



Tech trap

Actor Samantha Ruth Prabhu opens up about the toxic relationship she has in her life with her mobile phone

LEISURE | P2



Crete inferno

Hundreds of firefighters battle a blaze on the island of Crete that scorched forests and olive groves and led to the evacuation of over 1,000 people

INTERNATIONAL | P10



Service sector growth

Indian services sector growth touches a ten-month high in June aided by robust expansion in international sales and job creation

BUSINESS | P11



Tragic loss

Tributes from around the world pour in following the death of Liverpool soccer star Diogo Jota and his brother André Silva

SPORTS | P12

Pause after outrage

In the wake of a massive public outcry over the controversial ban on fuel for older vehicles, 10 years for diesel and 15 years for petrol, the Delhi government announced Thursday that end-of-life vehicles will no longer be impounded. The 'no fuel' directive sparked outrage among owners of vehicles that exceeded the age limit but still operated efficiently and produced minimal pollution, as evidenced by their Pollution Under Control certificate issued by the government. Many criticised the ruling BJP government for 'forcing' them to purchase new vehicles due to lobbying by the automobile industry

"We are trying to ensure that the vehicles are not banned according to their age rather than on the basis of pollution caused by them," Sirsa said.

The minister citing various challenges and problems faced in implementing the ban on refuelling of overage vehicles since July 1, said, "We have told CAQM that we are not able to implement this."

The Delhi government from July 1, banned fuel for EOL vehicles - 10 years or older for diesel vehicles and 15 years or older for petrol vehicles - that are deregistered and not allowed to ply on the roads, following a court order.

"Because of the technological inconsistencies of this extremely complex system and lack of integration with neighbouring states, there is public discontent and outcry and in the said circumstances, it is not feasible to implement this system to end of life vehicles identified through ANPR cameras installed at petrol pumps in Delhi," said the minister.

Moreover, the system is also not yet fully integrated with the databases of neighbouring NCR states. These issues require proper trial and error corrections before the same can be implemented in Delhi, Sirsa said.

Meanwhile, Chief Minister Rekha Gupta said that her government will make 'all-out efforts' for the resolution of problems related to the ban on EOL vehicles.



RECORD RUN: Skipper Shubman Gill plays a shot on day two of the second cricket Test match between England and India at Edgbaston in Birmingham, England, Thursday. He scored a massive 269 before getting out, becoming the first Asian captain to hit a double-century in England. Gill's classic maiden double hundred carried India to a formidable 587 all out in their first innings AP/PTI PHOTO

New Delhi, July 3: Delhi Environment Minister Manjinder Singh Sirsa Thursday asked the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) to immediately revoke Direction No. 89, which prohibits fuel stations from supplying fuel to end-of-life (EOL) vehicles in the national capital.

The Delhi government has written to CAQM, arguing the fuel ban on EOL vehicles is not feasible due to technological challenges and has asked the panel to put it on hold with immediate effect.

Addressing a press conference here, the Delhi Environment Minister said that there was discontent among people due to the move and the government stood with them.

Ratna Bhandar safe: Gajapati

Puri, July 3: The 'Ratna Bhandar' (treasure chest) of Srimandir is safe, and the repair work of the chamber is almost complete, Puri's titular king, Gajapati Maharaja Dibyasingha Deb, said Thursday.

The Gajapati Maharaja inspected the Ratna Bhandar repair work being carried out by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), the custodian of the 12th-century shrine, for 11 months.

Besides him, Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA) chief administrator Arabinda Padhee and technical team members of the ASI entered the Ratna Bhandar and supervised both the outer and inner chambers of the treasury, which were in a dilapidated state.

Deb said the structural revamp and aesthetics of the Ratna Bhandar reflect Odisha's timeless temple architecture.

Around 600 stone slabs were replaced with new ones, replicating traditional design while reinforcing safety, the Gajapati told reporters outside the 65-metre tall imposing temple.

"Whatever little work is left is expected to be completed by Niladri Bijie (return of the deities to the temple after Rath Yatra) July 8," he said.

Jagannath Pradhan held

BJP LEADER REMANDED TO 14-DAY JUDICIAL CUSTODY; OAS ASSOCIATION CALLS OFF STIR

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 3: Police Thursday evening arrested BJP leader Jagannath Pradhan from Bhubaneswar in connection with the alleged assault on an on-duty Odisha Administrative Service (OAS) officer.

Pradhan surrendered at the DCP office here, following which he was arrested after a medical examination, a police officer said. Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) Additional Commissioner Ratnakar Sahoo was allegedly dragged out of his office and attacked by a group of miscreants last week.

Pradhan was subsequently sent to 14 days' judicial custody after his bail plea was rejected by a lower court late Thursday, his lawyer said, adding that they will move the sessions



court for bail Friday.

A total of six persons, including Pradhan, have so far been arrested in connection with the case, the police said.

Meanwhile, the agitating OAS Association called off their stir following the arrest of Pradhan, its president Jyoti

Mishra said.

OAS officers across the state were on a 'mass leave' following the assault on Sahoo. Due to the strike, administrative functions and public service delivery have been severely disrupted across the state, including in Bhubaneswar.

Bhubaneswar DCP Jagmohan Meena said Pradhan was arrested on the basis of an FIR, and statements of Sahoo and the accused persons.

Following the arrest, several supporters of Pradhan blocked the main road near Vani Vihar square in the state capital affecting movement of traffic.

"I have come here to cooperate with the investigation. If my arrest can resolve the issue, I am ready to cooperate," Pradhan said.

The incident occurred June 30 during a public grievance hearing at the BMC office, where a group of six to seven individuals allegedly attacked Sahoo. In his complaint, Sahoo alleged that the attackers grabbed him by the collar, dragged and assaulted him. He also accused Pradhan of making derogatory remarks.

Man posing as delivery agent rapes Pune techie

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Pune, July 3: An unidentified man allegedly raped a 22-year-old woman after gaining access to her apartment in Pune by posing as a courier delivery executive, police said Thursday.

The accused also clicked a selfie on the victim's phone and left a message on it, warning her not to inform about the crime to anyone as he had taken her pictures and would share them on social media, Deputy Commissioner of Police (Zone 5) Rajkumar Shinde said.

The incident took place at around 7.30 pm Wednesday at a housing society in Kondhwa area of Pune and search was on for the culprit, as per the police.

The victim, who is an IT professional, was alone in her apartment as her brother had gone out of town, the official said. The man came to her house posing as a courier delivery agent and

gained entry. He asked for a pen to sign (a document) and as she turned her back to him, he came inside the house and latched the door, the official said.

"The woman does not remember anything (further) as she gained consciousness around 8.30 pm. The woman then informed her relatives and subsequently police were alerted," Shinde said.

The man left a message on her phone that he had taken photos of her, and if she revealed about the incident to anyone, he would make the pictures viral, the official said.

There is a possibility that the accused used some substance to make her unconscious. The police were verifying if any spray was used, he said.

The face of the accused has been captured in one of the CCTV cameras in the area and efforts were on to trace him, the official said.

Deepika to get star on Hollywood Walk of Fame

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Los Angeles, July 3: Deepika Padukone will receive a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame, making her the first Indian actress to be felicitated with the coveted honour.

Hollywood Chamber of Commerce, the official organisation which administers the Hollywood Walk of Fame, shared the news on its official Instagram page Wednesday night.

"A new group of entertainment professionals in the categories of Motion Pictures, Television, Live Theatre/Live Performance, Radio, Recording, and Sports Entertainment have been selected to receive stars on the Hollywood Walk of Fame by the Walk of Fame Selection Panel of the Hollywood Chamber of Commerce," the post read.

"We are honoured to welcome you to the Walk of Fame

Class of 2026!" it added.

Padukone will receive the star along with a host of popular Hollywood actors including Emily Blunt, Timothee Chalamet, Marion Cotillard, Stanley Tucci, Rami Malek, Rachel McAdams, Demi Moore, filmmakers Chris Columbus and Tony Scott.

From the television industry, "The Office" creator Greg Daniels, Sarah Michelle Gellar, Chef Gordon Ramsay, Bradley Whitford, and Noah Wyle will be honoured.

The Hollywood Walk of Fame celebrates achievements in the entertainment industry with over 2,700 brass stars embedded along the sidewalks of Hollywood Boulevard and Vine Street in Los Angeles, making it a major tourist attraction for visitors from around the world.

Each star honours artists

from the worlds of film, television, music, radio, and live performance for-

mance for their impact on popular culture.

In 2011, renowned Indian conductor Zubin Mehta received a star on Hollywood Walk of Fame. His was the 2,434th star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame and Hollywood legend Kirk Douglas spoke at a ceremony to honour him.

Before Mehta, Indian-origin American actor Sabu Dastagir, known his work in films during the 1940s, received a star Hollywood Walk of Fame.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



I didn't crack a joke to cheer him up. Just told him his longest foreign trip starts tomorrow

People wade through knee-deep water in Badagada area of Bhubaneswar as incessant rain caused flooding in low-lying areas of the City Thursday



downtown

Automatic weather stns in blocks soon

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 3: Automatic weather stations (AWS) will be set up at block levels while automatic rain gauges (ARG) will be installed in every gram panchayat, as the state government Thursday signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Skymet Weather Services Pvt Ltd for implementation of Weather Information Network Data System (WINDS) project.

According to sources, the project is expected to benefit not only farmers but also the broader sectors of insurance and disaster management as it would create a robust and real-time weather monitoring system.

The agreement was signed in the presence of Deputy Chief Minister Kanak Vardhan Singh Deo, who also holds the portfolios of Agriculture &



Farmers' Empowerment and Energy.

The WINDS project, initiated by the Union government, is aimed at improving weather data accessibility and enhancing implementation of Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PM-FBY). The project will involve installation of automatic weather stations (AWS) at block levels and automatic rain gauges (ARG) at gram panchayat levels across the state.

"Accurate weather data is crucial for better crop planning, timely risk assessment, and efficient claim settlement.

This initiative will empower our farmers and encourage them to take up multiple cropping," said Singh Deo at the MoU signing event.

The project will be jointly implemented by the Agriculture department and Odisha State Disaster Management Authority (OSDMA), under Revenue & Disaster Management department.

The state's financial contribution for the project will come from PMFBY budget, managed by the Cooperation department.

The pact was inked and exchanged by Director of Agriculture & Food Production Subham Saxena and CEO of Skymet Weather Services Pvt Ltd Jogesh Patil.

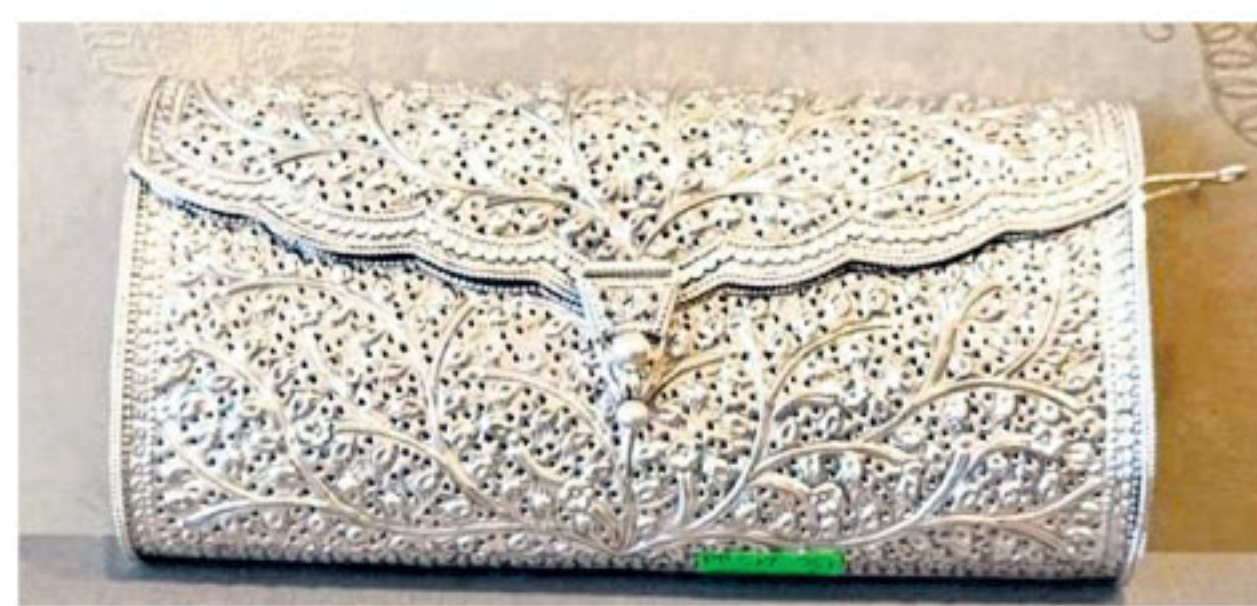
Senior officials including Agriculture department Additional Secretary Ganeswar Jena and other department officials were present.

PM gifts Cuttack filigree purse to Ghana's 1st Lady

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 3: Prime Minister Narendra Modi presented a stunning Silver Filigree Work Purse to Lordina Mahama, spouse of the President of Ghana John Mahama, during his recent official visit to the African country. This elegant gift, handcrafted in Cuttack, beautifully represents the region's centuries-old tradition of silver filigree work, locally known as 'Tarakasi'.

The silver filigree handbag is a testament to the mastery of Cuttack's skilled craftsmen, who meticulously create airy, lightweight yet durable pieces that are both functional and or-



nemental. This traditional craft reflects not only the artistic excellence of Odisha but also its cultural pride and rich history.

By choosing this gift, PM Modi emphasised India's commitment to showcasing its diverse cultural heritage on the global

stage, while strengthening the ties between India and Ghana. The gift symbolises goodwill and mutual respect, serving as a timeless keepsake that celebrates the shared values of artistry and tradition.

Chief Minister Mohan Cha-

ran Majhi expressed gratitude to the PM for highlighting the state's cultural heritage globally. He praised Modi for gifting the silver filigree purse to Ghana's First Lady, calling it a "remarkable tribute" to Cuttack's centuries-old 'Tarakasi' tradition. The CM highlighted the craftsmanship behind the gift, noting its intricate floral and vine motifs crafted from fine silver wires by Odisha's skilled artisans. He said such gestures not only reflect the artistry and devotion of the state's craftspeople but also bring international recognition to the state's cultural legacy and reaffirm pride in Odia Asmita (Odia identity).

Dy CM for upgradation of OPGC security infra

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, July 3: Deputy Chief Minister Kanak Vardhan Singh Deo Thursday directed officials to strengthen and upgrade the data management and operational security infrastructure of the Odisha Power Generation Corporation (OPGC).

While reviewing the functioning of OPGC at Lok Seva Bhavan, Singh Deo, who also holds the Energy portfolio, emphasised the need to enhance the corporation's internal security systems. OPGC is a key player in Odisha's energy sector, catering to over 30 per cent of the state's power demand.

In addition to this, it establishes, operates, and maintains large thermal power generating stations across the state.

Official sources said that proposals have been made to secure OPGC through cloud computing, artificial intelligence, and other high-end technologies.

Puri stampede: Govt seeks info from public

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, July 3: The state government Thursday requested the public to share any information related to the Puri stampede that left three people dead and 50 others injured.

The stampede took place near the Shree Gundicha Temple during a Rath Yatra event June 29. The state government through a public notice urged the people to share information, video footage or any other materials related to the stampede which took place early Sunday for a proper and transparent inquiry into the incident. The public notice issued by the Planning and Convergence department, also mentioned that any individual or organisation can share their information regarding how such an incident took place.

"The members of the public are urged to share information,

video footage or any other material through the e-mail puritragedy.enquiry@odisha.gov.in by July 20," an official said.

This apart, the notice said that the interested persons can meet and share information with Development Commissioner (DC) and Additional Chief Secretary (ACS) Anu Garg at the State Guest House in Bhubaneswar after 3 pm July 9 and at the Special Circuit House in Puri July 10 after 3pm.

The state government has also provided two hotline telephone numbers (0674-2536882/2391970) of Bhubaneswar to facilitate the people to pass on their information to the team engaged in the inquiry of the stampede tragedy.

The state government, hours after the tragedy, had ordered an administrative inquiry into the stampede with DC and ACS Anu Garg as its chief.

Truck runs over lady home guard

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, July 3: A woman home guard died after being hit by a speeding truck in Chhatra Bazaar area here around 10am Thursday. The deceased was identified as Manorama Panda, 56, attached to Malgoddown police station.

Police said, the truck (OD 04 P 4032) ran over Manorama from behind while she was returning home on a bicycle with some groceries. Malgoddown police reached the spot, seized the truck, and sent the body to SCB Medical College and Hospital for post-mortem. While the driver fled the scene, the truck helper has been detained for questioning.

Manorama hailed from Kulagaon village in Nishchintakoili block and had been living on rent with her two sons at Rausapatana here. Her husband, Ashwini Kumar Panda, had died four months ago.

SSB to release answer keys July 7

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 3: The State Selection Board (SSB) Thursday announced that it will publish the provisional answer keys for the BEd, MEd, and BHED entrance examinations 2025, July 7.

This is in response to the multiple grievances the SSB had received from applicants regarding discrepancies in the marks awarded during the recently conducted entrance examinations.

The examinations were held for admission into 2-year professional education programs for the academic session 2025-26, and several candidates have raised concerns about inaccuracies in their scores.

According to a release, the SSB will make the provisional answer keys available on its official website — <https://ss-bodisha.ac.in> — July 7. Candidates will have the opportunity to review the answer keys and submit objections from July 8 to

July 10, 2025, the release said.

"The publication of the provisional answer keys is aimed at addressing the applicants' concerns and maintaining fairness in the selection process," an SSB official stated, adding, "Applicants are advised to carefully verify their responses and follow the guidelines provided on the portal for raising objections."

The final results will be declared after the evaluation of all objections and necessary corrections to the answer keys.



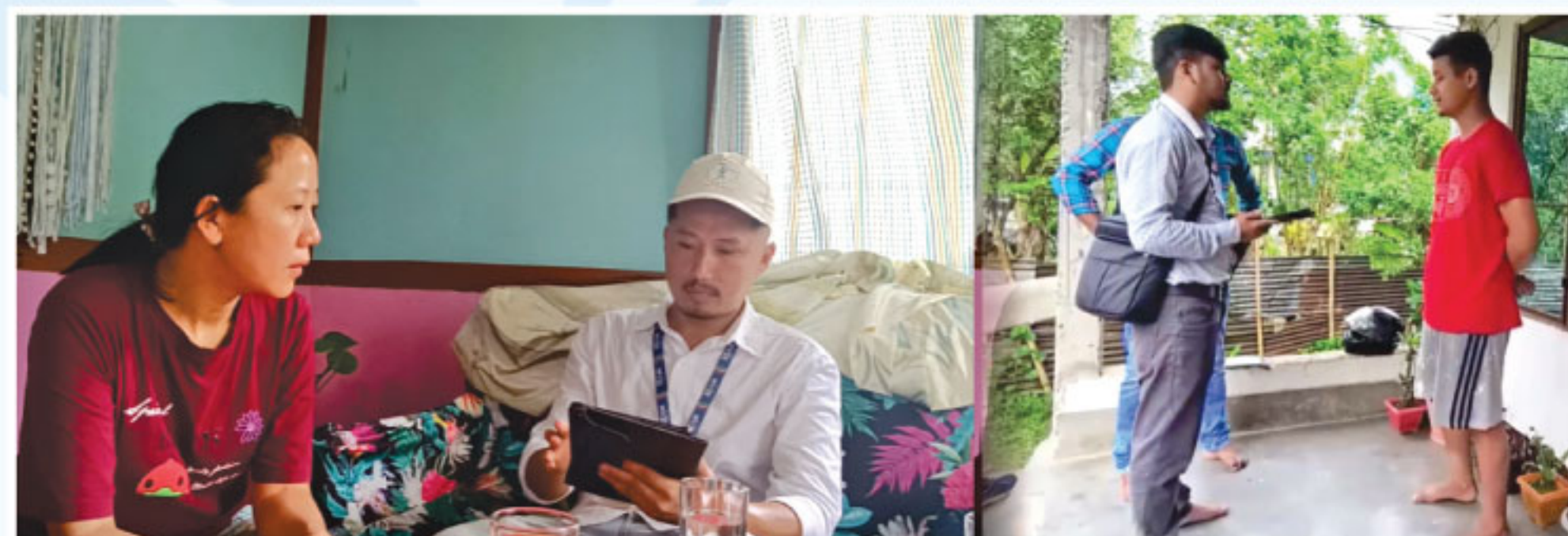
Assessing Prevalence of illness & Health Care Services in India

Let us strengthen the National Statistical System

National Statistics Office (NSO), Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) is conducting Survey on Household Health Expenditure from January to December 2025.

Information being collected:

- ➔ Type of ailments
- ➔ Treatment received
- ➔ Cost of treatment & vaccination
- ➔ Coverage of Health Insurance
- ➔ Ante-natal and post-natal care



Households are requested to cooperate with the enumerators of NSO and provide accurate data. Identity of the households participating in the survey is kept confidential in all reports/microdata of MoSPI.

Shabari Bhawan is a platform for empowering tribal youth: Majhi

7,559 students in final PG merit list

DRIVE TO TACKLE POST-FLOOD DISEASES



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 3: A total of 7,559 students have been shortlisted for admission at 121 higher educational institutions (HEIs) across the state...

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 3: In response to recent floods and diarrhoeal outbreaks across districts, the Odisha Government will roll out an intensive weeklong campaign from July 4 to July 11 to curb water and vector-borne diseases...

intensity inspections of bottling plants, eateries, and hotels, enforce SOPs, and take strict action, including fines, for any non-compliance.

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 3: Shabari Bhawan is not just a short-stay home, it is a platform for empowering tribal youth and fostering leadership...

ter cultural vibrancy through organisation of conferences, training camps, art exhibitions, and research programmes...

Majhi said the Shabari Bhawan would become a symbol of Odisha's identity and serve as an inspiration for future generations.



FOR A GLIMPSE: Sea of devotees at Saradhahali for Lord's Adapa Mandap darshan, in Puri, Thursday

PHOTO: YAGNESHWAR MOHANTY

BJD seeks apology from BJP MLA over remarks

Montana delegation calls on Governor

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 3: The Biju Janata Dal (BJD) Thursday condemned BJP Nilagiri MLA Santosh Khatua for allegedly making derogatory and offensive remarks against BJD spokesperson Lekhasri Samantsinghar...



At a press conference in Sankha Bhawan, BJD Binjharpur MLA Pramila Mallik

must apologise to the women of Odisha," she said. Notably, the war of words began after BJD spokesperson Lekhasri Samantsinghar, at a press conference Wednesday, alleged that poachers involved in the illegal ivory trade were caught from the farmhouse of MLA Santosh Khatua...

understanding. The delegation also toured Raj Bhavan and expressed appreciation for the warm hospitality.

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 3: A 10-member delegation from Montana, USA, met Governor Hari Babu Kambhampati at Raj Bhavan Thursday as part of the India Trek 2025 programme.



understanding. The delegation also toured Raj Bhavan and expressed appreciation for the warm hospitality.

Landslide: Train services hit for second day

ECRICC Odisha bags top honour

Bhubaneswar: Train services on the Koraput-Kirandul line under the Waltair Division remained disrupted for the second consecutive day Thursday due to incessant rains and a landslide that occurred between Malliguda and Jarati stations...

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 3: The Odisha chapter of the Enhancing Climate Resilience of India's Coastal Communities (ECRICC) Project has secured first prize in the 'government sector' at the Seafood Expo Bharat 2025 (SEB-25), held from July 1 to 3 at the Chennai Trade Centre.



implemented by the Forest, Environment and Climate Change Department, government of Odisha. DPMU officials, community leaders, and beneficiary crab farmers, attended the expo.

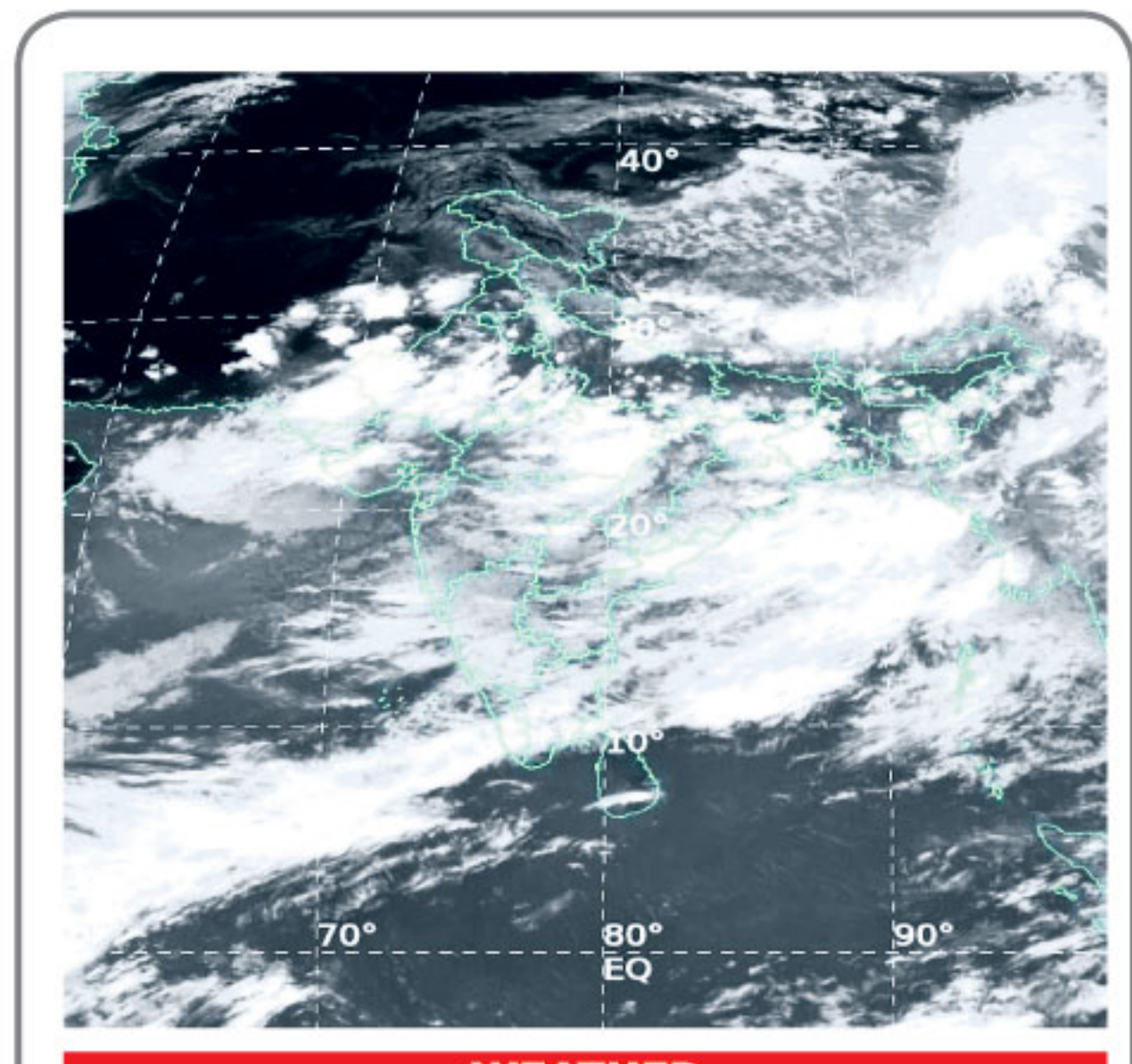
The state was ranked 14th in 2019-2020. The PGI 2.0 evaluates school education through 73 indicators across two categories: Outcomes and Governance & Management.

State 5th in school edu

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, July 3: Odisha has achieved a tangible change in the school education system and ranked fifth in the country as per the Performance Grading Index (PGI-2.0) between 2019-20 and 2023-2024, officials said on Thursday.

MARKET WATCH table with columns for CURRENCY, BOURSES, and COMMODITIES.



WEATHER table with columns for Max Temp, Min Temp, Humidity, Rainfall, BBSR, CTC, and FORECAST.

CLASSIFIED AFFIDAVIT

I, Antarjyami Sahu, S/o Late Dinabandhu Sahu, resident of ward No.- 4, New Kalupatro Street, Aska Road, Brahmapur, P.S.-Brahmapur Sadar, P.O.-Panigrahipentho, District.- Ganjam, PIN-760006, Odisha declare by this affidavit No.- A-615, dtd-03.07.2025. That now onwards I shall be known as Antarjyami Sahu for all future purposes.

FOR CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS CONTACT OUR BOOKING STATIONS

- Acharya Vihar-Dayal Agency-9437135727, A.P. Tours and Travel, Maitri Vihar, C.S. Pur-9861301598, Aurobindo Market-Sai Audio & Electronics-9438304668, Airport Road-Sai Baba Variety Store-9090071530, Anish Infotech-Tankapani Road-9861341488, Bapuji Nagar-Dreamland Studio-977517314, Baramunda Rental Colony-Maa Ramchandi Communication-9658821469, Baramunda Housing Board Colony-Pappu Variety Store-9040500106, Cuttack Road-Alishan Snacks-8984236754, District Center (Chandrasekharpur)-Sai Google Mart-9776056507, Forest Park-DTDC Couriers & Services (HB Services)-7381024156, IRC Village-Bapi Xerox-9090090404, Gift Hut(Antriksh Gifts & Decors Pvt. Ltd.)-9954781084, Pruthvi Medicine-9853314816, Janpath-Krupajal Book Store-7978646669, Jaydev Vihar-AK Enterprises-7978116618, Subam Sai Books Store-8895550649, Swain Graphics-9337121249, Jagannath Mobile Point-Janpath Road, Ram Mandir-9938475415, Kanan Vihar-Auro Electronics-8260697560, Khandagiri-Swosti Mobile Centre-7992914045, World Solution-9938317559, KIIT Road-Jugad Jn-9338545031, Laxmi Sagar-Aditya Mobile-9438191836, Lewis Road-Spider Web-7809186415, Metro Satellite City-Arogya Mitra Medicine Store-9853621640, Madhusudan Nagar-Mohapatra Communication-9124446664, Maa Santoshi travels-Gajapati Nagar-9777675867, Nayapalli-The Cake Room-7873660137, Near Mayfair Lagoon-Cookiemann-9439491273, Nigamananda-Omm Sai Travels-9668284823, Nr Cosmopolis Main Gate-Shreeram Medical Store-8763711714, Net Square-Niladri Vihar (C.S. Pur)-7205634821, Priyadarshini Market-Astro Point-9938134346, R.N. General Store-Nilakantha Nagar-9438642501, Sahid Nagar-Maa Communication-9437353424, Sahini General Store-Near Patia Railway Station, Mahavir Vihar-9937586626, Satya Nagar-Baishnavi Mixture & Sweets-7894821764, Samantapur-Download Point-7504557743, Sailashree Vihar-Harsha Book Store-8093449515, Saheed Nagar-Jagannath Graphics-7978652670, Photo World-7978468191, Sainath Photo Studio-8984436129, Shanti & Co-993771063, Siripur-Omm Maa Sarala Communication-9777682449, Sushree fashion-Jagmara-9938714347, Shree Vision-Sailashree Vihar-9861476678, Unit-3-LIC of India Premium Point-9337787080, Unit-7-LIC Premium Point-9338227422, VSS Nagar-Friends Cake & Bake-8658200930, Jeet Infoworld-7205195782, XIMB Square-LD Books-9658061373.

FOCUS SOCIETY

MIND YOUR LANGUAGE



English is no longer seen as a colonial relic but a language of aspiration and ambition. Travel to any corner of the country and witness the rapid expansion of English language coaching classes, all aimed at providing a 'new' India a chance to climb up the social ladder

If for Shah, the 'Hindi-centric' worldview is designed to position the BJP as a 'nationalistic' force taking on an elite Nehruvian Congress, for the Thackerays, rekindling the language issue is an attempt to revive the 'sons of the soil' movement that was Shiv Sena founder Bal Thackeray's original pitch. And while the Sena chieftain may have spewed fire on non-Marathi speakers, his first job as a cartoonist was with the English daily, Free Press Journal. Today, when the Sena has split wide open and is facing an existential crisis, the Gen-next Thackerays are seeking a reunion of sorts under the garb of linguistic pride. For MK Stalin too, raising the bogie of Hindi being 'imposed' on the people of Tamil Nadu is a familiar political weapon ahead of a big election year in the state. The rise of the Dravidian parties in the 1960s revolved around the strident anti-Hindi agitations meant to refurbish a resilient Dravidian culture. Six decades later, by claiming that the New Education Policy's three language formula is another attempt to force Hindi on Tamil-speaking citizens, the DMK chief minister is re-igniting a north versus south battle to consolidate his position as a flag-bearer of regional identity. And while espousing a 'Tamil-first' war-cry, the fact is that the next-generation of the DMK's first family is sending their children to study in foreign universities. Not to forget that most private schools in Chennai are inclined to offer a three language syllabus, including Hindi. Which is really the nub of the issue across the country. Politicians who rail against English from old-style socialist Lohia-ties to Hindutvawaadis to regional warriors, all choose to send their kin to English-language schools. Amit Shah can rant against English but he only needs to do a survey of his own Union Cabinet colleagues to find out how many of them, if any, have chosen to send their children to a Hindi or regional language medium school. At least half a dozen Cabinet ministers have their children studying in prestigious foreign universities. English is no longer seen as a colonial relic but a language of aspiration and ambition. Travel to any corner of the country and witness the rapid expansion of English language coaching classes, all aimed at providing a 'new' India a chance to climb up the social ladder. Far from being 'ashamed' of speaking English, most young Indians seek to excel at it. Sadly, it's the quality of English teaching that leaves a lot to be desired in

several parts of the country, one reason why Gujarat for example has lost out in the soft skills driven service industry. Interestingly, Hindi too is now a language of growth and ambition in many corners of India. Just look at the success of so many films made in the south but becoming blockbuster Hindi film releases. The traditional north-south divide is rapidly disappearing on the big screen as it is indeed on the other great Indian theatre of dreams, the cricket field too: who would have thought at the turn of the century that Ranchi-born, Hindi speaking Mahendra Singh Dhoni would be the ultimate Chennai hero. Mumbai too is now less of a Maharashtra city than ever in the past: Hindi is not just the language of its famed film industry but also the street language of livelihoods, nurtured uniquely by waves of north Indian migration and assimilation. The Bombay versus Mumbai versus Bamba debate has hollowed out a buzzing cosmopolitanism replacing any real angst over language divides. Yes, pride in local language still matters but it no longer needs one language to be pitted against another. Which is why those who might be fighting language wars need to realise that these are losing battles which may yield temporary political dividend but cannot be sustained beyond a point. Linguistic diversity is India's strength, being multi-lingual a competitive advantage. Politicians who have run out of ideas may seek refuge in linguistic chauvinism, most young Indians are job-seekers not language zealots. Post-script: I once interviewed a senior politician who insisted on speaking in Hindi because he wanted to reach out to the 'masses'. Interview over, he introduced me proudly to his son. 'Please meet my America-educated young man!' The writer is a senior journalist and author. His latest book is 2024: The Election That Surprised India.



A hero fears nothing, complains of nothing and never gives away.

THE MOTHER

Iran's Choices

The 12-day war that pitted Iran against two nuclear powers, Israel and the United States, is one of those conflicts that permits all sides to declare victory. For the Islamic Republic, that declaration came quickly, and centered on the fact that the regime is still standing. Despite heavy losses and widespread damage, there was no collapse, no revolt, and no regime change. To many Iranians, especially among the opposition abroad (some of whom - from the exiled crown prince, Reza Pahlavi, to the former armed group Mojahedin-e-Khalq - openly cheered the strikes), the scale of the onslaught suggested an intent to topple the government. But a revolt was always unlikely, given who was calling for it. The urban middle class - the backbone of Iran's civic and professional life - was not going to rise up on behalf of the two foreign powers most associated with decades of coercion and violence in the region.

Thus, whether ordinary Iranians "won" or not will depend on what comes next: how the government responds, how quickly it can rebuild civilian infrastructure, and whether it offers concessions to a middle class that rallied around the flag in the face of a brutal bombing campaign.

Some change was already coming well before Israel attacked. Since mid-2023, the Islamic Republic has been showing signs of a strategic shift inward. It did not directly enter the fray after Hamas' October 7th attack on Israel, nor in response to its allies in Lebanon and Syria coming under pressure.

Owing to mass protests in 2022, following the death of a young woman, Mahsa Amini, in police custody, the regime curtailed street-level enforcement of the unwritten dress code. When I visited Tehran and a few smaller cities last April, I was struck by how much the urban scene had changed. Many women (though not most) went out with their hair uncovered, and mingled freely with young men in the coffee shops that have mushroomed across urban Iran.

Then came Masoud Pezeshkian's surprising election to the presidency in June 2024. A more reform-minded figure, he succeeded the conservative Ebrahim Raisi, who had made hijab enforcement a priority and cracked down violently on protests. (Raisi died in a helicopter crash the previous month.) By contrast, when a new hijab law was passed, Pezeshkian refused to enforce it, allowing a new social norm to take hold.

Moreover, the Iranian economy is not as weak as foreign media coverage often suggests. The data do not paint a rosy picture, but nor do they point to an imminent collapse. Despite the draconian US sanctions imposed in 2018 (after Donald Trump abandoned the 2015 nuclear deal), the economy has been slowly recovering. By 2024, GDP had surpassed its 2018 peak, and growth averaged around 3 per cent per year - aided by oil exports that benefited from the Biden administration's lax sanctions enforcement. Moreover, survey data show rising real (inflation-adjusted) per capita expenditures in recent years.

Pezeshkian's appointments - including a progressive minister of welfare and labour and a young Chicago-educated economy minister - signaled a turn toward better economic management. Internally, there has been a major debate over whether Iran can meet the 8 per cent growth target that is regularly listed in annual budgets and five-year plans. The consensus among economists was "not without sanctions relief," which in turn would require diplomacy, not missiles.

Still, the Pezeshkian administration's economic reforms - including the restoration of an innovative 2010 cash-transfer programme - likely bolstered the urban middle class' willingness to stand with the government in the face of Israeli air strikes. Iran's rather measured response to the US attack on its nuclear sites shows where its leaders' priorities lie. They see renewed conflict as a distraction from their development mission, originally laid out in the 2005 Twenty-Year Vision Plan to place Iran among the region's top economies by 2025.

The immediate question is whether the recent war will push Iran further toward militarisation and an expanded role for the state in the economy, or toward greater freedom for civil society and the private sector. Many will remember how the bloody eight-year war with Iraq in the 1980s led to entrenched rationing, central planning, and dominance by state-linked institutions. It took nearly two decades of reform to reintroduce market principles and revive the private sector.

Iran may be better positioned today, because the war was limited in scope, and the private sector and market institutions are more firmly established. Just as the Iran-Iraq War led to vast development investments that acknowledged the contribution of rural communities, this one may catalyse a similar gesture of recognition for the urban middle class. If so, that would go far toward achieving the kind of social consensus (vefagh) that Pezeshkian is seeking.

Two decades ago, the joke in Iran was that the Islamic Republic had a consistent Korea strategy, except that sometimes it resembled the North, and sometimes the South. Now Iran faces a similar choice. The North Korean model may seem attractive to some, with its nuclear deterrence, stifling of dissent, and closed borders. But most observers familiar with Iran's culture, religion, history, and temperament would not regard this as a viable option - even after a war that has exposed Iran's vulnerability in the absence of nuclear weapons.

Undoubtedly, there will be tensions between rebuilding the military and addressing civilian needs - from shoring up the water supply to distributing gasoline and dealing with youth employment. Fortunately, unlike a military buildup, economic reconstruction can be advanced through broadly felt policies that attract private-sector engagement and reduce the budgetary trade-off between defence and development.

Assuming the cease-fire holds, the real question will not be who won or lost. It will be whether Iran uses the pause to double down on economic development, or whether the trauma of war will provoke an ideological hardening. The pro-development option may be constrained by the nature of the regime; but the alternative - a permanent wartime posture - is economically and socially untenable.

The writer is Professor of Economics at Virginia Tech. ©PROJECT SYNDICATE



Rajdeep Sardesai

POLITICIANS WHO HAVE RUN OUT OF IDEAS MAY SEEK REFUGE IN LINGUISTIC CHAUVINISM, MOST YOUNG INDIANS ARE JOB-SEEKERS NOT LANGUAGE ZEALOTS



Djavad Salehi-Isfahani

Assuming the cease-fire holds, the real question will not be who won or lost. It will be whether Iran uses the pause to double down on economic development, or whether the trauma of war will provoke an ideological hardening

SPECTRUM SOCIETY

Freedom from drugs: A commitment to children



Dushyant Meher

A STATE SPECIFIC STRATEGY TO AUGMENT CIVIL SOCIETY AND ENHANCE COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT WOULD INTENSIFY THE EFFORT IN PREVENTING CHILDREN FROM DRUG AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

While Odisha renews its commitment towards a developed state, leveraging on demographic dividend becomes a central point of discussions for its growth opportunities. With a large portion of its population falling in the working age group, children getting into drugs and substance abuse has become a major concern. In this context, announcement of provisions to open de-addiction centres in every district shows the commitment of the state government.

The Prime Minister gave a clarion call to address the issue of drug and substance abuse by children during his meeting with the chief of Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) in 2018 through a joint action plan. Subsequently, it took the shape of an inter-departmental joint action plan - "Prevention of Drugs and Substance Abuse Among Children and Illicit Trafficking - 2021 - a policy spearheaded by the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) in collaboration with the NCB.

This policy framework was primarily formulated to

streamline and strategise the efforts made by various authorities, institutions, agencies to bring paradigm shifts in the direction of drugs and substance abuse prevention amongst the children. Some of the initiatives include installation of CCTV cameras in chemist shops, action on selling substances near schools, separate or exclusive de-addiction and rehabilitation facilities for children, exclusive school club to create awareness, digitisation of sales of schedule X and schedule H drugs, mapping of children in street situations, and stricter enforcement of section 77 and 78 of the Juvenile Justice Act against people selling drugs to or using children for peddling drugs. After one year of piloting in 272 vulnerable districts by 2022, this is now being implemented throughout the country and monitored regularly at the district level under the district magistrate.

Odisha is faring well under this policy. Districts of Gajapati and Keonjhar have been recognised for their performance. However, there is a need for

standardisation of activities across the state, a mechanism for effective coordination as well as capturing data and information under one platform. Moreover, this framework also needs to broaden its scope to achieve its desired results through greater integration of institutions and state specific initiatives.

Mission SPANDAN (Spiritual Partnership Against Narcotic Drug Abuse - Nationwide) launched under NCB must cover all the schools in the state through collaborations with spiritual organisations. It is a step towards combating drug abuse and promoting a healthier society right from childhood. It is observed that adolescents also use dark web to access synthetic drugs, therefore, parents and teachers need to be vigilant about the online content that the children use and to observe any deviant behaviour. Data and information sharing and integration with the narcotics coordination portal are also vital for more vigilant action.

Implementation of the New Education Policy is promising for children as it provides

a platform for experiential learning, holistic development, creativity and innovative spirit that can prevent risk behaviour among adolescents and children. Greater availability and accessibility of sports facilities for school-children and state and national competitions for children would be more enabling. Also involving children in creative civic activities, from urban forestry to garbage segregation is crucial.

Finally, a state specific strategy to augment civil society and enhance community involvement would intensify the effort in preventing children from drug and substance abuse. Funding from corporate houses under CSR can bring more synergy. Thus, the Joint Action Plan is the promise of the nation and states like Odisha must show their commitment through a state specific strategy to ensure a brighter future free from drug and substance abuse.

The author is a Delhi-based independent consultant who worked with the NITI Aayog and NCPCR.

Lateral entry in CBI

Sir, The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) is heavily dependent on officers on deputation to serve its ranks. Also, the functioning of the agency is hampered by the reluctance of state police departments to lend officers. The Centre has taken a rapid stride in appointing non-IPS officers to some of CBI's key posts. Five Indian Revenue Service (IRS) officers and an Indian Defence Accounts (IDAS) officer were brought in as Superintendents of Police (SPs) in different departments of the agency over the last few months. Expectedly, the cadre officers are miffed but the Centre seems to be keen to appoint domain experts to a few key CBI departments considering the ever changing complexion of crimes. However, it is critical for the government to maintain a balance between the IPS officers and the lateral entrants so that the latter do not trample upon the authority of the former.

Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA

Tiger conservation

Sir, Amid the euphoria over the rising tiger population, the loss of five tigers in Karnataka's Male Mahadeshwara Hills Wildlife Sanctuary brings into sharp focus several conservation issues that have low priority. According to reports, a farmer avenged himself on the tiger that had killed his cow by poisoning the carcass. The tiger and four cubs died consuming the carcass. The State Forest Department and National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) are accountable for the loss of the tigers. This incident raises questions about unchecked cattle farming and grazing in a protected area. Similarly, several people have lost their lives in encounter with tigers. Lack of funding for relocation of people from protected areas is a hindrance to tiger conservation. While solatium is given to the next of kin of dead people in tiger attacks, compensation for livestock death is not given. Project Tiger is a prestigious mission the success of which depends on several aspects of tiger conservation.

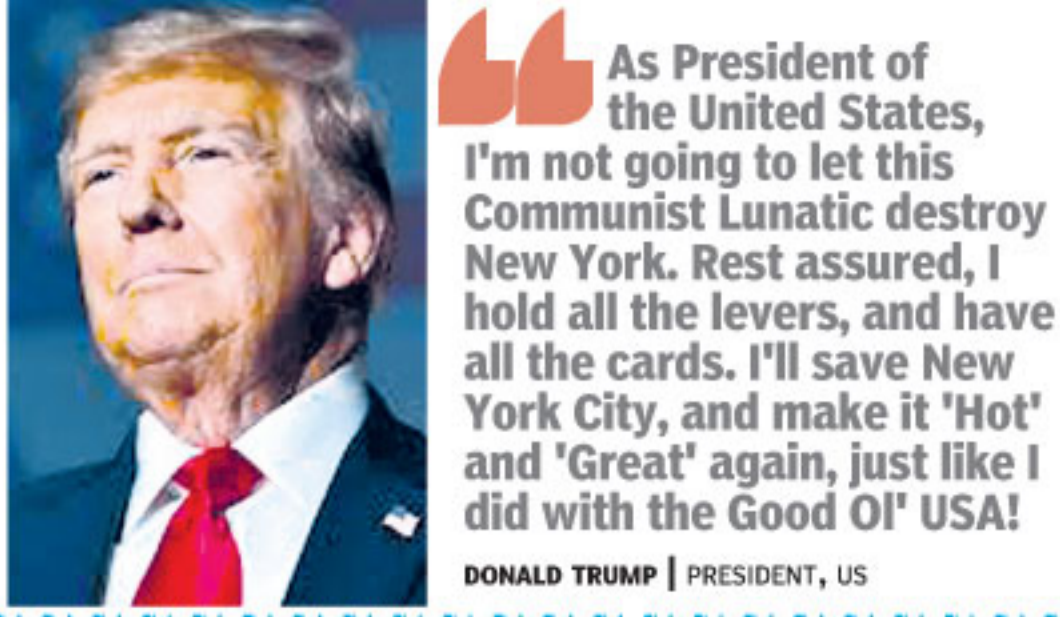
Venu GS, KOLLAM

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

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



As President of the United States, I'm not going to let this Communist Lunatic destroy New York. Rest assured, I hold all the levers, and have all the cards. I'll save New York City, and make it 'Hot' and 'Great' again, just like I did with the Good Ol' USA!

SHANDONG'S FIRST HK VISIT China's first domestically-built aircraft carrier arrived in Hong Kong on Thursday as part of a drive to drum up patriotism, days after the former British colony marked the 28th anniversary of its return to Chinese rule.



international

of the day quote

We have war on European soil. We face trade wars, and new tariffs, and we have our closest ally, in the United States, turning increasingly inward. Europe can no longer be in the shadow of the United States. We need now to stand on our own two feet

MARIE BIERRE | DANISH EUROPEAN AFFAIRS MINISTER

Ukraine belongs in the EU. It is in the interest of both Denmark and Europe. Therefore, the Danish Presidency will do everything we can to help Ukraine on its path towards EU membership

VOLODYMYR ZELENSKYI | PRESIDENT, UKRAINE

An estimated 90 per cent of the capital Port-au-Prince is now under control of criminal groups who are expanding attacks not only into surrounding areas but beyond into previously peaceful areas

GHADA FATHY WALY | EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE UN OFFICE ON DRUGS AND CRIME, UNSC

SHORT TAKES

Ferry sinks near Bali

Gilimaunk: Rescuers were searching Thursday for 29 people who were missing after a ferry sank and five people died the previous night near Indonesia's resort island of Bali.

US shooting rampage

Chicago: Four people have died from gunshot wounds and 14 others have been hospitalised following a drive-by shooting in Chicago, police said Thursday.

Indian jailed in S'pore

Singapore: A 21-year-old Indian national was Thursday sentenced to six months' jail for biting off a colleague's ear after a heated argument.

79 protesters detained

Belgrade: Serbian police said they detained 79 university students and other protesters as they broke up street blockades in several cities that are part of persistent dissent against President Aleksandar Vucic's populist government.

HEATWAVE HORROR Crete wildfire displaces over 1K as Europe sizzles

Scientists say heatwaves have arrived earlier this year, spiking temperatures by up to 10 C (50 F) in some regions as warming seas encouraged the formation of a heat dome over much of Europe, trapping hot air masses



Over 230 firefighters and aerial support deployed to curb fire. Winds complicate firefighting efforts. Some evacuees face respiratory issues

Athens, July 3: Hundreds of firefighters fought a blaze Thursday on the island of Crete that scorched forests and olive groves and led to the evacuation of over 1,000 people.

Stoked by intense winds, the blaze widened to encroach upon houses and hotels that were earlier evacuated, officials said. "There are wind gusts in the area, some measuring 9 on the Beaufort scale, triggering rekindling and hindering firefighting efforts," fire brigade spokesman Vassilis Vathrakogiannis said, as his troops

Israel's incessant airstrikes continue



Tel Aviv, July 3: Airstrikes and shootings killed 94 Palestinians in Gaza overnight, including 45 who were attempting to get much-needed humanitarian aid, hospitals and the Health Ministry said Thursday.

The deaths come as Israel and Hamas inch closer to a possible ceasefire that would end the 21-month war

Palestinians are sheltering. A separate strike on a school in Gaza City sheltering displaced people also killed 15 people. Gaza's Health Ministry said the number of Palestinians killed in Gaza has passed 57,000, including 223 missing people who have been declared dead, since the war began on October 7, 2023.

Amnesty accuses Israel of Gaza genocide

Amnesty International accused a controversial Israeli- and US-backed system to distribute aid in Gaza of using starvation tactics against Palestinians to continue to commit genocide in the Gaza Strip during Israel's war with Hamas.

PM Modi conferred Ghana's nat'l honour



Accra, July 3: Prime Minister Narendra Modi was Wednesday conferred with 'The Officer of the Order of the Star of Ghana', the country's national honour, for his "distinguished statesmanship and influential global leadership".

Modi received the award from the Ghanaian President John Dramani Mahama. "Honoured to be conferred with 'The Officer of the Order of the Star of Ghana', the prime minister said in an X post.

Kurdish fighters to hand over arms

Irbil: A Kurdish militant group that has waged a long-running insurgency in Turkey announced Thursday its fighters in northern Iraq will begin handing over their weapons, marking the first concrete step toward disarmament as part of a peace process.

France tells Iran to free its citizens

Paris: France Thursday demanded the immediate release of two of its citizens held in Iran for more than three years and said espionage charges reported to have been filed against them were unfounded.

Deputy head of Russian Navy killed by Ukraine

Moscow, July 3: Major General Mikhail Gudkov, the deputy head of the Russian Navy who also led a brigade fighting against Ukraine, has been killed in Russia's Kursk region, Oleg Kozhemyako, governor of a far eastern Russian region, said Thursday.



Indian national jailed in S'pore

Singapore: A 21-year-old Indian national was Thursday sentenced to six months' jail for biting off a colleague's ear after a heated argument.

Manga doomsday prediction spooks tourists to Japan

Japan has seen record numbers of visitors this year, with April setting an all-time monthly high of 3.9 million travellers. That dipped in May, however, with arrivals from Hong Kong - the superstitious Chinese-controlled city where the rumours have circulated widely - down 11% year-on-year.



tion of earthquake insurance had "prevented Japan-bound travel from dropping to zero," he added. Hong Kong resident Brandon Choi, 28, said he was a frequent traveller to Japan but was hesitant to visit the country during July and August due to the manga prediction.

Fears of catastrophe linked to viral manga 'The Future I Saw' Arrivals from Hong Kong drop 11% on-year in May Japan has seen record visitor numbers this year

that she was "not a prophet". The first edition of the manga warned of a major natural disaster in March 2011. That was the month and year when a massive earthquake, tsunami and nuclear disaster struck Japan's northeastern coast killing thousands.

pan is one of the most earthquake-prone countries in the world. In recent days there have been more than 900 earthquakes, most of them small tremors, on islands off the southern tip of Kyushu.

