



Rashmika's revelation

Actor Rashmika Mandanna, who claimed she had something really big in store for her admirers, finally unveils the surprise

LEISURE | P2



Israeli tanks in Gaza

Israeli tanks pushed into southern and eastern districts of the Gazan city of Deir al-Balah for the first time Monday

INTERNATIONAL | P10



Cyber threat to crypto

Crypto thefts in 2025 had crossed \$2.17 bn before last week's \$44 mn CoinDCX hack, underlining relentless cyber threat escalation

BUSINESS | P11



Scheffler dominates

Scottie Scheffler wins the prestigious Claret Jug after triumphing at The Open to claim the fourth major title of his career

SPORTS | P12



RUNWAY HITCH: An Air India plane that veered off the runway while landing amid heavy rain at Mumbai airport, Monday

PTI PHOTO

VP Dhankhar resigns

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 21: In a sudden move, Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar Monday evening resigned from his post citing medical reasons. He has sent his resignation to President Droupadi Murmu and said he is stepping down with immediate effect.

"To prioritise health care and abide by medical advice, I hereby resign as Vice President of India, effective immediately, in accordance with Article 67(a) of the Constitution," Dhankhar said in his letter to the President. Dhankhar, 74, assumed office in August 2022 and his tenure was till 2027. He is also the Chairman of the Rajya Sabha and his resignation came on the first day of the Monsoon session of Parliament. He had recently undergone angioplasty at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), New Delhi.

In his eventful tenure as Chairman of the Rajya Sabha, Dhankhar has had several run-



Dhankhar is the third Vice President after VV Giri and R Venkataraman to resign during tenure

ins with the Opposition, which had also moved a motion to impeach him. The motion to remove him, the first time ever in independent India to remove a sitting Vice President, was later rejected by Rajya Sabha Deputy Chairman Harivansh.

Dhankhar's abrupt resignation follows a day of surprising development in Rajya Sabha for the government, as an Opposition-sponsored notice for a motion to remove Justice Yashwant Varma was submitted to him and he mentioned it in the House.

7/11 train blasts: All 12 accused acquitted

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, July 21: Nineteen years after seven train blasts here killed more than 180 persons, the Bombay High Court Monday acquitted all the 12 accused, saying the prosecution "utterly failed" to prove the case and it was "hard to believe the accused committed the crime".

The judgement comes as a major embarrassment to the Maharashtra Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) which probed the case. The agency had claimed that the accused were members of the banned outfit Students' Islamic Movement of India (SIMI) and had hatched the conspiracy with Pakistani members of terror group Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT).

We are in shame: SC on Balanga fire

Three days after a minor girl was allegedly set afire by miscreants at Bayabara village under Balanga police station in Puri district, the Supreme Court Monday expressed grave concern over the rising crimes against women in states like Odisha. "We are in shame and it is unfortunate that these incidents are still taking place," the apex court observed, seeking suggestions from all concerned on what steps could be taken to empower schoolgirls, homemakers, children in rural areas, who are vulnerable and voiceless



and the voiceless people. Our directions should have some impact and visible imprint."

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 21: The Supreme Court Monday used "shame" and "unfortunate" to describe the incident wherein a 15-year-old girl of Balanga in Puri district was set on fire, while underscoring the need for providing safety net for women, especially those in rural areas.

A bench of Justices Surya Kant and Joyimalya Bagchi said, "We need suggestions from everyone on what concrete steps can be taken to empower the school girls, homemakers, children in rural areas, who are the most vulnerable

Some short-term and long-term directions need to be issued for immediate and for future, so that women living in taluka level could be made aware and empowered, it added. The bench said para legal volunteers, particularly women could be trained and appointed at taluka level and even help of Anganwadi workers could be taken to make the women aware of their rights. Senior advocate Mahalakshmi Pavani, appearing for the petitioner Supreme Court Women Lawyers' Association, said a couple of days ago, the minor was burnt and similar incidents took place in Maha-

rashtra and Tamil Nadu. "How long will this go on? This court needs to pass some directions for the safety of women," Pavani said. The bench said, "We are in shame and it is unfortunate that these incidents are still taking place. This is not adversarial litigation. We need suggestions from the Centre and all the parties."

Justice Kant said the registry has not put the affidavit of the Centre on record and posted the matter next week. Additional Solicitor General Aishwarya Bhati, appearing for the Centre, said the Union government gave details of steps and said CCTV cameras and face scan systems would be installed in public places to identify sexual offenders and timely actions.

She said one-stop centres were now functioning in every district which would be helpful for the women in distress. The bench, however, said while one-stop centre was good, it needed to go to the taluka level.

On December 16, last year, the SC agreed to examine a plea seeking directions to frame pan-India guidelines for a safe environment for women, children and transpersons.

Teen hockey player gangraped

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jajpur, July 21: Close on the heels of the self-immolation death of a female student of FM (Autonomous) College in Balasore over alleged inaction on her sexual harassment complaint and another girl set ablaze under Balanga police limits of Puri district, a 15-year-old hockey player was allegedly raped by three persons, including two of her coaches, in Jajpur district. Though the incident occurred July 3 evening, it came to the fore after the victim filed a complaint at Jajpur town police station Monday.

Police registered a case under Section 70 (2), 351 (2), 74, and 3 (5) of BNS and Section 6 of POCSO Act-2012. Police also recorded the statement of the survivor before the magistrate at Jajpur Court Monday.



Two of the accused hockey coaches - Sarthak and Sandip - have been detained, while another (Sagar) is absconding.

According to the complaint, the minor has been undergoing training at Jajpur hockey stadium in the district headquarters town for the past two years.

On July 3 evening, when the girl was going home, her coach and his two associates allegedly abducted her from the street, took her to a lodge and sexual-

Debate on Op Sindoor next wk

AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 21: The Union government Monday agreed to a 16-hour discussion in the Lok Sabha on Operation Sindoor and Pahalgam terror attack, and it is likely to be taken up next week, even as the Opposition insisted that it should start this week itself and PM Narendra Modi must reply.

At the meeting of the Business Advisory Committee (BAC), attended by members of different parties and chaired

by Speaker Om Birla, sources said that government representatives noted that PM is leaving on a foreign visit this week, and a debate when he is present in the House is possible only next week. Asked if the government's stand means that Modi may speak on the issue in the House, official sources said no decision has been taken yet.

The PM met his senior Cabinet colleagues who later held deliberations among themselves on the ruling alliance's strategy.

CCTVs at CBSE schools

New Delhi: The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has amended affiliation norms to mandate schools to install CCTVs with real-time audio-visual recording at all places other than toilets, an official said Monday. The schools were asked to install high resolution CCTV cameras with audio visual facility at all the entry and exit points of the school, lobbies, corridors, staircases, all the classrooms, labs, library, canteen area, store room, playground and other common areas except toilets and washrooms with real time audiovisual recording.

20 killed, 171 injured in Bangladesh plane crash

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dhaka, July 21: A Bangladesh Air Force training fighter jet crashed into a school building in Dhaka shortly after takeoff Monday, killing at least 20 people, mostly children, and injuring 171, in one of the deadliest aviation accidents in the country's recent history.

The F-7 BGI aircraft, a training fighter jet manufactured in China, crashed into the two-storey building of Milestone School and College at Diabari in Dhaka's Uttara area.

The pilot, Flight Lieutenant Mohammad Towkir Islam, was killed in the crash.

According to an updated statement from the Inter-Services Public Relations Directorate (ISPR), 20 people, including the pilot, have died and 171 oth-



ers injured.

The pilot attempted to steer the aircraft away from densely populated areas. However, despite his efforts, the aircraft tragically crashed into the two-storey building of the school, said the ISPR - the media wing of the military.

The aircraft crashed due to a mechanical fault after taking off from Bangladesh Air Force Base AK Khandaker in Kurmitola at 01:06 pm as part of a regular training, sources said.

Smart strategy: Indian couple builds an empire in Oz

The couple has flipped the traditional approach to homeownership. Instead of buying a \$3.5 mn home in a desirable Sydney suburb, they're renting a place in Narrabeena for \$100,000 a year

AGENCIES

Sydney, July 21: Rasti Vaibhav and Rupali Rastogi, an Indian couple, who moved to Australia with modest means, are gaining widespread attention for their remarkable success. They adopted a bold strategy of investing in properties, instead of buying a house to live in.

According to a 'Daily Mail' report, the couple came to Aus-

tralia in 2006 and have since built an impressive property investment portfolio, now owning 18 properties at an estimated \$11.3 million. The couple, with experience in IT and banking, started their investment journey in 2011 with a 10 per cent mortgage deposit. They began by buying land and building a \$440,000, four-bedroom house in Fletcher, a suburb of Newcastle.

Their properties are strategically located in areas such as Sydney's outer west, Melbourne's north, Brisbane's fringes, and south of Perth. According to Vaibhav, one of the biggest mistakes Australians make is prioritising saving for a mortgage deposit to live in a desirable suburb as owner-occupiers, only to find prices have surged out of reach. They argue that buying a home to live in may not be the most strategic



decision for Australians, citing the potential benefits of investing in property instead.

"It's very emotional - I live in my own home and I can choose to change the décor as and when I like it" - but just be

aware that it's very costly. The traditional way of what people have learnt about debt... is that "I need to have my own home and then when I am paid off, then I'll be looking at investments," Vaibhav told 'Daily Mail Australia'.

The couple has flipped the traditional approach to homeownership. Instead of buying a \$3.5 million home in a desirable Sydney suburb, they're renting a place in Narrabeena for \$100,000 a year. Meanwhile, they've built a substantial property portfolio that's likely to appreciate faster than wages. Mr. Vaibhav noted that paying \$230,000 annually in mortgage repayments for a similar home nearby wasn't worth it.

Sydney's median house price is around \$1.6 million, making it challenging for first-home buyers to save for a 20% deposit and afford stamp duty.

"They have to keep saving, keep earning and if you look at the average rate of saving, that will take a few years for them to get to that point, but by the time they get there, the price has already shot up further. It becomes unaffordable for a lot of people on average. We chose the path that's not so conventional. It's much easier to think about rent-vesting. Live where you want to live for the lifestyle, for the friends, for the school, for the workplace," Vaibhav remarked.

After living in Epping, they moved to Sydney's northern beaches, renting in North Curl Curl and later Narrabeena, to be close to a selective school and the ocean. Their daughter's desire to live near the beach drove the decision, and they preferred renting to achieve this lifestyle rather than buying a house in a far-off suburb.

leisure



DENISE'S HUBBY ACCUSES OF HER HAVING AN AFFAIR

The drama surrounding Hollywood actress Denise Richards and her estranged husband, Aaron Hypers seems to be getting bigger. The actress' husband has alleged that she had an affair and claims to have text messages to support it, reports *Female First UK*.

ROCKER NICK CAVE DONATES 2,000 BOOKS TO CHARITY

Veteran rocker Nick Cave has donated around 2,000 books from his private collection to charity and fans have been delighted to pick up bargains filled with the singer's handwriting, notes and tickets



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
You will be keen on carefully protecting your private affairs, particularly your relationships. Ganesha predicts exciting things for you today. You also make a final attempt at completing some work that you have been postponing.

TAURUS
Today, your passion for punctuality, for insistence on maintaining schedules is in for real appreciation. But, warns Ganesha, it could also create immediate and unexpected problems for some. You are like to become exceedingly impatient restless as the day progresses.

GEMINI
The first half of the day may see you in a foul mood, and the reason for it is likely to be some mental worry that has been bothering you for quite some time now. If things worsen, it is best to see a doctor. You will feel the urge to do something that really appeals to you, in the evening, says Ganesha.

CANCER
It is highly probable that you will be highly pious and dutiful today, foretells Ganesha. You will spend sparingly in the afternoon. You will stay in excellent health condition. Romantic dinner with sweetheart is likely, hopes Ganesha.

LEO
Your interactions with those around will you be tinged with understanding and empathy, as you will make an effort to solve their problems. Your relations with people will become stronger as a result. You need to stop worrying about others and pay more attention to your family, says Ganesha.

VIRGO
Your focus of attention will be your monetary matters today, and working towards building on your profits. Ganesha says it will be better if you make arrangements to set aside some money for the rainy day. You may seal some deals and agreements today that will prove to be very beneficial for your business in the future.

LIBRA
Ganesha says you will be assigned the responsibility to organize a meeting, which will give you the opportunity to prove your efficiency. Those of you in research and development fields will find success by putting your knowledge to use.

SCORPIO
You are like one butterfly today, literally flying from one place to another either for work or for socialising. New projects and business agendas form the crux of your day. There are chances that good business proposals may come your way and you may think of considering it, says Ganesha.

SAGITTARIUS
All things bright and beautiful in store for you today, predicts Ganesha. Your focus improves as your vision becomes clear and ideas innovative. You may even sort out the troubles that you are going through, since past few days. You are likely to make contacts that would prove beneficial in future.

CAPRICORN
You have high expectations from all, says Ganesha. Not only that, you also expect miracles from yourself. Naturally, with such high expectations you raise the chances of getting disappointed, also. A stitch in time saves nine. You need to plan out how you want to go about ideas and projects well in advance.

AQUARIUS
Put your best dress on, get a smart hairdo, and polish your shoes - you have to make your presence felt! Don't depend too much on the outer appearance though. You will need to apply your mind and make some vital decisions because they will have a permanent impact on your life, advises Ganesha.

PISCES
You will receive social acclaim today. Your intellectual and philanthropic nature will be the cause of your elevated social status. For those in search of love, now is the time when they will finally settle down with the person of their dreams. All your desires will come true today. Hence make the most of the day, says Ganesha.



IPRS to honour Rangabati creator Goutia

Bhubaneswar: In a bid to protect the creative legacy of India's folk music community, The Indian Performing Right Society Ltd. (IPRS) is bringing its 'My Music My Rights' initiative to Sambalpur July 26.

The copyright and royalty awareness workshop is set to honour Padma Shri Mitrabhanu Goutia, the lyricist of *Rangabati*, one of India's most popular folk songs, at Sambalpur Kala Parishad in the town.

The event will be supported by INRECO (The Indian Record Manufacturing Company Ltd.), the Kolkata-based heritage music label that recorded and released *Rangabati* in 1979.

It was in 1963, with the opening of All India Radio in Sambalpur, that Goutia, a humble schoolteacher from Bilung village (now renamed *Rangabati Bilung* in his honour), took a personal vow to write only in his mother tongue, Sambalpuri. Inspired by the words of poet Gangadhar Meher—"If you want to become great, first make your mother tongue great"—he went on to write over 1,000 songs, capturing the rhythm, sorrow, and soul of his land.

First aired on AIR Sambalpur, the song quickly became a cultural phenomenon and featured in Telugu cinema (*Sri Ram*, 2002), Bollywood (*Kaun Kitne Paani Mein*, 2015).

"Creators should not have to fight legal battles to claim what is rightfully theirs. They should be protected from the start," said Rakesh Nigam, CEO, IPRS.

Surveen on getting in and out of character

Mumbai: Actress Surveen Chawla, who is gearing up for the release of her upcoming streaming series *Mandala Murders*, has said that she doesn't follow a process to get in and out of a character.

The actress recently spoke with this agency, and said that while she doesn't have a process to approach a character, she makes sure to be 100% present mentally in the scene, and do justice to the truth of the moment. However, once the director calls for 'Cut', the actress easily moves away from it.

The actress said, "I think my only process is to just internalise and familiarise myself with what is written on paper. To such a degree that it becomes like second nature. Rather first nature. And then second nature is when I go back home from the set. I think I'm very instinctive, spontaneous".

"I just kind of get disconnected. There is no part that has hovered around my head. For me it's a job that when I'm at it, I'm just 100% present there", she added.



Rashmika unveils her big surprise

Mumbai: Actress Rashmika Mandanna has been hinting for a long time now that she has something really big in store for her admirers. The excitement among fans was finally over with the *Pushpa* actress announcing the launch of her fragrance brand - Dear Diary.

"For me, fragrance is memory. I don't remember most things, or maybe it's just selective memory, but perfumes bring back special moments that might otherwise be forgotten. It's how I hold on to the people, places, and experiences that shaped who I am." She said with Dear Diary, she

wanted to give everyone a way to carry their stories with them.

"To connect, to feel comforted, to feel a warm hug, and to express who they are, unapologetically," said Rashmika.

Rashmika also shared a video on social media talking about her new fragrance brand. She wrote in the caption: "This one's really really reallyyyy close to my heart. It's not just a brand.. not just a perfume.. it's a piece of me. Scent has always been such an important part of my personal life.. and today I share that with you.."

She added: "I am so grateful I get to do this.. I am so excited but also soooo nervous.. but I hope I have all your blessings to go ahead with this.."

IANS



Kajal's balancing act

Mumbai: Southern beauty Kajal Aggarwal dons multiple hats - an actress, a wife, and a mother. While juggling all these responsibilities, it becomes difficult at times to make time for self-love.

However, Kajal believes that working out to take care of one's health is a choice that one makes on a regular basis.

The *Singham* actress took to her Instagram handle and posted a video of sweating it out in the gym, working on core strengthening, and upper body.

Shedding light on the importance of consistency, Kajal wrote, "Some days it feels impossible — balancing work, home, and showing up for yourself. But the strength isn't just in the reps, it's in the choice to keep going. Every drop of sweat is proof: consistency ; perfection."

The Hey Sinamika actress further stated that working out not only helps one be in shape, but also reshapes the mind.

"The results? They don't just show on the outside —

they reshape your mind, your discipline, your drive. #WorkoutHustle #MindOverMatter #gritinandglow #BalancingAct #strongnotsorry @cravefitt thanks for making me realise that It's not magic — it's consistency with a side of caffeine and a whole lotta grit," she wrote.

Coming to her professional commitments, Kajal recently graced the screen as Goddess Parvati in the mythological drama, *Kannappa*. She was accompanied by Akshay Kumar, who essayed the role of Lord Shiva.

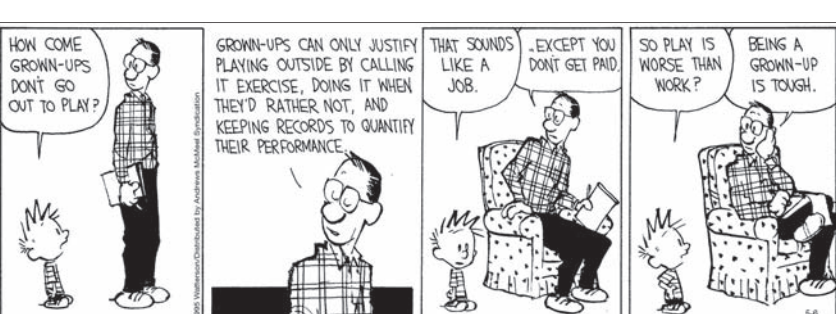
IANS



PEANUTS



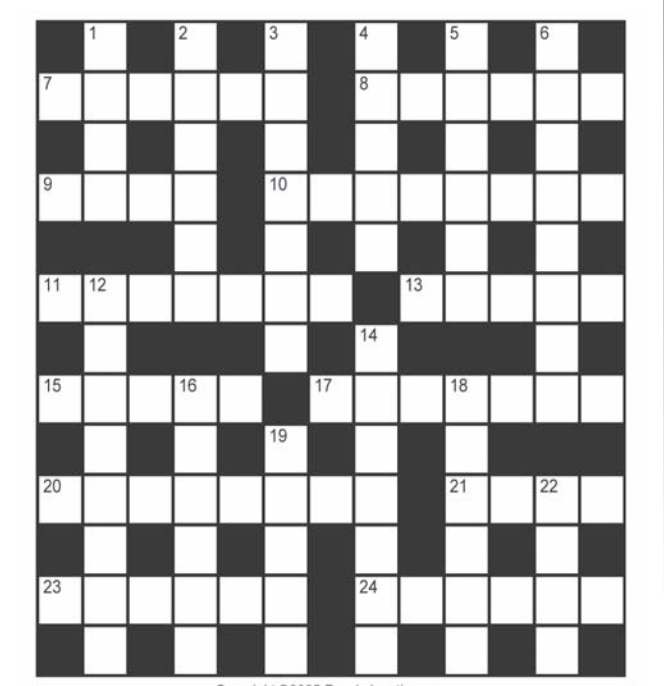
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



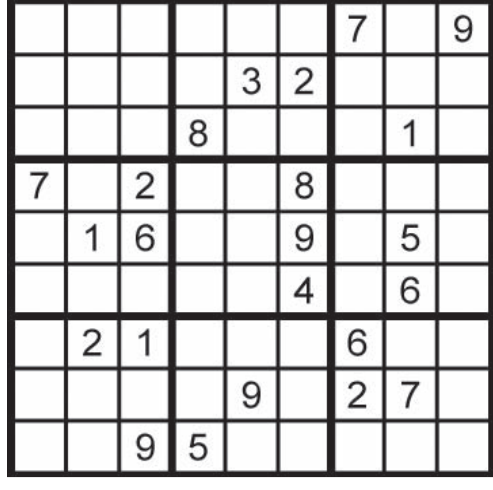
FUN POST CROSSWORD



- Across
- 7 Aromatic herb
 - 8 Drinking glass
 - 9 Emanation
 - 10 Ditties
 - 11 Trade stoppage
 - 13 Up and about
 - 15 Uneasy feeling
 - 17 Stocky
 - 20 Punter's choice, at times (4,4)
 - 21 Karate blow
 - 23 Wound
 - 24 Bounty
- Down
- 1 Lima's land
 - 2 Turkish capital
 - 3 Peacock's pride
 - 4 Like a gymnast
 - 5 Homes
 - 6 Abandoned ship
 - 12 Rainy seasons
 - 14 Snare
 - 16 Register (4,2)
 - 18 Brilliantly coloured parrots
 - 19 Blind followers
 - 22 Fairy tale villain

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.



SOLUTIONS



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown

NSUI suspends Udit Pradhan; Cong forms fact-finding panel

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, July 21: The Odisha Pradesh Congress Committee (OPCC) Monday constituted a fact-finding committee to investigate the rape allegations against the party's student wing president Udit Pradhan who has been suspended by the NSUI.

OPCC president Bhakta Charan Das has directed the newly formed committee to thoroughly examine the incident, hold discussions with the complainant, and submit a detailed report to the state party headquarters at the earliest.

The committee comprises Barabati - Cuttack MLA Sofia Firdous, OPCC secretary Debasmita Sharma, former MLA candidate Sonali Sahoo, OPCC spokespersons Jayashree Patra and Manisha Das Pattnaik.

The vice president of OPCC, Sasmita Behera, has been appointed as the chairman of the fact-finding committee.

In another significant development, Pradhan was suspended from the NSUI by its national president Varun Choudhury Monday.

"In view of recent developments, the NSUI Odisha state president has been suspended with immediate effect, pending inquiry. NSUI maintains a zero-tolerance policy towards gender-based injustice and is unwavering in its commitment to accountability and justice. Our fight for justice for the Balasore victim will continue with full resolve," read the order.

Pradhan was arrested by Mancheswar Police in Bhubaneswar for allegedly raping a 19-year-old female engineering student after spiking her soft drink with intoxicants.

According to police sources, Pradhan was arrested following a formal complaint lodged by the survivor Sunday. He was produced in a court for remand



Monday

Speaking to media persons, ACP Biswa Ranjan Senapati noted that March 18, the survivor had gone out with a friend, whom she identified as her boyfriend.

During the outing, Pradhan allegedly joined them in a car. The girl reportedly did not initially recognise Pradhan, but later found out that he held a political position as the state president of NSUI.

The group eventually went to a hotel in Mancheswar area where a party was held. The

girl was allegedly offered drug-spiked soft drink by Pradhan.

Senapati said the girl later stated that she felt unwell and asked to go home. When her condition worsened, her boyfriend left the place.

According to the complaint, when the girl regained consciousness, she discovered that she had been sexually assaulted. She was allegedly threatened and warned not to speak about the incident, which led her to remain silent for a while out of fear.

Police have also grilled others who were allegedly present during the incident. "So far, four people have been identified to be involved, and two have already been questioned. The role of others is being examined," the ACP added.

CCTV footage from the hotel is being analysed, and room booking details are under scrutiny to verify who booked the room and under whose name it was registered.

Further investigation is on to trace the hotel staff, other guests, and any digital evidence, police said.

BJP, BJD slam Congress

BHUBANESWAR: The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and Biju Janata Dal (BJD) Monday slammed the Congress over the arrest of NSUI state president Udit Pradhan on rape charges. At a presser at the BJP state headquarters here, BJP Yuva Morcha president Abhilash Panda accused the Congress



Central leadership of maintaining silence over the issue, and demanded OPCC chief Bhakta Charan Das' resignation. "(Udit) Pradhan who once held demonstrations demanding safety of women now faces rape charges. Will Rahul Gandhi, who misses no opportunity to tweet over every issue, put his views on his party's youth leader? This is sheer hypocrisy," Panda said while questioning the silence of the grand old party's women leaders. BJD spokesperson Ipsita Sahoo condemned the incident involving the NSUI state president and demanded a thorough investigation. "The culprits should be meted out the harshest of punishment. Whosoever is committing atrocities against women should be dealt with severely," Sahoo said. Earlier during the day, BJP Yuva Morcha and ABVP activists held demonstration at the Master Canteen Square and burned effigies of OPCC state president Bhakta Charan Das and senior Congress leader Rahul Gandhi over the issue.

CM meets Guv amidst ministry expansion talks



Bhubaneswar, July 21: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Monday met Governor Haribabu Kambhampati at Raj Bhavan, fueling speculation about a possible ministry expansion in the state.

While the CMO described it as a courtesy call, no further details about the discussion were provided.

The meeting comes days after state BJP president Manmohan Samal said the Majhi ministry will be reshuffled soon.

"Discussions with the Central leaders have already been held regarding the expansion of the council of ministers," Samal had told reporters July 9.

Majhi has met Prime Minister Narendra Modi and other senior BJP leaders including party's national general secretary BL Santosh earlier this month.

Though Majhi took oath as CM June 12, 2024, along with two deputy chief ministers and 13 other ministers, six ministerial positions have remained vacant for over a year. This has intensified speculation following the unexpected meeting between the Chief Minister and the Governor.

Though Majhi took oath as the Chief Minister June 12, 2024 along with two Deputy Chief Ministers and 13 other ministers, as many as six ministerial berths remain vacant since over one year.

State's 1st aviation MRO hub soon

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, July 21: In a strategic boost to aviation infrastructure, the state government has completed all formalities for establishing the state's first Maintenance, Repair, and Overhaul (MRO) facility in Bhubaneswar, marking a significant leap in creating aviation-linked economic ecosystems, an official said.

Anchored by the commerce and transport department, the new destination policy aims to expand regional and international air connectivity through structured incentives, route support, and facilitation for airlines, he said.

"Within a short span, the policy has significantly enhanced Odisha's aviation footprint both globally and domestically. A total of 13 new international and domestic flight services have been operationalised under the New Destination Policy, opening new corridors for trade,



tourism, and regional integration," he added.

On the international front, direct flights from Bhubaneswar to Dubai and Abu Dhabi have positioned the state on the global aviation map, strengthening diaspora ties and unlocking global market access.

On the domestic front, routes such as Jharsuguda-Mumbai, Jharsuguda-Hyderabad, Bhubaneswar-Goa, Bhubaneswar-Dehradun, and Bhubaneswar-Port Blair, among others, have enhanced connectivity to tribal regions, industrial zones, and key tourist destinations, he added.

These services are further supported by the operational-

isation of regional airstrips at Jeypore, Rourkela, Utkela, and Rangelunda under the UDAN scheme, ensuring seamless last mile connectivity, he said.

This apart, the proposed Puri airport project has achieved a major milestone with the launch of the Interactive Colour Coded Zoning Map (CCZM) on NOCAS 2.0.

This transformative digital tool enables online height clearance processing, ensuring that aviation planning is integrated with safe urban development, regulated infrastructure growth, and environmental safeguards.

Further strengthening its futuristic outlook, the Odisha government is also in the process of formulating a dedicated drone policy and fast tracking land allotment for airport infrastructure, reinforcing its mission to build a resilient and innovation driven aviation ecosystem, according to an official release by the Commerce and Transport department.

10 SHGs shortlisted for 'Subhadra Shakti' grand finale

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, July 21: Ten Self-Help Group (SHG) teams have been shortlisted for the grand finale of Subhadra Shakti Traditional Food Competition following an intense round of culinary presentations and evaluations by a panel of renowned chefs.

The semi-final round of the competition was held Sunday at the Institute of Hotel Management (IHM), Bhubaneswar.

30 district-level teams from across Odisha participated in the competition in a celebration of the state's rich culinary traditions and women-led food entrepreneurship.

Organised by the depart-



ment of Mission Shakti, government of Odisha, the competition is part of a broader initiative aimed at empowering SHG women by reviving traditional food practices and promoting structured culi-

nary enterprises. Each of the 30 participating teams—comprising a Head Chef, an Assistant Chef, and a Kitchen Assistant—had previously won their respective district-level competitions.

MIN: SALE OF PETROL IN BOTTLES BANNED

BHUBANESWAR: Sale of petrol in plastic bottles has been completely banned in the state. Discussions have been held with various associations to discourage the sale of the fuel in plastic bottles from any petrol pump. Food Supplies and Consumer Welfare Minister Krushna Chandra Patra held an extensive discussion with representatives of various petroleum associations and departmental officials at his office chamber in Lok Seva Bhavan Monday. Keeping public safety in mind, the minister instructed the associations to strictly follow the rules issued by government-owned oil firms regarding the sale of petrol. He also mentioned that District Collectors will be informed to ensure personal monitoring and enforcement of these regulations.



DEVOTION: Kanwaris queue up outside the Lingaraj Temple in Old Town area of Bhubaneswar in the holy month of Shraavan, Monday

Student death: BJD stages protests, seeks judicial probe

Hundreds of Opposition party leaders, workers agitate before RDC offices in Cuttack, Berhampur and Sambalpur

AGENCIES

BJD MPs MEET BALANGA FIRE VICTIM

BHUBANESWAR: A delegation of BJD MPs Monday met the 15-year-old girl, who is struggling for her life after suffering 70 per cent burn injuries, at AIIMS Delhi and enquired about her health condition, party sources said. The girl was set on fire by three unidentified miscreants when she was returning home from her friend's house in Balanga area of Puri district Saturday morning. She was first rushed to the government hospital in Pipili and later admitted to AIIMS Bhubaneswar. On Sunday, she was airlifted to AIIMS Delhi for better treatment. Her condition remained critical, as per the hospital bulletin issued Sunday. The delegation of BJD MPs that visited AIIMS Delhi comprised Sasmit Patra, Manas Ranjan Mangaraj, Sulata Deo and Niranjan Bishi. They met the victim and also interacted with the attending doctors to enquire about her health condition. They also met the family members of the victim and assured them of all possible support. Taking to X, Mangaraj said, "Under the directions of Hon'ble BJD President Shri @Naveen_Odisha, we, the BJD Rajya Sabha MPs, met the Balanga (Nimapada) burn victim at AIIMS, New Delhi. We discussed her health conditions with the medical team and also spoke to her uncle." Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, who hails from Odisha, had also visited the Balanga victim Saturday, sources said.

the agitation near RDC office in Cuttack.

The 20-year-old second-year integrated BEd student of Fakir Mohan (Autonomous) College succumbed to 95 per cent burn injuries on the night of July 14 at AIIMS Bhubaneswar, two days after she set herself on fire, sparking nationwide outrage. The BJD has already

rejected the Crime Branch inquiry, claiming it would be inadequate.

Several influential figures, including the Balasore MP and the Higher Education Minister, must be interrogated in the case. A Crime Branch probe cannot ensure impartiality," Mishra asserted.

Protest marches were held

from Sunshine Field to RDC office in Cuttack, Gangadhar Mandap, Daleipada to RDC Office in Sambalpur, and from Khalikote University Ground to RDC Office in Berhampur.

During the protest in Cuttack, demonstrators clashed briefly with security personnel while attempting to enter the RDC office.

However, a selected group of leaders were later allowed to meet the RDC and submit memorandum to Governor demanding judicial probe into the matter.

Mishra claimed that assaults on women and girls are continuing to take place in the state and people are panicked due to back-to-back incidents, from the gang rape of a college student at Gopalpur beach (June 15) to this tragic self-immolation case in Balasore, and now the burning of a minor girl by miscreants in Balanga, Puri (July 19).

Justice Manas Pathak takes oath as judge of Orissa HC

AGENCIES

Cuttack, July 21: Justice Manas Ranjan Pathak was sworn in as a judge of the Orissa High Court here



Monday. Chief Justice Harish Tandon administered the oath of office to Justice Pathak in the presence of Law Minister Prithviraj Harichandan, Advocate General Pitambar Acharya and others.

Justice Pathak was previously a judge of the Gauhati High Court. The Supreme Court had recommended his transfer to the Orissa High Court in May, and the Union Law Ministry notified his transfer July 14.

With his joining, the functional strength of the Orissa High Court increased to 20 against a sanctioned strength of 32.

CM, Naveen, others condole Achuthanandan's demise

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, July 21: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, BJD chief Naveen Patnaik, state CPI(M) secretary Suresh Pujari and several politicians Monday condoled the death of former Kerala CM VS Achuthanandan.

Achuthanandan, one of India's most respected Communist leaders, died at the age of 101.

He breathed his last in Thiruvananthapuram while undergoing treatment following a cardiac arrest nearly a month ago.

He served as Kerala's chief minister from 2006 to 2011 and was elected to the state Assembly seven times.

Taking to X, Majhi said, "Saddened to hear about the demise of former Kerala CM VS Achuthanandan. Heartfelt condolences to his family and admirers. May Mahaprabhu Jagannath grant him eternal peace. Om Shanti."

"Deeply saddened to learn about the passing away of former Kerala CM and veteran CPI(M) leader VS Achuthanandan. He was a towering figure in Kerala politics and will be remembered for the grassroots connect and dedication to serve the people. My thoughts and



prayers are with the bereaved family, friends, and followers in the hour of grief. #OmShanti," Patnaik said in a social media post.

The CPI(M) Odisha state committee, in an official statement, paid tribute to Achuthanandan, saying, "We pay our heartfelt tributes to his enduring legacy and offer our deepest condolences to his bereaved family." State secretary Suresh Chandra Panigrahy added that, in line with the party politburo's directive, the CPI(M) Odisha unit will observe three days of mourning, during which the party flag will be flown at half-mast.

ODISHA TEX 2025 JULY 25

The event, which will be inaugurated by Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi at the State Convention Centre in Bhubaneswar, will help promote Odisha as a major hub for textiles and apparels



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 21: The state government is set to host the first edition of 'ODISHA TEX 2025', eastern India's biggest textile investment event, here July 25, official sources said Monday.

The event, which will be inaugurated by Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi at the State Convention Centre in the City, will help promote Odisha as a major hub for textiles, apparels, and technical textiles, an official statement said.

The event is expected to witness the signing of key MoUs and significant investment announcements involving top players in the textile industry.

"These developments will play a key role in strengthening Odisha's industrial growth and helping the state move towards its goal of becoming the textile capital of India by 2030," the government said in a statement.

Claiming that 'ODISHA TEX 2025' will be the biggest textile

investment event in eastern India, the state government added that the event would bring together leading textile companies, global brands, manufacturers, startups, and young professionals. It will provide a unique platform to explore investment opportunities across sectors such as apparel, technical textiles, footwear, accessories, and luggage manufacturing, it added.

The state government is currently developing six new parks for textiles, apparel, and wearables. These parks, equipped with world-class facilities, will be ready for operation soon.

These parks will be formally launched during 'ODISHA TEX 2025', underscoring Odisha's strong commitment to becoming a national leader in textile and apparel manufacturing.

Industries department additional chief secretary Hemant

Sharma said, "This platform will bring leading textile players to Odisha and generate significant employment opportunities for our youth. With progressive policies, world-class infrastructure, and a skilled workforce, we are building a robust ecosystem where textiles can become a powerful driver of industrial growth, women empowerment, and rural transformation."

More than 300 delegates from across India, representing key textile hubs such as Tirupur, Bengaluru, Surat, the National Capital Region (NCR), and states including Punjab and West Bengal, are expected to attend.

As the industry partner, FICCI is actively engaging with leading sectoral associations across fibre, textiles, apparel, hosiery, and wearable segments to ensure broad-based industry representation and collaboration.

Normalcy returns to FM College

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar/Balasure, July 21: Ten days after a second-year integrated BEd woman student resorted to self immolation over alleged sexual harassment by a teacher, normalcy returned to FM (Autonomous) College in Balasure Monday, officials said.

The 20-year-old student had set herself on fire July 12 as her complaint of sexual harassment was 'not validated' by an internal enquiry committee of the institute. She died July 14.

Classes were held as usual after 10 days, with students attending college, officials said.

However, the Crime Branch of Odisha Police continued its probe into the circumstances leading to the student's self-immolation July 12 and her death two days later at AIIMS-Bhubaneswar.

"Only Crime Branch people had visited the campus today and recorded statements of some staff and certain students," In-charge Principal Firoz Kumar Padhi told reporters.

Padhi said the UGC's four-member team has returned to Delhi, while the Higher Education department's three-member team have completed their investigation and did not turn up Monday.

Meanwhile, CB DSP Iman Kalyan Nayak said that their investigation was going on and they were doing it professionally.

2,015 built heritage & sites in state documented by NMMA

ASI does not maintain any inventory of privately-owned heritage homes: Ministry of Culture

AGENCIES

New Delhi/Bhubaneswar, July 21: As many as 2,015 built heritage and sites in Odisha which are 100 years old or more are among the 11,406 so far documented by the National Mission on Monuments and Antiquities (NMMA), according to data presented by the Ministry of Culture in the Lok Sabha Monday.

Responding to a question of Kakinada MP Tangella Uday Srinivas, Union Culture Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat said, "The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) does not maintain any inventory of privately-owned heritage homes, specifically, however, the Government of India has established the NMMA in 2007 to prepare two national registers on monuments and antiquities from length and breadth across the country."

The Union Minister, in his written response, shared the state-wise break-up of the 11,406 built heritage and sites, which has been published on the NMMA website.

Rare earth oxide in Odisha

Atomic Minerals Directorate for Exploration and Research (AMD), under the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE), has estimated presence of approximately 7.23 million tonnes (MT) of in-situ rare earth oxide (REO) in 13.15 MT of monazite in Odisha and seven other states, the Parliament was informed Monday. Replying to a question in Rajya Sabha, Union Coal and Mines Minister G Kishan Reddy said, "Atomic Minerals Directorate for Exploration and Research (AMD), a constituent unit of Department of Atomic Energy (DAE), is carrying out exploration and augmentation of rare earth group elements along coastal/inland/riverine placer sands, as well as in hard rock terrains in several potential geological domains in the country." The minister further said, "As on date, AMD has estimated approximately 7.23 million tonnes (MT) of in-situ Rare Earth Oxide (REO) contained in 13.15 MT of monazite in coastal beach, teri/red sand and inland alluvium in parts of Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, West Bengal, Jharkhand, Gujarat and Maharashtra." He further said that 1.29 MT of in-situ REO resources have been identified in hard rocks in Gujarat and Rajasthan, adding that, as per DAE, mining is feasible for these resources. Besides, GSI has augmented 482.6 MT resources of REE ore at various cut-off grades in 34 exploration projects. The National Critical Minerals Mission, launched in 2025 by the government, aims to establish a self-reliant domestic supply chain for critical minerals, including rare earths, he said.

in the list include 2,160 in Rajasthan, 2,015 in Odisha, 1,788 in Andhra Pradesh, 749 in Madhya Pradesh, 20 in Bihar and one in Haryana.

According to its website, the NMMA's objectives include documentation and creation of a suitable database on built heritage and sites through published and unpublished secondary sources for information and dissemination to planners and researchers and for better management of such cultural resources. Besides, to promote awareness and sensitise people concerning the benefits of preserving the historical and cultural aspects of built heritage, sites and antiquities.

Shekhawat was also asked whether any financial assistance, tax incentives or special

schemes exist to support the private owners in the conservation, restoration or adaptive reuse of such heritage properties, and if so, the details thereof; and whether the government has 'any proposal to introduce a dedicated Central scheme' to provide financial or technical assistance for conservation of privately-owned heritage homes, and if so, the details and timeline thereof.

"This is outside the mandate of ASI," the Union Minister said in response to the two queries.

There are 3,698 centrally-protected monuments and sites, and 52 museums under the ambit of the ASI.

The ASI was set up in 1861, and it comes under the purview of the Ministry of Culture.

SPATE OF CRIMES AGAINST WOMEN AAP protests, seeks Gov's intervention



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 21: The Odisha unit of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) staged a protest at Master Canteen Square Monday, expressing concern over the rising crimes against women and girl students in the state. The party urged the Governor to intervene and direct the government to restore law and order and ensure swift justice for the victims.

AAP leaders submitted a memorandum to the Governor through the Khurda Additional District Magistrate, seeking urgent intervention.

State president Nishikanta Mohapatra, organisation secretary Sandipta Das, and Youth Wing president Ruchir Rudra Rath were among those who led the demonstration.

AAP strongly criticised the BJP-led state government for its inaction in curbing the

growing number of crimes against women in Odisha.

"In the past 13 months of BJP rule at the Centre and the continued BJD governance in Odisha, the state has witnessed a surge in horrific crimes, including rapes and murders of women and girl students," the party said. Referring to the recent self-immolation of a girl student from FM College, AAP alleged she was driven to the act after repeated pleas for justice were ignored by local MLAs, ministers, and MPs.

The party also raised concern over a shocking incident in Balanga, Puri district, where miscreants allegedly set a minor girl ablaze in broad daylight. "This act not only highlights the breakdown of law and order but also exposes the incompetence of the Home department. Even after two days, police have failed to arrest the culprits," AAP stated.

City IIT launches MTech in Systems Engineering

Initiative to bridge academia-industry gap, upskill engineers with plant or industrial experience

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, July 21: Indian Institute of Technology (IIT)-Bhubaneswar Monday announced the launch of blended mode MTech programme in Systems Engineering, designed specifically for working professionals in the industry.

This one-of-its-kind initiative aims to bridge the gap between academia and industry, enabling engineers with a minimum of three years of experience in plants or industrial settings to enhance their expertise in modern systems engineering, the institute said in a statement on Monday.

This M Tech programme will help build the knowledge needed for understanding the behaviour of engineering systems through its courses on modelling of system behaviour,



testing systems performance, design of systems and the tools and techniques for predicting system behaviour, such as reliability engineering, statistical machine learning, the statement said.

The institute said that the curriculum for the course was developed in collaboration with Applied Materials India Private Limited, a subsidiary of Applied Materials, Inc, the global leader in materials engineering solutions for the semiconductor industry.

Speaking on the launch of the programme, IIT-Bhubaneswar

director Shreepad Karmalkar said, "Such programmes foster deeper collaboration between academia and industry. Beyond professional development, they open avenues for joint R&D (research and development), leading to innovations that can significantly benefit society and contribute to the vision of an Atmanirbhar Bharat."

The programme is set to commence soon, with participation from eligible industry professionals eager to advance their systems engineering competencies through this flexible learning model, the institute said.

Rama Devi Memorial Lecture

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 21: Rama Devi Women's University Monday hosted the 7th edition of the Maa Rama Devi Memorial Lecture at the Old Auditorium here, as part of an ongoing series to honour the life and legacy of Maa Rama Devi. The event was organised on the eve of her Punyatithi.

The session began with a welcome address by Sucheta Priyabadi, Chair Professor of the Maa Rama Devi Chair, followed by the presidential address by Vice Chancellor (I/C) Chandhi Charan Rath. Renowned social activist and scholar Narayan Sahoo spoke on contemporary social issues, drawing inspiration from Maa Rama Devi's ideals. Guest speaker Gabin Song, Associate Professor at Guangdong University of Foreign Studies, China, delivered a lecture on

India-South Korea relations and global job opportunities. She, along with her family, actively participated in the outreach initiative alongside student volunteers and faculty members.

A poignant drama based on Maa Rama Devi's life, written by Sahoo, was performed by university students, leaving the audience moved. "Maa Rama Devi's journey continues to inspire generations—her life is a lesson in courage and compassion," said Sahoo.

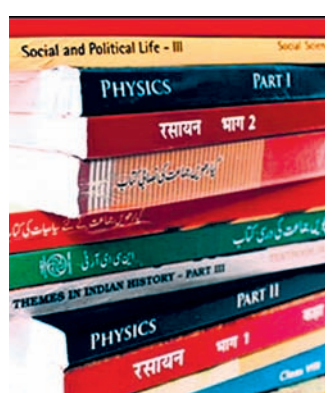
As part of the event, an old clothes donation drive was held at Chunukoli Slum in Budha Vihar in collaboration with the university's NCC and NSS units. Priyabadi remarked, "True tribute to Maa Rama Devi lies in walking her path—serving society selflessly." The programme concluded with an interactive session with children from the slum area.

Paika Rebellion in Vol 2 of NCERT book

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar/New Delhi, July 21: The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) has issued a clarification Monday following reports that its recently released Class VIII Social Science textbook, 'Exploring Society: India and Beyond', omits key regional resistance movements such as Paika Rebellion and Kuka Movement.

The NCERT clarified that the textbook in question is only the first volume of a two-part series. The second volume, currently in its final stages of development, is slated for release in September-October 2025 and will comprehensively cover regional resistance movements and armed uprisings, including Paika Rebellion of Odisha, Kuka Movement in Punjab, and others.



by Bakshi Jagabandhu in Odisha, is often cited as one of the earliest organised revolts against British colonial rule—predating the 1857 uprising by four decades. The Paikas, a warrior class of Odisha, rose in protest against British economic policies, land revenue changes, and interference in traditional institutions.

In 2017, during the rebellion's 200th anniversary, there was a growing demand to recognise Paika Rebellion as India's first war of independence. The movement was commemorated at the national level, with the Indian government acknowledging its historical importance.

Similarly, the Kuka Movement, which originated in Punjab in the mid-19th century, was a socio-religious and political movement led by Sikh reformers who resisted British authority and sought to revive Sikh traditions.

NCERT emphasised that these important events have not been removed but will be treated in detail in Volume 2 of the textbook series, as part of a restructured and phased approach to curriculum design. This modular release is intended to allow for thematic continuity and deeper engagement by students.

1st merit list out for 3-yr LLB courses

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 21: The Higher Education department Monday released the first selection merit list for admission into 3-year LLB courses for the 2025-26 academic session. A total of 360 students have been selected across three participating law colleges in Odisha.

Altogether, 2,207 students had applied for admission to the 3-year LLB programmes offered by the three Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), which have a combined sanctioned intake of 360 seats. The competitive selection process highlights the growing demand for legal education in the state.

Of the 360 students selected, 206 are male and 154 are female. No transgender applicants were selected in this round.

The merit-based cut-off marks for the three participating institutions varied,

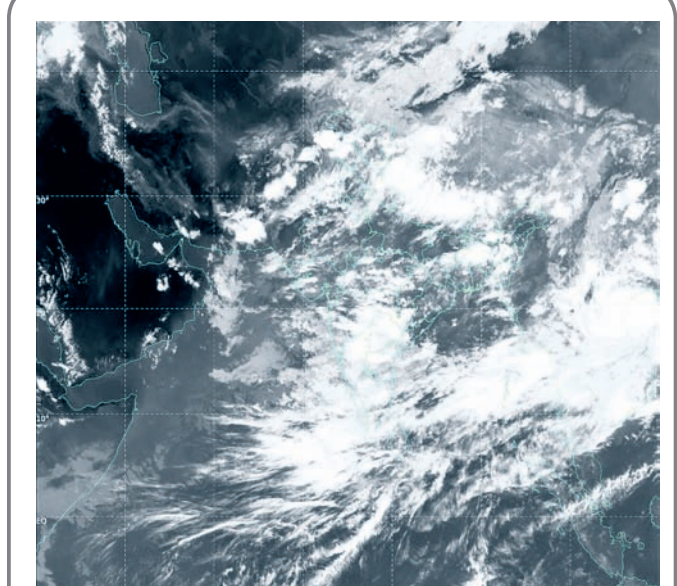
with University Law College, Bhubaneswar registering the highest at 82.23 per cent, followed by Madhusudan Law University, Cuttack at 79.42 per cent, and Lingaraj Law College, Berhampur at 75.13 per cent.

Selected students are given two options—Freeze or Slide. Students opting for the Freeze option must pay their admission fees online, download the intimation letter, and report to their respective HEIs between July 22 and July 24 (from 10am to 5am) to complete admission formalities.

Those choosing the Slide option are also required to pay the admission fees online but are not required to report or download the intimation letter. These students will be considered for possible upgradation in the next round of selection.

This announcement marks a significant step in the 2025-26 academic admission cycle.

MARKET WATCH					
CURRENCY		BOURSES		COMMODITIES	
INDEX	VARIATION	INDEX	VARIATION	INDEX	VARIATION
DOLLAR	86.29 ▲ 0.15	SENSEX	82200.34 ▲ 462.61	GOLD	₹99,409 ▲ ₹1385
EURO	100.89 ▲ 0.75	NIFTY	25090.70 ▲ 122.30	SILVER	₹114,742 ▼ ₹1792



WEATHER			
	BBSR	CTC	FORECAST
Max Temp	34.8°	34.4°	Partly cloudy sky with possibility of one or two spells of rain or thunderstorm
Min Temp	26.4°	25.6°	
Humidity	76%	81%	
Rainfall	0.2mm	Nil	

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Woman consumes poison inside PS alleging inaction

POST NEWS NETWORK

Nayagarh, July 21: A woman allegedly attempted suicide by consuming poison inside the Itamati police station in Nayagarh district Monday morning, protesting what she described as police inaction in a cheating case against her lover. The woman was admitted to the district headquarters hospital in Nayagarh in critical condition. Doctors initially considered referring her to a Bhubaneswar facility but later said her condition had stabilised and was under control. Tehsildar Rakesh Swain also reached the hospital and recorded the woman's statement in the presence of a magistrate.



summoned to the police station Monday, officers reportedly informed them that her brother would be arrested. In response, the woman consumed poison inside the police station in protest.

Speaking from her hospital bed, the woman accused police of siding with the accused. "My lover cheated on me, and when I went to the police, they failed to act. Instead, they sympathised with him," she said tearfully. "Now he walks free while I face unbearable trauma. Who will marry me now?"

She further claimed that Swain's family assaulted her brother and then filed a counter-case, which led police to target her family instead of the accused. "If my brother is jailed, how will our family survive?" she asked.

The woman also said she had approached the Sub-Divisional Police Officer (SDPO), the Superintendent of Police, and the State Women's Commission, but no concrete action was taken. "They questioned my political affiliation instead of helping me. I was pushed to

the edge."

Nayagarh SDPO Jyoti Samantaray and Itamati Inspector-in-Charge Priyabrata Rout denied any negligence. They said acting on the woman's complaint, they had arrested the accused from Raipur after registration of a case (42/25) and sent him to jail.

Police confirmed that Sunday's incident resulted in two additional cases — one filed by the accused's father (Case No. 264/25), in which the victim's brother was named as the prime accused. Simultaneously, the victim's family filed a counter-complaint, registered as Case No. 265/25.

Police clarified that no chargesheet on rape has been submitted yet in the court. "When the case is pending in court and the woman insists on becoming the man's wife, what kind of justice can the police deliver?" they said.

They also confirmed that the suicide attempt inside the police station was recorded on CCTV, and the incident has not been ignored.

Double murder over mushroom theft

POST NEWS NETWORK

Padampur, July 21: An unimaginable tragedy unfolded Monday in Pathuri village under Padampur subdivision in Bargarh district. What began as a dispute over mushroom theft spiralled into a brutal double murder, leaving the local community in shock.

The victims, identified as Belamati Naag and her daughter Sabitri, were found dead at the scene, while Belamati's husband, Bishikesan, sustained serious injuries. He has been admitted to the Padampur Sub-Divisional



Hospital for treatment. In a stunning turn of events, the prime accused—Belamati's nephew, Sashibhushan—surrendered at the Padampur police station shortly after the incident. Police have registered a case

of murder (201/25) and taken Sashibhushan into custody for interrogation.

According to preliminary reports, Sashibhushan was involved in mushroom farming. Tensions had long simmered within the family over

recurring thefts of the crop, which often led to heated arguments between Sashibhushan and his aunt. However, the quarrel escalated beyond control Monday.

In a fit of rage, Sashibhushan allegedly went to his aunt's house and attacked Belamati, Sabitri, and Bishikesan with an axe. Belamati and Sabitri died on the spot, while Bishikesan was critically injured.

Police have begun an investigation and sent the bodies for post-mortem examination at the Padampur Sub-Divisional Hospital.

Wild animal parts seized; 2 arrested



POST NEWS NETWORK

Baripada, July 21: Forest officials from the northern division of the Similipal Tiger Reserve (STR) in Mayurbhanj district have arrested two suspected poachers during a joint raid. The accused have been identified as Fakir Chakia, 44, of Ashankudiar village and Kamala Dangil, 21, of Ranibhol village, under Thakurmunda police limits.

Carcasses of wild animals like sambar, antlers and other animal parts, bows and arrows, and other hunting

equipment were seized from their possession.

According to Sai Kiran, Deputy Director, STR northern division, separate cases have been registered against the accused under the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972. Both suspects were produced in court Monday.

The duo was arrested during raids conducted by Forest officials after AI-based camera surveillance detected their movement in forest. Personnel from Karanjia, the southern division, and the northern division of the STR took part in the operation.

Armed robbery at OGB branch

POST NEWS NETWORK

Lakhanpur, July 21: An armed robbery at the Odisha Grameen Bank's Bhikampali branch, located in the Nath Complex near Chikhalapali on the national highway 49 in Jharsuguda district, has caused panic in the area.

According to reports, three unidentified miscreants arrived on a red motorcycle around 3:15pm Monday. Wearing helmets to conceal their identities, they entered the bank. While one of them held the branch manager at gunpoint, the other two threatened staff and customers before looting cash.

The robbers fled the scene at high speed towards the nearby state border located 4 km away. The nearest police station, Rengali, is approximately 3.5 km from the bank.

Despite having three branches in the area, Odisha Grameen Bank reportedly employs no security personnel at any of the locations, raising serious concerns about safety.

The latest incident follows a similar robbery last year at the Sambalpur DCCB Kanaktora branch near the state border.

Preliminary investigation suggests that cash worth ₹50,000-₹1 lakh may have been stolen. Police have launched a manhunt to track down the suspects.

Senior officials, including Brajarajnarayan SDPO and officers from Brajarajnarayan, Belpahar, and Rengali police stations, visited the scene and initiated a detailed investigation. A forensic team has also been deployed.

District police officials indicated that a scientific investigation team will be assigned to assist in the case.

2 teachers held for molesting student; headmaster detained



POST NEWS NETWORK

Balasure, July 21: Two teachers of a state-run high school in this district were arrested and the headmaster was detained for alleged molestation of a Class IX student, police said Monday.

The accused were picked up from their houses by personnel of the Raibania police station

post Sunday midnight, after the girl's family lodged a complaint.

The accused teachers were identified as Kailash Chandra Bej, an assistant teacher of Mathematics, and another teacher Kalicharan Majhi of the school, Raibania police OIC Lopamudra Panda said. Headmaster Bhawani Shankar Pal was

detained and being questioned in this connection, she said.

As per the complaint, the girl was molested by Bej on several occasions. He also made lewd and obscene gestures towards her, and even threatened to fail her in the examination if she did not oblige to his demands, the complaint read.

Such frequent torture pushed the girl to depression. She finally mustered courage and lodged a complaint with the headmaster eight days back. However, even after narrating the incident to the headmaster, no action was taken.

Later, the girl narrated her ordeal before her mother. The girl's mother visited the Raibania police station and lodged a written complaint in this regard Sunday night.

EAST COAST RAILWAY
Tender Notice No. ST-OT-AMC-ET-KYOSAN-480
Date: 14.07.2025

NAME OF WORK: PROVISION FOR COMPREHENSIVE ANNUAL MAINTENANCE CONTRACT FOR ELECTRONIC INTERLOCKING SYSTEMS OF KYOSAN MAKE AT MARSAGHAI (MSGR), KALAGHAR (KLG), NUAGAON (NUGN), SIJU (SIJU) STATIONS OF KHURDA ROAD DIVISION OF EAST COAST RAILWAY FOR A PERIOD OF 36 (THIRTY SIX) MONTHS.

Tender Value: ₹ 1,65,77,870.76, EMD: ₹ 2,32,900/-, Bidding Start Date: 22.07.2025, Tender Document Cost: ₹ 5,900/-

Date of closing of Tender: At 1100 Hrs. of 05.08.2025.

No manual offers send by Post/Courier/ Fax or in person shall be accepted against the e-tenders even if these are submitted on firm's letter head and receipt in time. All such manual offers shall be considered invalid and shall be rejected summarily without any consideration.

Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-tender is available in website: www.ireps.gov.in

Note: The prospective tenderers are advised to visit the website 15 days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes/corrigenda issued for this tender.

Sr. Divisional Signal & Telecom Engineer, PR-379/QJ/25-26, Khurda Road

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Date and Venue:
Friday, 25th July 2025; 6:00 p.m. onwards.
At Hotel Grand Residency, Badambadi, Cuttack - 753 001, Odisha.
For registration, please contact: Ankit Prasad Bhagat, Mobile: 78099 43887.
Registration is compulsory. The registration time will be from 9:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. No walk-ins will be allowed.

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

Mutual Fund investments are subject to market risks, read all scheme related documents carefully.

Office of the Executive Engineer UPPER LANTH IRRIGATION DIVISION BELPADA, DIST.- BALANGIR
E-mail: eeulidbelpada2024@gmail.com
e-Procurement Notice No. EEULID-02(01-01)/2025-26, Dt. 17.07.2025
Bid Identification No. EEULID-02(01-01)/2025-26
PERCENTAGE RATE e-TENDER

1. Type/Nature of work : Electrical Works, 2. Total No. of works : 01 (one) No. 3. Approx. value of works : Approx. 10.87 Lakhs (Excluding GST), 4. Period of completion : 02 (Two) Calendar months, 5. Class of Contractor : "M" or "HT" Class Electrical Contractor, 6. Bid Identification No.: EEULID-02(01-01) / 2025-26

Name of Officer inviting tender: Executive Engineer, Upper Lanth Irrigation Division, Belpada, Dist.- Balangir.

Date and time of availability of bid documents in the portal: From 22.07.2025 at 11.00 AM to 01.08.2025 up to 17.30 PM.

Last date and time for receipt of bids in the portal: 01.08.2025 up to 17.30 PM.

Date, time and venue of opening of tender Bid: 02.08.2025 (11.30 AM) in the O/o the Executive Engineer, Upper Lanth Irrigation Division, Belpada, Dist.- Balangir, Odisha, Pin-767026.

Name of Officer inviting tender: Executive Engineer, Upper Lanth Irrigation Division, Belpada, Dist.- Balangir.

N.B: Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal <https://www.tendersodisha.gov.in> and any addendum/ Corrigendum/ Cancellation to the above notice will be published in the above Govt. website (only).
Sd./- (E. Pritam Meher), Executive Engineer, Upper Lanth Irrigation Division, Belpada, Dist.- Balangir
OIPR-32532/11/0008/2526

Regional Office (Sambalpur Region) G.M. College Chowk, Christian Park, Sambalpur-768001		POSSESSION NOTICE (Immovable Property)	
(As per Appendix IV read with rule 8(1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002)			
Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of the BANK OF BARODA under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued demand notice calling upon the Borrowers/Guarantors to repay the amount mentioned in the notice together with further interest thereon at the contractual rate plus costs, charges and expenses till date of payment within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice. The Borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrowers/Guarantors and the public in general that the undersigned has taken POSSESSION of the properties described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under Sub-Section (4) of Section 13 of the Act read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest Enforcement Rules, 2002 on the date mentioned below. The Borrowers/Guarantors in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the properties and any dealings with the properties will be subject to the charge of the BANK OF BARODA for an amount stated herein below plus further interest thereon at contractual rate plus costs, charges and expenses till date of payment. The Borrower's attention is invited to provision of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.			
BRANCH / Name & Address of the Borrower/Co-Borrower/Guarantor	Description of the Immovable Properties	Demand/ Possession Notice Date	Total Dues as on
TITLAGARH BRANCH / Borrower: Mrs. Anjana Barma, W/o: Sri Om Prakash Barma / Co-Borrower: Mr. Om Prakash Barma, C/o: Sri Ramgariba Barma, Both are residing At: Padmanabhapur, PO: Titlagarh, Titlagarh NAC, Ward No.: 12, Dist.: Bolangir, Odisha, PIN - 767033	Equitable Mortgage of Land & Building measuring Area: Ac. 0.050 Dec., KISSAM: Gharabari, situated at Mouza: Titlagarh (Kha), Tahasil: Titlagarh, PS: Titlagarh, PS No.: 84, Dist.: Bolangir, having Khata No.: 463/1831, Plot No.: 1783/4268, standing in the name of Mr. Om Prakash Barma, S/o: Sri Ramgariba Barma, Bounded by East: Mishra Babu, West: Vendor, North: Road, South: Manju Gupta.	08.04.2025 / 21.07.2025	₹9,76,717.21 as on 12.07.2025 + further interest thereon at contractual rate plus costs, charges and expenses till date of payment
BARPALI BRANCH / Borrower: Mr. Gyanranjan Seth, S/o: Sri Kalakanhu Seth / Co-Borrower: Mrs. Pratibha Seth, Both are residing At: Jagannath Nagar, Barapali, Dist.: Bargarh, Odisha, PIN - 768029	Equitable Mortgage and Extension of Equitable Mortgage of Land & Building measuring Area: Ac. 0.10 Dec., KISSAM: Gharabari, situated at Mouza: Barpali, PS/ Tahasil: Barpali, PS No.: 51, Dist.: Bargarh, having MS Khata No.: 1410/3420, Plot No.: 2987/8187, standing in the name of Mr. Gyanranjan Seth, S/o: Sri Kalakanhu Seth, Bounded by East: Road, West: Land of Gopal Rout, North: Land of Akshay Rout, South: Land of Duryodhan Behera and Others.	01.05.2025 / 16.07.2025	₹34,36,996.47 as on 12.07.2025 + further interest thereon at contractual rate plus costs, charges and expenses till date of payment
SONEPUR BRANCH / Borrower: Mr. Radheshyam Mahakur, S/o: Mr. Banta Mahakur / Co-Borrowers: 1) Mr. Banta Mahakur, S/o: Mr. Rajan Mahakur, 2) Mrs. Manju Mahakur, W/o: Sri Banta Mahakur / Guarantor: Mr. Manjuka Mendili, W/o: Mr. Radheshyam Mahakur, All are residing At: Anandpur, P.O: Jatesingha, PS: Subalya, Tahasil: Birmaharajpur, Dist.: Subarnapur, Odisha, PIN - 767018	Equitable Mortgage of Land & Building admeasuring Area: Ac. 0.042 Dec., KISSAM: Gharabari, situated at Mouza: Anandpur, PS: Birmaharajpur, PS No.: 157 of 05th settlement under Birmaharajpur Tahasil Office, Tahasil No.: 312, Dist.: Subarnapur, having Khata No.: 114, Plot No.: 755, standing in the name of Mr. Banta Mahakur, S/o: Late Rajan Mahakur, Bounded by East: Bhabani Shankar Panigrahi, West: Suratha Sethi, North: Subash Danta, South: Lal Bihari Bagha.	19.04.2025 / 16.07.2025	₹3,48,797.14 as on 12.07.2025 + further interest thereon at contractual rate plus costs, charges and expenses till date of payment
Place: Sambalpur, Date : 21.07.2025		Authorised Officer, Bank of Baroda	

WADIA INSTITUTE OF HIMALAYAN GEOLOGY
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THE MOTHER

Voting At 16

It has long been held that when one is young, one tends to subscribe to pro poor and people oriented progressive politics which are now being labelled in a blanket manner as Left wing politics, while some argue that with age they cease to look at political reality with the prism of Left ideology. Such a tendency is ascribed to the belief that the youth react more with their heart – emotions – than their brain – reason – and maturity with the passage of time makes an individual more balanced and rely less on emotions. Political scientists and psychologists are yet to come to a definite conclusion on the issue, even as Far-Right politicians in the West are now swaying the youth with their extreme and intolerant political credo and agenda. It is interesting that against this backdrop the UK government run by the Labour Party has announced that it will lower the voting age from 18 to 16. The Labour Party administration says it is part of a package of changes to strengthen British democracy and help restore trust in politics. But, the Far-Right opposition party, persuaded by the belief that a young mind tilts towards the Left, has lambasted the government decision accusing the Labour Party of trying to consolidate their support base with the participation of school students in the country's general elections.

Experts say the phenomenon of young voters is complicated, with mixed evidence about how lowering the voting age affects democracy and election outcomes. Britain's voting age last fell in 1969, when the UK became one of the first major democracies to lower it from 21 to 18. Many other countries, including the United States, followed suit within a few years.

Now the government says it will lower the threshold to 16 by the time the next general election is held, likely in 2029. That will bring the whole country into line with Scotland and Wales, which have semi-autonomous governments and already let 16 and 17 year-olds vote in local and regional elections. A few other countries currently have a voting age of 16. These include Austria, Brazil and Ecuador. Some European Union countries, including Belgium, Germany and Malta, allow 16-year-olds to vote in elections to the European Parliament.

The advocates of lowering the voting age to 16 are correct in emphasizing that if 16-year-olds in Britain can work and pay taxes, there should not be any bar to making them eligible to vote. In fact, Prime Minister Keir Starmer argued on the same line and said, "If you pay in, you should have the opportunity to say what you want your money spent on," meaning the 16-year-olds, since they could be tax payers, should enjoy the voting right.

Quite rightly, pro-democracy organizations welcomed the lower age, and a move toward automatic voter registration, saying it would help increase voting rates. Turnout in the 2024 election was 59.7 per cent, the lowest level in more than two decades. The age change is part of a package of electoral reforms that includes tightening campaign financing rules and broadening the range of documents that can be used as identification at polling stations.

Certainly, the lowering of age will increase democratic participation by getting teenagers into the habit of voting at a time when most are still in school. The only thing, probably, that can be said against the decision is that school students being given the right to vote may not have the political maturity to choose the party that will rule the destiny of the nation. On the other hand, young citizens across the world today are perceived as being much more aware and alert in comparison to the same aged people even a decade or two ago.

One more argument against the measure is that in the age of social media when all sorts of good and pernicious ideas are peddled online, 16-year-olds may be manipulated for their credulity and gullibility. However, social scientists advance the theory that younger people, who are in full-time education and often still live at home, can make for better, more engaged first-time voters compared with 18- to 20-year-olds, who often experience their first election in a highly transitory phase of their lives.

The government's political opponents on the Right argue that Labour hopes to benefit from 1.5 million new potential young voters who generally lean to the Left. Nigel Farage, leader of the Far-Right party Reform UK, said Labour was trying to "rig the system."

The 16-year-olds in the UK account for a small percentage of British voters and their apologists say they are in no position to greatly influence the formation of a government. However, in cases of narrow victory margin, they may prove to be the decisive factor.

This move should be considered a good sign as very young minds must have a say in the process of democracy.



Ajit Ranade

THE VULNERABLE ARE EXPLOITED, HAVE JOB INSECURITY AND FACE THE MOST UNSAFE AND RISKY CONDITIONS

Let's look at three recent events which symbolise workers' plight due to lack of safety at the workplace. On 30 June, in Telangana's worst industrial mishap, 46 people died, eight are still in hospital and another eight are still missing, some possibly charred beyond recognition. This human tragedy in an industrial area was caused by the explosion of a reactor in a chemical plant, heard several kilometres away. To call it an accident absolves the management of the neglect of proper maintenance, or not adhering to safety protocols. In the same Sangareddy district alone, 25 workers died within a four month period in 2024. The cases of injuries or near fatal cases, which have not been reported can only be guessed. But Sangareddy is just an illustrative case, not an isolated one, across the country.

Now consider another "accident." On 7 June, in the Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation (MIDC) area near Pirangut on the outskirts of Pune, 18 workers were charred to death, 15 being women, in a deadly fire in a chemical factory. As per the investigation by some intrepid labour activists, it was revealed that the workers were not even aware they were handling hazardous chemicals. They were marked by codes masking the true name of the chemicals. It was revealed that the women workers were paid less than minimum wage. The vulnerable are exploited, have job insecurity and face the most unsafe and risky conditions. This company was in operation since 2012, but got registered only in 2020. It also managed to obtain an ISO 9001 certification for quality management. No inspector ever visited the factory till this "accident" happened. This cannot be attributed to ease of doing business. While EODB has shifted the onus to self-certification on the owners and managers of factories, it surely does not mean complete



It is clear that thousands of workers are getting killed or maimed across the automotive sector, and the official silence must be broken

abdication of inspection, especially of worker safety in hazardous industries. It is made worse by the management's greed and corner-cutting, like disabling safety sensors, or running the presses at higher speeds to achieve sales targets. The third event is the launch of a report called "Crushed." This is India's only long running evidence based report published by Safe in India (SII), an NGO dedicated to improving worker safety in India's manufacturing sector, particularly the automotive and auto-component industry, which accounts for one-third of the manufacturing sector GDP. SII, founded in 2016 by Sandeep Sachdeva and his colleagues, works for workers' rights, putting pressure on auto brands to improve safety for over 10 million workers in that industry. SII's work has increased worker awareness about the Employees State Insurance Scheme and the ESIC role. Their work is data driven, painstaking and based on authentic testimonies of workers. Over the past seven years SII has helped 10,000 workers access ESIC benefits, but this still represents only 40 per cent of the victims. In the last few years the vendors to top ten auto brands accounted for the crushed fingers of 2,333 workers. This work breaks the silence around injuries showing its true scale with official statistics. It al-

so throws up laughable anomalies. For instance, the source of data could be from two arms of the government, the labour ministry and the insurance corporation. In Haryana, routinely the ministry reports the number of injuries around 40 to 50 per year for several years. But the ESIC claims benefits are going to nearly a thousand workers. And this is with only 40% awareness among workers. It is clear that thousands of workers are getting killed or maimed across the automotive sector, and the official silence must be broken. Thankfully, the Economic Survey of this year has highlighted the issue of workplace safety. It says that Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) regulations are not to be seen as burdensome expenses but as strategic investment. The SII estimates that the country loses up to 4 per cent of GDP due to neglect of safety. India ranks a low 133 in global labour productivity, and this rank is directly correlated with inadequate OSH standards and poor working conditions. India's rank is significantly below China, Vietnam and Mexico. Investment in safety and OSH protocols not only improve the life of the worker and her family, but raise productivity, morale and improve the trust between workers and management. For the factories it reduces absenteeism, medical expenses and penalties for

non-compliance. Frequent shut-downs due to crushed fingers can disrupt supply schedules and reduce competitiveness.

The lesson from neighbouring Bangladesh is telling. In 2013, an eight story building housing garment factories collapsed in the Rana Plaza, and 1,134 people died. This shocking incident led to drastic changes, including the putting in place the Accord on Fire and Building Safety, which led to the training of 1.4 million workers. It was certainly a factor which increased Bangladesh's garment sector competitiveness and its exports outpaced even India and Vietnam. Even Chile and Costa Rica experienced strong labour productivity growth due to improved OSH standards and reduced occupational injuries. The Employee State Insurance Scheme was established by the ESIC Act of 1948, the same year as the setting up of the National Health Scheme of the United Kingdom. Both aim to provide universal social security and healthcare (in case of India to workers, and in UK to all citizens). The present reality is that almost all citizens have access and get benefits from the NHS whereas for the ESIC, many workers are not even aware of their rights and benefits.

The way forward is clear. There should be complete transparency in data reporting on accidents and fatalities, making it consistent across ESIC and labour department. Compliance of safety and OSH protocols must be incentive based. There should be public private partnership (through NGO's if necessary) to increase worker awareness about rights and safety. The top brands must be made accountable for practices in their vendors, across the supply chain. Finally, let us note that worker safety does not merely have an instrumental value but is ultimately a moral and ethical commitment too.

The writer is a noted economist.
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SPECTRUM HIGHER EDUCATION

The Sino-American battle for brains

Around the world, governments are racing to build world-class universities. From Germany's Exzellenzinitiative to India's "Institutes of Eminence," the goal is the same: to cultivate institutions that attract and nurture top global talent, conduct cutting-edge research, and drive innovation and growth. But the stakes are particularly high in the US and China, given the escalating competition between the world's two largest economies.



Lee Jong-Wha

HOW THE GLOBAL "BRAIN RACE" UNFOLDS COULD AFFECT TECHNOLOGICAL LEADERSHIP, ECONOMIC POWER, AND GEOPOLITICAL INFLUENCE FOR DECADES TO COME

The struggle to lead in higher education is about more than prestige. Elite universities affect economic performance in myriad ways, including by fostering innovation, boosting productivity, and increasing individual earnings. Graduates from top-tier institutions are more likely to become scientists, inventors, and entrepreneurs. At the national level, countries with higher average university quality tend to enjoy faster technological development and stronger productivity. A few years ago, any comparison of US and Chinese higher education would have

been no contest. For decades, US universities have dominated global rankings, with institutions like MIT, Stanford, and Harvard forming the core of the innovation hubs that have been integral to the country's global scientific leadership and entrepreneurial dynamism. Many of the world's most valuable companies – including Google, Meta, Nvidia, and Tesla – were built by graduates of elite US universities. As often as not, those graduates were not American. Over half of America's billion-dollar startups have at least one immigrant founder, and a quarter were launched by individuals who first arrived in the US as international students. This points to a key strength of America's university system: its ability to attract the world's top talent. International students account for 14% of enrollment at America's top research universities, and 28% at elite institutions, such as the Ivy League universities, Stanford, and MIT. In the 2023-24 academic year, international students contributed nearly \$44 billion to the US economy and supported more than 378,000 jobs.

While US (and European) institutions still lead in global rankings, Chinese universities have been rapidly gaining on them in recent years. In the 2025 Nature Index, eight of the top ten global research institutions are based in China, with Harvard and Germany's Max Planck Society being the only Western institutions that made the cut. Chinese universities are particularly strong in the so-called STEM fields (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics). China now produces some two million science and engineering graduates annually, more than double the number in the US. Today, nearly half of the world's top AI researchers are of Chinese origin – and a growing number of them are choosing to work in China. To be sure, China's push to lead in higher education will face considerable headwinds. Cutting-edge research and breakthrough innovation demand intellectual and academic freedom – the freedom to question prevailing ideas, explore new concepts, and update modes of thinking. As critics have warned, the Com-

munist Party of China's tight control over universities and the media is not conducive to any of this.

Nonetheless, China's commitment to strengthening higher education is clear. The same cannot be said for the US, where President Donald Trump's administration has effectively declared war on leading universities in the name of combating alleged ideological bias. Meanwhile, the Trump administration has sought to revoke and restrict visas for international students.

One can only hope that the Trump administration's assaults on higher education will prove to be short-lived, and the US will recommit to promoting academic freedom, welcoming international students, and supporting universities as incubators of groundbreaking ideas. How the global "brain race" unfolds could affect technological leadership, economic power, and geopolitical influence for decades to come.

The writer is Professor of Economics at Korea University.
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WISDOM CORNER

There is no end to education. It is not that you read a book, pass an examination, and finish with education. The whole of life, from the moment you are born to the moment you die, is a process of learning.

JIDDU KRISHNAMURTI

Achievement of your happiness is the only moral purpose of your life, and that happiness, not pain or mindless self-indulgence, is the proof of your moral integrity, since it is the proof and the result of your loyalty to the achievement of your values.

AYN RAND

If in our daily life we can smile, if we can be peaceful and happy, not only we, but everyone will profit from it. This is the most basic kind of peace work.

THICH NHAT HANH

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

1456: Hungarian forces led by János Hunyadi, including an untrained army of peasants, won one of the most remarkable victories in the history of Turkish wars, resisting the Ottoman sultan Mehmed II's siege of Belgrade.

1812: The duke of Wellington defeated "40,000 Frenchmen in 40 minutes" at Salamanca, Spain, during the Peninsular War.

1933: American aviator Wiley Post becomes the first person to fly solo around the Earth. Post landed on Floyd Bennett Field in New York 7 days after he departed alone from the same airfield in a Lockheed Vega aircraft known as Winnie Mae.

1943: Led by U.S. General George S. Patton, Allied forces took Palermo, on the northwest corner of Sicily, giving them a strategic foothold from which to invade mainland Italy during World War II.

1946: A violent Jewish right-wing underground movement in Palestine, the Irgun Zvai Leumi, blew up a wing of the King David Hotel in Jerusalem, killing 91 soldiers and civilians.

1977: After falling from favour during the Cultural Revolution (1966–76), Deng Xiaoping returned to power on this day in 1977 after the Chinese Communist Party reinstated all his former high posts, including that of vice-premier.

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

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

Bird hits

Sir, The tragic Ahmedabad plane crash was initially attributed to bird hit although different theories are being floated now. However, bird strikes on moving aircraft are not uncommon in India. In 2019, there were 539 reported bird hits while the number stood at 1123 by the end of 2023. According to a report, more than 4000 aircraft were affected by bird hits across 80 airports in India in the last five years. Structural damage, loss of control and, at the worst, engine failures are the consequences. Rules are unambiguous: 10 km radius around the airport should be clear of garbage that contain food waste and animal slaughter houses. In short, no bird should be venture into the area in search of food, water and cover. However, plenty of funnel zones of airports – areas where flights takeoff and land – bear the risk of being hit by birds due to the callous approach of the authorities thereby endangering hundreds of lives..

Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA

Indore stands out

Sir, Indore has once again shown the way for urban cleanliness by topping the Swachh Survekshan 2024-25 rankings – for the eighth time in a row. Honoured by President Droupadi Murmu, the city's achievement reflects strong teamwork between the local government, citizens, and new technologies. With over 4,500 cities in the race, Indore stood out for its solid waste segregation, door-to-door collection, biogas plants, and recycling efforts. The survey, conducted under the Swachh Bharat Mission, looked at on-ground work, public feedback, and digital monitoring. What makes Indore special is how every citizen took part – from shopkeepers to school children. Clean zones, well-kept public spaces, and strong awareness campaigns created a culture of cleanliness across the city. Indore's success is a reminder that true change happens when people and governments work together. It sets a powerful example for all cities to follow – that with commitment and cooperation, a cleaner India is possible.

Krishna Kumar Vepakomma, HYDERABAD

Andhra to roll out free RTC bus ride for women Aug 15

Free bus travel for women was one of the 'Super Six' promises made by the Telugu Desam Party-led alliance in last year's elections



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu directed officials to issue 'zero fare tickets' for women ahead of free bus travel rollout

Amaravati, July 21: The TDP-led NDA government in Andhra Pradesh will launch a free travel scheme for women in Andhra Pradesh State Road Transport Corporation (APSRTC) buses from August 15. At a meeting with officials Monday, Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu directed officials to issue 'zero fare tickets' to women passengers under the scheme set to be implemented from August 15. The ticket must include details such as the route travelled, the amount of money saved through the free service, and the full 100 per cent subsidy the government provides. The chief minister stated that issuing 'zero fare tickets' would help women passengers

clearly understand the benefit they are receiving. He instructed officials to develop the necessary software for this purpose. He discussed the financial aspects of the scheme in the other states where it has been implemented and what it might cost in Andhra Pradesh. He directed that the scheme must be implemented effectively from August 15 under all circumstances.

In view of the implementation of the scheme, the Chief Minister asked APSRTC to explore alternative revenue sources and reduce operational costs to become a profitable entity. He directed officials to come up with an action plan on the possible revenue-generating methods and the necessary policy changes. The chief minister instructed officials to purchase only AC electric buses in the future. He noted that converting existing buses to electric buses would reduce maintenance costs and recommended that the required electricity be produced in-house. He also emphasised the need to study the establishment of charging stations in all RTC depots across the state.

Free bus travel for women was one of the 'Super Six' promises made by the Telugu Desam Party-led alliance in last year's elections. There was no clarity whether the scheme would be applied within the district, as stated by the chief minister a few days ago. Addressing a meeting in Srisailem two weeks ago, the chief minister had stated that women can travel free in the district in RTC buses from August 15. The opposition parties have accused the coalition government of going back on the promises made in the elections. YSR Congress Party alleged that the government has betrayed women after promising free travel across the state.

MNS downs Gujarati board at BJP MLA's office

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Thane, July 21: Workers of the Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) and from other political parties forced the removal of a Gujarati display board at the office of a Gujarat BJP MLA's office in the Seawoods area of Navi Mumbai Monday. The plaque was removed under police supervision outside the public relations office of Virendrasinh Bahadursinh Jadeja, who represents Rapar Assembly constituency in Gujarat. Last week, the party gave an ultimatum for the removal of the board. A protest march was taken out to the NRI Sagari police station under the leadership of



MNS Navi Mumbai City Secretary Sachin Kadam and leaders from other parties, including Shiv Sena (UBT), Congress, and the Nationalist Congress Party (SP).

The delegation presented their demand to the police, seeking immediate removal of the Gujarati board and its replacement with a Marathi one. They also insisted that action

be taken against those who insulted the Marathi identity. Senior police inspector Sunil Kadam of NRI Sagari police station assured the delegation that the controversial board would be removed immediately. Acting on that assurance, MNS leaders and supporters then proceeded to the BJP office, where, under the watch of police personnel, the plaque in Gujarati was taken down. In the presence of the police, the Gujarati plaque was removed. And the BJP MLA's worker publicly apologised to all the Marathi people and assured to install the Marathi dais within a few hours, the MNS stated in a release.

In a first, Konkan Railway to operate Ro-Ro car service for Ganapati festival

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, July 21: Konkan Railway Monday said it would be running special roll on-roll off (Ro-Ro) train services from August 23 to September 11 between Kolad in Maharashtra and Verna in Goa for private cars during the upcoming Ganapati festival. The specially designed rake for the Ro-Ro car service, which will commence August 23 from Kolad and August 24 from Verna, can accommodate 40 cars per trip, with two cars loaded on each of the 20 wagons, a KR release said. The owners will have to shell out Rs 7,875 inclusive of GST for transporting their car using Ro-Ro. They will have to pay Rs 4,000 initially at the time of booking, and the bal-



ance on the day of the journey. Per car, a maximum of three persons will be allowed to travel in the attached 3AC or second seating coach. For this, each person will have to pay the prescribed fare, which is Rs 935 for 3AC and Rs 190 for the second seating coach, the release said. In the event of insufficient bookings (fewer than 16 cars), the trip will be cancelled and registration fees will be fully refunded. The bookings for the ser-

vice will open between July 21 and August 13. Those who want to avail the service can make reservations at KR's Belapur or Verna-based offices with flexible payment options, including UPI and cash, it added. The service will run end-to-end between Kolad and Verna, with departures at 5 pm and arrivals at 5 am the following day, with car owners having to report at the starting point at 2 pm, about three hours before the departure time, the release said.

Farmer donates land for school in Maha village

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar, July 21: A 55-year-old farmer, whose quest for education was cut short, has donated 4,000 sq ft of land for a school to ensure a better future for the children of his village in Maharashtra's Beed district. Earlier this month, Vishnu Raotale donated land worth Rs 2 lakh for a school in Ravtale Vasti village in Shirur Kasar tehsil, around 110 km away from Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar. The village was sanctioned a primary school in 2001, but there was no land available. The school has since been functioning in a makeshift manner under a tin shed on open grounds, pastures and during rains, in the verandahs of people's houses, an official said. He said the school caters to 24 children from Classes I to IV. Arjun Badhe, a teacher, said the school functioned on an open land, and sometimes people would give them rooms to conduct classes, but nothing was permanent. Raotale observed the struggles, as his grandson was also a student at the school. Talking to PTI, Raotale said, "I have studied only till Class II and could not pursue my education further. My grandson is studying at this school, and in a couple of years, he will shift to another school. But this land I have donated will remain for the school forever. I want the children from my village to learn, and this land is for their bright future." Block education officer Prashant Shinde said, "We have got the land and a proposal to build at least two rooms for the school has been forwarded to the district planning committee. Once it is sanctioned, the school will have its building."

Andhra to develop India's largest green hydrogen ecosystem

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Amaravati, July 21: The Andhra Pradesh government will promote India's largest ecosystem for producing green hydrogen and its derivatives through its recently announced 'Green Hydrogen Valley' initiative, unveiled by Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu. The state will work in partnership with industry and academia to achieve the goals of the Green Hydrogen Valley. The initiative aims to accelerate domestic R&D, build capacity in green hydrogen technologies, and establish testing facilities, according to an official release issued on Monday. "The Green Hydrogen Valley will promote India's largest ecosystem for the production of green hydrogen and its derivatives in partnership with industry and academia, aimed at accelerating domestic R&D and capacity building in green hydrogen technologies, including testing facilities," it said.



Following the two-day Green Hydrogen Summit held in Amaravati last week, Andhra Pradesh has now focused its attention on green hydrogen production, storage, distribution, and its applications in industry, transport, and power generation. The state is also working on policy formulation, setting standards, and strengthening capacity building for a sustainable hydrogen ecosystem, it added. As part of its push into this futuristic technology, Andhra Pradesh has set ambitious targets: to establish an electrolyser manufacturing capacity of 2 GW by 2027 and 5 GW by 2029, and to produce 1.5 million metric tonnes per annum (MMTPA) of green hydrogen by 2029. Other goals include creating transmission infrastructure (green energy corridors) to evacuate 25 GW of renewable energy by 2029 and achieving cost reduction in production and deployment.

Rains batter Mumbai; Konkan braces for monsoon onslaught

AGENCIES

Mumbai, July 21: Torrential monsoon unleashed havoc across Mumbai and its satellite cities early Monday, with the India Meteorological Department slapping an orange alert over Maharashtra's entire Konkan belt, excluding Palghar. Sheets of rain driven by fierce winds battered Navi Mumbai, Thane, and Raigad districts under thick cloud cover, triggering emergency protocols as Santa Cruz weather station logged 150mm of downpour within hours starting 8:30am. IMD Mumbai Director Shubhangi Bhute pinned the deluge on "easterly monsoon winds concentrating over Konkan," while Mantralay authorities blasted SMS alerts to millions across the Mumbai Metropolitan Region, warning citizens to avoid non-essential movement for the next 3-4 hours. Forecasts until July 25 paint a grim picture: Palghar district faces thunderstorms with heavy rain and 40-50



Schoolchildren wade through a waterlogged area after rainfall in Mumbai, Maharashtra, Monday

PTI PHOTO

kmph winds Monday, downgrading to moderate showers with 30-40 kmph gusts Tuesday before isolated heavy rains hit mid-week. Thane braces for the worst

Monday with very heavy rainfall, thunderstorms, and 50-60 kmph winds, followed by heavy downpours and 40-50 kmph gusts Tuesday amid isolated very heavy showers later this week.

Mumbai itself remains in the crosshairs with severe thunderstorms and very heavy rain Monday, persistent heavy rainfall and 40-50 kmph winds Tuesday, and

widespread heavy to very heavy precipitation through Saturday. Officials advised residents across all districts to prioritise safety as the monsoon siege continues.

Godavari's iconic Pulasa fish now faces scarcity

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Amaravati, July 21: Every monsoon season, for about two months, a small fish called Pulasa, which swims upstream into the distributaries of the mighty Godavari River from the Bay of Bengal to spawn and breed, creates a gastronomic stir in the scenic Godavari districts of Andhra Pradesh. But, sadly this fish has become rare in recent times. Known as Pulasa in Telugu and Hilsa Ilisha in English, this migratory anadromous fish species is a prized delicacy, which commands a fortune and the spicy curry made out of it is fondly presented to politicians, bureaucrats, celebrities and eminent people as a good-will gesture during a brief window of time. B Gopal Rao (44) from Dowleswaram in East Godavari district lamented this scarcity, fondly recalling that he had relished Pulasa curry more often during his childhood than now. Such is the popularity of Pulasa curry that it inspired the

Telugu maxim 'pustelu ammiaina pulasa tinali', which translates to "one should eat pulasa even by selling the mangalsutra". S Angeli, additional director of Fisheries department, noted that the overwhelming demand and excessive fishing of Pulasa for its lip-smacking taste is putting the species at risk as they cannot be bred artificially like other fish through aquaculture for consumption. Over time, hilsa catch is increasing in the sea and plummeting in the rivers. It was abundant in the 1990s, but gradually diminished over the years to very low levels today. As per Elsevier, a 145-year-old Dutch scientific journal, decreasing water discharge from upstream rivers, heavy siltation, indiscriminate exploitation of juveniles, disruption of migration routes and loss of spawning, feeding and nursery grounds, coupled by overfishing is contributing to their drop in riverine prevalence.



For a fish enjoying such pre-eminent status in the local Godavari cuisine, comparable to the caviar in Continental cuisine, Angeli said a strict ban on catching juvenile Pulasa is imperative. She stressed the need for a focused study on the spawning grounds of Hilsa in the Godavari River to declare them as protected areas. Further, she suggested adopting the polluter pays principle (PPP) and establishing a floating laboratory on Godavari River as part of conservation efforts, among other much-needed initiatives. According to Angeli, Pulasa fish enter the Godavari River during the flood season, swim upstream against the strong

current for thousands of kilometres of marine sea water to lay eggs. "This migration and spawning process occurs between June and August. After laying eggs, they (hilsa or pulasa fish) return to the sea around October. Pulasa fish undergoes a transformation in taste and color when they enter the freshwaters of the Godavari," Angeli told PTI. She noted that the Pulasa fish found in the delta are also particularly flavourful, especially in areas where the fresh Godavari River water mixes with seawater near Narsapuram in West Godavari district. The blending of freshwater and saltwater (estuarine conditions) gives Pulasa its unique taste, she said, and added that the fisherfolk classify female pulasa as 'chenal' and male as 'goddu'. "The female fish is especially prized for its richer taste and commands a higher price. Though the fish has

many bones, its preparation is key—traditionally cooked in clay pots over firewood. Pulasa tastes better after sitting for several hours," said the additional director. Angeli explained that Pulasa fish caught near Yanam and Kotipalli are cheaper as they have just entered the river from the sea and those caught from Kapileswarapuram and Alamuru are a bit pricy. But, the most expensive are the ones caught near Dowleswaram and Pottilanka, owing to their rich flavour. "The cost of an authentic Pulasa fish will range up to Rs 10,000 and it will be around 1 kg at maximum. The Pulasa caught between Bobbarlanka and Dowleswaram is the best," said Gopal Rao. Gopal Rao said the renowned curry is prepared with a blend of ingredients, which include 'avakaya' (mango pickle oil, ladies finger, and savoured the day after its preparation. "We used to cook it Saturday night, keep it aside and savour

it Sunday afternoon," he said. In 2018, Elsevier paper 'Biology and fisheries of Hilsa shad in Bay of Bengal' observed that hilsa is widely distributed in the North Indian Ocean and majorly in the Bay of Bengal. Though the species is found in Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Malaysia, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, Thailand, United Arab Emirates and Vietnam, Bangladesh accounts for the lion's share of hilsa catch. VV Rao, former additional director in the Fisheries Department said the tastiest Pulasa is found only in the Godavari river and attributed this to the fish acquiring the characteristics crucial for its distinctive flavour during its brief sojourn in these waters. According to Elsevier, Hilsa enjoys great demand and exerts socio-cultural influences in West Bengal, prompting it to import the fish from Bangladesh to meet local demand and supplement its own catch.



Voter list manipulation, similar to what happened in Maharashtra, could take place in Madhya Pradesh too
RAHUL GANDHI | CONGRESS LEADER

STUDENT SUICIDES 7.6 % OF ALL SUICIDE CASES ACROSS INDIA

Student suicides made up 7.6 per cent of all suicide cases reported across India in 2022, showing a slight dip from 8.0 per cent in 2021 and 8.2 per cent in 2020, according to official data shared in Lok Sabha



of the day quote

Deeply disturbed by the ongoing victimization, dispossession and disempowerment of Muslims on a daily basis - I have written to Rahul Gandhi ji urging him to raise this critical issue in the upcoming Parliament session
MEHBOOBA MUFTI | PDP CHIEF, JAMMU AND KASHMIR

It is time Goa comes up with an anti-conversion law. We had even noticed cases of love jihad in the state
PRAMOD SAWANT | CHIEF MINISTER, GOA

The successful eviction drive here emboldened us and made us take stronger steps in Borsolla, Lumding, Burhapahar, Pabha, Batadrava, Chapar and Paikan. We have cleared 1.29 lakh bighas (nearly 43,000 acres) in four years, and this land is being used for the public good now
HIMANTA BISWA SARMA | CHIEF MINISTER, ASSAM

CBSE mandates schools to install CCTV cameras

To ensure the safety of students in the school premises, the board has made an amendment in Chapter 4 (Physical Infrastructure) of Affiliation Bye Laws-2018 by incorporating a clause about CCTV installation

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 21: The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has amended affiliation norms to mandate schools

to install CCTV cameras with real-time audio-visual recording at all places other than toilets, an official said Monday.

"Safety of students is one of the paramount responsibilities of a school and ensure that the students get a safe and cohesive eco-system in the school. The Safety has two aspects- (a) safety from scrupulous unsocietal elements (b) safety for the overall well-being of the children with reference to bullying and other implicit threats. All of such probabilities can be prevented with a vigilant and sensitive staff and with the usage of the latest technology," CBSE Secretary Himanshu Gupta said.



To ensure the safety of students in the school premises, the board has made an amendment in Chapter 4 (Physical Infrastructure) of Affiliation Bye Laws-2018 by incorporating a clause about CCTV installation. "The school should install

high resolution CCTV Cameras with audio visual facility at all the entry and exit points of the school, lobbies, corridors, Staircases, all the classrooms, labs, library, canteen area, store room, playground and other common areas except toilets and washrooms with real time audiovisual recording. These CCTV Cameras must be equipped with a storage device with the capacity of holding footage of at-least 15 days. It shall be ensured that a backup of a minimum 15 days be preserved, which may be accessed by the authorities, if required," Gupta added.

As per the Manual on Safe-

ty and Security of Children in Schools, NCPCR, "School Safety" has been defined as creating a safe environment for children, starting from their homes to their schools and back.

"This includes safety from any kind of abuse, violence, psycho-social issue, disaster: natural and man made, fire, transportation. Emotional safety is especially important because it is often difficult for teachers and parents to detect emotional problems and difficulties in children. Bullying can cause victimized students to suffer from lower self-esteem and daily stress about their well-being," Gupta said.

Process for removal of Justice Varma on

While the notice submitted to the Rajya Sabha Chairman had signatures of 63 Opposition members, the one submitted to the Lok Sabha Speaker was a bipartisan effort with 152 members, including Leader of the Opposition Rahul Gandhi, supporting the move



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 21: The process for the removal of Justice Yashwant Varma was set in motion Monday with parliamentarians submitting notices to the presiding officers of the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha, and Chairman of the Upper House Jagdeep Dhankhar taking note of the move.

While the notice submitted to the Rajya Sabha Chairman had signatures of 63 Opposition members, the one submitted to the Lok Sabha Speaker was a bipartisan effort with 152 members, including Leader of the Opposition Rahul Gandhi, supporting the move.

Justice Varma was repatriated from the Delhi High Court to the Allahabad High Court after burnt wads of currency notes were found at his official residence here March 14.

Dhankar mentioned in the House that he has received a notice of motion for setting up a statutory committee for the removal of Justice Varma of the



Allahabad High Court.

"It is signed by more than 50 members of the Council of States and thus, it meets the numerical requirement of signing by members of Parliament for setting in motion a process for removal of a high court judge," he said.

Congress leader Jairam Ramesh said in a post on X that 63 Opposition members had submitted the notice to the Rajya Sabha chairman for removal of Justice Varma.

BJP leaders said they were also gathering signatures of its party MPs and those of its allies for the removal of Justice Varma. Dhankhar asked Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal whether a similar notice has been submitted in the Lok Sabha. The Law Minister said 152 Lok Sabha members have submitted a similar notice to the Speaker.

The Rajya Sabha Chairman said that according to the Judges (Inquiry) Act, when notices of a motion are submitted on the same day in both the Houses

of Parliament, a committee to examine the charges levelled against the judge will be constituted by the Lok Sabha Speaker and the Rajya Sabha Chairman.

"The secretary general will take the necessary steps in this direction," the Rajya Sabha Chairman announced.

Both Houses, sources said, may accept the motions Tuesday, and their Chairs are likely to jointly initiate formalities for the constitution of an enquiry committee according to the Judges (Inquiry) Act.

The Act states that no inquiry committee shall be constituted unless the motion has been admitted in both Houses.

The committee includes three members, including either the Chief Justice of India (CJI) or a Supreme Court judge, a High Court Chief Justice -- both recommended by the CJI -- and a jurist picked by the Chair of the House where the motion is admitted. In this case, the Chairs of the two Houses are likely to act jointly.

The committee will then probe the charges levelled against Justice Varma. It will be asked to come out with a report in three months.

The inquiry report will be tabled in Parliament, followed by a discussion in both Houses after which there will be voting on the motion for the removal of Justice Varma.

Though Justice Varma has denied any wrongdoing, the inquiry panel constituted by the then Chief Justice of India Sanjiv Khanna concluded that the judge and his family members had covert or active control over the storeroom where the cash was found, proving his misconduct serious enough to seek his removal.



An Air India flight passed over vehicles stuck in a traffic jam on Western Express Highway after monsoon rainfall, in Mumbai, Maharashtra, Monday

Mamata declares war on BJP's 'linguistic terrorism'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, July 21: Pitching 'Bengali asmita' as her battle cry for the 2026 polls, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee Monday tore into the BJP for unleashing "linguistic terrorism" on migrant Bengalis, vowing an unrelenting battle to defend identity and mother tongue till the saffron party is defeated.

Addressing a massive Martyrs' Day rally in the heart of Kolkata, Banerjee declared, "If this linguistic profiling doesn't stop, our resistance movement will reach New Delhi."

She gave a clarion call to party workers to launch a fresh agitation from July 27, styled as a second 'Language Movement', to resist what she called systematic attacks on Bengali identity and attempts to erase the Bengali language from the national landscape.

"If needed, there will be a second language movement against the BJP's terrorism on the Bengali language... From July 27, a movement will start in Bengal in protest against the attack on Bengalis, Bengali language and 'Bhasha santras' (linguistic terrorism). This language movement will continue till the Assembly polls," she announced.

The first Language Movement took place in 1952 in erstwhile East Bengal (now Bangladesh), when protesters demanded that Bengali be recognised as one of the official languages of Pakistan.

Banerjee hinted the "real battle" for 2026 would not be fought just at the ballot box but over the voter list, alleging a "silent purge" of legitimate voters through a conspiracy between the BJP and the Election Commission.

SHORT TAKES

AI plane veers off runway at Mumbai

New Delhi/Mumbai: Three different aircraft incidents occurred Monday, including a Kochi-bound Air India plane veering off the runway while landing in heavy rain at the Mumbai airport, and an IndiGo plane from Goa making an emergency landing at the Indore airport due to a technical snag. There was also the incident of a Kolkata-bound Air India plane aborting takeoff due to a technical snag at the Delhi airport. An Air India spokesperson said the flight AI2744, operating from Kochi to Mumbai, experienced heavy rain during landing, resulting in a runway excursion after touchdown. All passengers and crew are safe. In another incident, an IndiGo plane coming from Goa with 140 passengers on board made an emergency landing at the Indore airport following a technical snag related to its landing gear. An IndiGo spokesperson stated that flight 6E 813 operating from Goa International Airport (Dabolim) to Indore reported a technical snag just before landing. Meanwhile, at the Delhi airport, a Kolkata-bound Air India plane aborted takeoff due to a technical snag.

8 kanwariyas killed in road accidents

Muzaffarnagar/Dehradun: Eight devotees were killed in road accidents on the Kanwar Yatra routes in Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand in the last 24 hours as the annual pilgrimage entered its last leg. In UP's Barabanki, a group of kanwariyas (Lord Shiva devotees) was allegedly attacked by some intoxicated men following a dispute late Sunday, police said, adding that two suspects have been taken into custody. Meanwhile, the Delhi Traffic Police issued a detailed advisory announcing the closure of several key stretches in the national capital till 8 am July 23 due to the pilgrim rush.

Home buyers 'fraud': ED arrests 2 directors

New Delhi: The Enforcement Directorate Monday arrested Sandeep Yadav and Arvind Walia, promoters of Haryana-based realty company Ramprastha Group, as part of a money laundering investigation linked to an alleged Rs 1,100 crore fraud with homebuyers, official sources said.

ED crossing all limits: SC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 21: The Enforcement Directorate is "crossing all limits", the Supreme Court said Monday as it expressed serious concern over the agency summoning advocates for offering legal advice or representing clients during investigations.

It also called for guidelines on the matter.

A bench of Chief Justice BR Gavai and Justice K Vinod Chandran was hearing a suo motu case to address the implications of such actions on the independence of the legal profession.

This comes in the wake of the ED summoning senior lawyers Arvind Datar and Pratap Venugopal.

"Even if it is wrong, the communication between a lawyer and the clients is privileged communication. How can notices be issued against them? There should be some guidelines," the CJI said.

The CJI continued, "They

(ED) are crossing all limits."

While responding to submissions that recent ED notices to legal professionals like senior advocate Datar could have a chilling effect on law practice, the CJI said, "Guidelines should be framed."

Attorney General R Venkataramani and Solicitor General Tushar Mehta said the issue was taken up at the highest level and the probe agency had been asked to not issue notices to the lawyers for rendering legal advice. Venkataramani early on in the hearing said he had a word with the ED officials and the summons to lawyers were wrong.

"Lawyers cannot be summoned for rendering legal opinions," Mehta agreed with Venkataramani.

Mehta, however, said there were attempts to malign institutions by creating false narratives.

Senior advocate and Supreme Court Bar Association president Vikas Singh illustrated on issue with China and

Turkey, saying, "India should not be going the way of other countries which cracked down on the independence of the legal profession."

He said, "My lords may set it down once and for all, because the European Commission on Human Rights also has something to say. In Turkey, the entire bar association was disbanded. China also has a similar issue."

Advocates stressed that summoning lawyers, especially for giving legal opinions, was setting a dangerous precedent.

"Otherwise it will have a chilling effect on the whole justice delivery system. Lawyers will not be able to freely advise my lords," a lawyer said. One lawyer said, "If this continues, it will deter lawyers from offering honest and independent advice." Even district court lawyers were facing undue harassment, the lawyer added.

The CJI pointed out the court being surprised by reports it came across.

Comrade VS: Relentless Communist who rose from working class to lead Kerala

FORMER KERALA CHIEF MINISTER AND VETERAN CPI(M) LEADER VS ACHUTHANANDAN, ONE OF INDIA'S MOST RESPECTED COMMUNIST FIGURES AND A KEY PRESENCE IN KERALA'S POLITICAL HISTORY, DIED MONDAY AT THE AGE OF 101

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Thiruvananthapuram, July 21: V S Achuthanandan, a staunch Marxist known for his sharp rhetoric, anti-corruption stance, and unwavering commitment to social justice, was India's first communist leader from a working-class background to rise to the office of Chief Minister.

A founding figure in the Communist Party of India (Marxist) after the 1964 split in the undivided Communist Party, Achuthanandan's life in Kerala was defined by unrelenting struggle -- against the entrenched injustices of a caste and class-bound society, and against the creeping revisionism he saw within his own party. He died at the age of 101 Monday.

Whereas his peers--E M S Namboodiripad, Jyoti Basu and E K Nayanar -- came from

privileged, upper-caste families and were drawn to communism by its intellectual promise, Achuthanandan lived the inequality they fought.

Achuthanandan, affectionately known as Comrade 'VS' by party colleagues and even political opponents, led a life so eventful that he was once presumed dead and prepared for burial after being assaulted by police during a pre-independence struggle for workers' rights -- only to survive, defy his attackers, and rise to become one of Kerala's most towering political figures.

Achuthanandan died at a private hospital Monday here.

For over eight decades, he remained firmly on the side of workers, farmers and the poor--his politics shaped by the fires of anti-colonial resistance, class struggle and the complicated, often turbulent path of the In-



dian Left. His political journey began in the 1940s, inspired by legendary Communist leader P Krishna Pillai. In 1943, he represented Alappuzha at the Communist Party conference.

During the 1946 Punnappra-Vayalar uprising, he went underground and was later arrested and severely beaten. Believed to be dead by the police, he was about to be buried in the forest when it was

discovered he was still alive and taken to the hospital.

Despite being tortured during the 1946 uprising, he returned to political activism. In 1956,

he joined the party's state committee and steadily rose to hold key national positions.

In 1964, he was among the 32 national council members who split from the Communist Party to form the CPI(M), a pivotal moment in Indian Left politics.

He joined the party's central committee the same year and was inducted into the Politburo in 1985. Achuthanandan became known for his integrity, sharp speeches in colloquial

COMRADE VS BUILT A REPUTATION AS A STRAIGHT-TALKING, NO-NONSENSE LEADER WHO CONSISTENTLY RAISED HIS VOICE ON PUBLIC ISSUES--FROM ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION TO WOMEN'S RIGHTS

national



What happened on July 14 was shameful. It should never have happened. It's not about me, it's not about the individual. It's about the office, it's about the institution, it's about the implications. And none of this bodes well for Jammu and Kashmir

OMAR ABDULLAH | CHIEF MINISTER, JAMMU AND KASHMIR

BIHAR: EC GIVES LIST OF MISSING VOTERS TO PARTIES

As the the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of Bihar's electoral roll reaches a crucial stage, poll machinery in the state has met representatives of all the political parties to share detailed lists of the 29.62 lakh electors whose enumeration forms have not been received so far. It has also shared lists of the nearly 43.93 lakh electors who were not found at their addresses



of the day uote

Issue 'zero fare tickets' to women passengers under the APSRTC (Andhra Pradesh State Road Transport Corporation) free bus travel scheme set to be implemented from August 15

N CHANDRABABU NAIDU | CHIEF MINISTER, ANDHRA PRADESH

Being transgender is not the child's fault. It is our social mindset that is at fault. The true spirit of Vasudhiva Kutumbakam (the world is one family) will be realised only when we walk together with respect, irrespective of gender, class or background

ANANDIBEN PATEL | GOVERNOR, UTTAR PRADESH

It is unfortunate that earlier governments made no sincere efforts in this direction. With NeVA, we are now bridging that gap and paving the way for a more accountable and modern legislative ecosystem

VJENDER GUPTA | ASSEMBLY SPEAKER, DELHI

POST OF THE DAY

Did you know? -In last 20 years (2004-2024), 117 communities were added to the "Scheduled Tribe" list!

Means many communities have become "tribal" post independence. And looking at this trend, many will turn "tribal" in next few years too! Question is "Why"? Answer is "Votes!"

@neha_laldas

SHORT TAKES

Meta, Google fail to depose before ED

New Delhi: Executives of tech giants Meta and Google did not depose before the Enforcement Directorate (ED) as scheduled Monday and have now been given fresh summons for July 28 in a money laundering case linked to promotion of "illegal" online betting and gambling platforms, official sources said. It is understood that the representatives of the two companies sought deferment of the July 21 summons, saying they need time to collect relevant information and documents before they present themselves for questioning and recording of their statements at the federal probe agency.

Pawar asks party youth chief to quit

Mumbai: Taking serious note of the beating up of Chhava Sanghatna activists by NCP workers, Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar Monday asked his party's youth wing chief Suraj Chavan to resign from his post. The strict decision has been taken as his behaviour goes against the party's values and will not be tolerated, Pawar, who had summoned Chavan to meet him, said in a statement while terming the incident, which occurred Sunday, as condemnable.

Sambhal mosque row: Court to hear Aug 5

Sambhal (UP): A civil court in Chandausi Monday deferred the hearing in the ongoing dispute over the Shahi Jama Masjid-Harihar temple to August 5 due to the strike by the local bar association. Civil judge (senior division) Aditya Singh was scheduled to hear the matter.

ALL 12 ACCUSED ACQUITTED

HC says 'hard to believe' they committed the crime

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, July 21: Nineteen years after seven train blasts here killed more than 180 persons, the Bombay High Court Monday acquitted all the 12 accused, saying the prosecution utterly failed to prove the case and it was hard to believe the accused committed the crime.

The court allowed the appeals filed by the accused challenging their conviction and sentences imposed on them by a special court in 2015.

Of the 12, five had been sentenced to death and seven to life imprisonment by the special court. One of the death row convicts died in 2021.

Maharashtra revenue minister and senior BJP leader Chandrashekhar Bawankule said the state government will assess the merits of the HC order, before deciding on whether to challenge it in the Supreme Court. Former BJP MP Kirit Somaiya said CM Devendra Fadnis has spoken of approaching the Supreme Court at the earliest.

AIMM president Asaduddin Owaisi sought to know whether Maharashtra government would take action against ATS officers who investigated the train blasts case.

The HC judgement comes as a major embarrassment to the Maharashtra Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) which probed the case. The agency had claimed that the accused were members of the banned outfit Students' Islamic Movement of

7/11 TRAIN BLASTS



Seven blasts ripped through Mumbai local trains at various locations on the western line on July 11, 2006, killing more than 180 persons and injuring several others

India (SIMI) and had hatched the conspiracy with Pakistani members of terror group Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT).

In a damning indictment of the prosecution's case, the high court declared all confessional statements of the accused as inadmissible suggesting "copying".

Further eroding the credibility of the confessions, the court said the accused had established that torture was inflicted upon them to extort these confessional statements.

A special bench of Justices Anil Kilar and Shyam Chandak



said the prosecution has failed to even bring on record the type of bombs used in the crime and that the evidence relied on by it was not conclusive to convict the accused. The bench refused to confirm the death penalties imposed on five of the 12 accused and dismissed the confirmation appeals filed by the Maharashtra government.

gives a misleading sense of resolution, it added.

This deceptive closure undermines public trust and falsely reassures society, while in reality, the true threat remains at large. Essentially, this is what the case at hand conveys, the bench said.

The death row convicts were Kamal Ansari (now dead), Mohammad Faisal Ataur Rahman Shaikh, Ehtesham Qutubuddin Siddiqui, Naveed Hussain Khan and Asif Khan.

It had imposed life imprisonment on Tanveer Ahmed Mohammed Ibrahim Ansari, Mohammed Majid Mohammed Shafi, Shaikh Mohammed Ali Alam Shaikh, Mohammed Sajid Margub Ansari, Muzammil Ataur Rahman Shaikh, Suhail Mehmood Shaikh and Zameer Ahmed Rehman Shaikh.

The witness statements and alleged recoveries made from the accused have no evidentiary value and hence cannot be held as conclusive for conviction, the HC said while quashing the conviction.

Landslide hits Vaishno Devi track; pilgrim dead

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jammu, July 21: A 70-year-old pilgrim was killed while nine others were injured when a massive landslide struck the old track to the Vaishno Devi shrine in Reasi district of Jammu and Kashmir Monday, officials said.

They said a booking office and an overhead iron structure caved in under the weight of the landslide, triggered by heavy rains which lashed Karta town, the base camp for the pilgrims visiting the shrine atop Trikuta hills.

The yatra remained suspended for several hours as a precautionary measure following the landslide.

Lt Governor Manoj Sinha and Chief Minister Omar Abdullah expressed grief over the death of the pilgrim and wished speedy recovery to the injured.

The incident occurred around 8.30 am at Gulshan Ka Langar near Banganga, the starting point for the yatra where mostly pony riders gather along the old track and register before taking the pilgrims to the cave shrine, 12 km from the town.



The landslide resulted in critical injuries to three persons and minor injuries to seven others. All the injured were taken to a hospital, officiating Chief Executive Officer of Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board, Sachin Kumar Vaishya told reporters.

Vaishya, who is also the district magistrate Jammu, said a full fledged rescue and debris clearance operation is underway.

An earth-mover was also rushed to speed up the rescue efforts.

The critically injured - Uppan Srivastava (70) of Chennai, his wife K Radha (66), and Rajinder Bhalla (70) of Haryana - were admitted to Narayan hospital, where Srivastava breathed his last.

9 notices to AI In 6 months for safety violations: Govt

Minister of State for Civil Aviation Murlidhar Mohol says during the last six months, no adverse trend was reported in reliability reports of Air India in respect of crashed aircraft

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 21: A total of nine show cause notices were issued to Air India in connection with five identified safety violations in the last six months and enforcement action has been completed with respect to one violation, the civil aviation ministry informed the Rajya Sabha Monday.

Last month, Air India's Boeing 787-8 aircraft enroute to London Gatwick from Ahmedabad crashed soon after take off, killing 260 people. Following the fatal accident, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) ordered additional checks of the airline's Boeing 787-8/9 aircraft. As many as 81 people were injured in the



accident.

"Out of total 33 aircraft, 31 operational aircraft have been inspected wherein minor findings were observed in 8 aircraft. These aircraft have been released for operation post rectification. The remaining 2 aircraft are under scheduled maintenance," Civil Aviation Minister K Rammoan Naidu said in a written reply.

He was responding to a question from BJP member Ashokrao Shankarrao Chavan. Meanwhile, in a separate written reply, Minister of State for Civil Aviation Murlidhar

written reply, said that every aspect is being looked into for determining the probable causes/contributory factors leading to the accident.

His answer was to DMK leader Kanimozhi NVN Somu's queries, including whether any sabotage by any person or any agency has come to the light.

In another written reply to RJD member Manoj Kumar Jha, Naidu said DGCA has a structured surveillance and audit framework in place.

These include planned and unplanned surveillance of organisation/aircraft such as regular and periodic audits, spot checks, night surveillance and ramp inspections across all operators and maintenance organisations.

DGCA has done 254 enforcement actions this year till April while there were 673 such actions in 2024. There were 542 enforcement actions in 2023, the minister said.

The enforcement action may include warning, suspension, cancellation and imposition of financial penalty.

This year, the regulator has planned a total of 56 regulatory audits.

Mumbai logs highest drop in PM10 level in 2024 among metros

According to the government data, 64 cities have shown a reduction in PM10 levels by more than 20 per cent and 25 of them achieved a reduction of over 40 per cent

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 21: Among metro cities covered under the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP), Mumbai registered the highest decline of 44 per cent in PM10 pollution level in 2024-25 as compared to 2017-18, followed by Kolkata (37 per cent), the Environment Ministry told Parliament Monday.

Delhi recorded a drop of 15 per cent in PM10 levels and Chennai 12 per cent, according to data tabled in a written reply to a question in the Lok Sabha by Union Minister of State for Environment Kirti Vardhan Singh.

He presented the data in reply to a joint query from MPs Anil Desai and Babu Singh Kushwaha regarding worsening air pollution, health im-

pacts and funding utilisation for air quality improvement across Indian cities.

He said 103 out of 130 cities covered under the NCAP showed improvement in PM10 levels in 2024-25 as compared to 2017-18.

According to the government data, 64 cities have shown a reduction in PM10 levels by more than 20 per cent and 25 of them achieved a reduction of over 40 per cent.

The NCAP, launched in 2019, aims to reduce particulate pollution by 40 per cent by 2026 in 130 highly polluted cities, using 2019-20 as the base year. However, in practice, only PM10 concentration is being considered for performance assessment.

PM10, or particulate matter of diameter 10 micrometres or less, is a major pollutant con-



tributing to poor air quality and respiratory diseases.

The average PM10 concentration in Mumbai fell from 161 micrograms per cubic metre (µg/m3) in 2017-18 to 90 µg/m3 in 2024-25. Kolkata's levels dropped from 147 to 92 µg/m3, Delhi's from 241 to 203 µg/m3

PM10, or particulate matter of diameter 10 micrometres or less, is a major pollutant contributing to poor air quality and respiratory diseases

Among the most improved cities, Bareilly saw a 77 per cent drop in PM10 levels, from 207 µg/m3 to 48 µg/m3, followed by Varanasi (230 to 59 µg/m3), Firozabad (247 to 100 µg/m3), Dehradun (250 to 107 µg/m3) and Moradabad (222 to 96 µg/m3). These cities were among 25 that achieved reductions exceeding 40 per cent.

The government, however, said air quality comparisons

between cities in different countries are not straightforward due to differences in geography, climate and national standards.

Responding to questions on health impacts, the ministry said there is no conclusive national data that directly correlates air pollution with mortality.

"Health is influenced by a range of factors beyond environment, including nutrition, socio-economic status, heredity, occupation and immunity," Singh said.

The minister said a total of ₹13,036.52 crore has been released under the NCAP and the 15th Finance Commission's performance-linked grants.

Of this, ₹9,202.21 crore has been utilised so far across states and union territories.



“The message ... is very clear: Germany is back. It's worth investing in Germany again. We are not a location of the past, but a location of the present and above all the future”
FRIEDRICH MERZ | GERMAN CHANCELLOR

REBELS IN COLOMBIA ATTACK MILITARY PATROL

Rebels in northeastern Colombia used a drone to attack a military patrol in a rural area, killing three soldiers and injuring eight, the military said. The army blamed the attack on the National Liberation Army, or ELN, a group of approximately six thousand fighters that has been fighting the Colombian government since the 1960s



Iran to hold nuclear talks with European nations in Turkey

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Tehran, July 21: Iran said Monday it would hold renewed talks this week with European nations over the country's nuclear programme, with discussions to be hosted by Turkey.

The talks, to be held in Istanbul Friday, will be the first since a ceasefire was reached after a 12-day war waged by Israel against Iran in June, which also saw the United States strike nuclear-related facilities in the Islamic Republic. A similar meeting had been held in the Turkish city in May.

The discussions will bring Iranian officials together with officials from Britain, France and Germany — known as the E3 nations — and will include the European Union's foreign policy chief, Kaja Kallas.

“The topic of the talks is clear, lifting sanctions and issues related to the peaceful nuclear programme of Iran,” Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baghaei said in his weekly briefing. He said the meeting will be held at the deputy ministerial level.

Under a 2015 deal designed to cap Iran's nuclear activities, Iran agreed to tough restrictions on its international programme in exchange for an easing of sanctions.

The deal began to unravel in 2018, when the United States pulled out of it and began to reimpose certain sanctions.

Delta pilot made sharp turn to avoid B-52 bomber

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Bismarck, July 21: The pilot of a regional airliner flying over North Dakota carried out an unexpected sharp turn and later apologised to passengers, explaining that he made the move after spotting a military plane in his flight path.

The Friday incident is detailed in a video taken by a passenger and posted to social media as Delta Flight 3788 approached the Minot International Airport for landing. In the video, the SkyWest pilot can be heard over the plane's intercom system explaining that he made the sharp turn after spotting a B-52 bomber in his flight path.

“Sorry about the aggressive maneuver. It caught me by surprise,” the pilot can be heard saying on the video. “This is not normal at all. I don't know why they didn't give us a heads up.”

SkyWest, a regional carrier for Delta and other large airlines, said the flight had departed from the Minneapolis-St Paul International Airport and landed safely in Minot after performing a “go-around” maneuver when another aircraft became visible in the SkyWest plane's flight path.

Israel sends tanks into Gaza's Deir al-Balah

REUTERS

Cairo, July 21: Israeli tanks pushed into southern and eastern districts of the Gaza city of Deir al-Balah for the first time Monday, an area where Israeli sources said the military believes hostages may be held.

The area is packed with Palestinians displaced during more than 21 months of war in Gaza, hundreds of whom fled west or south after Israel issued an evacuation order, saying it sought to destroy infrastructure and capabilities of the militant group Hamas.

Tank shelling in the area hit houses and mosques, killing at least three Palestinians and wounding several others, local medics said.

To the south in Khan Younis, an Israeli airstrike killed at least five people, including a husband and wife and their two children in a tent, medics said.

In its daily update, Gaza's health ministry said at least 130 Palestinians had been killed and more than 1,000 wounded by Israeli gunfire and military strikes across the territory in the past 24 hours, one of the highest such totals in recent weeks.

There was no immediate Israeli comment on the Deir al-Balah and Khan Younis incidents.

Israeli sources have said the reason the army had stayed out of the Deir al-Balah districts was because they suspected Hamas might be holding hostages there. At least 20 of the remaining 50 hostages in captivity in Gaza are believed to be



Smoke and flames erupt from an Israeli airstrike in Gaza City, Monday

AP PHOTO

still alive.

Families of the hostages have expressed concern for their relatives and demanded an explanation from Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Defence Minister Israel Katz and the army chief of how they will protect them.

“The people of Israel will not forgive anyone who knowingly endangered the hostages - both the living and the deceased.

No one will be able to claim they didn't know what was at stake,” the Hostage Families Forum Headquarters said in a statement.

Gaza health officials have warned of potential “mass deaths” in coming days from hunger, which has killed at least 19 people since Saturday, the Hamas-run territory's health ministry said.

The incursion into Deir

al-Balah and growing number of deaths appeared to be complicating efforts to secure a ceasefire between Hamas and Israel in talks mediated by Qatar and Egypt, with U.S. backing.

A Hamas official told Reuters Sunday that the militant group was angered by the mounting death toll and hunger crisis, and that this could affect the talks on a 60-day truce and hostage deal.

The war began when Hamas-led militants stormed into Israel on October 7, 2023, killing 1,200 people and taking 251 hostages back to Gaza, according to Israeli tallies.

The Israeli military campaign against Hamas in Gaza has since killed over 59,000 Palestinians, according to health officials, displaced almost the entire population and caused a humanitarian crisis.

of the day uote

The Houthis will pay heavy prices for launching missiles towards the state of Israel
ISRAEL KATZ | ISRAELI DEFENSE MINISTER

It's not in the US's business or interest to tell any of the surrounding nations with each other what to do
TOM BARRACK | US SPECIAL ENVOY TO SYRIA

Our support for (Turkish Cypriot leader Ersin Tatar's) vision for a two-state solution is absolute
RECEP TAYYIP ERDOGAN | TURKISH PRESIDENT

SHORT TAKES

Sri Lanka opts for US crude

Colombo: Sri Lanka is considering the purchase of crude oil from the US as part of its efforts to correct the trade imbalance with Washington, an official said Monday. The development comes ahead of the August 1 deadline for negotiations on tariffs imposed by the Donald Trump-led administration. Head of the state fuel entity Ceylon Petroleum Corporation (CPC) Janaka Rajakaruna told reporters that the West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude oil would be invited to participate in Sri Lanka's competitive tender bids to buy crude oil. Sri Lanka currently buys its entire crude oil requirements from Middle Eastern sources. “We are open for competitive bids to supply crude by WTI,” Rajakaruna said. He added that before an invitation is extended for the competitive bidding process, steps would be taken to obtain samples from WTI to test whether the crude could be refined in the CPC refinery. Since April, with the imposition of 44 per cent tariffs by the US, Sri Lanka has been negotiating with the US Trade Representative's Office. The US brought the tariff down to 30 per cent in a letter sent by the Trump administration. However, the island nation's export industry maintains that the move falls short, especially compared to the preferential treatment received by competitors like Vietnam.

'Honour killing': 11 held in Pak

Karachi: A video showing the murder of a couple in an apparent honour killing went viral on social media in Pakistan, prompting the police to arrest 11 people in connection with the case in Balochistan province. The video showed a group of men leading a couple out of vehicles and into a desert before gunning them down with pistols and shooting the bodies. Political figures and activists said it was an ‘honour’ killing incident. The incident sparked outrage in the country, with civil society, religious scholars, and political leaders all calling for the arrest and exemplary punishment for the perpetrators of the gruesome crime. Balochistan Chief Minister Sarfaraz Bugti Monday confirmed that 11 people have been arrested. They are suspected of being behind the “honour killing” of the couple. A first information report (FIR) was registered by the Station House Officer Naveed Akhtar at Quetta's Hanna-Urak police station, the Dawn newspaper reported. Akhtar said he lodged the complaint after receiving the video clip that had gone viral on social media. “The victims seen in the viral video have been identified as Bano Bibi and Ihsanullah,” the FIR said, naming eight suspects who allegedly shot the couple dead. The FIR also mentioned 15 other unknown suspects involved in the incident.

UK imposes fresh sanctions on Russia

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

London, July 21: The UK Monday announced a fresh set of sanctions which the government claims will ramp up pressure on Russia's critical oil industry and “shadow fleet operation,” draining its “war chest” against Ukraine.

Britain's 137 targets for the latest sanctions claim to strike at the heart of Russia's energy sector, which the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) said restricts Russian President Vladimir Putin's access to key oil revenues “bankrolling his illegal war in Ukraine.”

The crackdown on Moscow's shadow fleet operations targets 135 oil tankers which form part of the fleet responsible for illicitly carrying USD 24 billion worth of cargo since the start of 2024.

“New sanctions will further dismantle Putin's shadow fleet and drain Russia's war chest of its critical oil revenues,” said UK Foreign Secretary David Lammy.

Ishiba's coalition loses majority in upper house



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Tokyo, July 21: Japanese Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba's ruling coalition failed Monday to secure a majority in the 248-seat upper house in a crucial parliamentary election, further shaking the stability of his government as Japan faces challenges such as rising prices and high US tariffs.

Ishiba's Liberal Democratic Party and its junior coalition partner Komeito, which needed to win 50 seats on top of the 75 seats they already have to retain their majority, won 47 seats. It was three seats short of a majority and a retreat of 19 seats from before the vote.

The loss is another blow to

Ishiba's coalition, making it a minority in both houses following its October defeat in the lower house election, and worsening Japan's political instability. It was the first time the LDP has lost a majority in both houses of parliament since the party's formation in 1955.

Despite the loss, Ishiba expressed determination to stay on and not create a political vacuum to tackle challenges such as U.S. tariff threats, but he could face calls from within his party to step down or find another coalition partner.

“I will fulfil my responsibility as head of the No. 1 party and work for the country,” he said.

Ishiba had set the bar low, wanting a simple majority of 125 seats, which means his LDP and its Buddhist-backed junior coalition partner Komeito needed to win 50 seats. Exit poll results released seconds after the ballots closed Sunday night mostly showed a major setback for Ishiba's coalition.

The LDP alone won 39 seats, better than most exit poll projections of 32, and still the No. 1 party in the parliament, known

'Japanese First' party emerges strong



TOKYO: The fringe far-right Sanseito party emerged as one of the biggest winners in Japan's upper house election Sunday, gaining support with warnings of a “silent invasion” of immigrants, and pledges for tax cuts and welfare spending. Birthed on YouTube during the COVID-19 pandemic spreading conspiracy theories about vaccinations and a cabal of global elites, the party broke into mainstream politics with its “Japanese First” campaign. The party won 14 seats adding to the single lawmaker it secured in the 248-seat chamber three years ago. It has only three seats in the more powerful lower house. “The phrase Japanese First was meant to express rebuilding Japanese people's livelihoods by resisting globalism. I am not saying that we should completely ban foreigners or that every foreigner should get out of Japan,” Sohei Kamiya, the party's 47-year-old leader, said in an interview with local broadcaster Nippon Television after the election.

as the Diet. But Ishiba said the coalition's poor showing was because his government's measures to combat price increases

had yet to reach many people. “It's a tough situation. I take it humbly and sincerely,” Ishiba told a live interview with NHK.

WARMING EARTH TAKES ITS TOLL ON BEES

THE CONVERSATION

Williamsport (US), July 21: Sweat covers Isaac Barnes's face under his beekeeper's veil as he hauls boxes of honeycomb from his hives to his truck. It's a workout in what feels like a sauna as the late-morning June temperatures rise.

Though Barnes was hot, his bees were even hotter. Their body temperatures can be up to 27 degrees Fahrenheit (about 15 Celsius) higher than the air around them. As global temperatures rise under climate change, scientists are trying to better understand the effects on managed and wild bees as they pollinate crops, gather nectar, make honey and reproduce.

They noticed flying bees gathering nectar avoided overheating on the hottest days by using fewer but harder wingbeats to keep their body temperature below dangerous levels, according to a study published last year. Scientists also say that bees — like people

— may also cope by retreating to a cooler environment such as the shade or their nest.

“Just like we go into the shade, or we sweat or we might work less hard, bees actually do the exact same thing so they can avoid the heat,” said Jon Harrison, an environmental physiologist at Arizona State University and one of the study's authors.

But that means the bees aren't able to do what they normally do, said Kevin McCluney, a biology professor at Bowling Green State University.

“They're not going out and getting more nectar. They're not mating. They're not doing the things that bees would otherwise do,” McCluney said. Generally, most bees are heat-tolerant, but as the climate warms, some experts think their ability to fend off disease and gather food might become harder. And habitat loss, increased use of pesticides, diseases and lack of forage for both managed and wild



bees are all listed as potential contributors to the global decline of bees and other pollinators.

“If you're not well-fed, and your body is intoxicated with pesticides and you have lots of diseases in your body, you're going to be less heat-tolerant than if you were healthy,” said Margarita López-Urbe, a pollinator health expert at Pennsylvania State University.

Earlier this year, preliminary results from the annual

US Beekeeping Survey found that beekeepers lost almost 56% of their managed colonies, the highest loss since the survey started in 2010.

Almost all of the managed honeybee colonies in the US are used to pollinate agricultural crops such as almonds, apples, cherries and blueberries. Fewer pollinators can lead to less pollination and potentially lower yields.

“It's a very fragile system if you think about it,” López-

Uribe said. “Because if something goes wrong, you have these super high-value crops that won't get enough bees for pollination.”

Back at Barnes' hives in Ohio, thousands of honeybees fly around as he gathers boxes to take back to his farm for honey production. Nearby, a couple of his bees land on milkweed flowers, a rare bit of plant diversity in an area dominated by corn and soybean fields.

For Barnes, who operates Honeyrun Farm with his wife, Jayne, one of the challenges heat can pose to his 500 honeybee hives is fending off parasitic mites that threaten the bees. If temperatures get too hot, he can't apply formic acid, an organic chemical that kills the mites. If it's applied when it's too hot, the bees could die.

Last year they lost almost a third of the 400 hives they sent to California to help pollinate commercial almond groves. Barnes thinks those hives may have been in poor health ahead of pollination because

they were unable to ward off mites when it was hot months earlier.

“Dead hives aren't pollinating the almonds,” he said. “It's a real ripple effect that stems back from the heat in the summertime.”

Sometimes the heat helps. Here in Ohio, Barnes' hives last summer produced a bumper crop of honey as they feasted on nearby soybean nectar as the plants bloomed in the heat. Still, the lack of diverse plants for bees to forage in an area dominated by corn and soybean fields isn't ideal.

And even the native blooms are appearing erratically, Barnes said. In autumn, his bees search for food on goldenrod, but those blooms are appearing later. And even then, he has supplemented his hive with additional food to keep them healthy into the winter.

“Every single plant that blooms is something that the bee can use,” Barnes said. “And every single plant is affected by climate change.”



I do not think that necessarily this (rate cuts by RBI) will be a magic bullet to propel investments
RAGHURAM RAJAN | FORMER GOVERNOR, RBI

INDIA'S LARGEST GREEN H2 PLANT

Infrastructure major Larsen & Toubro (L&T) Monday said its arm will set up the nation's largest green hydrogen plant at Indian Oil Corporation's Panipat Refinery in Haryana. The project aligns with the National Green Hydrogen Mission, which aims to position India as a global hub for green hydrogen production and technology



of the day quote

I think the Indian market has a lot of talent in AI. The second thing is Original Equipment Manufacturers' attitude. They are very interested in AI and want to try their best to adapt to the offroads in their vehicles

RITA WU | DIRECTOR FOR PRODUCT MARKETING, MEDIATEK



Atomic Minerals Directorate for Exploration and Research (AMD), a constituent unit of Department of Atomic Energy (DAE), is carrying out exploration and augmentation of rare earth group elements along coastal/ inland/ riverine placer sands, as well as in hard rock terrains in several potential geological domains in the country

G KISHAN REDDY | COAL AND MINES MINISTER, RAJYA SABHA



In FY 2024-25, we added 460 new service touchpoints, which is more than one every single day. We plan to continue these efforts and aim to add around 500 new service touchpoints during this financial year, of which we have already set up 91 touchpoints

HISASHI TAKEUCHI | MD AND CEO, MARUTI SUZUKI INDIA



Q1 RESULTS

Eternal's massive dip

New Delhi: Food delivery and quick commerce firm Eternal, which owns the Zomato and Blinkit brands, Monday reported a consolidated net profit of Rs 25 crore for the first quarter. The company, which re-branded itself as Eternal in March, had reported a net profit of Rs 253 crore a year ago. During the quarter under review, Eternal's revenue from operations stood at Rs 7,167 crore, up from Rs 4,206 crore a year ago, according to a regulatory filing. However, the company's total expenses also jumped to Rs 7,433 crore, from Rs 4,203 crore in the corresponding period of last fiscal.

UCO profit surges 10%

New Delhi: State-owned UCO Bank Monday reported 10 per cent increase in net profit at Rs 607 crore for the first quarter of current financial year. The Kolkata-based bank had earned a net profit of Rs 551 crore in the same quarter of the previous fiscal year. Total income rose to Rs 7,433 crore during the June quarter of 2025-26, from Rs 6,859 crore a year ago, UCO Bank said in a regulatory filing. Interest earned by the bank improved to Rs 6,436 crore, as compared to Rs 6,024 crore in the June quarter FY25. Similarly, net NPAs, or bad loans, declined to 0.45 per cent from 0.78 per cent in the year-ago period.

UltraTech Cement rises

New Delhi: UltraTech Cement Monday reported a consolidated net profit of Rs 2,220.91 crore for the first quarter ended June 30, 2025. It had posted a net profit of Rs 1,493.45 crore for the year-ago period, the Aditya Birla group flagship firm said in a regulatory filing. Revenue from operations was at Rs 21,275.45 crore during the first quarter of FY26. It was Rs 18,818.56 crore a year earlier. The company said its results for the June quarter are not comparable due to acquisition of South-based India Cements Ltd, Wonder WallCare and Ras Al Khaimah, UAE-based RAKWOC.

IDBI net profit zooms

New Delhi: IDBI Bank Monday reported a 17 per cent rise in net profit at Rs 2,007 crore for the first quarter of the current financial year. The LIC controlled-bank had earned a net profit of Rs 1,719 crore in the same quarter of the previous fiscal year.

200% IN 6 YEARS

From ₹30K to over ₹1L: Gold prices skyrocket

Phases of heightened market uncertainty during the last couple of years — triggered by inflation, global economic shifts, and geopolitical instability will further trigger an uptick in the yellow metal price

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, July 21: Over the past six years, gold prices in India have risen by an astounding 200 per cent, skyrocketing from Rs 30,000 to over Rs 1,00,000 per 10 grams between May 2019 to June 2025, analysts said Monday.

Motilal Oswal Financial Services Limited (MOFSL) reinstated its bullish outlook on

the precious metal, considering geopolitical situations. "We have been fortunate to be part of the gold uptrend since 2019. Following our long-standing bullish stance on the yellow metal, we are now taking a cautious pause in July 2025 — without completely turning away from it, said Manav Modi, Analyst, Precious Metal Research, MOFSL. While normal price fluctu-



ations will continue, for gold prices to move beyond current all-time highs, the market requires fresh and significant catalysts. We are likely to see a period of price consolidation

until the emergence of any decisive or longer-term triggers, Modi added. Meanwhile, on the first trading day of the week, the prices of both gold and silver saw

significant increases. While the price of silver once again surpassed Rs 1.13 lakh per kilogram, the price of 24-carat gold increased by more than Rs 650. Earlier, July 14, silver hit a record high of Rs 1,13,867 per kilogram. The price of 24-carat gold increased by Rs 653 to Rs 98,896 per 10 grams, up from Rs 98,243 last Friday, according to India Bullion and Jewellers Association (IBJA). Similarly, the price of 22-carat gold increased from Rs 89,991 to Rs 90,589 per 10 grams, while that of 18-carat gold increased from Rs 73,682 to Rs 74,172 per 10 grams.

The price of silver increased as well, going up Rs 765 to Rs 1,13,465 per kg from Rs 1,12,700 the previous session. The futures market also followed the upward trend. The August 5, 2025, gold contract on the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX) increased by 0.67 per cent to Rs 98,685 per 10 grams, while the September 5, 2025, silver contract increased by 0.93 per cent to Rs 1,14,001 per kg. Precious metals are also becoming more popular worldwide. Silver was up 1.16 per cent at \$38.91 per ounce on Comex, while gold was up 0.71 per cent at \$3,382.10 per ounce.

Crypto thefts top \$2.17bn in 2025

THE GRIM FIGURE UNDERSCORES THE GLOBAL AND GEOPOLITICAL NATURE OF CYBER THREATS IN THE CRYPTOCURRENCY SPACE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 21: Crypto thefts in 2025 had already crossed \$2.17 billion before last week's \$44 million CoinDCX hack, underlining relentless cyber threat escalation in the digital currency world, according to the latest data.

Blockchain analytics platform Chainalysis' 2025 crypto crime mid-year update says that over \$2.17 billion was stolen from cryptocurrency services so far in 2025, and "this year is more devastating than the entirety of 2024".

By the end of June 2025, 17 per cent more value had been stolen year-to-date (YTD) than in 2022, previously the worst year on record.

The \$1.5 billion hack of ByBit, the largest single hack in crypto history, accounts for the majority of service losses. So far in 2025, significant concentrations of stolen fund victims have emerged in the US, Germany, Russia, Canada, Japan, Indonesia, and South Korea, it said.

"Regionally, Eastern Europe, MENA, and CSAO (Central and Southern Asia and Oceania) saw the most rapid H1 2024 to H1 2025 growth in victim totals," it said.

The report revealed that threat actors who have compromised services tend to exhibit higher levels of sophistication than those targeting personal wallets.

At \$1.5 billion, the ByBit hack not only represents the largest crypto theft in history, but also accounts for approximately 69 per cent of all funds stolen from services this year, Chainalysis said.

"The sophistication and scale of this attack underscore

HACKERS' PLAYGROUND

Crypto Heists by the Numbers

According to Chainalysis, with over **\$2.17 billion** stolen from cryptocurrency services in 2025, this year is more devastating than the entirety of 2024.

By the end of June 2025, **17% more value** had been stolen year-to-date (YTD) than in 2022, previously the worst year on record.

So far in 2025, significant concentrations of stolen fund victims have emerged in the US, Germany, Russia, Canada, Japan, Indonesia, and South Korea.

Company	Amount Stolen (USD)	Timeline
WazirX	230 MILLION	July 2024
ByBit	1.5 BILLION	Feb 2025
Cetus Protocol	200-260 MILLION (estimated)	May 2025
BigONE	27 MILLION	July 2025
CoinDCX	44.2 MILLION	July 2025

the evolving capabilities of state-sponsored threat actors in the crypto space, and comes after a notable slowdown in the second half of 2024," it added.

The report assumes significance in the backdrop of Indian cryptocurrency exchange CoinDCX suffering a security breach, resulting in theft of \$44.2 million, or Rs 378 crore.

CoinDCX co-founders Sumit Gupta and Neeraj Khandelwal took to the social media platform X to reassure that customer funds remained unaffected and safe, with the compromise limited to an internal operational account.

The total exposure is being absorbed entirely by CoinDCX,

using the company's treasury reserves, the company said in a First Incident Report released Sunday.

Last year, crypto exchange WazirX faced a hack in India, leading to the loss of more than \$230 million, and marking one of the biggest such heists in India. The theft had prompted a thorough examination of safety measures and eroded sentiments.

Among other notable cryptocurrency thefts are those involving Cetus Protocol, which saw losses estimated between \$200-260 million in May this year, and BigONE, which suffered a theft of \$27 million in July 2025.

EPFO's net payroll addition in May at new high of 20.06L

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 21: Retirement fund body EPFO added all-time high 20.06 lakh net members in May 2025, which includes 9.42 lakh new employees, as per the payroll data released Monday.

This is 4.79 per cent higher as compared to April 2025 and 2.84 per cent more on year-on-year basis. The May figure marks the highest recorded addition since payroll data tracking began in April 2018, a labour ministry statement said.

Union Minister of Labour & Employment Mansukh Mandaviya said the EPFO's all-time high net member addition in May 2025 is a testament to the growing strength of India's formal employment landscape.

"This historic achievement is the direct result of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visionary leadership and the government's unwavering commitment to pro-youth, pro-worker reforms," he added.

The EPFO enrolled around 9.42 lakh new subscribers in May 2025, representing 11.04 per cent increase over April 2025. This increase in new subscribers can be attributed to growing employment opportunities, increased awareness of employee benefits, and EPFO's successful outreach programs.

Core sectors' growth slows down in June

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, July 21: The combined Index of Eight Core Industries (ICI) increased by 1.7 per cent in the month of June compared to the same month last year, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry data showed Monday.

The production of steel, cement and refinery products recorded positive growth last month.

"The final growth rate of Index of Eight Core Industries for May 2025 was observed at 1.2 per cent. The cumulative growth rate of ICI during April to June, 2025-26 is 1.3 per cent (provisional) as compared to the corresponding period of last year," the ministry said.

Petroleum refinery production increased by 3.4 per cent (on-year) in June. Its cumulative index remained constant during April to June, 2025-26 over corresponding period of the previous year.

Steel production increased by 9.3 per cent in June and its cumulative index increased by 7.0 per cent during April to June, 2025-26 over corresponding period of the previous year.

Meanwhile, cement production increased by 9.2 per cent last month and its cumulative index increased by 8.4 per cent during April to June, 2025-26 over corresponding period of



the previous year. The ICI measures the combined and individual performance of production of eight core industries -- Coal, Crude Oil, Natural Gas, Refinery Products, Fertilizers, Steel, Cement and Electricity.

The Eight Core Industries comprise 40.27 per cent of the weight of items included in the Index of Industrial Production (IIP).

Meanwhile, electricity generation declined by 2.8 per cent in June, 2025 over June, 2024. Its cumulative index declined by 2.0 per cent during April to June, 2025-26 over corresponding period of the previous year.

Natural Gas production also declined by 2.8 per cent in June, 2025 over June, 2024. Its cumulative index declined by 2.5 per cent during April to June, 2025-26 over corresponding period of the previous year, the data showed.

SEBI LIFTS TRADING BAN ON JANE STREET

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 21: Markets regulator Sebi Monday announced that it has allowed Jane Street, the US-based proprietary trading firm accused of market manipulation, to resume trading after the company deposited the mandated Rs 4,843.57 crore in an escrow account.

The move comes after Jane Street complied with Sebi's directive, issued in the interim order dated July 3, to deposit

the amount in an escrow account. Following the compliance, the restriction on accessing the securities market no longer applies.

"In terms of para 62.11 of interim order in the matter of index manipulation by Jane Street group dated July 3, 2025, (interim order), upon compliance with the directions in clause 62.1 (creation of escrow account with a lien marked in favour of Sebi), for an amount of Rs 4,843.57 crore, the direc-

tions stipulated in clauses ... of the interim order shall cease to apply," Sebi said in a statement.

While lifting the trading restriction, Sebi said the entities involved have been directed to "cease and desist from directly or indirectly engaging in any fraudulent, manipulative or unfair trade practice", or any activity that might breach existing regulations. This includes trading in securities using any of the patterns identified or mentioned in the interim order.

SBI labels RCom, promoter Anil Ambani as 'fraud'



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 21: State Bank of India has classified Reliance Communications along with promoter director Anil D Ambani as 'fraud' and is also in the process of lodging complaint with CBI, Parliament was informed Monday.

The entities were classified as fraud June 13, 2025 in accordance with the RBI's Master Directions on Fraud Risk Management and Bank's Board-ap-

proved Policy on Classification, Reporting & Management of Frauds, Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary said in a written reply in the Lok Sabha. "On June 24, 2025, the bank reported classification of fraud to RBI, and is also in the process of lodging complaint with CBI," he said.

Further, July 1, 2025, as part of disclosure compliance, Resolution Professional of RCom informed the Bombay Stock Exchange regarding fraud classification by the bank.

The credit exposure of SBI in RCom includes, fund-based principal outstanding amount of Rs 2,227.64 crore along with the accrued interest and expenses with effect from August 26, 2016 and non-fund based Bank Guarantee of Rs 786.52 crore, he said.

RCom is undergoing Corporate Insolvency Resolution Process under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016.

Stock markets snap falling streak

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, July 21: Benchmark BSE Sensex surged by 442 points while Nifty closed above the 25,000 level Monday following buying in blue-chip private banking shares HDFC Bank and ICICI Bank after their quarterly earnings.

Snapping the two-day falling streak, the 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 442.61 points or 0.54 per cent to settle at 82,200.34. During the day, it surged 516.3 points or 0.63 per cent to 82,274.03.

The 50-share NSE Nifty jumped 122.30 points or 0.49 per cent to 25,090.70. The 50-issue index had slid below the 25,000 mark to settle near a month's low on Friday.

Firm trend in Asian markets and fresh foreign fund inflows also supported the markets.

Among Sensex firms, Eternal surged the most by 5.38 per cent post its first quarter numbers. ICICI Bank jumped 2.76 per



The market currently reflects a tug-of-war between bulls and bears, with the focus primarily on earnings for further direction

VINOD NAIK | HEAD OF RESEARCH, GEJOIT INVESTMENTS LIMITED

and ITC were also among the laggards.

In Asian markets, South Korea's Kospi, Shanghai's SSE Composite index and Hong Kong's Hang Seng settled in positive territory. Equity markets were closed in Japan for a holiday.

European markets were trading lower. The US markets ended on a mixed note Friday.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) bought equities worth Rs 374.74 crore Friday, according to exchange data.

On Friday, the Sensex tanked 501.51 points or 0.61 per cent to settle at 81,757.73. The Nifty dropped 143.05 points or 0.57 per cent to close at 24,968.40.

SCHEFFLER lifts Claret Jug

GOLF'S NO 1 PLAYER DELIVERED ANOTHER DOMINANT PERFORMANCE TO WIN HIS SECOND MAJOR THIS YEAR AND GRAB THE THIRD LEG OF THE CAREER GRAND SLAM

REUTERS

Portrush, July 21: Scottie Scheffler created waves before the British Open when he questioned the meaning of his success in a press conference, repeatedly asking what was the point of his relentless pursuit of golfing glory.

After cruising to a four-shot victory at Royal Portrush Sunday, the world number one American pumped his fists in celebration.

Scheffler's son Bennett fell over as he tried to run to his dad on the green before the British Open champion scooped him up and held him alongside the trophy.

"Thanks to my wife and son - I love you very much and can't wait to get home and celebrate," Scheffler said. "To my parents and the rest of the team, I can't thank you guys enough. I've got the best support team. Everyone does such a great job of working together."

There was a strong sense of inevitability about Scheffler winning his fourth major title and second of the year.

Three early birdies sent him seven shots clear and even when he double-bogeyed the eighth hole, failing to escape from a bunker at the first attempt, there was no panic.

NERVELESS PUTT
Scheffler birdied the ninth with a five-foot putt, reverted to his risk-free strategy and picked up another shot at the 12th with a nerveless eight-footer.

Six pars followed and he

finished the week with only three bogeys alongside his late double.

Watching him celebrate his victory, it was hard not to think about his pre-tournament comments.

"This is not a fulfilling life," he said. "It's fulfilling from the sense of accomplishment but it's not fulfilling from a sense of the deepest places of your heart," the 29-year-old said.

Scheffler has dominated golf since 2022. He won the Masters in 2022 and 2024, and the Olympic gold medal last year as whispers in golf have likened his dominance to that of 15-times major champion Tiger Woods in his prime.

His rivals are in no doubt about his quality.

"I played with him the first two days, and honestly I thought he was going to birdie every hole,"

2019 Portrush Open champion Shane Lowry said. "It was incredible to watch."

American Bryson DeChambeau, the twice US Open champion who finished tied 10th at Portrush, played against Scheffler many times during their youth.

Thanks to the fans for all the support. I know I wasn't the fan favourite today so I appreciate you guys coming out to support. Overall, it's been a great week, the fan support was tremendous. It was a really fun week to be able to play in front of such a great crowd

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER

"I knew at college he was going to be a good player, but not this good. He's setting a benchmark we all want to get to," DeChambeau said.

"Scottie's in a league of his own right now. He's incredible. He really is."

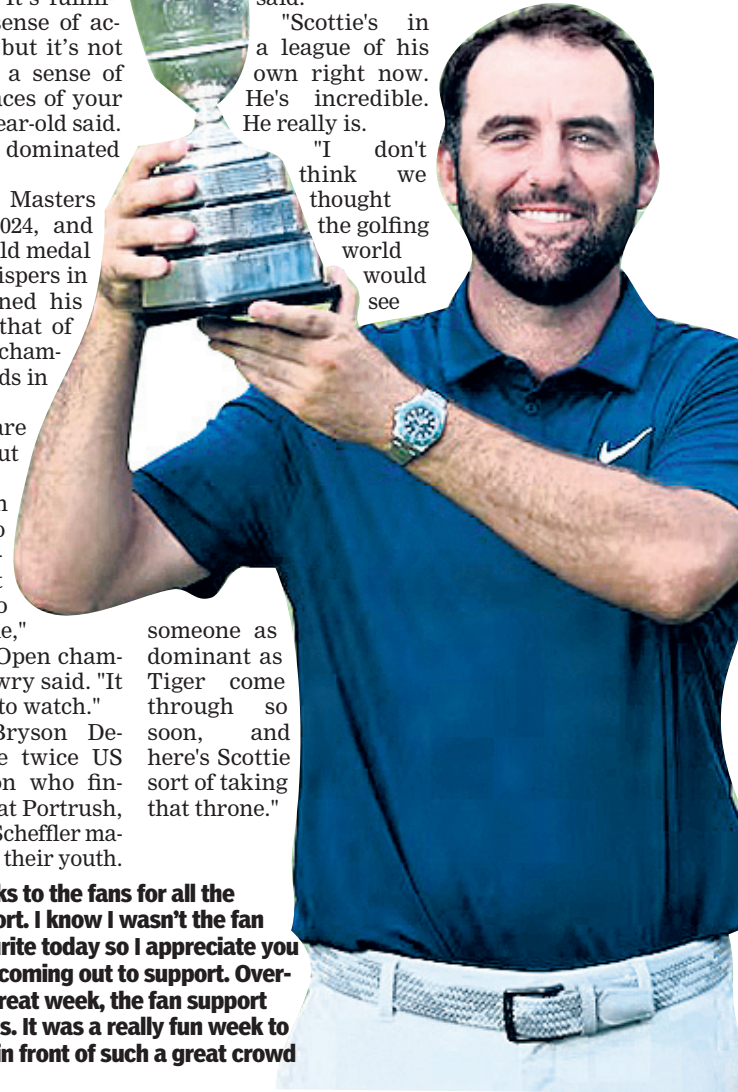
"I don't think we thought the golfing world would see someone as dominant as Tiger come through so soon, and here's Scottie sort of taking that throne."

as was quoted by Freestyle Chess.

Niemann, however, came close to his biggest career win but had to settle for the runner-up spot and \$140,000.

World no.1 Carlsen beat Hikaru Nakamura 1.5-5. to take third place and \$160,000.

Praggnanandhaa finished in seventh place thanks to a two-game victory over So. His win over So came in the second game, where the American grandmaster suffered a similar fate as against Nakamura where he just didn't really get out of the opening.



A CHANCE TO BE PART OF METTLE MEET 2025

OrissaPOST HERE . NOW

QUIZ Extravaganza

RULES & REGULATIONS

- Everyone will have to mail their answers to mettlemeet@orissapost.com
- Answers to the questions will follow the next day. The names of the winners will also be announced along with their pictures.
- Answers mailed between 8.00am to 6.00pm each day will be considered valid.
- OrissaPOST's decision on all entries will be final. No complaints will be entertained.
- Participants must send their entries with a **passport size photograph, mobile numbers and residential address**. Otherwise the entries will not be entertained.
- There can be only one winner from one family.
- Invitation cards to the winners will only be issued on presentation of Valid ID proof - **Voter Card, Aadhaar Card, Driving License, Passport, School ID card** (In case of students till Class XII)
- No employee or families of **OrissaPOST** team can be part of the competition.

TODAY'S QUESTION

On this date in 1813, the Charter Act of 1813 renewed the British East India Company's charter for another 20 years. It also ended the company's monopoly, except for the trade of opium and what else?

ANSWER TO MONDAY'S QUESTION

Pratibha Patil

THE TWO LUCKY WINNERS



JIGYANSA PRIYADARSHINI



BHUMIKA SUBHALAXMI

Others who answered correctly are

Dr Joseph John, BishnuPrasada Dash, Amar Kumar Jena, Papuni Nayak, Rudhisundar Rath, Lipan Behera, Saroj Nag, Rajendra Kumar Panda, Prateek Tripathi, Priyanka Nahak, Surendra Pradhan, Divyanshu Mohanty, Pranay M Daharwal, Sachin Minj, KV Ramana

SHORT TAKES

Shuttlers bow out

Solo: India's junior team fought valiantly before suffering a narrow 104-110 defeat to former champions Japan in the quarterfinals of the Badminton Asia Junior Mixed Team Championships here Monday. In a closely contested tie under the relay scoring system, India came out strong after a narrow 11-9 loss in the opening match. The boys' doubles duo of Bhargav Ram Arigela and Viswa Tej Gobburu got India on the board, followed by a composed win from the girls' pair of Vennala Kalagotla and Reshika Uthayasooriyar. The result put India ahead at 33-26. India had topped Group D with wins over Hong Kong China, United Arab Emirates, and Sri Lanka.

Europe tour ends

Eindhoven: The India A men's hockey team ended its campaign in the Europe tour with a 2-8 loss against the Netherlands here. Young Indian midfielder Rajinder Singh and forward Selvam Karthi scored the two goals for India A in the final match Sunday. India A had lost their previous game against the Netherlands 0-3 last week. India A began the tour July 8 and played a total of eight matches against five European teams. The team travelled across three cities to compete against some of the top teams in the sport, including world number 1 Netherlands and world number 3 Belgium.

Williams back in tennis

Washington: Venus Williams is back on the tennis scene, ready to compete for the first time in more than a year, and while she smiled or laughed frequently while discussing her return at the DC Open, there was something that would make her even happier: if her younger sister Serena were along for the ride. "I keep saying to my team: The only thing that would make this better is if she was here. Like, we always did everything together, so of course I miss her," Venus said when asked about a recent video on social media that showed Serena swinging a racket. "But if she comes back, I'm sure she'll let y'all know."

Freestyle Chess Grand Slam Aronian wins title; Erigaisi finishes fifth, Pragm seventh

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Las Vegas, July 21: Levon Aronian captured his first Freestyle Chess Grand Slam crown at Wynn Las Vegas, defeating Hans Niemann 1.5-0.5 in the final.

World No 1 Carlsen finished third after beating Hikaru Nakamura 1.5-5. and took home \$160,000. Indian Grandmaster Arjun Erigaisi defeated Fabiano Caruana 2-0 to take fifth place, while Praggnanandhaa Rameshbabu overcame Wesley So 1.5-0.5 to finish seventh.

The 42-year-old Aronian, who earlier in the week knocked out both Magnus Carlsen and Hikaru Nakamura, sealed the title and the \$200,000 first prize by converting a dominant second game after an opening draw.

"It's one of the biggest victories in my life, definitely the biggest when you count the prize fund. I am extremely happy and grateful for the opportunity," said Aronian,



as was quoted by Freestyle Chess.

Niemann, however, came close to his biggest career win but had to settle for the runner-up spot and \$140,000.

World no.1 Carlsen beat Hikaru Nakamura 1.5-5. to take third place and \$160,000.

Praggnanandhaa finished in seventh place thanks to a two-game victory over So. His win over So came in the second game, where the American grandmaster suffered a similar fate as against Nakamura where he just didn't really get out of the opening.

Bumrah to play in fourth Test

Nitish Kumar Reddy ruled out of England tour, Arshdeep unavailable for fourth Test

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Manchester, July 21: India pacer Mohammed Siraj has confirmed that pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah will play the fourth Test in Manchester starting Wednesday, putting rest to all the speculation regarding the latter's participation in the do-or-die encounter.

The news comes as a great relief for the Indian supporters who were left sad with the dual injuries to pacers Akash Deep and Arshdeep Singh, forcing the Indian camp to call in Anshul Kamboj as cover.

With India trailing 1-2 in the five-match series, attention was naturally turned to Bumrah, who is being carefully managed and set to feature in only three of the Tests. Having already played in the first and third Tests - both ending in defeats for India - Bumrah is now expected to return for the crucial fourth Test.

"Jassi bhai will play as



far as I know," Siraj said in the press conference on Monday.

"Akash Deep has a groin issue, he bowled today and now physios will see. Combination is changing but we need to bowl in good areas. Plan is simple - stick to good areas," he added on his fellow pacer.

All-rounder Nitish Kumar Reddy has been ruled out of

the remainder of the series due to a left knee injury, the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) confirmed Monday.

Nitish, who missed the first Test but played in the second and third, will fly back home. The all-rounder had a quiet outing in Birmingham before making key contributions at Lord's, both with bat and ball. His ab-

sence could open the door for Shardul Thakur, who played the first Test, to return.

Adding to India's woes, left-arm pacer Arshdeep Singh has been ruled out of the fourth Test after sustaining an impact injury to his left thumb while bowling in the nets at a training session in Beckenham. The BCCI medical team is monitoring his progress.

AGARWALLA WINS DRESSAGE EVENT

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Hofgeismar, July 21: India's Anush Agarwalla won the dressage event of the Jubilaumsturnier Hofgeismar Open to record his maiden victory with his mare Floriana here.

Agarwalla, who represented the country at the Paris Olympics, recorded an impressive 69.891 per cent points to finish atop in the six-member field with each of the other competitors being from Germany.

Pia Piotrowski and Katharina Hemmer finished second and third respectively.

The win marked the first triumph for the pair at the S level as it also was only the second time Agarwalla and his seven-year-old mare were competing in an event. "I'm incredibly proud of Floriana, this was only her second S competition and she handled it with maturity beyond her years," Agarwalla said in a release. "Winning here is a special moment for both of us."

Harbhajan reveals heart-shattering encounter with Sreesanth's daughter

AGENCIES

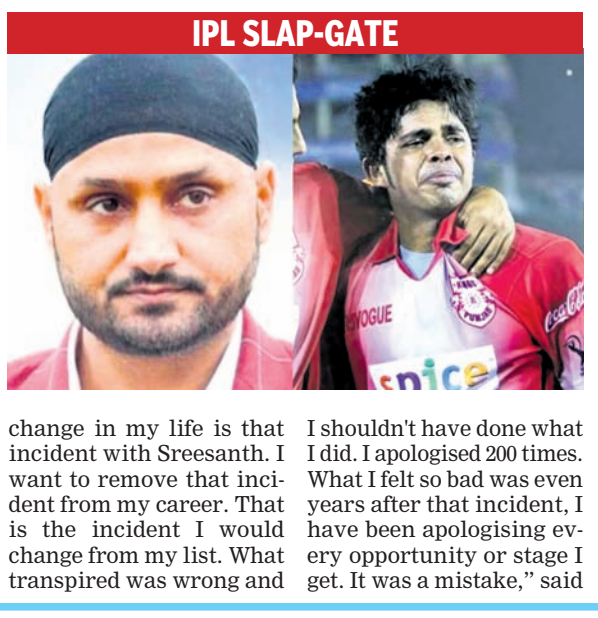
Mumbai, July 21: The inaugural edition of the Indian Premier League (IPL) made several headlines not only because of its unique concept but also due to some controversial moments.

The biggest controversy happened when Mumbai Indians captain Harbhajan Singh slapped Kings XI Punjab (now Punjab Kings) pacer Sreesanth, after a match between the two teams in Mohali. This incident went viral like a wildfire which left the ex-India pacer in tears and Harbhajan was banned from the remained of the

tournament. 17 years have passed and both the cricketers have moved on from the incident and share a good relation with each other. On numerous occasions, the former spinner has apologised to Sreesanth for his actions. However, the scars of the incident are still there in Harbhajan's heart and he is not able to get over it.

In a recent interaction with ex-India all-rounder Ravichandran Ashwin, Harbhajan revealed a heartbreaking moment when Sreesanth's daughter refused to talk to him because of the 'slapgate' incident.

"One thing I'd want to



IPL SLAP-GATE

change in my life is that incident with Sreesanth. I want to remove that incident from my career. That is the incident I would change from my list. What transpired was wrong and

I shouldn't have done what I did. I apologised 200 times. What I felt so bad was even years after that incident, I have been apologising every opportunity or stage I get. It was a mistake," said

Harbhajan on Kutti Stories with Ash.

"What hurt me even after many years was when I met his daughter and I was talking to her with a lot of love and she said, 'I don't want to talk to you. You hit my father.' My heart was shattered and I was on the verge of tears. I was asking myself what is the impression I've left on her? She must be thinking of me in a poor light, right? She sees me as the guy who hit her father. I felt so bad. I still apologise to his daughter that I can't do anything," he added.

Both Sreesanth and Harbhajan were a part of India's 2011 World Cup-winning squad.

SNIPPETS

ASIA CUP: PAKISTAN MAY BOYCOTT INDIA

Karachi: The Pakistan Hockey Federation (PHF) has informed the sport's global governing body FIH that it will be "difficult" for them to send a team to India for the Asia Cup next month because of "security concerns". Tariq Bugti, who heads the PHF, said they had written to the FIH and Asian Hockey Federation (AHF), expressing their reservations over sending the team to India. "We have informed them that in the existing scenario, our team will face security risks playing in India," he said.



ICC TO EXPLORE TWO-TIER TEST SYSTEM



London: An eight-member working group, headed by ICC's new chief executive officer Sanjog Gupta, has been formed by the game's global governing body to explore the possibility of restructuring Test cricket into a two-tier system. The committee was set up during ICC's annual general meeting in Singapore under the all-India leadership of the chair, Jay Shah and Gupta. Currently, nine teams compete in the World Test Championship, but if the proposed two-tier system is implemented, the structure would shift to two divisions of six teams each, featuring a promotion and relegation mechanism.