

AI meets state messaging: China launches DeepZang in Tibet

New platform reportedly embeds official narratives into digital interactions

NEW DELHI

CHINA has started deploying a Tibetan language artificial intelligence platform called DeepZang in Tibet which aims to shape narratives and reinforce Beijing's authority in the region, a new report has said.

Sources in the security establishment flagged that DeepZang, launched in March, aims to shape how "information about Tibet is created, accessed and understood," a report said.

The Chinese government has introduced multiple AI-driven applications in the region, and the administration wants to deliver state services digitally in a way that aligns with official state positions on politically sen-

sitive topics such as religion and governance.

Mainly DeepZang aims to promote linguistic inclusion by offering services in Tibetan but it also seeks to reinforce Beijing's authority over Tibet by embedding state-approved terminology and perspectives into everyday digital interactions, the report said.

The application generates responses consistently using terms such as 'Xizang' instead of 'Tibet', in an effort to normalise Beijing's preferred terminology. "Over time, linguistic framing can alter both perception and political understanding," the report cited a source.

"In this sense, DeepZang represents the evolution of traditional information-



control strategies into the age of artificial intelligence," the report cited a source.

DeepZang differs from traditional censorship tools by not merely block-

ing complete explanations, summaries and contextual state-sanctioned narratives.

Sources felt that users will be easily influenced by such an application that creates a single coherent

AI-generated response instead of users seeking out competing viewpoints.

Analysts remain watchful of how deeply the platform will eventually be integrated into schools, government services or public digital infrastructure across Tibet.

Through administrative oversight, technological surveillance and coercive policies, China has always maintained tight control over Tibet.

Another report in European Times said that China's large-scale lithium production since 2025, is a "quiet erosion of Tibetan autonomy" as benefits primarily leave the region and "flow eastward" to Mainland China.

Centre brings Pregabalin drug under Schedule H1 to prevent misuse

NEW DELHI

HEALTH Ministry on Friday said it has notified the inclusion of the drug 'Pregabalin' under Schedule H1 of the Drugs Rules, 1945. The decision has been taken in view of reports received from certain states regarding the misuse and abuse of Pregabalin, particularly among youth.

Violations and non-compliance will attract penal action under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940 and Rules thereunder.

The drug, which is prescribed for the treatment of chronic pain, neuropathies, fibromyalgia, and certain neurological conditions, has reportedly been misused for its sedative, euphoric, and dissociative effects, informed the ministry.

All stakeholders, including manufacturers, distributors, wholesalers, retailers, and pharmacists, are advised to ensure strict compliance with the provisions of the notification, the ministry said.



Recent seizures of illegally stocked and unauthorisedly sold Pregabalin have also been reported from some parts of the country.

With the notification, published in the Gazette of India Extraordinary, Pregabalin will now be regulated under the stricter provisions of Schedule H1, instead of the existing Schedule H, under the Drugs and Cosmetics Rules, 1945.

The Schedule H1 prescription 'Drug-CAUTION' says that it is dangerous to take this preparation except in accordance with the medical advice — not to be sold by retail without the prescription of a Registered Medical Practitioner.

The revised classification mandates that Pregabalin can be sold only against a valid prescription issued by a Registered Medical Practitioner (RMP); retailers must maintain a separate register recording details of prescriptions and sales; manufacturers shall prominently display the prescribed 'Schedule H1 Drug Warning' label on product packaging.

"The measure is aimed at strengthening accountability across the supply chain, preventing unauthorised access, enhancing prescription monitoring, curbing illegal trafficking, and safeguarding public health from drug misuse and abuse," said the ministry.

Ajay Banga advocates affordable AI solutions for farmers

World Bank President highlights local-language Artificial Intelligence tools for crop diagnosis and rural health care

SINGAPORE

WORLD Bank President Ajay Banga has called for the deployment of "Small AI" - locally deployed artificial intelligence running on inexpensive hardware, speaking local languages and solving daily problems for farmers and rural communities.

Speaking at the ATX Singapore 2026 technology summit, Banga cited the example of a farmer in India's Uttar Pradesh sharing a photograph of a diseased crop leaf through an old mobile phone and receiving diagnosis and treatment advice from agricultural experts in the region.

He also highlighted how a nurse in Indonesia could share a photograph of a rash with a network of clinics running a local diagnostic model through a basic internet connection or older mobile connectivity. These are daily use cases of AI that do not get enough attention, Banga told around 4,000 delegates from 50 countries attending the May 20-22 summit in Singa-



Inexpensive and affordable local technology can offer a major opportunity for emerging markets if deployed in rural regions

pore. He underlined that inexpensive and affordable local technology can become a force for good and offer a major opportunity for emerging markets if deployed in rural regions.

Singapore-based technology entrepreneur Saurav Mukherjee said AI adoption would increasingly move beyond manufacturing and services into agriculture and food cultivation, as the technology need not always be expensive.

He said farmers could use AI tools to assess seed quality before sowing, access advanced information on weather, soil conditions, rainfall and water availability. Mukherjee also said patients

in remote villages could use basic mobile technology to share symptoms with nurses or nearby clinics, helping establish first contact for treatment.

"Why not create such connections for the comfort of the less fortunate," he said, adding that internet connectivity across India was expanding rapidly and 5G services had reached remote regions. Mukherjee said advanced technologies were attracting major investments globally but warned that shortages of skilled manpower could emerge as a bottleneck in AI adoption.

"There are no options, for AI brings efficiency and productivity in the workplace and enterprises across are adopting it for the daily work flow," said Mukherjee, founder of Singapore-based ORCA Media. He said governments should adopt a more aggressive approach towards funding technology adoption and creating incentives for private sector investments.

Mental disorders now top global disability burden: Lancet study

India sees sharp rise in anxiety disorders over three decades

NEW DELHI

MENTAL disorders have become the leading cause of disability worldwide, overtaking cardiovascular diseases, cancer and musculoskeletal disorders, according to a major global study published in The Lancet.

Researchers from Australia and the US found that nearly 1.2 billion people were living with a mental disorder in 2023, almost double the number recorded in 1990. Anxiety and depression accounted for much of the increase.

The study found women are disproportionately affected, with 620 million women living with mental disorders globally in 2023, compared to 552 million men. Teenagers aged 15-19 recorded the highest burden worldwide.

Researchers said the continuing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, along with long-term factors such as poverty, violence, social isolation and insecurity, are driving the surge. They called for coordinated global action and stronger mental health support systems.

The World Health Organi-



zation had earlier estimated that more than one billion people globally were living with a mental health condition in 2021, with anxiety and depression making up nearly two-thirds of cases.

India has witnessed a sharp rise in anxiety disorders over the past three decades, according to a new study published in The Lancet. Researchers found that age-standardised prevalence of anxiety disorders across both sexes rose from nearly 2,592 per one lakh population in 1990 to 5,793 per one lakh in 2023, an increase of 123.5 per cent. The rise was steeper among women, where prevalence increased by 136.7 per

cent during the period, compared to 102 per cent among men. Researchers said young people and women remain especially vulnerable as social stress, economic insecurity and weakening social connections continue to intensify.

The study linked the worsening burden to factors such as poverty, abuse, domestic violence, inequality, climate-related stress, pandemics and disasters. Experts stressed the need for stronger mental healthcare systems, improved surveillance and greater investment in counselling and psychiatric services in low and middle-income countries like India.

DigiHaat expands cooperative mobility service to 55 Indian cities

NEW DELHI: Government-backed e-commerce platform DigiHaat on Friday announced that it has expanded its mobility services to 55 cities across India through partnerships with driver-owned cooperatives Bharat Taxi and Namma Yatri.

The company said the expansion is aimed at promoting a cooperative and citizen-centric model in the ride-hailing sector.

The newly launched 'DigiHaat Rides' service, which was previously operational in Delhi NCR and Bengaluru, has now been extended to cities including Ahmedabad, Chandigarh, Chennai, Hyderabad, Jaipur, Kolkata, Kochi, Lucknow, Mumbai, Surat, Thiruvananthapuram and Vadodara, along with several tier-2 and tier-3 cities.

The platform said its mobility model differs from conventional ride-hailing services by focusing on driver ownership and lower commissions.

According to the company, drivers retain greater control over their earnings and decision-making on the platform, while customers benefit from transparent pricing and community-based accountability.



THE POLITICA

Nothing political about it

NEW DELHI

THE X account of Cockroach Janata Party, a satirical digital outfit that came up last week and took social media by storm, was withheld in India on Thursday. Soon after, came another handle - 'Cockroach is Back' with the tagline 'Cockroaches Don't Die'.

"This (action) was expected since there were attempts to hack the account yesterday. But this is a self-goal by the government," founder Abhijeet Dipke said. "I have now started a new account named 'Cockroach Is Back' on X," Dipke added. He also said the team would pursue the matter legally.

The number of followers of the account 'Cockroach is Back' continued to grow, reaching more than 91,000 late Thursday night. Around 6 pm, a few hours after the launch, the X handle had garnered more than 39,000 followers. It once again shared the demand for the resignation of Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, over the NEET UG 2026 paper 'leak'.

Cockroach Janata Party, which, according to Dipke, had 201,000 followers on X when it was withheld, was born following a controversy over Chief Justice of India Surya Kant using the terms "parasites" and "cockroaches" while pulling up a lawyer for his plea seeking senior designation. The CJJ later clarified that he was misquoted and

'Cockroaches Don't Die': CJP back online after X withholds account in India

Digital protest movement gains fresh momentum amid censorship debate

his remarks were directed specifically at individuals entering the legal profession through "fake and bogus degrees".

The account, which came into being a day after the CJJ's remarks on May 15, quickly went viral, attracting support from politicians, activists, artists and a large number of young and not-so-young social media users. Though the X account is inaccessible in India, it can be accessed through VPN. The platform's Instagram page remains active with over 18 million followers - and counting - by late Thursday night. At around 6 pm, the account had 15.6 million followers. A post from the X account 'Cockroach is Back' drew comparisons with the official BJP account, which has approximately 8.8 million followers on the Meta-owned platform. "The reason why they blocked us," read the post, which also had an image of a cockroach munching on a lotus flower, the election symbol of the BJP. "You thought you can get rid of us? Lol," another post read.

The Instagram account of the Cockroach Janata Party, which quickly became CJP for many, has also surpassed the following of the Congress, which has 13.3 million followers.

Questioning the action against what he described as a satirical platform, Dipke said the account and the movement had been growing rapidly. "The X handle and movement have been grow-

ing, getting thousands of followers every day - perhaps that is what scared the government," Dipke alleged.

Dipke, who was earlier associated with the AAP, also posted on X that attempts were being made to hack the Instagram account. Several other accounts using the 'cockroach' nomenclature remain active on X. These include 'The Cockroach Youth', 'Cockroach News', 'IAmCockroach', 'Cockroach Party of India' and 'Cockroach Janata Party (Gen Z)'.

What began as an online satire project has soon evolved into a wider conversation about contemporary protest and the role of humour and meme culture in it. Using memes, the CJP platform gained traction through sharp political satire and commentary. Much of its content centres on youth concerns such as unemployment, examination paper leaks and education, packaged through graphics, animation, manifestos and charter-style demands. The rapid rise drew attention not only from meme creators and young users but also from public figures who viewed it as a form of digital dissent. Politicians, including Trinamool Congress leaders Mahua Moitra and Kirti Azad, engaged with or expressed interest in the movement alongside activists such as Prashant Bhushan and Anjali Bharadwaj. Several activists and politicians criticised the action



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against the CJP's X handle. "So much for haters and paid troll armies - truth and genuine followers win every time. CJP now has the largest number of Insta followers. Well done, Abhijeet

Dipke," Moitra said. CPI(M) Liberation General Secretary Dipankar Bhattacharya asked if the government believed it could "stop GenZ by blocking social media handles of CJP." "What

if the CJP launches an unfollow campaign against the BJP and NaMo handles? X must respect internet freedom and restore the Cockroach Janta Party handle without any delay," Bhattacharya said on X.

Activist Yogendra Yadav shared a video message, urging people to follow the CJP and unfollow government members. "Those who cannot take a joke are themselves a joke. The ban on the Cockroach Janata Party shows that the government may look strong, but it is hollow," he said in a video message in Hindi. Congress leader Shahi Tharoor, meanwhile, said he was "incredibly intrigued" by the rise of the Cockroach Janta Party. Tharoor advocated for an outlet for the youth to "express their feelings" and said withholding the account was "extremely unwise". "I understand the frustrations of the youth and see why they are resonating with it. This is precisely why the account being withheld on X is disastrous and deeply unwise - there should be an outlet for the youth to express their feelings, and so, let CJP's account function instead of shutting it down! Democracies need outlets for dissent, humour, satire and even frustration," Tharoor said.

While stating that he was "uncertain about the future of this movement", Tharoor expressed hope that "youngsters behind it find a way to bring this energy into mainstream politics or per-

haps express it through their vote to be a voice of change and in doing so, become impossible to ignore". "This is an opportunity that the Opposition must seize," he said.

Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Priyanka Chaturvedi called it a sad reflection of youth losing hope in most of the opposition parties. In a post on X, she said there was a need to "rethink and reimagine the young voter". "That a social media-created idea of CJP has taken the GenZ imagination by storm is a sad reflection of them losing hope in most of the current opposition parties," Chaturvedi said. On its website, the CJP describes itself as a "political party for the people the system forgot to count. Five demands. Zero sponsors. One large, stubborn swarm". Complete with sections on 'manifesto', 'vision', 'eligibility' and 'contact', the website also claims that it is the "Voice of the Lazy and Unemployed".

On May 15, CJJ Surya Kant said, "There are youngsters like cockroaches, who don't get any employment or have any place in the profession. Some of them become media, some of them become social media, RTI activists and other activists, and they start attacking everyone." The next day, he said in a strongly worded clarification, "I am pained to read how a section of media has misquoted my oral observations made during the hearing of a frivolous case yesterday."