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Government of Assam

# Welcome to India



*People of Assam  
Welcome*

His Majesty  
**Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck**  
King of Bhutan

3-5 November 2023



**Shri Narendra Modi**  
Prime Minister of India



**Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma**  
Chief Minister, Assam

**A great honour and rare privilege for Assam to host His Majesty**

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Janasanyog /D/12888/ 23/ 03 November 2023



# Notice sent to Apple, CERT-In has started probe: IT Secretary on hacking attempt threat notification row

**NEW DELHI, Nov 2:** The government's cybersecurity agency CERT-In has started its investigation into the issue of the Apple threat notification received by several opposition MPs, and a notice has been sent to the company, IT Secretary S Krishnan said on Thursday.

The move assumes significance as the Minister of State for Electronics and IT Rajeev Chandrasekhar had earlier this week said that the government wants Apple to clarify if its devices are secure and why 'threat notifications' were sent to people in over 150 countries, given the company's repeated claims about its products being designed for privacy.

The government will investigate the threat notifications and also Apple's claims of being secure and privacy-compliant devices. Chandrasekhar had penned in a post on X (formerly Twitter) on Tuesday, after several opposition leaders claimed 'state-sponsored' attack notification were sent to them from Apple and the government ordered a probe.

IT Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw has categorically rejected the opposition's attack on the government, saying "compulsive critics" were indulging in the politics of "distraction", as they could not tolerate the country's progress under the PM's Narendra Modi leadership.

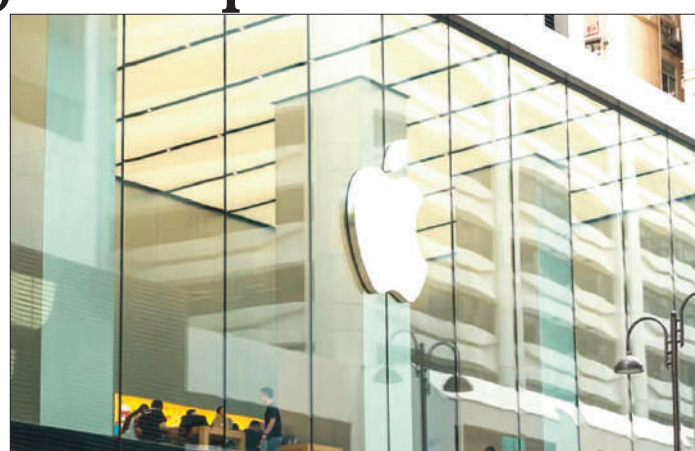
On Thursday, S Krishnan, Secretary, IT Ministry confirmed that notice has been sent to Apple.

"CERT-In has started its probe... they (Apple) will cooperate in this probe," Krishnan told reporters on the sidelines of an event related to the Meity-NSF research collaboration.

Indian Computer Emergency Response Team or CERT-In is the national nodal agency for responding to computer security incidents as and when they occur.

Asked if a notice has been sent to Apple, the IT Secretary answered in the affirmative.

Apple did not reply to an email by PTI seeking comments on the notice. Several opposition leaders on Tuesday claimed they have received an alert from Apple warning them of "state-sponsored



attackers trying to remotely compromise" their iPhones and alleged hacking by the government.

Those who received such notifications included Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge, party leaders Shashi Tharoor, Pawan Khera, K C Venugopal, Supriya Shrinate, T S Singhdeo and Bhupinder S Hooda; Trinamool Congress MP Mahua Moitra, CPI(M) general secretary Sitaram Yechury and SP chief Akhilesh Yadav.

Shiv Sena (UBT) MP Priyanka

Chaturvedi, Aam Aadmi Party's Raghav Chadha, AIMIM president Asaduddin Owaisi and some aides of Congress MP Rahul Gandhi also received the notification.

Yechury and Chaturvedi wrote to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, while Moitra shot off a missive to Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, raising concerns over the issue and demanding action.

iPhone-maker Apple Inc in a statement earlier had reacted to the claims of Opposition leaders, say-

ing it is possible that some threat notifications may be false alarms and some attacks may not be detected. It, however, refused to say what triggered warnings received by opposition leaders.

"Apple does not attribute the threat notifications to any specific state-sponsored attacker," the firm had said in a statement on October 31. State-sponsored attackers, it had said, are "very well-funded and sophisticated, and their attacks evolve over time".

"Detecting such attacks relies on threat intelligence signals that are often imperfect and incomplete. It's possible that some Apple threat notifications may be false alarms, or that some attacks are not detected," it said.

Apple had further said: "We are unable to provide information about what causes us to issue threat notifications, as that may help state-sponsored attackers adapt their behaviour to evade detection in the future."

The Cupertino, California-headquartered company had sent the threat notifications to individuals in nearly 150 countries. (PTI)

## Canberra's approach of 'great respect' to Indian govt, people: Australia's Oppn leader



**NEW DELHI, Nov 2:** Amid India's concerns over presence of Khalistani elements in various countries, Australia's Opposition leader Peter Dutton on Wednesday said Canberra's approach has been of "great respect" to the Indian government and people.

Dutton, who is currently on a visit to India, emphasised that while in Australia people can protest like they do against various political parties, being a democracy.

He further said, "people need to be respectful of the equities and interests" of Australia and that includes the relationship with India.

To a question about India's concerns about Khalistani activists in other countries including Australia against the backdrop of India-Canada row, he said: "I don't have any comment to make in relation to the India-Canada relationship, that's an issue between the two countries."

"From our own perspective, I think the approach that we've taken is to be very respectful of the sensitivities of the requests for support," he added. In Australia, Dutton said, people can protest as they do against him, his party or his opposition.

"So there's a reality to democracy in our country but people need to be respectful of the equities and interests that we have and that includes the relationship with India," he said at a media interaction.

He said that a lot of work has been done between respective agencies, and between the police who have monitored activities that they are concerned about and an opportunity for that to be conveyed back to authorities here in India as well.

"...That's the approach that we've taken, one of great respect to the Indian government and to people of India," he said.

Sharing his views on the recently operationalised free trade pact between the two nations -- the India-Australia Economic Cooper-

ation and Trade Agreement (ECTA), Dutton emphasised the importance of both sides "to continue to build on the strengths as they really exist and to look for the opportunities".

Sharing his views on avenues for bilateral cooperation, Dutton said he senses "a very significant opportunity" in the agriculture space, education sector and critical minerals and mining. On the other hand, Australia has a great opportunity to provide for India's energy security, Dutton said, adding that there are emerging opportunities in the defence sector as well.

"We need to think about the opportunity broadly and if we do that the jobs will follow, the investment, the economic multiplier will become a reality," he added.

Regarding the visit of Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese to Beijing and his meeting with President Xi Jinping, Dutton said: "We want to see the trading relationship (with China) grow and prosper as Prime Minister Albanese points out, as I pointed out when I was Defense Minister, we may be in the most precarious period since the second World War in our part of the world."

The Australian Opposition leader observed that India has its own experience on the land border, the Philippines has its own experience, while the Americans have spoken about some of the issues in the South China sea that they've faced in recent weeks.

"So there is a level of aggression that causes a lot of concern and angst because in the end, what we all desire is for continued peace in our part of the world, in the Indo-Pacific. We want to make sure that the trading relationship can continue to prosper. But Australia should never shed our values or step back from arguing for what we believe is right and just," he said. He said the Australian Prime Minister has some "hard messages" to deliver to President Xi during his visit to Beijing next week. (PTI)

## Srijan Foundation organises the Youth Star Chef Competition grand finale

**HT Bureau**

**GUWAHATI, Nov 2:** Srijan Foundation, a social organisation of Delhi, organised the grand finale of Youth Star Chef Competition on October 29 at the The Grand Floriana Banquet, GT Karnal Road, Delhi.

It was an initiative curated by The Srijan Youth Wing with a motto of bringing out the culinary skills of youths of the Jain community. This event was one of its kind in the Terapanth community of Delhi. The official launch of this event took place earlier this month on October 8, at Floriana Banquet, after a preliminary round where 22 contestants between the age group of 14 years to 24 years competed in two rounds (Flavour Medley and Quench & Crunch) to secure a place in the finals.

The grand finale (Perfect Palate), was graced by a panel of four esteemed judges, chef Ashish Bhasin (Culinary Director & Co-founder Opulence), Chef Gurkirat Singh (Finalist Master Chef-7), chef Alka Jain (Kalakriti Varadan Academy), and chef Harsh Bothra (Finalist Master Chef-6). Our contestants Archana Dakalia, Daksh Bengani, Nandini Jain, Megha Golcha, Heeral Lalwani, Bhavna Manot, Saanvi Babel, and Simran Surana participated and showcased their culinary skills with great enthusiasm. The preparation and efforts of all 22 contestants, as well as the presentation of their dishes, left a

significant impact on both the audience and the judges.

The competition began around 4pm and concluded at around 9:30pm. The winner of this competition was Bhavna Manot, who won the hearts of the judges with her preparation of the famous Rajasthani dish, Dal Baati Churma.

Archana Dakalia also succeeded in securing the second position with her exceptional culinary skills. The youngest contestant in this competition, Ms. Saanvi Babel, also impressed the judges, leading to a special award in her honor. The event was graced not only by the members of Srijan Foundation, but also dignitaries from the society. All levels, subjects, and arrangements of the competition received great appreciation from the judges.

The chairman of Srijan Foundation, Mohit Manot, along with vice chairpersons Lalit Lunia, Preeti Pagaria, general secretary Vandana Jain, Treasurer Rajesh Bengani, organising secretary Sushi! Bothra, and senior members of the organisation, honored the winners, runners-up, and judges with mementos. The chairman shared that the motto of this program was to attract the youths, towards the art of cooking, who are increasingly immersed in the digital world. He also expressed the organisation's commitment to conducting various programs on different topics in the future.

## Anita Kataria inaugurates 'HM Traders 2' at Athgaon

**HT Bureau**

**GUWAHATI, Nov 2:** HM Traders, which has stood the trust of customers in the plywood and laminates business for the last two decades, inaugurated its second store at Athgaon in Guwahati. The First Lady of the Assam, Anita Kataria on Monday formally inaugurated HM Traders 2 located at Borbhuyan Complex, Athgaon, Guwahati.

On this occasion, chief guest Kataria congratulated the store owner Bhansali family and expressed hope that in the coming times, HM Traders will provide better service to the customers than before. On this occasion, store owner Manglik Bhansali, Manju Bhansali, Gautam Bhansali, Rashmi Bhansali and other dignitaries were present. During this Bhansali said that through this new store spread over 400 square feet, he will provide plywood and laminate to retail customers at reasonable prices. He said that apart from plywood, laminates, Caryl Kitchen appliances, Exclusive Handle locks etc. are available in this new store. It is known that HM Traders based in Kumarpara has distribution of Tejash Ply, Ply Story, Royale Touche Luxury Laminates, Satyam Laminates, Welspun SPC Flooring, Exclusive Handles. Apart from this, HM Traders is the channel partner of Century Ply. In the new store, all items related to Plywood, Laminates, Hardware fittings etc. are available under one roof.

## People can send ₹ 2,000 notes by post to RBI offices for direct credit in bank accounts

**NEW DELHI, Nov 2:** People can send their ₹ 2,000 banknotes to specified regional offices of the Reserve Bank through the insured post for credit in their bank accounts. This is a hassle-free option for the people who are away from the regional offices of the Reserve Bank.

Besides, the RBI is offering TLR (Triple Lock Receiptable) form to people for a deposit of ₹ 2,000 banknotes in their bank account. "We encourage customers to send ₹ 2,000 notes through the insured post to the RBI for direct credit in their account in the most seamless and secure manner. This (will) save them from the hassle of travelling to specified branches and standing in queue," RBI Regional Director Rohit P Das said.

Both the options of TLR and insured post are highly secured, and there should not be any fear in the

mind of the public relating to these options, he said, adding that about 700 TLR forms have been received so far by the Delhi office alone.

The RBI, in its communications, has been reiterating these two options, apart from the exchange facility at its offices, he added.

On May 19, the RBI announced the withdrawal of ₹ 2,000 denomination bank notes from circulation. More than 97 per cent of the ₹ 2,000 banknotes in circulation as of May 19, 2023, have since been returned.

Giving details of arrangements made to manage exchange, Das said the regional office in Delhi has made special arrangements for senior citizens and "divyangjan" by providing a separate queue for them. There is a separate queue for those coming with less number of such currency notes, such as 2-3,



for faster disposal, he noted.

A drinking water facility and covered waiting area have been created so that there is no inconvenience to members of the public, he said, reiterating that ₹ 2,000 notes continue to be a legal tender. Das appreciated that Delhi Police is helping in crowd management and ensuring that no undesirable incident takes place in the vicinity of the RBI regional office. Public and entities holding such notes were initially asked to either exchange or deposit them in bank accounts by September 30. The

**HT Bureau**

**GUWAHATI, Nov 2:** Amazon.in on Thursday announced the launch of a comprehensive range of interior and exterior paints featuring over 1,000 shades along with a range of essentials that include waterproofing products, primers, enamels, painting tools, masking tapes and drop sheet covers for home improvement needs. To help customers visualize and compare paint shades, Amazon has also introduced a Paint Finder tool and a calculator, to help customers estimate the quantity of paint required, hence avoiding wastage. During the Amazon Great Indian Festival 2023, Northeastern region has contributed tremendously with more than 1.6X YoY growth during the festive season across Home, Kitchen and Outdoors category. Customers can still make the most of it and avail minimum 50% off on cookware and dining products, up to 40% of electric scooter and bikes, up to 70% off on home and kitchen appliances, up to 80% of Diwali lights and home décor, minimum 40% off on sport equipment and much more during Amazon Great Indian Festival Finale Days.

Commenting on the occasion, K N Srikanth, director, Amazon India said, "As India's most preferred marketplace, we are deeply committed to delivering an exceptional customer experience during the festive season. The northeastern region holds a prominent position and is growing at more than 1.6X YoY across Home, Kitchen and Outdoors category. We are building our capacity to cater to the emerging demands from the region and 20% of orders in Guwahati are being delivered within 1 day. Further, catering to the emerging demands of our valued customers, we have launched a wide selection featuring 1,000+ shades of interior and exterior paints that will be delivered with convenience at their doorsteps so that they can upgrade their homes during this auspicious festive period".

## Amazon.in launches comprehensive range of paints

## OPPO India expands Send-in Repair service to 25,000 pin codes

**HT Bureau**

**GUWAHATI, Nov 2:** OPPO India revolutionises after-sales service with its Service Centre 3.0, which expands its reach across India to cover 25,000 PIN codes with its pick-up and drop service.

As part of this programme, the brand has also fine-tuned process efficiencies to guarantee a quick 24-hour TAT (turnaround time) for 80% of all smartphone repairs, including software issues, screen and battery replacement, speaker damage, and touch-screen malfunction.

The Customer Service 3.0 initiative, introduced last year, already provides one-hour onsite repairs for select devices, new product demonstrations, free pick-up and drop, and debit/credit cards-based bank EMI options on repairs, among several other benefits. OPPO India also provides transparent, real-time repairs where customers can view OPPO technicians fixing their devices in front of their eyes.

Under the 24-hour send-in repair service, customers can schedule a free pick-up and drop for their smartphone by submitting the Send-in repair form on the OPPO India website; here, they will need to enter the device IMEI number and registered mobile number along with the pick-up address. OPPO India's 24-hour repair TAT starts once the device reaches the

service centre.

Customers will receive regular updates through SMS and WhatsApp to inform them of the repair progress. In cases where devices are picked up from remote areas, the pick-up, repairs, and delivery are completed between 5 and 7 days. OPPO India Customers can also communicate with @OPPOCareIN on Twitter or Facebook to avail of the Send-in repair service.

Commenting on the expansion of its service initiative, Dmyant Singh Khanoria, CMO, OPPO India, stated, "Customers are at the core of everything we do. Expanding our smartphone repair pick-up and drop service to 25,000 pin codes reflects OPPO's dedication to ensuring accessible customer service across the length and breadth of the country. We are redefining convenience and satisfaction for our users, wherever they may be, making the OPPO experience effortlessly within reach for every customer."

OPPO India has also announced festive offers\* at its service centres—commencing on November 6 till November 10—to include a 25% discount on repairs for display, mainboard, and battery, and a 10% discount on phone accessories, free protective film, back cover and its phone disinfection service.

## Adani Enterprise Q2 net profit halves

**NEW DELHI, Nov 2:** Billionaire Gautam Adani's flagship firm on Thursday reported halving of the second quarter net profit as losses in the mining business widened and operating expenses rose.

Adani Enterprises Ltd's July-September quarter consolidated net profit of ₹ 222.82 crore was down 50.5 per cent when compared with ₹ 460.94 crore net profit in the same period last year, according to a stock exchange filing by the company. While operating expenses rose 8 per cent, the company booked a one-time loss of Rs 88 crore on realisable value of assets held for sale of one of the subsidiaries of the group, Mundra Solar PV Ltd. Losses on commercial mining widened to about ₹ 340 crore from ₹ 132.22 crore in July-September 2022. AEL's businesses of new energy and airport posted robust growth in revenues and pre-tax profits. New energy business, which includes solar module manufacturing, saw revenues triple to ₹

1,939 crore and EBITDA rose 11x to ₹ 628 crore. Airports business saw a 49 per cent jump in revenues to ₹ 1946 crore and a 15 per cent increase in EBITDA to ₹ 568 crore. The company said it now has 4 GW of operational solar manufacturing capacity while module sales rose 205 per cent to 630 MW.

### Public Notice (Date 25/10/2023)

It is for information of the general public that the draft list of Polling Stations for 111-Rongthang (ST) LAC & 112-Amri (ST) LAC in respect of West Karbi Anglong Election District has been prepared in accordance with the final Delimitation Order of the Election Commission vide Notification No.2132/AS/2023(DEL) Vol.V Dated 11/08/2023 and is available for inspection at the office of the undersigned (Election Branch).

Any objections/Suggestions with regard to the draft list of Polling Stations may be lodged in written to the undersigned on or before 04/11/2023.

Sd/-

District Election Officer  
West Karbi Anglong, Hamren



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WORLD

8
NORTHEAST

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# Himanta ridicules Cong's fixation on Akbar

## Post-poll leadership change in Chhattisgarh predicted

**HT Bureau**  
GUWAHATI, Nov 2: Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Thursday questioned the Congress party's fixation on historical figures, specifically Akbar, following an Election Commission (EC) notice issued to him regarding his 'Akbar' remark.

Addressing the media during his visit to Chhattisgarh, Sarma expressed his surprise at the Election Commission notice, stating, "The Congress raised objections when I mentioned Akbar, but it would have been logical if my comments were directed at TS Singh Deo, Baghel, or any other Congress leader. It appears that for Chhattisgarh Congress, Akbar holds more significance than Bhupesh Baghel. I wonder if Akbar is more important than Bhupesh Baghel?"

The Assam chief minister, who



arrived in Raipur ahead of the state assembly elections to campaign for the upcoming polls, also made claims about internal developments within the Congress party.

"As per the information I have, Congress has decided that Bhupesh

Baghel's name should be removed from banners and posters. This has started in the last 10 days. I was in Congress for 22 years, so I got internal information about the party. After the elections, Congress will remove Baghel from the leadership

post either immediately or gradually," he claimed.

It is worth mentioning that Sarma's remarks come in the midst of the election fervour, adding a new layer of complexity to the political landscape in Chhattisgarh. The comments have sparked discussions and debates among political circles, raising questions about the Congress party's strategies and internal dynamics.

The meeting between Himanta Biswa Sarma and Chhattisgarh chief minister Bhupesh Baghel in Mohla-Manpur-Ambagarh Chowki has further intensified speculations about the unfolding political scenario in the state.

Commenting on the issue of alleged religious conversion in the state, Sarma emphasized that conversion is not merely a political problem but a significant social

issue and a criminal conspiracy against the community.

"Conversion in Chhattisgarh is not merely a political problem; it's a significant social issue and a criminal conspiracy against the community," he added.

The chief minister also underscored the urgency for robust legislation to address this matter, highlighting the need for decisive action against conversions driven by greed, adding, "Bhupesh Baghel himself would stand against such activities, acknowledging the seriousness of the situation".

Notably, Chhattisgarh is gearing up for a two-phase election scheduled for November. The first phase, encompassing 20 seats, is set to take place on November 7, followed by the remaining 70 seats on (CONTD. ON PAGE-9)

# Bhutan king's maiden visit to Assam from today



**GUWAHATI, Nov 2:** Bhutan King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck will be on a three-day visit to Assam from Friday, the first trip by any monarch of the neighbouring country to this northeastern state, officials said.

During his visit, he will attend various programmes here and also visit Kaziranga National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site famed for its one-horned rhinos.

"In the annals of Assam and Bhutan's history, there has never been an official visit by the king of Bhutan to Guwahati. Official responsibilities and geographical realities had previously led to greater interaction with the central government in New Delhi," Dasho Tsering Wangda, vice-president of Bhutan India Friendship Association, said here on Thursday.

"Against this backdrop, the king will make a historic state visit to Assam, extending the goodwill of the Bhutanese people, fortifying the friendship and demonstrating solidarity with Assam and India for their crucial role in ensuring unprecedented peace in the region," he added.

Mentioning the friendly relations between India and Bhutan for centuries, Wangda said there was a "brief period of unease" due to insurgency problem in northeast India, with many of these outfits

putting up camps inside their territory. "It was a challenging phase as the insurgent groups posed security concerns for both countries. The leaders of the two neighbours consistently prioritised their relationship and resolved the issues with the common goal of sustained peace," the former consul general at the Royal Bhutanese Consulate, Kolkata, added.

The current leadership of India, led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has further ensured sustained peace, he said.

Sharing details of the visit, the Royal Bhutanese consulate general said the king will be accompanied by his wife and two sons.

"After spending the first day in Guwahati with various engagements, he will go to Kaziranga on Saturday. The king will spend a night there too and then proceed to New Delhi from Jorhat on Sunday for the next leg of India trip," the former official of the Royal Bhutan government added.

Meanwhile, officials said the king and his entourage will arrive at the Lokpriya Gopinath Bordoloi International Airport here by a special flight on Friday forenoon. He will first visit Kamakhya temple atop Nilachal hill in the city and then hold interactions with people of Bhutanese community at a city hotel, (CONTD. ON PAGE-9)

# Hopeful of India designating Hamas as terror organisation: Israeli Ambassador Naor Gilon

**NEW DELHI, Nov 2:** Israel is providing to India more information relating to Hamas and it is hopeful that New Delhi will designate the group as a terrorist organisation as done by around 40 nations, Israeli ambassador Naor Gilon said on Thursday.

In an exclusive interview to PTI, the envoy said India is supporting Israel the way it wanted and that the current "crisis" only proved how strong the ties between the two countries are.

Delving into various aspects of the Hamas-Israel conflict, he said Tel Aviv is fine with New Delhi sending humanitarian aid to people of Gaza as it is in support of extending humanitarian assistance to those in need.

The ambassador, at the same time, underlined Israel's expecta-

tion from India to designate Hamas as a terrorist organisation.

"We are in a process of providing information and making it very organised," he said, exuding confidence that New Delhi will heed to Israel's request. "Israel is doing it all around the world and not only in India. Hamas is already designated (as a terrorist organisation) in around 40 countries. All the European Union member nations and the countries like the US, the UK, Australia, Canada have done it. We want many of our friends to designate it."

Referring to Hamas leader Khaled Mashal virtually participating in a pro-Palestine rally in Kerala, the Israeli envoy said India's designation of Hamas will help prevent such activities. "I hope India will (CONTD. ON PAGE-9)

# Ayush minister inaugurates Ayurvedic hospital in Dudhnoi



**GUWAHATI, Nov 2:** Union minister of ports, shipping and waterways and Ayush, Sarbananda Sonowal on Thursday said that people of Dudhnoi and its adjoining areas can now benefit from the

goodness of the Ayurveda with a new Ayurvedic hospital opening in the area.

Sonowal said this while inaugurating a 50-bedded Ayurvedic hospital at Dudhnoi in the Goalpara district on Thursday. The hospital

is the second such to be opened in the state in less than a month after Majuli.

Speaking at the occasion, Sarbananda Sonowal said, "It gives me immense pleasure that people of Dudhnoi and its adjoining areas can now avail the wonders of India's rich heritage of Ayurveda. Under the inspiring leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi ji, India has invested to revive the rich heritage of Ayurveda that has been healing humanity for thousands of years. As Assam, along with the rest of Northeast, receives a focused attention to become the engine of growth for India's next economic resurgence, it is important to have a robust healthcare infrastructure, which is modern, inclusive and integrated." "By integrating a modern approach to validate the efficacy of traditional medicine (CONTD. ON PAGE-9)

# Amit Shah terms Cong 'cut, commission, corruption' party, slams INDIA bloc constituents



**KARNAL (Haryana), Nov 2:** Union home minister Amit Shah on Thursday targeted the Congress by describing it as a party of "cut, commission and corruption" and also slammed the INDIA alliance, saying the opposition parties have joined hands to serve their own interests.

The BJP, on the other hand, works for the welfare of the peo-

ple, he said. Addressing the "Antyodaya Sammelan" programme organized by the Haryana government here, Shah also congratulated the Manohar Lal Khattar dispensation for carrying out overall development of the state and said it ended corruption and improved the law and order situation in the last nine years.

With Lok Sabha and Haryana

Assembly polls due next year, Shah also appealed to people to make the BJP victorious on all the seats in the state. He accused the Congress of indulging in appeasement and caste-based politics.

"The Congress is a party of cut, commission and corruption. The party's hand (election symbol) is not with the people of Haryana," the Union home minister alleged.

Shah slammed Haryana Congress leader Bhupinder Hooda, saying, "I want to ask Hooda ji whether the development which took place in the last nine years (under BJP) is visible or if (your) eyes are still shut."

Terming the INDIA coalition a "ghamandiya" (arrogant) alliance, Shah alleged that all the 27 constituents of the opposition bloc are "parivarvadis" (dynasts). "All the 27 outfits are 'parivarvadis'. Some have to adjust their son, some have to make (CONTD. ON PAGE-9)

# KLDB distributes appointment letters to 50 teachers in Diphu

**HT Bureau**  
**DIPHU, Nov 2:** The Karbi Language Development Board (KLDB) of Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council (KAAC) has distributed appointment letters to 29 Karbi Medium Teachers (KMT) and 21 Karbi Language Teachers (KLT) in a function held at the conference hall of New KAAC Secretariat building here on Thursday.

The appointment letters were handed over by chief executive member (CEM), KAAC, Tuliram Ronghang in presence of executive member (EM), KAAC, Education Richard Tokbi and Diphu MLA Bidyasing Englang.

It may be mentioned here that the KLDB has started setting-up 29 Karbi medium schools in both Karbi Anglong and West Karbi Anglong districts from 2008. With today's appointment there are 58 KMTs. The following year KLTs were also appointed to teach Karbi



subjects in primary, ME and high school levels.

In his welcome address, Tokbi said all together 50 teachers have been appointed by KLDB to teach in Karbi Medium schools as well as in primary section, adding, "Out of this 29 candidates have been appointed as Karbi Medium Teachers and 21 candidates as Karbi Language Teachers".

"I am very happy to appoint new teachers for Karbi medium schools and KLT for primary section. The appointment of KMTs and KLTs has been done by KLDB for the development and promotion of Karbi language. Our CEM Tuliram Ronghang sir has provided the much needed support for the development of Karbi language and for his positive (CONTD. ON PAGE-9)

# KAAC EM Lunsing Teron to host health check-up event on Nov 5

**HT Bureau**  
**DIPHU, Nov 2:** The executive member (EM) of Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council (KAAC) Panchayat & Rural Development (P&RD) and Irrigation, Lunsing Teron has organised a one day free health check-up and distribution of medicines in memory of his late mother Kajir Ronghangpi on November 5 at Rasinja Aklam in Dokmoka.

Informing this, the EM said on November five free health check-up for villagers will be organised at Rasinja Aklam, Dokmoka.

It is worth mentioning that the health camp is organised under Howraghat LA segment covering 6 Member of Autonomous Council (MAC) constituencies of Karbi Anglong i.e. Nonmati, Howraghat, Phuloni, Mahamaya, Langhin and Langler where free medicines will also be distributed. "I am organising the (CONTD. ON PAGE-9)

Adaptation finance gap figures between USD 194 billion and USD 366 billion per year

# Finance gap in climate adaptation poses risk for vulnerable nations: UN

**NEW DELHI, Nov 2:** Despite clear signs of accelerating climate risks and impacts worldwide, the adaptation finance gap is widening and now stands at between USD 194 billion and USD 366 billion per year, according to a new report by the United Nations.

Released ahead of the annual United Nations (UN) climate talks in Dubai, UAE, the "Adaptation Gap Report 2023: Underfunded, Underprepared - Inadequate investment and planning on climate adaptation leaves the world exposed" finds that the adaptation finance needs of developing countries are 10-18 times as big as international public finance flows - over 50 per cent higher than the previous range estimate.

The adaptation finance gap is



the difference between the estimated costs of adapting to climate change in developing countries and the amount of finance avail-

able to meet these costs. "Today's Adaptation Gap Report shows a growing divide between need and action when it comes to

protecting people from climate extremes. Action to protect people and nature is more pressing than ever," UN secretary-general Antonio Guterres said in his message on the report.

"Lives and livelihoods are being lost and destroyed, with the vulnerable suffering the most. We are in an adaptation emergency. We must act like it. And take steps to close the adaptation gap, now," he added. "In 2023, climate change yet again became more disruptive and deadly: temperature records toppled, while storms, floods, heatwaves, and wildfires caused devastation. These intensifying impacts tell us that the world must urgently cut greenhouse gas emissions and increase adaptation efforts to protect vulnerable (CONTD. ON PAGE-9)

# Former DNB chairman passes away

**HT Bureau**  
**DIPHU, Nov 2:** Former chairman of Diphu Municipal Board (DMB) and a popular folk fusion musician Daniel Ingti passed away on Wednesday after suffering from a stroke.

Ingti was a resident of Rong Karbi in Diphu. He is survived by his wife and a two and a half year old son and aunt. His mortal remains will be laid to rest at the cemetery of the Bible Baptist Church in Diphu on Friday.

According to his family, the former DMB chairman reached home on his scooter around 7 pm and suddenly fell on the ground. He was immediately taken to the Diphu Medical College and Hospital, where doctors declared him brought dead. His death occurred due to a stroke, doctors said.

Several political leaders, friends and well wishers arrived at his residence to pay their last tribute to Ingti, who was also the general secretary of ST Morcha, BJP, East Karbi Anglong district committee. Many also took to social media to express their grief on the occasion.

Chief executive member of Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council (KAAC), Tuliram Ronghang visited Ingti's residence to pay his last respect. The CEM in his condolence message said, "I offer my prayer and final adieu to the departed late Daniel Ingti. Rest in Peace my good friend."



MLAs Bidyasing Englang and Dorsing Ronghang and president of, BJP, EKADC, Roland Killing also visited Ingti's residence to offer prayer and condolences to the bereaved family.

Ingti was the son of late Sarsing Engti and late Rameswari Ronghangpi. He was born on January 1, 1982. He did his schooling from Hojai Don Bosco School. He did his graduation from the Diphu Govt. College here.

He developed his interest in music during his college days and formed a band called Excruator, a Karbi rock band and produced his own albums 'Nihang Anat' and Kaikae. (CONTD. ON PAGE-9)



## QUOTE OF THE DAY

*It's not what you pay a man, but what he costs you that counts. - Will Rogers*

## India's election campaigns in jeopardy

Election campaigns in India are undergoing a disturbing transformation, where the fundamental principles of free and fair elections are under threat. The level playing field for opposition parties, in their endeavour to challenge the ruling BJP, has all but disappeared. This imbalance is primarily due to the BJP's stranglehold on funding, facilitated by the controversial electoral bond scheme that grants it privileged status as the incumbent ruling party. The opposition finds itself severely handicapped in their electoral campaigns, grappling with a dearth of financial resources. Furthermore, a deliberate strategy of harassment, including raids, summonses, and arrests, is being employed to impede their ability to effectively campaign against Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Prominent opposition figure, senior advocate, and former union minister Kapil Sibal, in a recent post on X, lamented the situation, stating, "ED targets leaders of almost all political parties in the opposition." He decried the weaponisation of the Enforcement Directorate (ED) and the unjust denial of bail to opposition leaders. Sibal emphasised the urgent need for the courts to intervene and address the blatant misuse of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA).

Sibal's remarks on X came on the heels of the Enforcement Directorate summoning AAP leader and Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal in connection with a liquor case in Delhi. Notably, when the Supreme Court denied bail to Delhi's former deputy chief minister Manish Sisodia, Sibal rallied the opposition, calling for a unified front. It is apparent that the government's motto appears to be, "Send them to jail first, evidence can follow." It is imperative to recognize that the ED's summons to Arvind Kejriwal coincided with the upcoming polls in five states. At such a critical juncture, political parties and leaders should have the freedom to focus entirely on their election campaigns without undue distractions. Kejriwal, demonstrating resolve, chose to prioritize his campaign over the summons. However, even permission for a poll rally in Singrauli, Madhya Pradesh, was denied to him and his party. It is essential to note that Madhya Pradesh is governed by the BJP, who are fiercely striving to retain power in the state. Simultaneously, in Delhi, another AAP leader and state minister, Raaj Kumar Anand, witnessed a raid on his residence and 11 other properties in a money laundering case. Prior to this, the ED had already apprehended two key ministers and AAP leaders, Satyendar Jain and Manish Sisodia.

The pervasive belief is that the BJP, rattled by the formation of the INDIA alliance, is implementing a plan to target its top leaders. AAP's Raghav Chadha contends that the first target in this strategy is Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal. The opposition has brought the issue of political misuse of Central investigating agencies to the attention of the Supreme Court of India. The Supreme Court is currently hearing petitions challenging the Electoral Bond scheme and has agreed to hear several petitions related to the misuse of the ED. On several occasions, the SC has criticised the ED for its high-handed actions. The question that arises is whether the ED believes that only opposition leaders deserve its attention while BJP leaders and their associates remain untouchable. This inequity raises concerns about the principle of equality before the law, a constitutional guarantee to the citizens of India.

# 2024: India's priciest poll with a Hindutva-development cocktail



Election outcomes in a country as diverse as India are inherently unpredictable, yet an assessment is both inevitable and insightful. The upcoming elections in five states are often considered the semifinals for the 2024 Parliamentary elections. While I hold the conviction that each election possesses unique dynamics, distinct from others, they all offer a glimpse into the future, providing voters and readers with a somewhat blurry preview of things to come. Recognizing the significance of these elections, it is crucial to approach them with due importance and scrutiny.

Political parties are currently immersed in the intricate process of ticket distribution, each fervently identifying optimal candidates for constituencies. The unfolding scenario presents a challenging outlook for the BJP, which appears to be grappling with internal issues, while surprisingly, the Congress exudes an optimistic vibe. In three states - Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, and Chhattisgarh - other political parties seem almost negligible, setting the stage for a battle royale between the two national parties. The outcome of this contest will undoubtedly convey a powerful message for the future. While abstaining from speculation on victory or defeat, it's noteworthy that in Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh, the BJP is striving to narrow the gap with the Congress, while in Rajasthan, the Congress, led by Ashok Gehlot, faces the challenge of winning over voters to influence the pendulum that often swings between the two parties in every election. Telangana adds a surprising element to the mix for the Congress, and though the prospect of an upset looms, one certainty prevails - that the Congress is poised to emerge as a formidable force, challenging predictions of its defeat in the state.

This election holds heightened significance for the BJP. Securing a majority in the states would alleviate concerns about the upcoming general elections; however, a defeat would necessitate profound introspection. Surface indications suggest a weariness within the BJP, with signs of a strained relationship emerging with the voters. The setbacks in Karnataka and Himachal Pradesh served as warning signals, prompting the realization that a reevaluation of strategy is imperative for the party. A new narrative must be crafted, recognizing that every strategy and narrative has an expiration date. The BJP of 2014, under the dynamic leadership of Narendra Modi, marked a paradigm shift in Indian politics. Unlike the BJP of Vajpayee and Advani, this iteration was characterized by aggression, irreverence, a no-holds-barred attitude, and a willingness to go to any extent to secure electoral victories. It exhibited an absence of complacency, employing every conceivable tactic and disregarding traditional norms. This election beckons the BJP to rediscover and redefine its approach, setting new standards for itself and its supporters.

The 2014 election marked the pinnacle of India's electoral spending, standing out as the most expensive campaign at that time. Meticulously crafted by hardcore professionals, its strategy blended Hindutva and development into a potent cocktail. The campaign portrayed Modi as a transformative figure, almost a messiah destined to reshape lives. Crucially, the party exhibited neither confusion nor guilt regarding its embrace of Hindutva. In contrast to Atal-Advani, who had utilized Hindutva with a degree of uncertainty about its broader acceptance, Modi, drawing from his Gujarat experiment, exuded supreme confidence. He believed that for the BJP, Hindutva was indispensable, akin to a fish needing water, and that it should be fully exploited to establish a lasting social foundation.

PM Modi's foresight was evident, always staying a step ahead of rivals both within and outside his party. His strategic prowess proved effective, resulting in the BJP establishing a robust social base that guarantees its enduring presence in Indian politics. Even in the event of electoral setbacks, the BJP is poised to remain a prominent force on the national stage for decades. Modi's leadership has cultivated a dedicated legion of supporters proudly displaying their ideological allegiance, unabashedly identifying as Hindutvavadis - a shift from the past trend among BJP supporters. This solidification of the BJP's core belief system implies that in the future, the party may only need to make adjustments to its approach rather than fundamentally redefine its foundation.

The BJP witnessed an original contribution in the form of Modi's gladiatorial instinct. Within this party, every election, thanks to him, became a high-stakes battle akin to a struggle for survival. Modi approached each electoral contest as if it were his final one, a mindset that contributed to turning seemingly precarious situations into victories. This instinct led to unprecedented actions, such as a complete cabinet overhaul in Gujarat, introducing an unfamiliar face as the chief minister. Similarly, in Uttarakhand, he removed two senior leaders as CM, appointing Pushkar Singh Dhami, a relative unknown, to the position. Notably, during the 2017 MCD election in Delhi, Modi countered a decade of anti-incumbency by changing candidates in every seat - a move that resulted in a resounding return to power for

the BJP in all three instances. However, in the current election, there appears to be a perceptible waning of Modi's once-formidable political touch. Three states - MP, Rajasthan, and Chhattisgarh - bear witness to a notable shift in Modi's initial plans. Initially inclined to replace Shivraj Singh Chauhan, Vasundhara Raje Scindia, and Raman Singh with younger faces, the current scenario reflects a reversal of that intent. Raman Singh, absent from the Chhattisgarh scene, suddenly emerged as a contestant, indirectly assumed to be the chief ministerial candidate. In MP, initial speculations of Shivraj Singh Chauhan's move to the central cabinet were countered by Modi's commendation of him, despite senior cabinet ministers like Narendra Singh Tomar being fielded for assembly elections. The situation in Rajasthan adds a bizarre twist. Publicly known for his reservations about Vasundhara Raje Scindia, Modi's actions, including speculated deliberate humiliation, eventually led to her and her substantial supporter base being accommodated. This shift suggests a potential exhaustion of ideas or a diminished appetite for new experiments, revealing a certain vulnerability on Modi's part.

The Congress appears to be standing on more solid ground, despite minor hiccups, across all four states. Opting for recognized faces, the party has granted them considerable autonomy to formulate their strategies. While Kamal Nath's soft Hindutva stance may be criticized, the central leadership refrains from dictating his course of action. Additionally, the Congress exhibits a greater sense of cohesion, successfully quelling factional politics. Differences between leaders like Bhupesh Baghel and T S Singhdev in Chhattisgarh and Ashok Gehlot and Sachin Pilot in Rajasthan have been ironed out. In Telangana, Revant Reddy has been entrusted with significant authority. The Congress is evidently engaged in ideological reinvention, exemplified by the "caste census" slogan, as it seeks a new social base. In contrast, the BJP appears fatigued, relying on familiar rhetoric and an old narrative, with Modi seemingly as their sole savior. The effectiveness of this approach remains uncertain, prompting the BJP to reconsider its electoral vision and design if it aspires to secure a third term nationally. *(The writer can be reached at dipaknewslive@gmail.com)*

For the United States and much of Europe, the problem, with heart-breaking scenes of the Gaza carnage dominating images of the war, is that the mud sticks because of perceptions of hypocrisy and double standards. The perceptions are reinforced by a lack of equitable empathy for Palestinians compared to what Biden and other Western leaders have to say about Israeli casualties. To be sure, the Global South, including the Arab and Muslim world, has no good options in the Gaza war. The United States is the only power with true leverage in Jerusalem.

## Festive October witnessed fading output, demand, employment

By: Dr. Gyan Pathak

Deceleration in India's manufacturing sector growth was the worst in the last eight months since February this year, reflecting fading of output, demand, and employment generation in the country. It is particularly ominous, since it's a festive season and the first month of the busy second-half of the India economy when improvement is generally expected after the first-half of the lean economic season of the financial year.

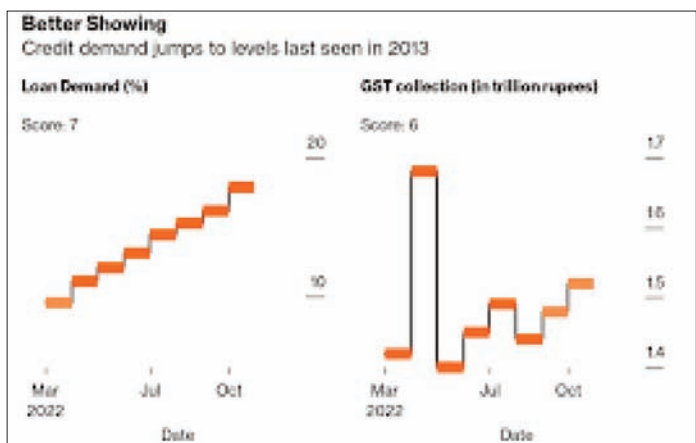
The Purchasing Manager's Index (PMI), an economic indicator derived from the survey conducted by S&P Global India Manufacturing PMI, released on November 1, says that growth of several measures subsided in October as demand for certain types of products faded. Indian manufacturing growth decelerated to the slowest on account of decline in growth of total new orders, production, exports, buying levels and stocks purchase. Hiring activity faded and business confidence slipped to a five-month low. Meanwhile, cost pressures intensified.

The seasonally adjusted PMI was 55.5 in October. It may be seen as not bad, since PMI above 50 in interpreted as expansion, while a score below 50 indicates contraction. Though it was also above the long-run average of 53.9, but it is noteworthy that it slipped from 57.5 in September and was the slowest rate of expansion since February, even as it pointed to a good overall operating conditions for the 28th straight month.

The monthly survey has also noted that the growth eased to an eight-month low weighed down by competitive pressures and weak demand at some plants. Granular data highlighted a particularly marked slowdown in the consumer goods sub-sector.

October data has signalled a deceleration in growth in new orders since September. Anecdotal evidence suggested that subdued demand for certain products and fierce competition stymied the earlier upturn. The rate of expansion was the softest in a year with consumer goods especially affected.

As for growth of international sales, the rise was the weakest in October in the last four months. Those firms that experienced an



increase in new orders from abroad reported gains from Asia, Europe, the Middle East, and the US.

Despite deceleration in growth, the ongoing increases in new business continued to spur recruitment efforts among goods producers in India. However, with fewer than 4% of companies hiring extra staff and 95% leaving workforce numbers unchanged, the rate of job creation was slight and the slowest since April.

Even though, the October data pointed to sufficient capacity levels at Indian manufacturers, as backlogs of work were little-changed since September. Concurrently, suppliers were often able to deliver inputs in a timely manner, with vendor performance being broadly stable.

Goods producers sought to add to their inventories and meet production schedules by purchasing additional materials in October. The rate of input buying growth was sharp, though the slowest in eight months.

As has been observed since mid-2021, stock trends diverged in October as growth of input inventories contrasted with another fall in holdings of finished goods. The former saw a softer uptick and the latter a quicker reduction.

Price trends were also mixed. Both input costs and output charges increased, but inflation of the former accelerated while factory gate charges rose to a weaker extent. When listing materials that had increased in price, firms mentioned aluminium, chemicals, leather, paper, rubber and steel.

Business sentiment remained firmly inside positive territory, but slipped to a five-month low amid concerns surrounding the path for inflation and demand.

Pollyanna De Lima, Economics Associate Director at S&P Global Market Intelligence said, "India's manufacturing sector generated substantial growth in October, despite a challenging global economic environment. Still, insights from surveyed purchasing managers pointed to the deceleration of several measures."

"The survey's new orders index slipped to a one-year low," she said, "as some firms raised concerns about the current demand picture for their products. Consumer goods was behind most of the slowdown, recording considerably softer increases in sales, production, exports, input inventories and buying levels. Growth of all of the aforementioned variables was led by capital goods makers which, with the exception of new orders, registered accelerated rates of expansion."

"We saw further indication of broadly stable inflationary forces across the manufacturing industry. It appears that a moderate increase in input costs was simply passed on to clients. Nonetheless, qualitative evidence from the future output question revealed an interesting finding, as reports of rising inflation expectations were expected to dent demand and subsequently production growth over the course of the coming 12 months," she said.

Fall in manufacturing sector activity is indeed a matter of serious concern, at a time when India is desperate need of accelerated level of production for substantial level of employment generation, which in turn may push up demand and production. Falling business confidence, activity, output and high level of unemployment in October does not augur well. *(IPA Service)*

By: James M Dorsey

The stakes in the Gaza war for the United States and President Joe Biden could not be higher. For the United States, it's the ability to garner support for its positions on multiple issues, among which the Ukraine war looms large.

Biden's bear hug approach towards Israel has sparked widespread allegations of hypocrisy and double standards. Neither the United States, nor Europe for that matter, has a credible response to calls to apply to the Gaza war the same standards of international humanitarian law and the law of war they uphold for Ukraine.

"We are losing the battle for hearts and minds in the Global South. Whatever credibility and moral ground we had is gone. Phrases like a rules-based world order are meaningless. At this point, we can stand on our heads, it does not matter. Why should the Global South take our insistence on universal human rights and international law serious if we are the first to cast them by the wayside?" a Western diplomat asked.

In a more hopeful note, The Economist suggested that America "still has a lot to offer, especially if it works with its allies to enhance security and keep trade open. Its values, however imperfectly they are realised, still attract people from all across the planet in a way that Chinese communism does not."

Last week's United Nations General Assembly vote in favour of a resolution calling for a "immediate, durable and sustained humanitarian truce leading to a cessation of hostilities" in Gaza tells the story. The language was designed to accommodate the US' refusal to call for a ceasefire, insisting instead on phrases such as "humanitarian pause" or "humanitarian corridors."

Speaking on CBS' Face the Nation, US National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan insisted, "A humanitarian pause would be a good thing to get hostages out, but you can bet that Hamas will try to use that time to their advantage as well. These are the things that Israel was trying to grapple with."

At the same time Sullivan added that Hamas' alleged use of civilians as human shields "does not lessen (Israel's) responsibility to distinguish between terrorists



For the United States and much of Europe, the problem, with heart-breaking scenes of the Gaza carnage dominating images of the war, is that the mud sticks because of perceptions of hypocrisy and double standards. The perceptions are reinforced by a lack of equitable empathy for Palestinians compared to what Biden and other Western leaders have to say about Israeli casualties. To be sure, the Global South, including the Arab and Muslim world, has no good options in the Gaza war. The United States is the only power with true leverage in Jerusalem.

and innocent civilians and to protect the lives of innocent civilians as they conduct this military operation. That's true of striking from the air. It is true of going in on the ground."

The US official went on to say that "under international humanitarian law hospitals should not be targeted. They are not military targets."

In a separate interview on ABC's This Week, Sullivan acknowledged that thousands of innocent Palestinian civilians have been killed in Israeli air strikes but stopped short of saying that their deaths violated international law.

"There have been deaths of thousands of Palestinian civilians in this conflict, and that is an absolute tragedy. Those people did not deserve to die. Those people deserved to live lives of peace and sanctity and dignity," Sullivan said.

Earlier, Biden called into doubt Palestinian casualty figures provided by Gaza's Hamas-controlled health ministry. Palestinian analysts charge that the United States may be complicit in Israeli violations of international law by aiding and abetting Israel's indiscriminate bombing.

More than 250 prominent British lawyers advised their government in an open letter to "take urgent steps" to ensure the United Kingdom complies with its obligations under the Geneva conventions not to encourage, aid or assist violations of interna-

tional humanitarian law by other states.

As Sullivan spoke, the Palestinian Red Crescent Society said it had received warnings from Israeli authorities to "immediately evacuate" al-Quds hospital in Gaza.

Journalists reporting from Gaza said the hospital hosts hundreds of injured patients and some 12,000 displaced persons. Israeli air strikes hit areas near Al-Quds as well as Gaza City's Al-Shifa hospital.

Video posted by the Red Crescent Society on X showed people in Al-Quds covering their mouths inside the smoke-filled building. Israel asserts that Hamas uses hospitals as command centres and to camouflage its underground tunnel network.

The UN resolution was adopted despite US objections that it failed to condemn Hamas by name for its wanton killing of more than 1,400 mostly civilian Israelis during its October 7 attack. The US also wanted the resolution to label 239 people, mostly civilians, kidnapped during the Hamas assault as hostages rather than captives.

The US further refused the resolution because it did not recognise Israel's right to self-defence.

This week, Yahya Sinwar, the Hamas Gaza leader, proposed an "immediate" exchange of hostages for the estimated 6,600 Palestinians in Israeli prisons. Hamas claims 50 hostages have been killed in Israeli air strikes.

To be fair, those in favour of

the UN resolution and those who voted against it all have mud on their faces by prioritising the scoring of political points above the saving of innocent lives.

For the United States and much of Europe, the problem, with heart-breaking scenes of the Gaza carnage dominating images of the war, is that the mud sticks because of perceptions of hypocrisy and double standards. The perceptions are reinforced by a lack of equitable empathy for Palestinians compared to what Biden and other Western leaders have to say about Israeli casualties.

The perceptions are reinforced by a lack of equitable empathy for Palestinians compared to what Biden and other Western leaders have to say about Israeli casualties. To be sure, the Global South, including the Arab and Muslim world, has no good options in the Gaza war. The United States is the only power with true leverage in Jerusalem.

Even so, Biden does not have total freedom. Irrespective of whether he wants to compel Israel to abide by international law, he is hemmed in by domestic political constraints. Republican Mike Johnson's introduction of a bill in Congress supporting Israel that was adopted with an overwhelming majority as his first act as speaker of the US House of Representatives demonstrates domestic restraints on Biden in the run-up to next year's presidential election.

The bill highlighted a gap between Congress and public opinion that is far more divided with thousands on the streets of cities in the United States and across the globe marching against the war. In addition, Israeli hostages' families have demanded that Israel make the release of the captives a priority above destroying Hamas.

The protests are reminiscent of mass demonstrations in 2003 against the US-led invasion of Iraq. Those protests didn't stop the hostilities but shaped public opinion and the careers of political leaders.

In the cacophony of voices, Biden's subtle hints at behind-the-scenes pressure on Israel to limit the war and abide by international law are lost. It was not immediately clear whether Israel's so far limited ground offensive was the result of US pressure or the first phase of a full-scale invasion of the Gaza Strip. What US pressure did not do was persuade Israel to halt its indiscriminate bombing of the territory. *(IPA Service)*



# Israel-Hamas war: The likely geopolitical turbulence in the Middle East

By: Dr Alvite Ningthoujam

The conflict that began during the early hours of 7 October this year, following the brazen terror attacks carried out by the Gaza Strip-based Hamas against Israel, is not coming to an end any time soon.

Instead, the situation on the ground is getting grimmer with each passing day, and the repercussions both in the wider Middle Eastern region and in different parts of the world have become discernible.

Alongside the internal dynamics within the Israeli and the larger Palestinian societies (both in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank), there are already signs of the implications of the ongoing conflict vis-à-vis the regional geopolitics of the Middle East.

What remains to be seen is the likely impact this conflict will have on the diplomatic efforts being made by Israel to warm up to the Arab neighbours, and lately also the possibility of a regional conflagration should countries like Iran decide to join the conflict.

This piece highlights some of these issues, with a focus on the impact on Israel's regional policy, the impact on its newfound bonhomie with the moderate Arab countries, and the Iranian dimension in this conflict.

## Steadily Mounting Castigation Against Israel

Similar to the events in the past, the retaliatory military operations (mostly aerial bombardment and partial ground operation inside Gaza) currently being carried out by the Israel Defence Forces (IDF), in the wake of the well-orchestrated Hamas missile and ground attacks, have resulted in wide-

spread condemnations over "heavy strikes" and criticisms about "violation of humanitarian laws and international conventions."

It is perceptible that the longer it continues, the greater the possibility of the fault lines in the region widening, particularly between Israel and some of its regional adversaries. In a region that is plagued by sectarian politics, civil wars, the scourge of terrorism, the phenomenon of radicalisation, and a history of Arab-Israeli wars, this could be an undesirable by-product of the conflict.

The tone and tenor of the Arab countries, including those with whom Israel has established diplomatic ties, have also changed, particularly following the bombing of the al-Ahli Arab Hospital (on 19 October) inside the Gaza Strip (for which both the warring parties blamed each other).

The steadily mounting castigation against Israel has come at this juncture when its politico-diplomatic recognition and acceptance are gradually on the rise in the Middle East. This has been evidenced by the signing of the Abraham Accords in late 2020 with the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Bahrain from the Middle East, and Morocco and Sudan in the northern African region.

Since its establishment as a state in May 1948, coming out of Arab encirclement and forging political ties with the regional countries have been Israel's national interests and foreign policy objectives. It is to that end that efforts have been made (until the conflict started) for normalisation of ties with Saudi Arabia, with the assistance of the Joe Biden

administration.

This, for now, has been put on the back-burner, mostly by the Saudis who would not want to be singled out for warming up to a regime that is criticised vociferously in the region and elsewhere for its Palestinian policy.

## Difference in Sentiment: The Arab Elite & the Arab Street

As the war rages, most of the Arab countries, including the ones that have established political ties with Israel, have been compelled to condemn Israel's retaliatory actions, regardless of its clarifications that it is a war against "Hamas terrorists" and it is not targeting civilians in Gaza. In light of this, the prolongation of violence will likely make the geopolitics of the wider Middle East more complex, particularly for Israel's politico-diplomatic overtures.

This is because the recent geopolitical realignment in the region is believed to be brought about by the understandings and convergence of interests mainly between the ruling elites of both sides, while the larger public sentiments in the Arab and the Muslim world apparently lie with the Palestinians.

The eruption of protests on the streets of Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt, Iraq, and Yemen, and also in Morocco, a signatory of the Abraham Accords – following the outbreak of the Israel-Hamas conflict, could be interpreted as disapproval of the wave of normalisations from particular sections of the societies in the region. Such activities are also construable as a disconnect between the leaders in the Arab countries and their ordinary citizens.

Furthermore, having encountered the bitter experiences of the



Arab uprisings (that began in late 2010) which engulfed almost every part of the Middle East, the leaders in this region would not take any chance either to irk or perturb the sentiments of their general masses. The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states, especially the UAE and Saudi Arabia, cannot afford to witness such mass movements at this stage when they both are making unrelenting efforts to deescalate tensions in the region, transform themselves into financial and technical hubs, attracting tourists, businesses and investments from every possible part of the globe.

Interestingly, this was also one of the main reasons why they have established diplomatic ties with Israel, alongside their shared concerns over Iran's controversial nuclear program. Currently, it will be complicated for Saudi Arabia to openly embrace Israel given that it is the custodian of Islam's two holy sites; it needs to continue preserving its religious standing in the region and beyond in the Islamic world.

Tellingly, the current Saudi monarch – King Salman – having been an ardent supporter of the Palestinian cause, would not like to trigger the public by signing a decree announcing the normalisation with Israel.

sation with Israel.

As a result, the kingdom, under the leadership of the Crown Prince, Mohammed bin Salman (MbS), also considered the de facto ruler, can be expected to walk a delicate tightrope, with objectives in mind to increase the credibility as a responsible Islamic country working for the welfare of the fellow Palestinians as well as to reduce regional tensions so that its Vision 2030 could become a successful story.

These predicaments would necessitate the ambitious young leader to express solidarity with the Palestinians (for now) and work closely with the regional partners, including Iran, with whom Riyadh signed a reconciliation deal in March this year.

This also means that the normalisation process with Israel will be put on hold for the moment, but without ruling out the possibility of a political breakthrough at an opportune moment.

## Iran and Its Proxies

While Iran has been closely monitoring the emerging developments (with intermittent anti-Israel inflammatory statements from its top leadership), further intensification of clashes between Lebanese-based Hezbollah and Israel could be another unde-

sirable trajectory of the conflict. In the event that Iran decides to intervene in the conflict directly, Israel will have to fight the war on multiple fronts, which it is presently doing in the north (in Lebanon) and east (in Syria).

That will transform the trend of "limited conflicts" which Israel has been fighting for the longest time. It is noteworthy that since the last few years, the Iranian Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has been talking about Iran's "regional presence" giving the country a "strategic depth and more power."

This hints at the presence of Iran-backed proxy forces that operate across the region, particularly in Yemen, Syria, Iraq, and Lebanon, and also at the long-range missile capabilities the country's military possesses. The involvement of Iran and its proxies, undoubtedly, carries the risk of igniting a regional conflagration, and in such a scenario, one cannot not rule out the possibility of extra-regional powers like the US, Russia, China, etc., supporting their respective allies in the region.

Notwithstanding these worst-case scenarios, it remains to be seen if the existing socio-economic predicament inside Iran will prevent its leadership from taking any adventurist policy and participating directly in the war against Israel.

Or, is it going to be the proxies who are going to jump into the fray, as already indicated by Yemen-based Houthis' long-range missile attacks against Israel, reportedly fired from the southern part of the Red Sea? Further escalations on this front could be a game changer, risking a region-wide conflict.

Looking at the developments

on the ground, there is no end in sight to the conflict between Israel and Hamas. The Israeli government, however, has made it clear time and again that its goal is to "destroy Hamas" and this is exemplified by upping its bombardment in the Gaza Strip. At the same time, nobody has any concrete answer as to how the war will be ended, whether there will be a ceasefire, what a future in the Gaza Strip will look like, who will rule the strip, and what will be Israel's policy once it manages to achieve its "goal".

But, one thing is certain further escalations of the conflict will put the entire region in a precarious position, let alone Israel. In the days to come, the role of countries like Egypt and Qatar in the region could be closely monitored. The future course of the conflict, however, will likely be determined by the willingness of Israel to enter into any negotiations, but who could convince it at the moment is going to be one of the biggest questions.

For Israel, the assault by Hamas on the wee hours of 7 October 2023 was unprecedented in several ways, and it is being viewed as a renewed existential threat, which it can no longer afford to ignore. For the Palestinians, its longstanding unresolved issue is back in the spotlight, which cannot be ignored anymore.

The ongoing conflict also indicates that there cannot be a 'new Middle East' without resolving the Palestinian issue, and merely managing this conflict will not change the dynamics. With the emerging developments, it is sufficient to say that peace and stability in the Middle East look to be a distant prospect. (Courtesy: *The Quint*)

## Afghanistan in need: A devastating earthquake and its aftershocks

By: Shivam Shekhawat

On 7 October, Afghanistan's western province of Herat witnessed a 6.3 magnitude earthquake. This was followed by a week of multiple aftershocks and earthquakes, with two more high-intensity tremors on 11 and 15 October. Compounding the already dire situation inside the country, the earthquakes ravaged villages and affected 1.6 million people, leaving 1,14,000 in urgent need of assistance. The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) and other international organisations have made a joint funding appeal of \$US 93.6 million as part of the Herat Earthquake Response Plan. However, the past year has seen a fall in the international community's response to appeals for funding, which could have adverse consequences on the aid organisations' ability to address the aftermath of the earthquakes.

## A week of tremors

As per estimates from the OCHA, the cumulative effect of all the tremors and aftershocks left around 1,500 people dead, injured close to 2,000 people and destroyed and damaged more than 21,500 homes. The funding appeal of \$US93.6 million is aimed at addressing the needs of 1,14,000 people in dire need over the winter period (October 2023-March 2024). Apart from homes, the quakes flattened out many health facilities, schools, and other critical infrastructure. Families have now moved into the open to safeguard against any residual aftershocks while many have attempted to migrate to other regions.

The Herat city now resembles a tent city, with people seeking refuge in makeshift tents as their mud houses crumbled and families buried their dead in mass burial ceremonies across the province. Of the almost 500 villages in the province, 289 have been severely or moderately affected as per the OCHA. The quake also damaged multiple historical sites in Herat city which is a UNESCO World Heritage site with cracks and damages on the citadel, the Mosalla complex and the Great Mosque of Herat. Their destruction poses a risk to the country and its peoples' cultural identity and collective memory which is already under threat since the Taliban's return to power.

The vast majority of the people who died and were affected by the impact of the earthquakes were women and children, making up 90 percent of the affected people. The first shock on 7 October was in the early hours of the day when most men had gone out for work in the fields or across the border,



with mostly women, children, and elderly inside the homes. But the disproportionate impact on women is also a testament to how the Taliban's restrictive policies towards women affect them during times of crises. The lack of access to information about earthquake preparedness could also have affected their ability to respond to the tremors.

In the aftermath of the quakes, the Taliban's spokesperson announced the setting up of a commission to coordinate aid. The State Ministry for Disaster Management pegged the death toll at 2,445 people. It eventually brought the number down to around 1000, close to the estimates given by international organisations. As per the spokesperson, this was done to ensure that the aid is not diverted and that there is no corruption in its distribution. The Emirate also urged the international community to step in and help. While the group made sure to project that their response to the disaster was quick and efficient, there were reports about a delay in their initial response with the communities and people stepping up to help. The Emirate's spokesperson posted on the social media platform X, formerly Twitter, that they have started building standard homes in quake-affected areas and intend to finish them before the beginning of the winter season. The Acting Deputy Prime Minister of Economic Affairs also visited the province along with a delegation to oversee the delivery of aid.

The post-disaster aid delivery process faces myriad issues. While connectivity and communications networks have been adversely affected by the earthquakes, the supply routes for the delivery of aid could also become inaccessible soon as the winter season approaches. The beginning of a harsh winter also necessitates a quick and efficient response to address the issue of housing and shelter as the tents compound the risk of weather and health-related hazards.

**Not enough- international community's response to the quake**

Two years since the Fall of Kabul, the humanitarian situation in Afghanistan is still disastrous. As per the International Rescue Committee, cuts to humanitarian aid have led to a 60 percent increase in the number of people in need along with the collapse of the economy and climate change. The UN's Humanitarian Response Plan had only received 23 percent the required funds till August 2023 as opposed to 40 percent at the same time last year. The gap in funding increased after the Taliban decided to ban Afghan women from working for the UN and other international NGOs.

Almost a week since the tremors rocked Afghanistan, there have been funding commitments from some countries. On 12 October, the US special representative announced \$US 12 million in immediate aid through USAID to assist the Afghan people in accessing safe drinking water, emergency shelter kits, cooking materials, blankets, etc. Since August 2021, the US has contributed close to \$US 2 billion in aid to Afghanistan but at the beginning of this year it also admitted that owing to fiscal reasons and the need to address crises at other places, the humanitarian contribution could be lower. While Australia pledged \$US1 million through the Afghanistan Humanitarian Trust Fund, the European Union committed \$US 3.71 million in aid. China also shipped emergency humanitarian aid worth \$US4.1 million, with a handover ceremony held at the disaster management department of the Emirate.

The United Kingdom, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Türkiye, Kazakhstan, and Tajikistan, all announced funding commitments and relief packages. As per the OCHA, against the demand for \$US93.6 million, bilateral donors and pooled funds have confirmed \$US15.5 million and \$US10 million respectively but the gap still remains. To address the needs of the earthquake victims, aid organisations have also redirected resources, with UNDP repurposing \$US2 billion towards earthquake relief. While this will help in addressing the needs of the earth-

quake-affected people, their diversion from other areas and communities that also require assistance is also a cause of concern.

While the distribution of aid in Afghanistan has always been susceptible to corruption and diversion, the Taliban's intransigence in addressing the concerns of the international community has further complicated the matter. As no country has granted de jure recognition to the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, countries have had to balance a tightrope between ensuring that they fulfil their commitment to the Afghan people while being cautious about not granting any legitimacy to the Taliban regime. The group has made efforts to establish some degree of control over the aid distribution and allocation, passing strict instructions on NGOs and making the process complicated by including the signing of Memorandums of Understanding (MoU) for every aid project. Reports about disruption in humanitarian activities have also emerged with Herat witnessing access issues in August 2023, one of the five provinces that saw interference in aid. As per a UNSC report, between February and May, 2023 there were 299 incidents of interference in the delivery of humanitarian aid. All these factors do raise concerns about the possibility of aid actually reaching the people in need. But notwithstanding these concerns, countries have attempted to carve out ways of working with specialised agencies to ensure that the aid reaches the intended beneficiaries.

India has always been committed to the welfare of the Afghan people as a first responder. Since August 2021, it has steadfastly supported Afghans by providing wheat, medicines, and COVID-19 vaccines through the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the World Food Programme (WFP), etc. New Delhi has had a functional technical mission in Kabul since June last year to help facilitate the effective delivery of aid and assistance.

As the Afghans in Herat scramble to rebuild their lives, it is difficult to understand why New Delhi hasn't stepped up its support after such a devastating natural calamity. As the country reels towards a harsh winter, the needs of the Afghan people will only increase in the coming weeks and months. Owing to Herat's remote location, the pre-existing humanitarian concerns and a lack of global attention to the crisis in Afghanistan, the situation will take more time to stabilise, making it imperative for New Delhi and the international community to ramp up their support to the Afghan people. (Courtesy: *ORF*)



By: Srinivas Kodali

India is rapidly digitising. There are good things and bad, speed-bumps on the way and caveats to be mindful of. The weekly column Terminal focuses on all that is connected and is not – on digital issues, policy, ideas and themes dominating the conversation in India and the world.

Monday night's alerts from Apple to politicians and journalists about "state-sponsored attacks" pointed to an increasing trend of using surveillance towards the suppression of the political opposition. Digital India is being hailed as the government's flagship contribution to nation building, with technology determining our lives everyday. This utopian imagination is being hailed by many, from the World Bank to Bill Gates. But is it time for us to question whether Digital India has actually become a Digital Dystopia?

Digital India as an official Government of India programme was launched in 2014 by Narendra Modi, and digitisation has been an important agenda for this government. The BJP gave all the push necessary to build Nandan Nilekani's imaginations of India, one where technology determines the lives of every Indian. It forced Aadhaar, UPI, GST and a host of digital technologies in a bid to formalise the economy. But this digitisation process also powered the surveillance and policing infrastructures like CCTNS, NATGRID, CMS and ICIS that were set in motion in the aftermath of the 26/11 Mumbai attacks.

The surveillance infrastructures that were being developed were always directed towards the citizenry, under the garb of enumeration exercises, which was not immediately clear to the population. The Ministry of Home Affairs historically policed us through secretive systems and any push towards reforms in policing and intelligence has not been a priority. The idea of surveillance and 360-degree profiling were always part of the imaginations of the Aadhaar programme, specially with agreements between the UIDAI and MHA to share biometrics, to create National Population Registry and the requirement of unique IDs to link databases for creation of NATGRID.

The possibility of active surveillance of any individual through spyware was always a demand from our intelligence agencies. But this reality is far more concerning with no accountability in these agencies. Surveillance infrastructures have always been part of societies, from surveillance of telegraphs, posts to telecom networks. But unrestricted access to these systems by rogue institutions and actors has brought us here. The current reality is being cheered by the population, which has been sold this reality as a Hindutva utopia by media networks.

The techno-utopian imagination that were sold to us was that technology in the form of Aadhaar would eradicate fraud, corruption and economically make every Indian rich using their personal data. This imagination, while being utopian, could only be enforced through technology and was forced on the entire population which had no option other than fitting itself into the imagi-

nations of a billionaire whose entire claim was that technology will fix everything.

The imagination that was sold to us was not complete and was never entirely explained to us, while rubbishing any critical questions around it. It should be clear to any individual that the early experimentation of Aadhaar on welfare schemes was just an excuse to build and test software that could be finally used for building credit profiles and a data economy. The language of fraud and duplicate Indians in welfare that was forced on us is leading us towards a witch-hunt to search for illegal citizens in the country with biometrics. Nilekani was always silent about the surveillance aspects of his imaginations, while claiming there are no privacy issues with Aadhaar. According to Nilekani, Aadhaar linking with voter IDs will remove duplicate voters, but he won't talk about the dangers of centralising elections and risks of online-voting which Aadhaar is expected to power. This technocracy powers the entire techno fascist machinery of the current regime. It is a symbiotic relationship for the Bangalore Ideology as Mila Samdub calls, "For the engineers of Bengaluru and their allies in neoliberal think tanks, the BJP's Hindutva politics is the necessary condition to put their designs to work."

This system of technology architectures that are being termed "digital public infrastructures" and are highly centralised and unaccountable are turning governance invisible. Black box governance is a feature of this imagination, where people are not told why something works or fails, with a sense of mysticism associated with technology. The Aadhaar failures and non-functional apps that are mandatory on welfare systems are being forced with an excuse of fraud prevention, while we clearly see the dismantling of social welfare infrastructure. There are claims that are associated with this setup that have started in 2008 and continue to exist. These black boxes and techno-utopian imaginations need to be demystified for the general public. While there has been a decade of work around this, the control of reality with media narratives has been a challenge to expose the under-workings of these systems. Any language of criticism that was used by the citizenry was co-opted and was used against them to dissolve the criticism. The editorial decisions of media houses to not be critical of Aadhaar or Nilekani has already unfolded in the form of technology driven violence, that could have been prevented.

New frameworks of critical thinking and demystification of technology need to be evolved to make the citizenry aware of the violence being pushed with utopian claims. India is being shown as a utopian society where technology has transformed our economic lives primarily with dematerialisation of documents. But the realities of the material world are being hidden with clever marketing strategies where any discussion over fraud, corruption or poverty is replaced with UPI.

We need alternate imaginations to counter the existing narratives of techno-utopians who have sold us a dystopia while they profit from this enterprise. For a software engineer who builds these technology systems, a broken app doesn't affect his life and he sees these technology systems as utopian solutions to a problem that doesn't actually exist. Meanwhile this becomes a technological nightmare for the working class dependent on social welfare. Dystopias and utopias are relative in class societies and can co-exist simultaneously with different narratives among the population.

Privacy has been turned into a non-issue for people, with opposition from the economic actors who advocated against it. Digital India isn't what it is being claimed, the reality is different on the ground. It is time to renew efforts to demystify technology with the aim of surveillance reforms, before this Digital Dystopia becomes a permanent future. (Courtesy: *The Wire*)



US has pledged unwavering support for Israel as it seeks to end Hamas' rule over Gaza & crush its military capabilities

## Diplomatic efforts to pause fighting gain steam as Israeli ground troops push toward Gaza City

**RAFAH (GAZA STRIP), Nov 2:** Israel's ground troops advanced toward Gaza City on Thursday, as the US and Arab countries intensified diplomatic efforts to ease the siege of the Hamas-ruled enclave and bring about at least a brief stop to the fighting to help civilians.

President Joe Biden suggested a humanitarian "pause" on Wednesday, as hundreds of foreign passport holders and wounded Palestinians were allowed out of Gaza for the first time, exiting via Egypt's Rafah crossing. US Secretary of State Antony Blinken is expected back in the region on Friday.

Arab countries, including those allied with the US and at peace with Israel, have expressed mounting unease with the war. Jordan recalled its ambassador from Israel and told Israel's envoy to remain out of the country until there's a halt to the war and the "humanitarian catastrophe" it is causing. More than 3,600 Palestinian children have been killed in 25 days of fighting, as bombings have driven hundreds of thousands of people from their homes and food, water and fuel run low.

Israeli troops pushed into Gaza in larger numbers over the weekend after three weeks of heavy airstrikes that have demolished entire neighborhoods and driven more than half the territory's 2.3 million people out of their homes. The war, the fifth and by far deadliest in Gaza, began when Hamas launched a bloody Oct. 7 rampage into Is-



rael, which killed hundreds of men, women and children. Some 240 were captured.

The US has pledged unwavering support for Israel as it seeks to end Hamas' rule over Gaza and crush its military capabilities, even as the two allies seem to have no clear plan for the day after. White House officials said a pause in fighting would allow more aid to get into Gaza and create a possibility for more hostages to be freed.

The opening of Rafah came after weeks of talks among Egypt, Israel, the U.S. and Qatar, which mediates with Hamas. It was first time people left Gaza other than four hostages released by Hamas and another rescued by Israeli forces.

Israeli troops meanwhile appear to be advancing on three main routes, according to the Institute for the Study of War, a U.S. research group. One thrust came from Gaza's northeast corner. Another, south of Gaza City, cut across the territory, reaching the main north-south

highway. The third, from Gaza's northwest corner, has moved about 5 kilometers (3 miles) down the Mediterranean coast, reaching the outskirts of the Shati and Jabaliya refugee camps, on the edges of Gaza City. Airstrikes on Wednesday and Thursday destroyed apartment blocks in Jabaliya, but the number of dead and wounded remained unknown. Israel said the strikes killed militants and demolished Hamas tunnels.

Palestinian militants fired antitank missiles, set off explosive devices and hurled grenades at Israeli troops during an overnight battle, the Israeli military said Thursday. It said soldiers returned fire and called in artillery, as well as strikes from a helicopter and a naval ship. The report could not be independently confirmed.

Hundreds of thousands of Palestinians remain in the path of the fighting in northern Gaza, despite Israel's repeated calls for them to evacuate the region and head to the territory's south, which is also being bom-

barded. Casualties on both sides are expected to rise as Israeli troops advance toward the dense residential neighborhoods of Gaza City. Israeli officials say Hamas' military infrastructure, including tunnels, is concentrated in the city and accuse Hamas of hiding among civilians.

Rocket fire from Gaza into Israel, and daily skirmishes between Israel and Lebanon's Hezbollah militants, has disrupted life for millions of Israelis and forced an estimated 250,000 to evacuate towns near the borders in the north and south. Most rockets are intercepted or fall in open areas.

More than 8,800 Palestinians have been killed in the war, mostly women and minors, and more than 22,000 people have been wounded, the Gaza Health Ministry said Wednesday, without providing a breakdown between civilians and fighters. The figure is without precedent in decades of Israeli-Palestinian violence.

Over 1,400 people have died on the Israeli side, mainly civilians killed during Hamas' initial attack, also an unprecedented figure. Sixteen Israeli soldiers have been killed in Gaza since the start of the ground operation.

At least 335 foreign passport holders left Gaza through the Rafah crossing into Egypt on Wednesday, said Wael Abu Omar, a spokesman for the Palestinian Crossings Authority. Seventy-six Palestinian patients, along with their companions,

were evacuated for treatment in Egypt, he said. The U.S. has said it is trying to evacuate 400 Americans with their families.

Egypt has said it will not accept an influx of Palestinian refugees, fearing Israel will not allow them to return to Gaza after the war.

Those remaining in Gaza face an increasingly dire humanitarian situation, with basic supplies running low and hundreds of thousands packed into hospitals and U.N.-run shelters. Israel has allowed more than 260 trucks carrying food and medicine to enter from Egypt, but aid workers say it's not nearly enough.

Hospitals in Gaza say their emergency generators are running dangerously low on fuel amid a territory-wide blackout. The World Health Organization said the lack of fuel puts at risk 1,000 patients on kidney dialysis, 130 premature babies in incubators, as well as cancer patients and patients on ventilators.

Israel has refused to allow fuel in, saying it fears Hamas would steal it for military purposes. The military released a recording of what it said was a Hamas commander forcing a hospital to hand over some fuel. The recording could not be independently verified. Only hours of electricity remained at Gaza City's largest hospital, Shifa, according to its director, Mohammed Abu Salmia, who pleaded for "whoever has a liter of diesel in his home" to donate it. (AP)

## Blinken will enter diplomatic maelstrom over Gaza war on new Mideast trip

**WASHINGTON, Nov 2:** Just weeks after a frenzied trip to the Middle East, Secretary of State Antony Blinken is returning to the region with a somewhat more nuanced message than he offered in the immediate aftermath of Hamas' bloody October 7 attack on Israel and Israel's military response.

As he did last month, Blinken will stress U.S. support for Israel and try to prevent a wider Mideast war as he visits Israel and Jordan starting on Friday. But Blinken's agenda this time is more crowded and more complex as the conflict intensifies and the Biden administration grapples with competing domestic and international interests and anger.

He'll push for the evacuation of more foreigners from Gaza and more humanitarian aid for the territory. He'll press Israel to rein in violence against Palestinians in the occupied West Bank committed by Jewish settlers. And, he'll stress the importance of protecting civilians — even though the administration has yet to offer any criticism of Israel for strikes that have killed thousands of civilians in Gaza.

So, while calling for brief pauses in air strikes and fighting for humanitarian purposes, he will continue to oppose growing calls for a broader cease-fire. President Joe Biden said Wednesday he thought there should be a humanitarian "pause" in the Israel-Hamas war in order to get "prisoners" out.

But, Blinken will also be introducing a new element to the U.S. list of priorities: the need for Israel and its neighbors to begin to consider what a post-conflict Gaza will look like, who will govern it, how it can be made secure and how to establish an independent Palestinian state.

U.S. officials, including Biden and

Blinken, have said repeatedly that they do not believe an Israeli re-occupation of Gaza is feasible, and Israel agrees. But what comes next has been little explored beyond brief comments Blinken made Tuesday in congressional testimony when he talked about the possibility of a revitalized Palestinian Authority and perhaps Arab states and international organizations playing a significant role in post-conflict Gaza.

Blinken will speak about "the U.S. commitment to working with partners to set the conditions for a durable and sustainable peace in the Middle East to include the establishment of a Palestinian state that reflects the aspirations of the Palestinian people in



Gaza and in the West Bank." State Department spokesman Matthew Miller said.

The change in messaging reflects a shift in the international view of the war, of which Blinken has heard plenty since his last trip to the region when he travelled to Israel and six Arab states — several multiple times — in a frenetic shuttle diplomacy mission that required numerous last-minute schedule changes.

His itinerary after Jordan remains uncertain, although he will attend a Group of Seven foreign ministers meeting in Japan next week before travelling on to South Korea and India for much broader discussions, including on Russia's war in Ukraine and China.

The shift in public opinion has been palpable. After receiving a wave of global sympathy after the October 7 attacks, Israel now faces widespread criticism for its massive military response, something that many believe is fuelling a worldwide spike in antisemitic violence as well as incidents targeting Muslims. (AP)

## North Korea has likely sent missiles as well as ammunition and shells to Russia, Seoul says

**SEOUL, Nov 2:** North Korea has likely supplied several types of missiles to Russia to support its war in Ukraine, along with its widely reported shipments of ammunition and shells, South Korea's military said on Thursday.

The assessment was released a day after South Korea's spy service told lawmakers that North Korea recently provided more than a million artillery shells to Russia amid deepening military cooperation between the two countries, both key US adversaries.

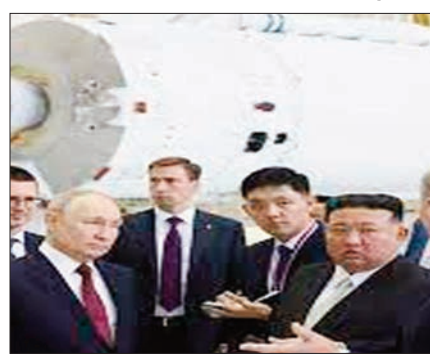
In a background briefing for local journalists, South Korea's military said that North Korea is suspected of sending an unspecified number of short-range ballistic missiles, anti-tank missiles and portable anti-air missiles to Russia, in addition to rifles, rocket launchers, mortars and shells.

The contents of the briefing were shared with The Associated Press. Last week, South Korea, the US and Japan strongly condemned what they call North Korea's supply of munitions and military equipment to Russia, saying that such weapons shipments sharply increase the human toll of Russia's war in Ukraine.

Any weapons trade with North Korea would be a violation of multiple U.N. Security Council resolutions, which Russia, a permanent U.N. Security Council member, previously endorsed.

Both Russia and North Korea dismissed the weapons shipment accusations as baseless. Outside speculation about North Korean arms shipments flared after North Korean leader Kim Jong Un traveled to Russia in September to meet President Vladimir Putin and visit key military facilities.

The U.S. and its allies accuse North Korea of seeking high-tech Russian technologies to modernize its arsenal of nuclear weapons and missiles in return for its shipments of conventional arms.



In a private briefing with lawmakers on Wednesday, the National Intelligence Service — South Korea's main spy agency — said that more than a million North Korean artillery shells have been sent to Russia since August via ships and transport planes. The NIS said the shells roughly amounted to two months' worth of supplies for the Russians, according to lawmaker Yoo Sangbum, who attended the NIS briefing.

The NIS assessed that North Korea has been operating its munitions factories at full capacity to meet Russian munition demands and has also been mobilizing residents to increase production.

The NIS said North Korea, for its part, is likely receiving Russian technological assistance over its plan to launch its first military spy satellite into space.

South Korea's military said North Korea also seeks to receive nuclear-related technologies, fighter jets or related aircraft equipment and assistance on the establishment of anti-air defense networks from Russia. (AP)

## Earthquake slightly damages houses in Indonesia, but no casualties reported

**JAKARTA, Nov 2:** An earthquake slightly damaged houses and other buildings in southeastern Indonesia on early Thursday, causing some panic but no apparent casualties.

The quake was strongly felt in several cities and villages and caused some to panic, said Daryono, who heads the Earthquake and Tsunami Center at Indonesia's Meteorology, Climatology and Geophysical Agency. It was based on land and had no risk of a tsunami.

"The quake has caused light damages in several buildings and houses," wrote Daryono, who goes by a single name, on the social media platform X.

Video circulating on social media showed residents in Kupang, the province's capital and largest city, reacting as houses and buildings swayed just after dawn. Some witnesses said ceilings at the governor's and mayor's offices were damaged.

The U.S. Geological Survey

measured the strength at 6.1 magnitude and said the quake occurred 36 kilometers (22 miles) below the surface. The epicenter was 21 kilometers (13 miles) north-northeast of Kupang on the western side of Timor Island.

The Indonesian agency measured its strength at 6.3 magnitude. Variations in early measurements of quakes are common.

Indonesia is a seismically active archipelago of 270 million people where earthquakes, volcanic eruptions and tsunamis frequently occur.

A magnitude 5.6 earthquake last year killed at least 602 people in West Java's Cianjur city. It was the deadliest in Indonesia since a 2018 quake and tsunami in Sulawesi killed more than 4,300 people.

In 2004, an extremely powerful Indian Ocean quake set off a tsunami that killed more than 230,000 people in a dozen countries, most of them in Indonesia's Aceh province. (AP)

## Gen elections in Pak to be held on Feb 11, poll body informs Supreme Court

**ISLAMABAD, Nov 2:** General elections in Pakistan will be held on February 11, the country's poll body informed the Supreme Court on Thursday, putting an end to months-long uncertainty over the polls.

The Election Commission of Pakistan's counsel, Sajeel Swati, said the process of drawing constituencies would be completed by January 29, paving the way for the polls.

He said this as the apex court resumed hearing on a set of petitions calling for holding elections within 90 days after the dissolution of the National Assembly and the provincial legislatures.

A three-judge bench comprising Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa, Justice Amin-ud-Din Khan and Justice Athar Minallah took up the pleas moved by the Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA), the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf and others, the Dawn newspaper reported.

Pakistan President Arif Alvi dissolved the National Assembly on August 9. (PTI)

## Former Chinese premier Li Keqiang cremated; Prez Xi Jinping & other top leaders pay homage

**BEIJING, Nov 2:** Former Chinese premier Li Keqiang, who died of a sudden heart attack on October 27, was cremated on Thursday here after President Xi Jinping and other senior ruling Communist Party leaders paid homage.

The remains of Li, 68, were cremated at the Babaoshan Revolutionary Cemetery in Beijing, the state-run Xinhua news agency reported.

China's national flags at Tiananmen Square, the seat of the country's power as well as all government buildings and foreign diplomatic missions, flew half-mast as a mark of respect for the departed leader.

President Xi, accompanied by his wife Peng Liyuan and Premier Li Qiang, other leaders of the ruling Communist Party and the government walked slowly up to Li's



remains, stood in solemn silence to pay their tributes, and made three bows.

They shook hands with Li's family members, offering their condolences. Former Chinese president Hu Jintao sent a wreath to express his condolences over Li's passing, the report said.

Other Communist Party and state leaders either paid their final respects at the cemetery or expressed their condolences through

various means.

Senior officials from central departments, Li's friends and representatives from his hometown also mourned his passing at the cemetery. Thousands of people visited Li's childhood home in Hefei in Anhui province to pay their respects.

Li, who was once a contender for power against Xi, a decade ago died of a heart attack on October 27 in Shanghai. He retired as premier in March this year.

An obituary issued by the ruling Communist Party of China (CPC), the Cabinet and Parliament described Li's death as a huge loss.

He was extolled as an "excellent CPC member, a time-tested and loyal communist soldier and an outstanding proletarian revolutionist, statesman and leader of the Party and the state." (PTI)

## Chaotic and desperate scenes among Afghans returning from Pakistan, say aid agencies

**ISLAMABAD, Nov 2:** Major international aid agencies on Thursday

warned of chaotic and desperate scenes among Afghans who have returned from Pakistan, where security forces are detaining and deporting undocumented or unregistered foreigners.

The crackdown on illegal migration mostly affects Afghans because they are the majority of foreigners living in Pakistan, although the government says it is targeting

everyone who is in the country illegally.

Three aid organizations — the Norwegian Refugee Council, Danish Refugee Council and the International Rescue Committee — said many people fleeing the Pakistani crackdown arrived in Afghanistan in poor condition.

"The conditions in which they arrive in Afghanistan are dire, with many having endured arduous journeys spanning several days, exposed to

the elements, and often forced to part with their possessions in exchange for transportation," the agencies said in a statement.

Between 9,000 and 10,000 Afghans are crossing the border every day from Pakistan. Previously it was around 300 a day, according to agency teams on the ground.

Returning Afghans have nowhere to go and the agencies said they fear for people's survival and reintegration in a country

overwhelmed by natural disasters, decades of war, a struggling economy, millions of internally displaced people and a humanitarian crisis.

Salma Ben Aissa, the International Rescue Committee's country director in Afghanistan, said returnees face a bleak future, especially if they lived in Pakistan for decades.

Taliban authorities have prepared temporary camps for Afghans in border areas. (AP)

## European privacy officials widen ban on Meta's behavioural advertising to most of Europe

**SAN FRANCISCO, Nov 2:** European officials widened a ban on Meta's "behavioural advertising" practices to most of Europe on Wednesday, setting up a broader conflict between the continent's privacy-conscious institutions and an American technology giant.

Behavioural advertising, used by Meta's Facebook and Instagram among many other tech companies, involves observing individual behavior such as browsing habits, mouse clicks and app usage, then using that data to build profiles for targeting ads.

The decision by the European Data Protection Board represents a sharp escalation of a tussle that began in Norway, where privacy officials imposed a daily fine of 1 million kroner (roughly USD 90,000) on Meta for obtaining that data without adequate consent. Those fines have been piling up since August 14.



Meta said it has cooperated with regulators and pointed to its announced plans to give Europeans the opportunity to consent to data collection and, later this month, to offer an ad-free subscription service in Europe that will cost 9.99 euros (USD 10.59) a month for access to all its products. The latest decision "unjustifiably ignores that careful and robust regulatory process," the company said in a statement following the European board's action.

Tobias Judin, head of the inter-

national section at the Norwegian Data Protection Authority, said Meta's proposed steps likely won't meet European legal standards. For instance, he said, consent would have to be freely given, which wouldn't be the case if existing users had to choose between giving up their privacy rights or paying a financial penalty in the form of a subscription.

"Meta's business model is at odds with the law and users' fundamental rights, and Meta will not back down willingly," Judin

said via email. "They continue with their unlawful activities to this very day, simply because breaking the law is so profitable."

Meta has been under fire over data privacy for some time. In May, for example, the EU slapped Meta with a record USD 1.3 billion fine and ordered it to stop transferring users' personal information across the Atlantic by October. And the tech giant's new text-based app, Threads, has not rolled out in the EU due to regulatory concerns.

Meta is also among the companies the EU is targeting under new digital rules aimed at reining in the market power of tech giants. In addition to the Facebook owner, Apple, Amazon, Microsoft, Google parent Alphabet and TikTok parent ByteDance were classified in early September as online "gatekeepers" that must face the highest level of scrutiny under the 27-nation bloc's Digital Markets Act. (AP)



## HMU urges ₹ 5 lakh compensation for fire-affected families

**HT Correspondent**  
**DIBRUGARH, Nov 2:** In a general meeting held at New Market Harijan Colony under the leadership of Ranjan Chowdhury, President of Harijan Mazdoor Union (HMU), Dibrugarh Municipality, several pressing concerns regarding the welfare of safai workers were discussed. The meeting highlighted the challenges faced by these workers, particularly in the aftermath of a recent fire incident that ravaged 15 residences belonging to the safai workers in Dibrugarh Municipality. Ranjan Chowdhury emphasized the neglect faced by the Safai workers, the stalwarts of the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan. "We demand immediate compensation of ₹ 5 lakh for the affected families," stated Chowdhury.

The HMU President further expressed disappointment over the lack of sufficient support from the Dibrugarh Municipality, especially in light of the fire incident. "Despite citing a lack of funds, the Municipality has not made significant efforts to address the concerns of the Safai workers. The demand to publicize the top one hundred tax defaulters' list, essential for the community's welfare, remains unaddressed," Chowdhury added. Highlighting the pressing need for better accommodations and basic amenities for the Safai workers, Chowdhury urged the Dibrugarh Municipality Board to construct proper RCC buildings for their settlement.

## Massive fire ravages ten rented houses in Margherita

**HT Correspondent**  
**MARGHERITA, Nov 2:** A significant fire broke out on Thursday morning, devastating ten rented houses owned by Md Zakir Ali Khan in the residential area of Margherita. The incident occurred near the A/R & T Company veneer mill in Margherita. While the exact cause of the fire is yet to be confirmed, locals speculate that a short circuit or a possible burst from an LPG cylinder might have triggered the devastating blaze. Upon the outbreak of the fire, the fire department promptly dispatched fire tenders to the scene. Despite their efforts to extinguish the flames, all ten rented houses were consumed by the fire, reduced to ashes.

## EC corrects names of several constituencies in state

**GUWAHATI, Nov 2:** The Election Commission of India (ECI) has corrected the names of several assembly and parliamentary constituencies in Assam as drafted after the delimitation process earlier this year. In a corrigendum issued by ECI secretary Ashwani Kumar Mohal, the Dergaon assembly constituency was corrected as 'Gual Gaon'. Similarly, the name of Howarghat (ST) constituency was corrected as Howraghat and a similar correction will be made in Diphu (ST) Lok Sabha seat under which Howraghat falls. Salakati TC under Kokrajhar (ST) assembly constituency shall be corrected to be read as 'Salakati CT', it said. The Dibrugarh assembly constituency was corrected as Dibrugarh. 'Moran Town (TC)' under Tingkhong assembly constituency shall be corrected to read as 'Moran Town (CT)'. The extent of Haflong (ST) assembly constituency of Dima Hasao district will be Diyu

Valley development block, Jatinga Valley development block, Harangajao IT development block, Diyungbra IT development block, New Sangbar IT development block, Haflong TC, Maibang TC, Mahur TC, Umrangso TC, Langting TC, Harangajao TC and Diyungbra TC, it stated. The ECI had carried out the delimitation exercise in the state and published the final report on August 11, keeping intact the number of assembly constituencies at 126 and Lok Sabha seats at 14, while revising the nomenclature of one parliamentary and 19 assembly constituencies. The ECI statement had reserved 19 assembly and two Lok Sabha constituencies for Scheduled Tribes (STs) while one Lok Sabha and nine assembly constituencies have been reserved for Scheduled Castes (SCs). All assembly and parliamentary constituencies in the state were delimited (redrawn) based on the 2001 Census. The last delimitation exercise in Assam took place in 1976 on the basis of the 1971 Census. (PTI)

## TU faculty listed among the world's top 2% scientists in respective fields

**HT Correspondent**  
**TEZPUR, Nov 2:** Tezpur University's academic and research excellence in multiple domains, including Artificial Intelligence & Image Processing, Energy, Polymers, Otorhinolaryngology, and Optoelectronics & Photonics, has garnered global recognition as several faculty members have been included in Elsevier's esteemed lists of top 2% scientists worldwide. The recognized faculty members in their respective fields are Prof. Dhruba K Bhat-tacharyya, Prof. Debendra

Chandra Baruah, Dr. Shyamal Kumar Das, Prof. Niranjan Karak, Prof. Ramesh Chandra Deka, and Prof. Partha Pratim Sahu. Elsevier, a globally renowned Publishing & Information Analytics Company, published the lists in 2022 and 2023 through an independent study. These compilations are based on a publicly available database of highly cited scientists, featuring standardized data on citations, h-index, co-authorship adjusted hm-index, citations to papers in various authorship positions, and a composite indicator (c-score). The scientists are categorized into 22 scientific fields and 174 sub-fields as per the standard Science-Matrix classification. Extending congratulations to the esteemed faculty members, Prof. Shambhu Nath Singh, Vice Chancellor of Tezpur University, expressed the institution's pride in hosting scholars and researchers who have significantly contributed to the University's advancement. He expressed hope that this recognition would inspire others to strive for excellence in their pursuit of knowledge.

## ASHA workers stage protest seeking regular salaries

**HT Correspondent**  
**SIVASAGAR, Nov 2:** On Thursday, ASHA workers from Sivasagar district staged a protest in front of the District Commissioner's office, expressing their discontent with the government's policy, which involves their engagement in various tasks beyond their designated roles within the Health & Family Welfare department. The demonstration aimed to highlight this issue along with other related grievances. During the protest, the ASHA workers voiced their demand for a fixed monthly salary of at least Rs 15,000, emphasizing the need for regular payment instead of the current stipend system. They stressed the importance of a stable income to meet their livelihood requirements while carrying out their crucial duties. Furthermore, the leaders representing the ASHA workers cautioned of potential actions, including a potential boycott of the voting process and the threat of extensive agitation in the subsequent phase if their appeals remain unaddressed by the government.

## UPPL and ABSU welcome holistic visit of King of Bhutan to India

His Majesty's visit expected to strengthen bilateral ties and regional peace: CEM Boro

**HT Correspondent**  
**KOKRAJHAR, Nov 2:** The United People's Party Liberal (UPPL) and the All Bodo Students Union (ABSU) have extended a warm welcome to His Majesty Jigme Khesar Namgyal Wangchuck, the King of Bhutan, who is set to make a holistic visit to India, particularly in the state of Assam, for the first time on Friday. UPPL president and chief executive member (CEM) of Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR), Pramod Boro, expressed optimism regarding the royal visit. Boro highlighted that His Majesty's visit holds the potential to strengthen bilateral relations between India and Bhutan, especially in Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR) and across Assam. He emphasized that this visit is anticipated to foster cooperation, cultural exchanges, and improved communication between the two nations. "His Majesty's visit will fortify the socio-cultural understanding and geographical harmony between our two nations and their neighboring communities," stated Boro. ABSU president Dipen Boro and general secretary Khanindra Basumatary also expressed their hearty welcome for His Majesty's proposed visit. They echoed similar sentiments, anticipat-

ing that the visit will contribute to enhancing sustained peace and fostering stronger bilateral ties between India and Bhutan across various domains. ABSU referred to the significance of statements made by Dawa Penjor, general secretary of Bhutan India Friendship Association (BIFA), highlighting the aim to strengthen the relationship between India, Assam, and Bodoland Territorial Region through a strong border relationship. They emphasized that such interactions help in nurturing socio-cultural understanding and geographical harmony among neighboring communities. ABSU emphasized the historical significance of the Bodo Peace Accord, signed on January 27, 2020, which paved the way for lasting peace in the region, alleviating fears and concerns that persisted for two decades during the movement period. The union extended gratitude to the Indian Prime Minister, home minister, chief minister of Assam, and CEM of Bodoland Territorial Region for facilitating this transformation. The student leaders expressed their belief that the King's historic visit will further bolster the enduring friendship between India and Bhutan and play a pivotal role in ensuring lasting peace in the region.

# Union minister visits Dima Hasao, emphasises enhancing child and women welfare

**HT Correspondent**  
**HAFLONG, Nov 2:** Dr Munjpara Mahendrabhai, Union minister of state for Ayush and women and child development, conducted a comprehensive visit to Dima Hasao, focusing on various aspects of child and women welfare initiatives. The minister visited the Anganwadi Centres (AWCs) in Zion village and inspected the facilities at the Haflong Civil Hospital. Accompanied by Debolal Gorlosa, the chief executive member (CEM) of Dima Hasao Autonomous Council, and Samuel Changsan, the executive member in charge of Medical affairs, Dr Munjpara embarked on this pivotal tour. In a meeting held in the morning at the conference hall of Haflong Circuit House, the minister convened discussions with heads of various line departments. Principal secretary Thai Tsho Daulagupu presented a comprehensive overview via a detailed presentation, which allowed the minister to note



specific areas for potential improvement. Dr Munjpara suggested enhancing certain aspects and proposed incorporating rehabilitation centers into the forthcoming medical

hospital project in the district. This initiative was mentioned during the recent declaration by chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on October 28.

Dr Munjpara engaged with Anganwadi and Accredited Social Health Activist (ASHA) workers during a review meeting at the District Library Auditorium hall in Haflong. The minister lauded the commendable efforts of ASHA workers and emphasized the importance of supplementary nutrition at the AWCs. He provided insights into addressing anemia issues concerning women and children, underlining its causes and effects. The meeting witnessed a notable announcement by CEM Debolal Gorlosa, declaring a Rs 500 incentive and a scooter for the best-performing ASHA workers. The session included the attendance of principal secretary Thai Tsho Daulagupu, ACS, secretary Partha Johori, deputy secretaries Rebecca Changsan and Prabhat Pegu, alongside the presence of SDM & HO Medical and Health Services and other key officials.

## Boat capsizes in Brahmaputra Ganga Mohan Mili's 'Noi Paror Ahotjupa' released

**HT Bureau**  
**GUWAHATI, Nov 2:** A boat carrying six labourers capsized in the Brahmaputra River near Jogighopa in Bongaigaon district on Thursday, November 2. The labourers, employed in the ongoing construction of the Jogighopa-Goalpara Bridge under A.P. Singhal's supervision, narrowly escaped a potential mishap as they were rescued by another boat nearby. The exact cause of the boat capsizing remains unknown at this time. This incident comes after a dramatic occurrence in August, where around 32 passengers narrowly escaped an accident on a ferry boat in Dibrang River, Sadia, Tinsukia district.

**HT Correspondent**  
**SIVASAGAR, Nov 2:** Noted poet Ganga Mohan Mili unveiled his eighth collection, 'noi paror ahotjupa', in a modest yet profound event hosted at his residence. The book release was graced by the presence of Prema Gogoi, former president of Asom Kobi Sammilan. In an expressive statement, Mili highlighted his deep concern regarding the diminishing presence

of trees in the surroundings. He expressed his heartfelt sentiments on this ecological issue and has encapsulated these emotions within the verses of his latest collection of poems. The collection, 'noi paror ahotjupa', appears to serve as a reflection of the poet's poignant observations and emotions about the current environmental challenges, resonating through his lyrical expressions.

### NOTICE INVITING TENDER FOR SALE OF UN-CLAIMED SEIZED TIMBER OF 2023-24 UNDER KARBI ANGLONG EAST DIVISION, DIPHU.

Sale Tender are invited for sale of Un-Claimed Seized under Karbi Anglong East Division, Diphu. Details of tender papers will be available in the office of the Divisional Forest Officer, Karbi Anglong East Division, Diphu in any working day within office working hours. Intending tenderers are requested to collect the details information and tender form etc. from the Office of the undersigned by paying 100/- for each form and the tender will be received from 13/11/2023 to 14/11/2023 upto 3.30 P.M. If the office does not function on the date of receiving tenders for any reason, the next working day will be considered by hand. After this time no tender will be considered under any circumstances.

#### Lot Statement of Unclaimed Seized Timber Lots under Karbi Anglong East Division, Diphu from 2023-2024.

Sl. No.	Lot No. and Year	Volume	Govt. Royalty (in Rs.)	Staking	Name of Range	Species	No. of Logs	Remarks
1	WR/05 of 2023-24	1.107 M <sup>3</sup>	7653.00	Samelangso Sub-Beat	Western Range, Dokmoka	Teak	7 Pieces	
2	N/20 of 2023-24	0.837 M <sup>3</sup>	5019.00	Bagori Sub-Beat	Northern Range, Dolamara	M-Sal	16 Pieces	
3	N/21 of 2023-24	0.847 M <sup>3</sup>	5079.00	-DO-	-DO-	M-Sal	15 Pieces	
4	N/22 of 2023-24	0.815 M <sup>3</sup>	4887.00	-DO-	-DO-	M-Sal	17 Pieces	
5	N/23 of 2023-24	0.829 M <sup>3</sup>	4971.00	-DO-	-DO-	M-Sal	19 Pieces	
6	N/24 of 2023-24	0.786 M <sup>3</sup>	4714.00	-DO-	-DO-	M-Sal	17 Pieces	
7	N/25 of 2023-24	0.831 M <sup>3</sup>	4983.00	-DO-	-DO-	M-Sal	17 Pieces	
8	N/26 of 2023-24	0.799 M <sup>3</sup>	4792.00	-DO-	-DO-	M-Sal	17 Pieces	
9	N/27 of 2023-24	0.815 M <sup>3</sup>	4887.00	-DO-	-DO-	M-Sal	16 Pieces	
10	N/28 of 2023-24	0.799 M <sup>3</sup>	4792.00	-DO-	-DO-	M-Sal	16 Pieces	
11	N/29 of 2023-24	0.788 M <sup>3</sup>	4726.00	-DO-	-DO-	M-Sal	13 Pieces	
12	N/30 of 2023-24	0.797 M <sup>3</sup>	4780.00	-DO-	-DO-	M-Sal	18 Pieces	
13	N/31 of 2023-24	0.610 M <sup>3</sup>	3658.00	-DO-	-DO-	M-Sal	14 Pieces	
14	N/32 of 2023-24	0.729 M <sup>3</sup>	4372.00	-DO-	-DO-	M-Sal	14 Pieces	
15	N/33 of 2023-24	0.685 M <sup>3</sup>	4108.00	-DO-	-DO-	M-Sal	15 Pieces	
16	N/34 of 2023-24	0.612 M <sup>3</sup>	3670.00	-DO-	-DO-	M-Sal	15 Pieces	
17	N/35 of 2023-24	0.613 M <sup>3</sup>	3676.00	-DO-	-DO-	M-Sal	14 Pieces	
18	N/36 of 2023-24	0.746 M <sup>3</sup>	4474.00	-DO-	-DO-	M-Sal	20 Pieces	

Sd/-  
I/c. Divisional Forest Officer  
Karbi Anglong East Division, Diphu

#### Lot Statement of NHIDCL (Section-6) Four Lane under Karbi Anglong East Division, Diphu from 2023-2024.

Sl. No.	Lot No. and Year	Volume	Govt. Royalty (in Rs.)	Staking	Name of Range	Species	No. of Logs	Remarks
1	LN/1 of 2023-24	6.752 M <sup>3</sup>	20088.00	Longnit Medical	Central Range, Manja	Non-Sal	50 Nos	
2	LN/2 of 2023-24	10.155 M <sup>3</sup>	33627.00	-DO-	-DO-	Non-Sal	50 Nos	
3	LN/3 of 2023-24	17.558 M <sup>3</sup>	63303.00	-DO-	-DO-	Non-Sal	60 Nos	
4	LN/4 of 2023-24	13.957 M <sup>3</sup>	47760.00	-DO-	-DO-	Non-Sal	59 Nos	
5	LN/19 of 2022-23	1.000 M <sup>3</sup>	6007.00	-DO-	-DO-	Teak	15 Nos	
6	LN/20 of 2022-23	1.062 M <sup>3</sup>	7271.76	-DO-	-DO-	Teak	15 Nos	
7	LN/21 of 2022-23	1.443 M <sup>3</sup>	8672.00	-DO-	-DO-	Teak	15 Nos	
8	LN/22 of 2022-23	1.758 M <sup>3</sup>	12413.00	-DO-	-DO-	Teak	15 Nos	
9	LN/23 of 2022-23	1.244 M <sup>3</sup>	7472.00	-DO-	-DO-	Teak	12 Nos	
10	LN/24 of 2022-23	1.113 M <sup>3</sup>	5821.00	-DO-	-DO-	Teak	9 Nos	
11	LN/25 of 2022-23	1.405 M <sup>3</sup>	8442.00	-DO-	-DO-	Teak	15 Nos	
12	LN/26 of 2022-23	0.677 M <sup>3</sup>	4069.00	-DO-	-DO-	Teak	15 Nos	
13	LN/27 of 2022-23	1.852 M <sup>3</sup>	13909.00	-DO-	-DO-	Teak	15 Nos	
14	LN/28 of 2022-23	1.542 M <sup>3</sup>	9264.00	-DO-	-DO-	Teak	15 Nos	
15	LN/29 of 2022-23	2.401 M <sup>3</sup>	15454.00	-DO-	-DO-	Teak	26 Nos	
16	ASD/50 of 2022-23	14.27 M <sup>3</sup>	35474.00	Amlokhi Stock Depot	-DO-	Non-Sal	60 Nos	
17	ASD/51 of 2022-23	13.994 M <sup>3</sup>	30762.623	-DO-	-DO-	Non-Sal	60 Nos	
18	ASD/52 of 2022-23	10.826 M <sup>3</sup>	23403.807	-DO-	-DO-	Non-Sal	60 Nos	
19	ASD/53 of 2022-23	10.211 M <sup>3</sup>	20090.847	-DO-	-DO-	Non-Sal	60 Nos	
20	ASD/54 of 2022-23	12.407 M <sup>3</sup>	33076.668	-DO-	-DO-	Non-Sal	60 Nos	
21	ASD/55 of 2022-23	5.454 M <sup>3</sup>	9454.328	-DO-	-DO-	Non-Sal	60 Nos	
22	ASD/56 of 2022-23	9.630 M <sup>3</sup>	15457.826	-DO-	-DO-	Non-Sal	60 Nos	
23	ASD/57 of 2022-23	8.284 M <sup>3</sup>	19293.292	-DO-	-DO-	Non-Sal	60 Nos	
24	ASD/58 of 2022-23	19.377 M <sup>3</sup>	49002.423	-DO-	-DO-	Non-Sal	60 Nos	
25	ASD/59 of 2022-23	10.820 M <sup>3</sup>	30751.955	-DO-	-DO-	Non-Sal	60 Nos	
26	ASD/60 of 2022-23	11.053 M <sup>3</sup>	30352.443	-DO-	-DO-	Non-Sal	60 Nos	
27	ASD/61 of 2022-23	17.920 M <sup>3</sup>	55551.296	-DO-	-DO-	Non-Sal	60 Nos	
28	ASD/62 of 2022-23	15.982 M <sup>3</sup>	48331.456	-DO-	-DO-	Non-Sal	60 Nos	
29	ASD/63 of 2022-23	13.866 M <sup>3</sup>	41294.322	-DO-	-DO-	Non-Sal	60 Nos	
30	ASD/64 of 2022-23	10.592 M <sup>3</sup>	32192.047	-DO-	-DO-	Non-Sal	60 Nos	
31	ASD/65 of 2022-23	0.966 M <sup>3</sup>	1696.051	-DO-	-DO-	Non-Sal	9 Nos	

Sd/-  
I/c. Divisional Forest Officer,  
Karbi Anglong East Division, Diphu.



## Mid-day meal workers stage dharna in Gossaigaon

HT Correspondent

**GOSSAIGAON, Nov 2:** The mid-day meal workers engaged in various schools staged a dharna in support of various demands in front of BEEO office, Gossaigaon on Thursday.

The dharna organised under the aegis of Gossaigaon Block Committee of All Assam Mid-Day Meal Workers Union raised several demands before the concerned authority and said that the demands were legitimate and that they were given wages in lieu of honorarium.

They further demanded Rs 3 lakh to those who have lost their jobs among others.

Bharati Ray, president, Gossaigaon Block Committee while participating in the dharna expressed dissatisfaction and anger against the government and said that they were working as cooks with great difficulty but the government neither had any time nor understood their pain and suffering to resolve their demands.

She further said that if the government didn't mitigate the long pending issues of the mid-day meal workers before the upcoming Lok Sabha Election 2023 then the workers threatened to launch vigorous movement in the days to come.

## Ready for post-poll tie-up BJP hopes to form govt in Mizoram

**AIZAWL, Nov 2:** The BJP, which has just one legislator in the Mizoram Assembly, on Thursday said it hoped to form the next government in the northeastern state on its own.

If the people of Mizoram give a fractured verdict, then the saffron party is ready to forge an alliance with either the ruling Mizo National Front (MNF), which is already a part of the NDA, or the main opposition party, Zoram People's Movement (ZPM), whose ever gets more seats.

The BJP is contesting in 23 seats in the 40-member Mizoram assembly elections on November 7. In 2018, it had contested in 39 constituencies and won one seat, opening its account for the first time in the state assembly.

"Our campaigning is going very well. People are accepting our stand on various issues and understanding our policies. We hope to form the government on our own this time," Mizoram BJP president (in-charge) Vanupa Zathang told PTI in an interview here.

He claimed that the opposition's "propaganda" branding BJP as an anti-Christian party hasn't worked and the people of Mizoram don't look at it in that way.

"We have explained our stand on Uniform Civil Code (UCC) and Article 371G of the Constitution. The UCC is still under examination by the Law Commission. We have nothing more to say on this,"



Zathang said.

On the opposition's allegation of possible dilution of Article 371G, he said the party has explained to people the special provision for Mizoram and that it is a permanent clause, not a temporary one like Article 370 in Jammu & Kashmir.

Article 371G of the Indian Constitution is a special provision for Mizoram. It states that no central law relating to religious or social practices, customary law and procedure, and ownership and transfer of land will be applicable unless the Mizoram Legislative Assembly ratifies it.

Asked about the BJP's stand if it fails to get a simple majority and Mizoram has a hung Assembly,

Zathang said, "In such a situation, we will support the MNF if it remains with the NDA. If ZPM gets more seats than MNF, then BJP will have no difficulties in going with them."

He, however, ruled out a coalition government of all the three non-Congress parties — BJP, MNF and ZPM.

"I don't see that happening. But if that happens, then a decision has to be taken by our central leadership. We are open to any party except the Congress," Zathang asserted.

On the Myanmar refugee crisis, which became a flashpoint between the central and state governments, Zathang declined to

comment.

"We never discussed it in the party. Regarding the internally displaced people from Manipur, our stand is clear that they are our brothers and sisters. But this is not an issue in the elections," he added. In September, the MNF-ruled Mizoram government had refused to collect biometric details of Myanmar refugees saying the same could lead to discrimination. Before that, it had rejected the Centre's directive to push back the refugees.

However, in July this year, a pilot project of recording biometric data of Myanmar nationals was launched in all the 11 districts of the state. More than 31,000 refugees have taken shelter in Mizoram since February 2021 after the Myanmar military junta staged a coup in the neighbouring country.

On October 27, BJP national president Jagat Prakash Nadda released his party's manifesto for the Assembly polls in Mizoram, making a host of promises such as a 33 per cent reservation for women in government jobs and investigation into alleged corruption in a social welfare scheme of the MNF government. In the 70-page 'Vision Document', the BJP went big on promises aimed at attracting women voters, who play a significant role in Mizoram's society. (PTI)

## Situation calm but tense in Imphal

**IMPHAL, Nov 2:** The situation in Manipur's capital Imphal remained calm but tense on Thursday, a day after security forces fired several rounds in the air to disperse a large mob of more than 2,000 people who tried to loot an armoury within the camp of the 1 Manipur Rifles.

Several markets in the city remained closed but educational institutions, government offices and the Manipur High Court were functioning normally, while vehicles were seen plying on roads after the curfew was relaxed from 10 am.

The administration deployed additional state and central forces at major junctions and police personnel were seen patrolling the area near the Manipur Rifles camp.

"Yesterday's attempt to loot arms and ammunitions at 1st MR Battalion by armed miscreants was repulsed by combined security forces effectively," the state police said on Thursday. The mob targeted the Manipur Rifles camp, close to the Raj Bhavan and the chief minister's Office in Imphal West district on Wednesday. Responding to the situation, the district authorities in Imphal East and West immediately withdrew the daily curfew relaxation from 5 am to 10 pm. District Magistrate Imphal East, however, relaxed the curfew restriction from 10 am to 6 pm on Thursday. Such a restriction was also lifted in Imphal West from 10 am to 5 pm.

The "restriction of movements of persons outside their respective residences has been relaxed from 10 am to 6 pm on Thursday" but "the relaxation does not apply to any gathering or large scale movement of persons or sit in protests or rally

which is unlawful in nature," the government orders said.

Tension had been brewing in the state capital after an SDPO - an officer of the rank of deputy superintendent of police belonging to the majority community - was shot dead by tribal militants at Moreh town on Tuesday morning.

In another incident, three police personnel suffered bullet injuries when militants ambushed a convoy of the state force at Sinam in Tengenoupal district on Tuesday afternoon. The convoy was sent to Moreh as reinforcement to assist in conducting operations.

Meanwhile, the Kuki Students Organisation (KSO) has called a 48-hour shutdown in the state from midnight of November 1 to protest against the deployment of additional police commandos in Moreh town in Tengenoupal district, where the sub-divisional police officer (SDPO) was shot dead on October 31. The state has remained gripped by recurring bouts of violence since ethnic clashes first erupted in May. More than 180 people have been killed since then.

The clashes have occurred over a number of grievances that both sides have against the other, however, the flashpoint of the crisis has been a move to give Meiteis Scheduled Tribe status, which has since been rolled back and an attempt to turf out tribals living in protected forest areas. Meiteis account for about 53 per cent of Manipur's population and live mostly in the Imphal Valley, while tribals, which include Nagas and Kukis, constitute 40 per cent and reside mainly in the hill districts. (PTI)

## Stakeholder workshop to explore floriculture in M'laya

**SHILLONG, Nov 2:** The government of Meghalaya has taken a significant stride in harnessing the region's flourishing floriculture industry by hosting a two-day "Stakeholder consultation workshop on Unlocking opportunities in Meghalaya" with a focus on floriculture.

The event was held at the Courtyard by Marriott recently aimed at fostering comprehensive dialogue and idea exchange within the sector.

The workshop was graced by Dr M Ampareen Lyngdoh, minister of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare as the chief guest, Isawanda Laloo IAS, secretary of the department of agriculture and farmers welfare, government of Meghalaya, as the guest of honour, S Kharsati director of agriculture, D Sohtun director of horticulture, Hub managers from different parts of the state and Scientists, specialist researchers, as well as companies and associations.

Lyngdoh in her speech, stated, "In our pursuit of fostering prosperity and opportunities, the Government of Meghalaya, under our chief minister's guidance, has launched 14 Horti-hubs to promote floriculture and create employment beyond the public sector. We're witnessing promising initiatives by farmer producer groups in Umsning and recognizing the potential in our rich biodiversity. Initiatives like the Flori-



culture Development Scheme and the Prime Scheme bolsters commercial floriculture and market-driven enterprises, benefiting both men and women. We're actively seeking funding and exploring the synergy between tourism and floriculture, shaping a brighter future for Meghalaya."

The minister was confident of the motivation that these workshops give to the farmers to ensure that their products meet national and international standards and emphasized that floriculture is an inclusive field where both genders can thrive.

Isawanda Laloo, secretary, department of agriculture and farmers welfare, stated the significance of the workshops and added, "When we look at

the data in the country, we find that India contributes to only 0.6 per cent of the global floriculture market which is a minuscule number and India and the state of Meghalaya has, therefore an immense potential to contribute to increasing the supply of flowers

not only regionally, nationally, but also to the international market.

The horticulture department owns and manages up to 14 Horti hubs. They are distributed to each of the Khasi Jaintia regions. These horti hubs also facilitate the flower growers and the service providers in collecting, trading, and packaging, and finally to send off the flowers to the respective market destination."

The workshop commenced with a presentation on the current state of floriculture in Meghalaya by the department of agriculture & farmers' welfare, setting the stage for the day's discussions.

Brainstorming sessions addressed various facets of floriculture, from production techniques to market potential. Participants from across the country attended the programme, entrepreneurs, experts, florists actively shared their insights and expertise, identifying critical areas for growth.

Interactive sessions involving Hub managers, lead farmers, and florists offered practical experiences, challenges, and innovative solutions within the floriculture sector. The workshop concluded by outlining a strategic roadmap for unlocking the potential of Meghalaya's floriculture industry, incorporating ideas and discussions.

The timing for the initiative was propitious, as the floriculture sector in Meghalaya is witnessing a surge in commercial potential, driven by the availability of improved planting materials, technical inputs, and a growing market demand. Overall, the 'Unlocking the Potential of the Floriculture Sector in Meghalaya' workshop marked a significant step toward realizing the region's ambition of becoming a Northeastern hub for floriculture. (NNN)

## Tiwa festival concludes in West Karbi Anglong Specialised health camp organised

HT Bureau

**DIPHU, Nov 2:** The 16th edition of the Langkhon festival of the Tiwa tribe at Langkhon Kham, Amri in West Karbi Anglong has concluded. The two-day cultural extravaganza that began on October 30 concluded on October 31. A total of 17 cultural troupes from different areas of Amri took part in the festival, which was organized by the Karbi Anglong district committee of Tiwa Cultural Society (TCS) in collaboration with the Langkhon Celebration Committee. The Tiwa tribe celebrates the harvest festival to offer their rituals to Ramsa devota and other deities for protection of their paddy from pests and to reap a good harvest. They pray for prosperity and good health of the family and village to ward off evil and sickness.

During the two day festival cultural activities were witnessed. Traditional dance like Langkhon dance, Moinari Khamthi and traditional song yangli were demonstrated. Traditional sports Plasele and Sam Kava were also conducted. Executive member (EM) of Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council's (KAAC) animal husbandry and veterinary department, D. Uphing Maslai inaugurated the festival. EM Maslai said, "Langkhon and other festivals of the Tiwas are celebrated in order to promote the cul-

ture and traditions of the Tiwa community and take it to a greater height. The younger generation should preserve these traditions."

Participating in the festival as chief guest the Baithalangso MLA Rupsing Teron said every tribe and community has its own distinct culture and tradition and should work for its preservation. He urged all tribes in the district to live together in peace and harmony.

EM of KAAC, Prabhat Chandra Taro said, "Every tribe has its own cultural organizations, which should work for the cause of their own culture and language. The Tiwa people are scattered in various parts of Karbi Anglong and West Karbi Anglong. They have their own distinct language, culture and traditions, which are different from others."

Former Tripura MLA, Dananjay Tripura participating in the festival said that Tiwasa, Dimasa and Tiprasa have the same common dialect. They came from the same root. The three communities should work together in solving their common issues. Dhansiri member of autonomous council (MAC), Tilutima Hasnu inaugurated the cultural night. Various cultural troupes staged different traditional and modern dance performances on the occasion. (PTI)

HT Bureau

**GUWAHATI, Nov 2:** The Mawlong Subcentre and the Mobile Medical Unit (MMU) of The Hans Foundation, in association with the office of the district medical and health officer, organised a specialised health camp recently, at Mawlang HWC-SC. The camp aimed at providing essential healthcare services to a total of nine villages in the area.

The primary objective of this health camp was to promote the health and well-being of the local population. The event emphasised the importance of routine immunisation, family planning, and early registration of Antenatal Care (ANC), 155 Outpatient Department (OPD) visits, 65 laboratory tests, 12 Immunizations Administered and 7 Antenatal Care (ANC) registrations took place.

The presence of two skilled doctors from the Mobile Medical Unit (MMU) ensured that the villagers received the necessary medical attention and guidance. This health camp not only addressed immediate healthcare needs but also played a vital role in raising awareness about preventive healthcare measures.

The collaborative efforts of Mawlong Subcentre, MMU, and the District Medical and Health Officer have made a significant impact on the health and well-being of the community, reinforcing their commitment to serving the local population.

### GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM

#### OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, PWD, (B&NH), DIPHU BUILDING CIRCLE, DIPHU.

No. SE(B)/CS/KYF/01/23-24/ 02

Dtd:-30.10.2023.

### PRESS NOTICE

The Superintending Engineer, Diphu Building & NH Circle, Diphu on behalf of the Governor of Assam, invites Bids with Bid price as shown against the work as below under Karbi Anglong Territorial Building Division, Diphu, with a validity of 180 (one hundred eighty) days only from the date of opening of the tender from registered PWD contractor, of Class-II, Class -I(c), Class-I(B) and above for the following works respectively. Detail of the Bids and Detail Notice Inviting Bids can be seen and purchase in the office of the undersigned during office hours up to 2.00pm from 15/11/ 2023 to 20/11/2023 and will be opened at 2.00 pm on 20/11/2023.

Sl/No	Name of Schemes	Amount
1	Construction of Retaining Wall of Random Rubble Masonry cum Brick Wall and Approach Road at Karbi Kurpho Ahemtun at KYF, Taralangso, Diphu for 2023-24.	Rs. 1,13,42,800.00
2	Construction of VVIP Sitting Room at Singmirjeng Stage (Main Stage) of KYF at Taralangso.	Rs. 94,85,600.00
3	Construction of Rongbong Artu at Taralangso.	Rs. 5,71,95,900.00
	I. Construction of KarbiRicho Ahemtun.	
	II. Construction of Karbi Adorbar Ahemtun.	Rs. 84,64,600.00

Note: - The tender invited in advanced action, prior to according of AA as per instruction of KAAC. The work order will be issued only after receipt of AA. No claims will be entertained from this end.

1. All terms and conditions will be as per the Bidding Document.
2. The Press Notice will be a part of Bidding Document.
3. Payment shall be made subject to arability of fund.

Sd/-

Superintending Engineer, PWD,  
(B&NH), Diphu Building Circle,  
Diphu

Memo No. No.SE(B)/CS/KYF/01/23-24/02 -A

Dtd:-30/ 10/2023

### GOVT. OF ASSAM

#### OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER::BAITHALANGSO DIVISION (IRRIGATION) HAMREN

(Temporary Campus at Hongkram)

No.BDI/T/I/Part-11/2023-24/

Date:

### TENDER CANCELLATION NOTICE

This letter serves as notification relating to cancellation of N.I.T. No. 3(Three) of 2022-23, issue No.EE/BDI/T/I/2022-23/121, Dt.13.01.2023 and N.I.T. No. 04(Four) of 2022-23, issue No.BDI/T/1/2022-23/145, Dt. 26.01.2023 due to some technical issues.

It has an approval from the authority of Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council Vide No. KAAC/Irrigation/BIso-Divn./C.S./01/2023-24/58, dt.26/10/2023.

The Tender will be re-invited in due time and Bidders of the said tenders may collect their earnest money from the office of the undersigned during office hours on any working days.

Sd/-

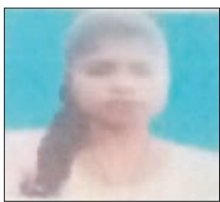
Executive Engineer  
Baithalangso Division (Irrigation)  
Hamren

Date: 30/10/2023

Memo No.EE/BDI/T/I/Part-II/2022-23/560-A



GOVT. OF ASSAM  
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF POLICE :: UDALGURI  
:: DISTRICT :: UDALGURI ASSAM ::



The above is photograph of Smt Sumita Lohar (28 Yrs), W/O- Sri Arjun Lohar, Vill- Khoirajongal, PS- Panery, Dist- Udalguri who has been missing since 27/10/2023 from Her House.

This refers to Panery PS GDE No- 28/23, Dtd. 28/10/2023 and this office Man Missing Register Entry No. 137, Dtd 31/10/2023

**Descriptive Roll of the Missing Person:**

1. Complexion	Fair
2. Age	28 years
3. Height	5 feet
4. L/known	Assamese, Adibashi
5. Wearing	Colourful Suridar

All efforts may be made to trace out/ recover the above noted missing person at the earliest and result thereof may be intimated to this office at the following helpline numbers for further necessary action: 6026901138 (cell phone)

Sd/-  
Superintendent of Police  
Udalguri, Assam

Janasanyog /D/12912/ 23/3-Nov-23

GOVT. OF ASSAM  
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF POLICE :: UDALGURI  
:: DISTRICT :: UDALGURI ASSAM ::



The above is photograph of Miss Alesa Khatun (22 yrs), D/O- Jjoyal Abadin, Vill- Aminpara, PS- Rowta, Dist-Udalguri who has been missing since 26/10/2023 from Aminpara.

This refers to Rowta PS GDE No-15/23, Dtd. 28/10/2023 and this office Man Missing Register Entry No. 136, Dtd. 31/10/2023.

**Descriptive Roll of the Missing Person:**

1. Complexion	Brown
2. Age	22 years
3. Height	5 feet
4. L/known	Assamese
5. Wearing	Black suridar

All efforts may be made to trace out/recover the above noted missing person at the earliest and result thereof may be intimated to this office at the following helpline numbers for further necessary action: 6026901138 (cell phone)

Sd/-  
Superintendent of Police  
Udalguri, Assam

Janasanyog /D/12904/ 23/3-Nov-23

## Oppn members storm out of LS Ethics Committee meet alongwith Moitra

**NEW DELHI, Nov 2:** Opposition members of the Lok Sabha Ethics Committee on Thursday stormed out of a meeting along with Mahua Moitra, accusing the panel's chairperson of asking the TMC MP personal and unethical questions.

The committee chairman and BJP MP Vinod Sonkar, who continued the deliberations even after the walkout, later counter-accused the opposition members of behaving unethically and boycotting to detract from allegations against Moitra. Talking to reporters after the meeting ended, Sonkar alleged that objectionable words were used against the committee's functioning and against him.

"We found the ethics committee chairperson's questions to Moitra undignified and unethical," Congress MP and panel member N Uttam Kumar Reddy told reporters after the walkout.

Opposition members of the committee, which had asked Moitra to depose before it in connection with allegations of "gifts-for-query" against her, also questioned the manner in which the meeting was conducted.

After the meeting, BJP MP and panel member Aparajita Sarangi, however, said that Moitra behaved in an angry, rude and arrogant manner when she was asked about the affidavit submitted to the committee by businessman Darshan Hiranandani.

Moitra has been accused of asking ques-

tions, which were keyed in through her parliamentary account, at the behest of Hiranandani in return for bribes and favours from the Dubai-based scion of a well-known business family.

Moitra pleaded innocence to the allegations levelled against her and told the parliamentary committee that the charge is motivated by animus of advocate Jai Anant Dehadrai after she broke her personal relations with him, sources said.

She was supported by opposition MPs, including Reddy and Danish Ali of the BSP, in the meeting while a few BJP members, including V D Sharma, wanted her to respond to the substantive part of the allegations and not make it all about the personal relationship going bad.

Sources said a large part of her deposition before the committee was about her relationship with Dehadrai as she appeared to blame him for the leaks and allegations.

Citing Dehadrai's submission, BJP MP Nishikant Dubey had filed a complaint against her with Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla who referred the matter to the committee. Separately talking to reporters, Dubey said Moitra tried to create a wrong narrative about the proceedings and the opposition was perturbed that the ethics panel was headed by an OBC MP. (PTI)



## LOST

I, Sri Amit Nath lost my BA (KKHSOU) Registration Certificate ( Enrollment No. 13018662) and Mark-sheet (III Semester) at Narengi area.

If any one finds them  
Please Contact me  
Amit Nath , Guwahati, Megzine, VIP  
Road Or 91+  
9101445567

## ED officer arrested in Jaipur by Rajasthan Anti-Corruption Bureau

**JAIPUR, Nov 2:** The Rajasthan Anti-Corruption Bureau on Thursday arrested an Enforcement Directorate officer, posted in Manipur, and his associate here for allegedly taking a bribe of ₹ 15 lakh for settling a matter related to a chit fund case, officials said. Those arrested are Naval Kishore Meena, an enforcement officer in the federal probe agency and resident of Vimalpura in Jaipur district, and Babul Meena, a junior assistant in the Mundawar Sub Registrar Office in the newly formed Kotpulti-Behror district of Rajasthan, the bureau said in a statement.

Sources in the Enforcement Directorate (ED) said that the agency will initiate a probe after lodging a criminal case of money laundering against the officer. Naval Kishore had allegedly demanded ₹ 17 lakh in lieu of settling a case lodged in the ED office in Manipur capital Imphal against the complainant in the chit fund matter, the bureau said and added that he is posted at the ED's sub-zonal office in Imphal. The complainant had informed the bureau that a bribe of ₹ 17 lakh was allegedly demanded by Naval Kishore for settling the case registered against him in the office of the ED in Imphal, the statement said. (PTI)

## NOTICE INVITING APPLICATION

It is to inform that the office of the undersigned is inviting application from the interested Individuals in fisheries sector of Karbi Anglong and West Karbi Anglong for Implementation of "PRADHAN MANTRI MATSHYA SAMPADA YOJNA" (PMMSY) Schemes for the year 2023-24. The selected beneficiaries will get Govt. assistance of 60 % (ST/Women) of the unit cost and the remaining 40 % will have to be borne by the beneficiary as beneficiary's share. The District Level Selection Committee (MSC) will approve the beneficiary base on feasibility and availability of the scheme.

**Last date for submission of application is 10-11-2023**

Sl. No	Component	Unit (Rs in Lakh)	Category	Karbi Anglong		West Karbi Anglong		Remarks
				Target	No. of Unit	Target	No. of Unit	
1	New Rearing Pond	ST	7.00/ Ha	2 ha	-	3ha	-	Unit size area 0.10-0.50 Ha.
		Women	7.00/ Ha	1ha	-	2 ha	-	
2	New Pond construction under NEH	ST	8.40/ Ha.	8 ha	-	5ha	-	Unit size area 0.25-1.00 Ha.
		Women	8.40/ Ha.	2ha	-	2 ha	-	
3	Fingerling Stocking in wetlands	ST	0.03/Ha.	-	-	24 ha	-	Min. water area 5.00 ha to 15.00 ha
4	Three wheeler with ice box	ST	3.00	3	3	1	1	To submit Self Contained Proposal (SCP) together with availability of financial resources to meet the of beneficiary's share.
5	Fish Kiosk	ST	10.00	1	1	-	-	
6	Boats and Nets	ST	0.67	1	1	-	-	
7	Livelihood support to Fishers	Gen/ST/ SC/ Women	0.045/ Nos.	100 Nos.	100 Nos.	200 nos	200 nos	Beneficiary should be a fulltime active fisher, BPL, age between 18 and 60 years, and a member of a Functional local fisher's cooperative society / federation/ any other registered body.

Following documents are to be enclosed along with the application

1. Patta or land holding certificate or leased agreement for long at least 10 years
2. Photo copy of PAN card, Voter ID, Front page copy of bank passbook, Passport size Photograph (3 Copies), Caste certificate, ADHAAR card and Mobile number are mandatory.
3. Photograph of the proposed Site.

Sd/-  
District Fisheries Development Officer  
Karbi Anglong, Diphu

Contd. from Page 3...

## Himanta ridicules Cong's

November 17. The counting of votes will occur on December 3. With both major contenders, BJP and Congress, having finalized their list of candidates for the 90 assembly seats, the stakes are high in this election. The 2018 assembly polls saw a significant victory for the Congress, securing 68 out of 90 seats against the then-ruling BJP, which managed to secure only 15 seats. As the state braces for the upcoming polls, the debate on religious conversion adds a new layer of complexity to the electoral discourse, prompting discussions on social and political fronts alike.

## Hopeful of India designating

go down that road (designating Hamas). I didn't even get a promise for that. We are doing it as a sincere effort to add as many friendly countries as possible like we see in Lashkar-e-Taiba and other organisations," he said. "I think it is very legitimate to request reciprocity," the envoy added. To a specific question, he said he was "hopeful" of India designating Hamas as a terror outfit.

Asked about mounting global concerns over the death of over 8,000 people and the plight of civilians in Gaza in view of the Israeli military offensive, Gilon said his country was doing its utmost to prevent humanitarian suffering and loss of lives. "For example we took three weeks before we began ground operation. We told the population in Gaza to go South. Unfortunately many did not because there was pressure on them by Hamas. They (Hamas) are hiding behind human shields," he said. (PTI)

## Ayush minister inaugurates

like Ayurveda, the government affirms its commitment to work towards achieving a healthy nation. Given the encouraging number of people availing Ayurvedic care solutions, we are moving ahead to create an integrated healthcare ecosystem where one can heal their illness and avail solutions to enrich their quality of lives," he said. The Centre has plans to have more Ayush healthcare infrastructure in the state to sustain the demand for a vigorous healthcare in the state.

The Ayurvedic Hospital at Dudhnoi will have out-patient department services in Kaya Chikitsa, PTSR, Samhita and Siddhant, Shalakya etc. In-patient department services will be available in Panchakarma Therapy like Snehan, Swedan, Janu Basti, Griba Basti, Sirodhara, Kriya Kalpa therapy like Karma Poran, Karma Dhupan, Anjan, Tarpan, Parishes among others. Infertility clinic with therapy like Uttar Basti, Khara-Khutra treatment in ano-rectal disorders, geriatric rejuvenative clinic, rheumatology clinic, lifestyle disorders, skin and cosmetic clinic will also be functioning here.

The hospital is also equipped with state-of-the-art laboratory, a yoga unit, pharmacy etc. In order to make the Dudhnoi campus a major centre of Ayush in the region, further development of USG facility, X ray and ECG facility, operation theatre, Kharasutra, upgraded Panchakarma, upgraded Laboratory as well as labour room will be developed. An Ayush educational institution is also being constructed at the same campus. In order to harness the flora for Ayurvedic medicinal products, a garden with rare medicinal plants will also be set up within the premises of this hospital.

Meanwhile, four more such integrated Ayurvedic hospitals will be set up in Kaliabor, Kokrajhar, Morigaon and Baksa. Diphu and Bajali will get a 30-bedded hospital and a 10-bedded hospital respectively. A total of 100 Ayush dispensaries will also be set up in all districts of the state.

The Union minister said, "Ayurveda has gained worldwide acknowledgement for its role in managing the Covid- 19 pandemic. At the world stage, the role of traditional medicine has been highlighted to complement and build a robust healthcare delivery system. At the G20 New Delhi Leaders Declaration, emphasis was laid on recognizing the potential role of evidence based traditional medicine. Ayush became an independent ministry only in 2014, which has proved to be a game changer in reviving traditional forms of medicine like ayurveda, yoga, siddha, naturopathy, sowa rigpa, homoeopathy and unani to make them active players in the healthcare delivery system in the country."

## Bhutan king's maiden visit

where he will also be staying. The king will be attending a dinner hosted by Assam Governor Gulab Chand Kataria in his honour on Friday and fly to Jorhat the next morning for Kaziranga National Park visit. Meanwhile, Assam chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Thursday said both the countries share a unique relationship which has strengthened with the passage of time. Sarma said the people of Assam are eagerly looking forward to welcome the king on his first visit to the state.

"Bharat and Bhutan share a unique relationship which has strengthened with the passage of time. For centuries, knowledge and education have been central to this special bond", the chief minister posted on X. Sarma also said, "tomorrow, we in Assam, eagerly look forward to welcome His Majesty, the King of Bhutan on his first official visit to our state". This visit will further deepen the friendship between the two countries, the chief minister added. Royal Bhutan Ambassador Major General Vetsop Namyel had called upon the chief minister ahead of the visit of the king to the state. (PTI)

## Amit Shah terms Cong 'cut

their son prime minister, some have to save their son from agencies while some have to make their son chief minister. Some have to become Madam's loyalists. Can these parties do any good for the people?" Shah asked. He also targeted the Congress over the Ram Temple issue. For decades after Independence, the Congress kept the Ram Temple issue hanging and hindered its construction in Ayodhya, he alleged. "Should the Ram Temple have been built in Ayodhya on time or not," he asked the gathering. Shah said it was Prime Minister Narendra Modi who laid the foundation of the temple. On January 22, an idol of Ram Lalla will be consecrated in the huge temple, he said, adding Modi ji will also attend the "pran pratistha" ceremony.

At the event here, Shah, in presence of chief minister Khattar and others, launched five schemes for the 'Antyodaya' families. Several Haryana ministers, Union minister Rao Inderjit Singh, and state BJP chief Nayab Singh Saini were among those present at the event in Karnal, which is also CM's home constituency. However, no one from BJP's ally JJP was present. Shah said the government has been carrying forward the 'Antyodaya' welfare policy based on Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyaya's vision. 'Antyodaya' means the welfare of the people in the bottom of the pyramid. Shah also attacked the previous governments headed by Congress' Hooda and INLD's O P Chautala. "What you (Hooda) had done? You gave the rule of fear, corruption and hunger," Shah said. "When Hooda came, there was massive corruption. There was an auction of Haryana land to serve 'damad' (referring to Sonia Gandhi's son-in-law Robert Vadra)," he alleged. When Chautala came, the law and order situation turned bad, he said. Both of them had indulged in corruption in government recruitments during their respective regimes, he alleged. However, the BJP government in Haryana gave jobs to people on merit and without any money, he said. (PTI)

## KLDB distributes appointment

approach I would like to extend my heartfelt appreciation to him," Tokbi added. The EM further said that the appointment has been made as per merit basis of the interview conducted in 2022. The CEM while handing over the appointment letters to the candidates said as envisaged in para 4.11 of National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, as wherever possible, the medium of instruction upto Class 5 should be with one's mother tongue. "Keeping this in mind the KAAC has appointed KMTs and KLTs so that at the foundation level children get to learn through their own mother tongue. The KAAC is making all efforts for the development of Karbi language," the CEM added. He mentioned that initially the salary of KMTs was ₹ 2, 400 but now it is increased to ₹ 17000. While the KLTs teach Karbi subjects in primary, ME section and high school level their salary is now ₹ 16000. "When I was EM, KAAC, Education I appointed Karbi Language Teachers for primary level. At first the salary of Karbi Medium Teachers was only ₹ 2, 400. Now it has increased to ₹ 17, 000. Same thing for Karbi Language Teachers their salary has been increased to ₹ 16, 000. The service of KMTs and KLTs were temporary, but the Executive Committee (EC) meeting today has decided to make their service permanent," the CEM said. The function was also attended by MLA Dorsing Ronghang, EMs and Member of Autonomous Council (MACs).

## KAAC EM Lunsing Teron

health check-up camp in order to reach out health facilities to the villagers as many can't go to hospital and buy good medicines. The health camp is organised in memory of my late mother Kajir Ronghangpi," the EM said. He also said critical illness can be brought on that day for free check-up as expert doctors have been hired. The doctors are: Dr.Chandan Modak, MBBS, MD, DM (Cardiology); Dr. B.C Roy, MS (ENT), Head and Neck Surgical Oncology (AIIMS, New Delhi); Dr. P.K Bhattacharya (M.S., Orthopedic); Dr. Bhaskar Jyoti Kakati (MD, Medicines); Dr. Abhishek Agarwal, MD (Pulmonologist); Dr. Jayanta Thakuria M.S (Eye specialist and dr. Golap Ch. Dutta, MBBS, DGO Gynaecologist.

## Finance gap in climate

populations. Neither is happening," said Inger Andersen, executive director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). According to the report, public multilateral and bilateral adaptation finance flows to developing countries declined by 15 percent to around USD 21 billion in 2021 despite the pledges made at the UN climate talks in Glasgow in 2021 to double 2019 adaptation finance support to around USD 40 billion per year by 2025. "Finding new ways to deliver finance for adaptation action is essential," Anderson said. "Neither the goal of doubling 2019 international finance flows to developing countries by 2025 nor a possible New Collective Quantified Goal for 2030 will significantly close the adaptation finance gap on their own," she added. The report points to a study indicating that the 55 most climate-vulnerable economies alone have experienced losses and damages of more than USD 500 billion in the last two decades. These costs will rise steeply in the coming decades, particularly in the absence of forceful mitigation and adaptation. (PTI)

## Former DNB chairman

Later, he also formed 'Jambili' a folk fusion rock band, where he was the vocalist and director. He has composed popular songs like 'School dun nangji', 'Senge jadi tha nang, Linchika', 'Baideu long' and many more. He has performed on different platforms within Karbi Anglong and outside. He is also associated with Karbi Human Rights Watch and Ruru Rara, an entertainment channel.

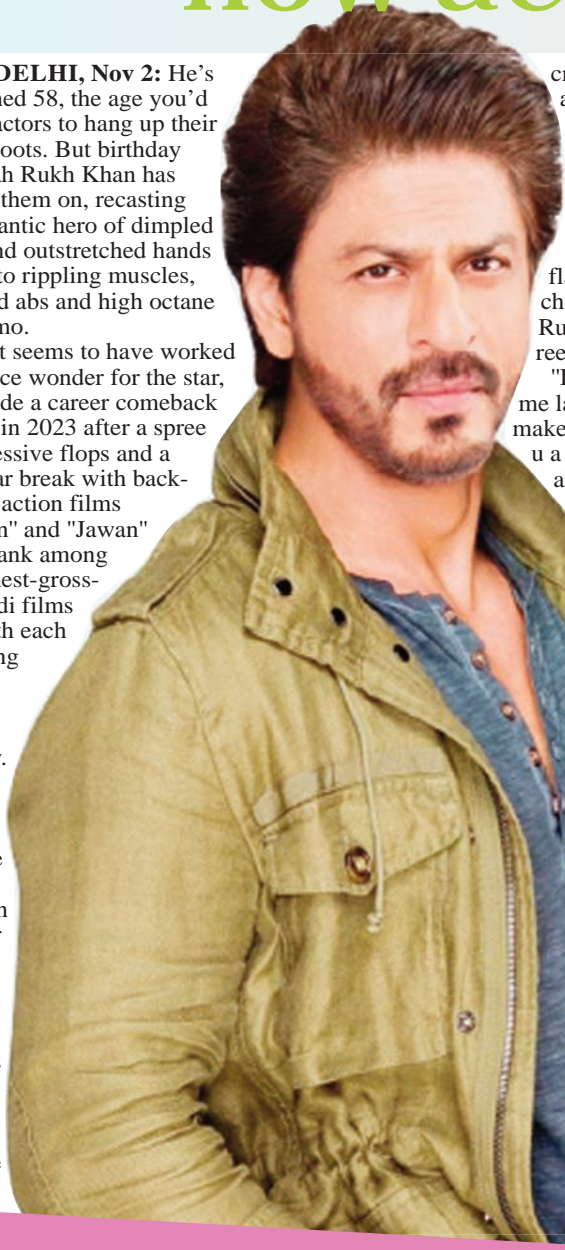
He stepped into politics with the Indian National Congress party. In 2012 he was elected as ward commissioner from Ward No.5 of Diphu town and was again elected as chairman of Diphu Town Committee, now the Diphu Municipal Board from 2012 to 2014. He joined the BJP in 2022.



## Shah Rukh@58: Villain, lover boy and now action hero

**NEW DELHI, Nov 2:** He's just turned 58, the age you'd expect actors to hang up their action boots. But birthday boy Shah Rukh Khan has just put them on, recasting the romantic hero of dimpled smile and outstretched hands fame into rippling muscles, chiselled abs and high octane machismo.

And it seems to have worked box office wonder for the star, who made a career comeback of sorts in 2023 after a spree of successive flops and a four-year break with back-to-back action films "Pathaan" and "Jawan" — they rank among the highest-grossing Hindi films ever with each collecting over Rs 1,000 crore globally. Film star birth-days are always occasion for their fans. It was so for Shah Rukh as well this year with the



crowds outside his home Mannat bigger, louder and more enthusiastic. Thousands of people waited for hours outside Mannat to ring in his birthday on Thursday. He obliged shortly after midnight, appearing in his balcony to greet them with folded hands, blowing kisses and striking his signature arms wide open pose.

As the night sky lit up with mobile cameras flashing wildly and the crowds screamed and chanted his name, it seemed evident that Shah Rukh's many gambles in his over three-decade career had paid off.

"It's unbelievable that so many of u come & wish me late at night. I am but a mere actor. Nothing makes me happier, than, the fact that I can entertain u a bit. I live in a dream of your love. Thank u for allowing me to entertain you all. C u in the morning...on the screen & off it," Shah Rukh wrote on X.

During the promotions of "Pathaan" earlier this year, Shah Rukh had said playing the titular action hero was the realisation of a long cherished dream.

"I came to the film industry 32 years ago to be an action hero but I missed the boat because they made me a romantic hero instead. I've only wanted to be an action hero," he said in a video interview posted by film's production banner Yash Raj Films on YouTube in January this year. "I mean I love 'Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge', and I love Rahul and Raj and all these good, sweet boys but I always thought I was an action hero, so for me it's my dream come true," he said.

Friend and frequent collaborator Karan Johar has also said Shah Rukh hated love stories and only wanted to be in action films. (PTI)

## SRK DROPS FIRST LOOK OF 'DUNKI' ON 58TH BIRTHDAY:

**MUMBAI, Nov 2:** Superstar Shah Rukh Khan unveiled the first look of "Dunki", his upcoming collaboration with filmmaker Rajkumar Hirani, on his 58th birthday, calling the film a "story of simple and real people trying to fulfill their dreams and desires".

The film's first look, dubbed 'Dunki Drop 1' by the makers, was shared by the actor on his official social media handles on Thursday.

"A story of simple and real people trying to fulfill their dreams and desires. Of friendship, love, and being together... Of being in a relationship called Home!"

A heartwarming story by a heartwarming storyteller.

"It's an honour to be a part of this journey and I hope you all come along with us. The #DunkiDrop1 is here," SRK wrote on X, along with the first look video.

Also starring Taapsee Pannu, Vicky Kaushal, Boman Irani, Vikram Kochhar and Anil Grover, "Dunki" is scheduled to be released in theatres on Christmas.

According to the makers, the film revolves around five friends -- SRK's Hardy, Pannu's Manu, Kochhar's Buggu, Grover's Balli and Kaushal's Sukhi -- and their quest to reach foreign shores. (PTI)



## Shooting complete on Hrithik Roshan and Deepika-starrer 'Fighter'

**MUMBAI, Nov 2:** Director Siddharth Anand on Wednesday announced that the filming on his upcoming directorial "Fighter", starring Hrithik Roshan and Deepika Padukone, is complete.

Touted as India's first aerial action magnum opus, the film also stars Anil Kapoor. It is scheduled to hit the screens on January 25, 2024.

Anand, known for blockbusters such as "Pathaan" and "War", shared the update on his Instagram Story.

"And it's a film shoot wrap on #FIGHTER !" the filmmaker shared a picture from the film sets.

The motion poster of "Fighter" was released on Independence Day 2023, which provided the first glimpse at the three actors, who play Indian Air Force (IAF) officers in the movie.

The film reunites Roshan with Anand after "Bang Bang!" and "War". It is the second project for Padukone and the director following "Pathaan". "Fighter", backed by Viacom18 Studios and Marflix Pictures, is described as a homage to the valour, sacrifice and patriotism of the Indian armed forces. (PTI)



## SCARLETT JOHANSSON TAKES LEGAL ACTION AI APP FOR USING HER NAME AND LIKENESS IN ADVERTISEMENT

**LOS ANGELES, Nov 2:** Hollywood star Scarlett Johansson has taken legal action against an AI app after its advertisement allegedly featured her name and likeness without her permission.

The 22-second advertisement was posted on X by Lisa AI: 90's Yearbook & Avatar, an image generating app, according to American news outlet Variety.

A spokesperson of the "Marriage Story" star confirmed to Variety that she is not a spokesperson for the company and that appropriate legal actions were taken since it was spotted on October 28.

"We do not take these things lightly. Per our usual course of action in these circumstances, we will deal with it with all legal remedies that we will have," her lawyer, Kevin Yorn, told the outlet. The ad, which has been taken down, uses the behind the scenes footage of Johansson from the set of her 2021 Marvel film "Black Widow", in which she played the titular superhero.

"What's up guys? It's Scarlett and I want you to come

with me..." she says, before the screen transitions into AI-generated photos that resemble her.

A voice, impersonating the actor, continues to speak to promote the app.

"It's not limited to avatars only. You can also create images with texts and even your AI videos. I think you shouldn't miss it," the narration says.

The advertisement also featured a fine print that read, "Images produced by Lisa AI. It has nothing to do with this person." Johansson's legal action against the AI app comes just a month after Hollywood veteran Tom Hanks warned his fans about a dental plan advertisement that he claimed was using an "AI version" of him. (PTI)



## Considering taking up more comedy films after doing 'Aankh Micholi': Mrunal Thakur

**NEW DELHI, Nov 2:** Actor Mrunal Thakur says she is looking forward to featuring in more comedies after her "Aankh Micholi" director Umesh Shukla praised her comic timing in the upcoming film.

The film marks the first comedy for the actor, who has mostly starred in dramatic roles in movies such as "Love Sonia", "Super 30", "Batla House", and "Sita Ramam".

In the light-hearted family comedy, she plays a young woman, Paro, who suffers from night-blindness and her family is trying to get her married by hiding the condition.

"There are festivities around. It's the best time for the film to release because we desperately needed a comedy to watch with our family and friends. It's my first comedy film in my career.

"The best compliment I have got from Umesh sir is that my (comic) timing is good and I should consider more comedy films, which I am. I really want to entertain my audience and make them laugh because not many comedy films are being made that we can watch with our families," Thakur told PTI in an interview.

"Aankh Micholi", also starring Paresh Rawal, Abhimanyu, Sharman Joshi and Divya Dutta, will hit the screens on November 3.

According to the official synopsis, the film is set around an Indian wedding and showcases the "madness of two mismatched families and their crazy shenanigans".

Working with Rawal, known for his impeccable timing in films such as "Hera Pheri", "Malamaal Weekly", and "Andaz Apna Apna",

was like going to comedy school, added Thakur.

"The only fact is that I got paid to be in this school. Every scene there was a learning process. Every day, Abhimanyu and I were learning something because we were new to this genre.

"We would always stick to the lines. What I learnt from Paresh ji is that you don't have to rote learn the lines. You just have to be in the flow and be impromptu. If you're not alert, somebody else will take away (the scene)," she said.

The 31-year-old actor said she likes clean and quirky comedies.

"I don't like comedies where people insult each other based on their physical appearance. I don't think I can take insults really well. I won't laugh, I'll end up saying something crazy. I like clean com-

edy, not the WhatsApp jokes. I don't get dark humour, sometimes. I'm a tubelight in that kind of a case. I prefer light comedy. I don't understand political satire, so I often ask people how is it a comedy?" she said.

"I love Govinda, his timing, his films. One of my all-time favourite comedy films is 'Andaz Apna Apna'. You name the comedy and there is Paresh ji. 'Hera Pheri' is another one, his character, Baburao, is my favourite," Thakur said.

The cast also includes Abhishek Banerjee, Darshan Jariwala, Grusha Kapoor and Vijay Raaz. The movie is written by Jitendra Parmar.

It is produced by Sony Pictures International Productions, Shukla and Ashish Wagh's Merry Go Round Studios. (PTI)





## THE ORANGE ARMY SECURED UPSET WINS OVER SA AND B'DESH

## Spinners make Afghanistan favourites against Holland on tacky Ekana surface

LUCKNOW, Nov 2: They have outlived tags like 'minnows' and 'giant-killers' with their lion-hearted performances but spirited Afghanistan's quest to reach the next level starts in earnest against an equally inspirational Netherlands in a World Cup match between the two teams here on Friday.

Starting as favourites on a tricky Ekana Stadium surface, with a quality spin attack at its disposal, Afghanistan (6 points) will not only look to secure two points against the Dutch (4 points) but also aim to win big and improve the net run-rate in its bid to remain relevant in the race to semi-final.

The manner in which Afghanistan's top-order batted to outclass sides like Pakistan and Sri Lanka, it showed that the victory against defending champions England wasn't a mere flash in the pan.

Ashes-winning English batter Jonathon Trott was a gritty customer during his playing days and he has instilled the same doggedness in his wards too, as they have made the heads with their methodical approach and praiseworthy resilience.

Just like Kenya, with a bit of luck, made it to the semi-finals of the 2003 World Cup, Afghans will hope that the rub of the green goes their way, beginning with the Dutch test.

After this game, they take on Australia (November 7) and South Africa (November 10) in what would determine whether they have it in them to go to the next level -- the World Cup semifinals. One de-



feat and it all comes crashing down.

The 'Orange Army', too have been a surprise package of this World Cup, securing upset wins over South Africa and Bangladesh.

It has put them ahead of Bangladesh and bottom-rung England in the 10-team standings to keep a slender semifinal qualification hopes alive although even their biggest supporters know that it would be miraculous if they happen to make it to final four.

On six points each, Pakistan and Afghanistan are two other teams outside top-four who are very much in the mix of a last-four berth.

But Afghanistan with a much-inferior net run-rate (-0.718) compared to Pakistan (-0.024) would mean that the Hashmatullah Shahidi-led side have a lot of catching up to do.

The bowling has always been their strength but their biggest turn-

around this time has been their batting which has clicked as a collective unit, something that came to fore in their clinical chases of 283 (vs Pakistan) and 242 (Sri Lanka) in their last two outings.

While skipper Hashmatullah Shahidi (226) and Azmatullah Omarzai (203) have the rock in the middle, the likes of Rahmanullah Gurbaz (224), Rahmat Shah (212), Ibrahim Zardani (212) and Ikram Akhili (77 in 2 games) have also

shouldered a lot of responsibility. It's only a hundred that has eluded an Afghan batter as Jonathan Trott will hope that one among them go on to convert their starts.

The likes of Rashid Khan and Mujeeb Ur Rahman will be tempted to bowl at the Ekana stadium that is known for its slow conditions.

Teams batting second have won nine of 12 ODI matches played at the Ekana, including two in the World Cup. (PTI)

## We have faced adversities due to injuries: Latham

PUNE, Nov 2: New Zealand skipper Tom Latham on Wednesday rued the series of injuries which has left the Black Caps in a difficult position as the World Cup enters the business end.

New Zealand slumped to their third consecutive defeat as South Africa handed them a massive 190-run loss here on Wednesday.

To add to their woes as many as five players, including regular skipper Kane Williamson (thumb), are battling injuries, leaving them with only 10 fit players in their squad of 15.

"We have faced adversities with injuries. We will reflect on this one quickly and move to the next one, we don't become a bad team overnight," Latham said after the game. Matt Henry and James Neesham suffered injuries on Wednesday with the former hurting his hamstring. He will undergo scans on Thursday.

Neesham, on the other hand, suffered a blow on his right wrist during his follow through, but came out to bat.

Lockie Ferguson (achilles) and Mark Chapman (calf) are also nursing injuries. New Zealand failed with the bat and ball against the Proteas. While the bowlers gave away 357 runs, the entire team was bowled out for 167.

"Not our best performance. We were under pressure after that partnership between Quinton de Kock and Rassie van der Dussen. It was a big score." (PTI)

## Fit-again Ferguson set for a comeback vs Pakistan

NEW DELHI, Nov 2: New Zealand pacer Lockie Ferguson, who missed the match against South Africa due to an injury, is now fit and will be "available" for their key World Cup clash against Pakistan on Saturday.

Ferguson walked off the game against Australia last Saturday after experiencing a niggle in his right Achilles and was ruled out of their match against South Africa.

Chasing 358, the last edition's runners-up capitulated by 190 runs, marking their third defeat in a row after four consecutive wins.

"Lockie Ferguson's scan on his right Achilles revealed no significant damage and it's hoped he'll be available for Saturday's game against Pakistan in Bengaluru," New Zealand cricket said in a statement.

The Black Caps are grappling



with a series of injuries, leaving them in a tricky position as the World Cup enters the business end.

As many as five players, including regular skipper Kane Williamson (thumb), are battling injuries.

While Ferguson and Mark Chapman (calf) were already

nursing injuries, Matt Henry and James Neesham also suffered injuries on Wednesday with the former hurting his hamstring.

"Matt Henry will undergo an MRI scan in the next 24 hours to ascertain the extent of the injury to his right hamstring," NZC said.

## Jamieson called in as cover as Henry awaits scan results

NEW DELHI, Nov 2: Ravaged by a spate of injuries, New Zealand on Thursday included towering fast bowler Kyle Jamieson in their World Cup squad with a cloud of doubt hovering over pacer Matt Henry's availability for a key clash against Pakistan.

The 28-year-old six feet eight inches tall pacer will arrive in Bengaluru late on Thursday ahead of Saturday's game against Pakistan. New Zealand have been left in a tricky situation to-

wards the business end of the tournament with as many as five of their players, including two pacers, battling injuries.

While regular skipper Kane Williamson (thumb), Lockie Ferguson (achilles) and Mark Chapman (calf) were already nursing injuries, Henry and James Neesham joined the list on Wednesday with the former hurting his hamstring. With Henry awaiting scan results on his right hamstring, New Zealand were forced to fly in Jamieson, who was pre-

viously with the squad as cover for Tim Southee. "The severity of Matt's injury, combined with a short turnaround to Pakistan, meant we couldn't risk being a bowler down for Saturday," Head coach Gary Stead said in a statement.

"Matt's been a world class performer for us in ODI cricket for the past two World Cup cycles so we've got our fingers crossed for the scan results later today." Stead said Jamieson was well-prepared to return to India. "Kyle's on his way over as we

speaking and we look forward to welcoming him back into the group. He'll likely train with us on Friday with a mind to being available for Saturday's game."

"Kyle was able to train for two full weeks with us earlier in the tournament and has since played a Plunket Shield match - so we're confident he'll be able to hit the ground running." New Zealand have slumped to three successive losses following four wins, leaving them with 8 points in the points table. (PTI)

## National Games: Teen swimmer Dhinidhi Desinghu wins her fourth Gold



PANAJI, Nov 2: Karnataka's 14-year-old swimming sensation Dhinidhi Desinghu won her fourth gold medal of the ongoing National Games, anchoring her team to the top spot in 4x200m freestyle relay here on Wednesday.

Olympian Sajjan Prakash won his second gold medal as he finished on top of the 200m butterfly podium with a Games record, stopping the clock at 1:59.38s.

Service's S P Likith clinched gold in the men's 50m breaststroke event with a timing of 28.71s ahead of S Danush of Tamil Nadu (29.03s) and Vidith S Shankar of Karnataka (29.07).

Chahat Arora (34.09s) of Punjab defended her women's 50m breaststroke title, leaping ahead of Karnataka's A K Linyesha (34.11). Harshitha Jayaram of Kerala won the bronze.

Karnataka 4x200m freestyle relay teams in both men's and women's categories won the gold creating Games records.

Seema of Himachal Pradesh completed a double by securing the gold in 5000m in athletics. She had clinched gold in 10000m also.

Ankit Kumar of Uttarakhand pipped Abhishek Pal and Gulveer Singh to win the gold in the men's 10000m.

Andhra completed the relay double in the women's category, winning the gold medal ahead of Tamil Nadu and Kerala.

In the men's category, SSCB won the gold, dipping ahead of Tamil Nadu who won the silver. Kerala won the bronze medal.

Earlier in the day, Services rowers secured six gold medals, which helped the defending champions to pull away from Haryana in the medals tally behind runaway leaders Maharashtra. Services increased their medal tally to 56 medals, including 32 golds. Maharashtra lead the table with a total of 134 medals including 56 golds.

Apart from SSCB, who swept

all the rowing gold medals in the men's category, Madhya Pradesh won three gold in the women's section, while Kerala won two and Haryana won the other gold.

In the men's quadruple sculls event, Asian Games bronze medal-winning team of Satnam Singh, Parminder Singh, Jakar Singh, Sukhmeet Singh of SSCB won gold.

Another Asian Games bronze medal-winning pair of Babul Yadav and Lekh Ram won gold for SSCB in the men's pair event. Olympians Arjun Lal Jat and Arvind Singh of SSCB won gold in the men's lightweight double scull pair event.

At the Fatorada Multipurpose Stadium, India's No. 1-ranked tennis player Ankita Raina guided Gujarat to gold in the women's team event.

In a match of heavyweights, Ankita beat Asian Games gold medallist Rutuja Bhosale of Maharashtra 6-4, 6-2 to seal the gold medal for her state.

Vaidehee Chaudhari had earlier beaten Vaishnavi Adkar 6-3, 6-0 to give Gujarat the lead in the match.

In the men's category, Karnataka upset favourites Tamil Nadu 2-1 to clinch the gold. Manish Suresh Kumar gave the perfect start for Tamil Nadu beating Suraj Prabhu in straight sets.

In the second singles, Asian Games medallist Ramkumar Ramanathan was stunned by Prajwal S D Dev as he was beaten 1-6, 1-6.

In the deciding doubles rubber, Ojes Teja partnered Jeevan Nedunchezhiyan but the pair of Prajwal S D Dev and Adil Kayanpur beat them in straight sets to give Karnataka a well-earned gold medal.

At Colva Beach, Kerala beat Goa 7-5 to secure the first gold medal in beach football at the National Games. Lakshadweep won the bronze beating Punjab 4-2. (PTI)

## Sri Lanka players wear black armbands in memory of legendary 'Uncle' Percy during WC game vs India

MUMBAI, Nov 2: Sri Lankan cricket team wore black armbands in memory of their 'legendary cheerleader' and 'superfan' Percy Abeysekera during their World Cup match against India here on Thursday.

Abeysekera passed away recently after a prolonged battle with illness at the age of 87.

'Uncle Percy' as he was fondly known, was present at almost all the Sri Lanka matches from the 1979 World Cup, but he gained popularity after the 1996 World Cup which the country co-hosted.

Abeysekera was famous for waving a large Sri Lankan flag during the games, patting the players on their backs and even accompanying the players to and from the dressing room.

"Abeysekera was an integral part of the game of cricket in Sri Lanka and did play a pivotal role from beyond the boundary line to support and motivate the players. His towering legacy spans across Sri Lanka's pre- and post-Test eras, and his name will remain etched forever among cricket lovers," Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) said in an official statement.

India captain Rohit Sharma recalled his meeting with Abeysekera during the recent Asia Cup when he visited the latter's house in Colombo.

"I was lucky to get an opportunity to meet him in Sri Lanka during the Asia Cup and he's been

such a great fan of cricket. Of course, (of the) Sri Lankan team but he's probably the first ever fan that I met, who was so genuine and the support from his side towards his team, towards the players was fantastic to see," Rohit said.

Rohit recalled his first-ever trip to Sri Lanka during the 2006 U-19 World Cup but said that he could notice 'Uncle Percy' only during a tour two years later with the Indian senior side.

"When I first went to Sri Lanka in 2006, actually for (the) U19 World Cup, he was there, but I was a little boy, I had no idea about how things work outside (the) cricket field. I was not too much into that," he said.

"But when I went with the Indian team for the first time in 2008, I saw him for the first time, and I saw how passionate he was."

"I got lucky as well to meet his family, his son, his grandson...their family is very sweet, I went with (a) few of my team members as well," Rohit recalled.

"It's a sad loss to the cricketing fraternity because in my eyes, he was the number one supporter of cricket at that point in time. Obviously, there have been so many fans now, but the first-ever fan, cricket fan I saw, was him. It's a sad moment for all of us," the Indian skipper added. (PTI)

## We've beaten India here before, says Rassie van der Dussen



PUNE, Nov 2: Having aced the conditions in the World Cup, the marauding South Africa are not intimidated by the next challenge of facing a formidable India, feels Proteas batter Rassie van der Dussen.

South Africa crushed New Zealand by 190 runs on Wednesday to grab the top spot in the standings with a four-match winning streak.

The Proteas will next face India, the only team unbeaten in the tournament, in a top-of-the-table clash in Kolkata on Sunday, and the batter said they're ready for the challenge.

"Obviously, playing India in India is a massive event. They've been playing really well. A lot of experience in their team. They've got all bases covered, brilliant bowling attack

and obviously the batting as well," said Van der Dussen during the post-match press conference here on Wednesday.

"But again, we'll go into that game knowing that if we do the things well that we want to do, we'll be in a really strong position."

"The challenge is to under pressure, to stay with that, and that's what we'll look to do. But we've played them here before and we've beaten them here before. "So, in a sense, it's, even though it's a World Cup, it's not really too much different. We won't be looking at that too much."

South Africa are yet to land a major trophy despite being close on multiple occasions but they have looked in peak form this ODI World Cup, having

scored three of the six highest scores in this edition.

"What we've done really well is in this campaign is we're really just focusing on what we want to do and how we want to play it," said van der Dussen, who smashed 133 off 118 balls against New Zealand for his second ton this World Cup.

"In our match review meetings, we keep looking at the numbers with the coaches and so far in this tournament, by most metrics, we're stacking up pretty well."

"So, at the end of the day, it's almost irrelevant who's in front of you. We know if we play the way we want to play and execute how we want to and take the correct options, especially under pressure, then the result is a byproduct of that." (PTI)



# Dream show on Loop: India crush Sri Lanka by 302 runs to enter semi-finals

**MUMBAI, Nov 2:** Mohammed Shami and Mohammed Siraj intimidated and scarred an under-prepared Sri Lanka with a fast bowling exhibition for the ages as India demolished the islanders by a record 302 runs to enter the World Cup semifinals here on Thursday.

On a Wankhede track that looked placid, India piled on a mammoth 357 for 8 in 50 overs.

Sri Lanka crumbled under lights for a paltry 55 in 19.4 overs to ensure an eighth semi-final appearance for India at the global event. This was India's biggest victory by margin of runs in the 48-year history of the tournament.

With 14 points from seven games, Rohit Sharma's army will like to finish with an all-win record as they now face South Africa in Kolkata on November 5 and the Netherlands in Bengaluru on November 12.

Shami (5/18 in 5 overs) took his second five-wicket haul in this edition and with 45 scalps, became India's highest wicket-taker in World Cup history.

Siraj (3/16 in 7 overs) was equally incisive and Jasprit Bumrah (1/8 in 5 overs) formidable as ever in a picture-perfect bowling performance.

As the Indian juggernaut rolls on, every performance seems like a dream played on a loop.

Exactly 45 days ago, Siraj had dismantled the Sri Lankans for 50 in the Asia Cup final and it seemed that the effect of

that game has stayed in the minds of the Lankans, who became the second team after Bangladesh to get eliminated from the 10-team event.

It was fascinating to see how the same 22 yards looked so different when the two teams batted.

While Virat Kohli (88 off 94 balls) missed out on a world record-equalling 49th ODI hundred with the maestro Sachin Tendulkar himself in attendance, batting seemed like the easiest job on the planet.

Shubman Gill (92 off 92 balls) and Shreyas Iyer (82 off 56 balls) pulverised the opposition even as they missed out on personal landmarks.

But the capacity Wankhede crowd wouldn't have believed what came in next.

On that placid track, the ball started jaggling around as Siraj and Shami didn't give any Lankan batters any respite during the 19 odd overs that they bowled.

If Siraj came wide off the crease and delivered unplayable in-cutters, Shami bowled from close to the stumps and got the ball to move away enough that either it kissed the outside edge of the bat or there was loud thwack of the stumps.

Hitting the right areas is an off-repeated statement but doing it day in and day out and getting those wrists into the business with perfect seam position creating doubts in batters' minds, Shami has etched his name in the history books.



On Thursday, Shami and Siraj showed quality of pitch doesn't matter, quality of players do.

## Batters make merry

Kohli enjoyed a 189-run second wicket stand with his heir apparent Gill, who looked a million dollars during his run-a-ball 92.

After a mini-slump, it was Iyer, who feasted against a mediocre bowling attack on a placid track, to get some form back before the match against South Africa at Eden Gardens, which will be played on a spicier track.

Starting briskly with a flurry of sixes, Iyer's innings was instrumental in taking

India past 350 after they lost both Gill and Kohli in quick succession. His innings featured six sixes and three fours.

Dilshan Madushanka (5/80 in 10 overs), who bowled a peach of a delivery to get skipper Rohit Sharma (4) first up, also denied all three Indian batters what would have been deserving hundreds.

He used the slower cutters and bouncers to good effect during his second and third spells.

Kohli and Gill weathered the storm adequately well to get through the initial overs and piled up a mountain of runs to put India on top.

In the sixth over, Dushmantha Chameera almost had Kohli's wicket but could not hold on to a return catch on his follow-through which saw the ball popping out.

Beginning with a risk-free approach, Kohli and Gill stitched India's highest-ever partnership in this World Cup for any wicket, putting on 189 runs from just 179 balls for the second wicket.

Kohli looked primed to equal the legendary Tendulkar's tally of most ODI centuries but met with a soft end, lobbing a straight catch to cover after a masterful 88 from 94 balls which included 11 fours.

The ball stopped on him as he was committed on the drive but it hit the upper part of the blade to balloon up.

Gill started slowly but produced a compelling knock that brought him close to his first century of the tournament.

His first runs came off the ninth ball that he faced, but there was no stopping the fluent batter once he pulled Madushanka with command for a four to mid-wicket and followed up with a fabulous backfoot punch on the next delivery. (PTI)

## Tendulkar gets his deserved place at Wankhede



**MUMBAI, Nov 2:** Sachin Tendulkar on Wednesday got his deserved place at the iconic Wankhede Stadium.

Coming to the revered venue as a 10-year-old kid, watching a match without a ticket way back in 1983, and witnessing his own life-sized statue being installed here after four decades, it has been a journey to remember for the legendary Tendulkar.

The batting great's statue was unveiled at his home ground by Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde at a grand ceremony.

Tendulkar was accompanied by his wife Anjali and daughter Sara. The dignitaries present on the occasion were former BCCI and ICC chief Sharad Pawar, incumbent BCCI secretary Jay Shah, treasurer Ashish Shelar, vice-president Rajiv Shukla and Mumbai Cricket Association (MCA) president Amol Kale among others.

"It is indeed a special moment for me. It was around February when Mr Shelar and Mr Kale

called me on the behalf of the MCA, they said we are having this thought of having your statue inside the stadium. I was extremely delighted, to be honest. I did not know how to react," Tendulkar said. "I am truly humbled when I stand here. I go to the ground, there are thousands of images that come to my head and thoughts, so many incredible memories. It is truly an honour to walk on this turf which has given me everything in life," he added. Tendulkar recalled his first-ever visit to the Wankhede Stadium and revealed that the first game that he watched at this venue was without a ticket as a 10-year-old.

"My first visit to the Wankhede Stadium was way back in 1983. I was only 10 years old. The West Indies had come to India and this was after the World Cup, the excitement was there. All my colony friends in Bandra, not 10-year-olds but my brother's friends, possibly 30-40 years old. They all decided to go for this match," he said. "I do not know how it happened

but a 10-year-old Sachin was also asked to accompany. I went along with them, we took a train at Bandra, got off at Churchgate and enjoyed the whole game. And by the way, I sat at the North Stand. We all cricketers know what the North Stand can do -- when they get behind the team no opposition can stop India and Mumbai," Tendulkar said. Tendulkar recalled being a part of the famous North Stand gang in the stadium here, saying that when they get into the act, it gets very difficult for opponents to get the better of India.

"I was a part of the North Stand gang. I also made a lot of noise, enjoyed the game. (On) my way back home to Bandra and somebody said 'achcha manage kiya na?' (We managed it well, no?). There were 25 of us and we only had 24 tickets. I asked how did we manage? The reply came, 'usko Sachin ko chhupa ke le jana pada' (we had to hide Sachin between us to taken him inside)," he said. "Sometimes, being vertically challenged can also work well for you," quipped Tendulkar. Tendulkar also said he recommended Mahendra Singh Dhoni's name as India captain in 2007, which was in a way was also influenced by his ankle injury. "I remember having a meeting with Mr Pawar (the then BCCI president) in England and I told him that as a player, my leadership role will always be there," he said. "Only the captain's tag won't be there. But at this stage, I don't think I can last the whole day as both my ankles were giving trouble. (PTI)

## SMAT Quarters: Punjab, Baroda, Delhi enter semifinals with comfortable victories

**MOHALI/MULLANPUR, Nov 2:** Reaping dividends for producing a clutch of quality IPL performers, Punjab beat Uttar Pradesh by five wickets despite Rinku Singh's brilliance to enter the semifinals of the Mushtaq Ali T20 tournament here on Thursday.

Batting first, Rinku, the Indian T20 team's future finisher, smashed 77 off just 33 balls with a half a dozen sixes to take Uttar Pradesh to 169 for 3 in 20 overs. He added 116 runs for the fourth wicket in just 8.5 overs with Sameer Rizvi (42 off 29 balls).

UP innings didn't get the required momentum due to poor show from skipper Karan Sharma (14 off 24 balls), who wasted a lot of deliveries up-front. In reply, in-form Abhishek Sharma (12), Prabhsimran Singh (0) and skipper Mandeep Singh (1) were dismissed cheaply leaving Punjab reeling at 14 for 3 inside first four overs.

But Anmolpreet Singh (43 off 29 balls) and Nehal Wadhwa (52 off 39 balls) set up the chase added 72 runs in 9.2 overs before Sanvir Singh (35 off 13 balls) and Ramandeep Singh (22 off 13 balls) blasted 59 in just 4.2 overs to finish the match with five balls to spare.

Left-arm seamer Yash Dayal, whose career turned upside down after being hit five consecutive sixes in the IPL, was once again clobbered by the Punjab batters and went for 53 off 4 overs.

Fellow left-arm Mohsin Khan was the best bowler with figures of 3/34 while veteran Bhuvneshwar Kumar with 2/22 in 4 overs was steady as usual.

The Punjab batters used the extra pace of the likes of Dayal and Kartik Tyagi to score their runs while left-arm Shiva Singh (23 off 3.1 overs) also went for quite a few.

Brief Scores: UP 169/3 in 20 overs (Rinku Singh 77 not out off 33 balls). Punjab 174/5 in 19.1 overs (Nehal Wadhwa 52 off 39 balls, Anmolpreet Singh 43 off 29 balls).

Mumbai's star-studded batting line-up didn't measure up as Baroda cruised to a three-wicket victory with more than an over to spare in another quarter-final at

the newly constructed Mullanpur Stadium.

Batting first, Yashasvi Jaiswal (8) was out cheaply while Ajinkya Rahane (13 off 11 balls) had another poor outing as Mumbai managed a below-par 148/8 in 20 overs. Rahane scored 175 runs in 8 SMAT games this season with a top score of 76 not out coming in opening encounter against Haryana.

In reply, Baroda stuttered a bit but seasoned Vishnu Solanki (49 not out off 30 balls) performed despite not too many people around him to support. That the total wasn't big enough was an advantage as he hit five fours and two huge sixes to seal the issue for Baroda.

Brief Scores: Mumbai 148/8 on 20 overs (Ajinkya Rahane 13 off 11 balls, Shivam Dube 48 off 36 balls). Baroda 149/7 in 20 overs (Vishnu Solanki 49 not out off 30 balls).

Anuj Rawat's breezy half-century and a collective performance by bowling unit ensured an easy 39-run win for Delhi against Vidarbha despite Test

star Umesh Yadav picking four wickets for the losing side. Batting first, Delhi scored 176 for 6 riding on Rawat's 68 off 53 balls with five fours and three sixes and laid the foundation of a decent score with a 105-run second wicket stand with skipper Yash Dhull (43 off 29 balls). Ayush Badoni's 17-ball-28 run cameo provided finishing touches as Umesh had stand-out figures of 4/30.

In reply, Vidarbha lost half the side for 75 runs by 11th over to surrender the contest to Delhi. They managed 137 for 9 with Dhull using as many as seven bowling options and everyone getting wickets.

Old guard Pradeep Sangwan (1/13 in 2 overs), Navdeep Saini (1/33 in 3 overs) and Mayank Yadav (2/25 in 4 overs) got crucial wickets while off-spinner Lalit Yadav (2/16 in 4 overs) and leg-spinner Suyash Sharma (1/25 in 4 overs) were brilliant during middle overs.

Brief Scores: Delhi 176/6 (Anuj Rawat 68 off 53 balls, Yash Dhull 43 off 29 balls, Umesh Yadav 4/30). Vidarbha 137/9 (Shubham Dubey 44 off 34 balls, Mayank Yadav 2/25, Lalit Yadav 2/16). (PTI)

## I am still not fully fit, four kilos down after dengue: Gill

**MUMBAI, Nov 2:** After crafting a run-a-ball 92 against Sri Lanka, Indian opener Shubman Gill on Thursday said he has not yet regained full fitness after a bout dengue which forced him to sit out of first two World Cup matches.

Gill's knock along with fifties by Virat Kohli (88) and Shreyas Iyer (82) fired India to 357 for 8 and eventually to a crushing 302-run win over the Lankans and to the tournament semifinals.

"Not in full fitness. I am four kilos down from dengue in terms of mass and muscle weight," said Gill during the post-match presentation. Gill said he was looking to bat in a compact manner without sacrificing his intent to put pressure on the Lankan outfit.

"The odd ball was seaming and I hit the balls in my areas. You couldn't get into a shell. I looked to put pressure on the bowlers. I felt in the previous matches I got starts except the last one."

"We thought about rotating the strike today. I honestly don't think it was a 400 wicket. We batted well to get 350," said Gill. Gill praised Indian pacers and Shreyas for their outstanding effort.

"The way they were bowling, we were anticipating wickets. Siraj is always fired up. They were sensational. They have made the job easier for us. Shreyas was the key today. He batted superbly," he added. Man of the Match Mohammed Shami, who picked up a five-wicket haul, said he was trying to hit the right lengths.

"It's very important to be in rhythm in white ball cricket and hit the good areas. If you hit the good areas with the new ball you will get assistance off the pitch and for me length matters a lot," said Shami.

Shami said bowling as a unit was the secret behind Indian pacer's success in this World Cup.

"Our bowling is in good shape and with the kind of rhythm that we are in, everyone is enjoying and everyone is happy for each other's success. We are bowling as a unit and that's the result you are getting to see. "I always try to bowl in good areas and be in good rhythm. In big tournaments, once the rhythm goes away, it's very tough to get it back," he said. (PTI)

## Australia all-rounder Mitchell Marsh flies back home to attend to 'family issues'

**AHMEDABAD, Nov 2:** In-form Australia all-rounder Mitchell Marsh left for home on Thursday due to personal reasons for an indefinite period, dealing yet another blow to the team, already hit by Glenn Maxwell's unavailability for the next World Cup match against England due to concussion.

Marsh could be out of the whole tournament as Cricket Australia did not give any timeline for his return.

"A timeline on his return to the squad is to be confirmed," the CA said in a statement.

In Marsh's absence, Cameron Green could be drafted into the team for the match against arch-rivals England here on Saturday.

Fit again team-mate Marcus Stoinis, however, gave hopes that Marsh could return to India for the World Cup. "He's got a family issue going on and like we all know, family is very important, the most important really," Stoinis told reporters on Thursday.

"He's doing the right thing and he's getting home and he's seeing the people he needs to see. I don't think there's a timeline on when he's coming back, but I'm sure he'll do what he needs to do at home and then get back," he said.

Stoinis said Marsh told him before departing for home that he would be "coming back to win this World Cup".

"He sent me a message last night saying, 'I'll be home for a little bit and then I'm coming back to win this World Cup' so that speaks to his mindset. I joked with him that he just passes the overs back to me

now - and 'thanks for that'. You know that the bases are covered, but we will miss him, and he'll be back soon."

"You miss him off the field -- in terms of his energy and his personality around the team as much as we're going to miss him on the field -- but you can pretty much see how the team's going to line-up (without him)."

Australia have already lost fellow all-rounder Maxwell for Saturday's clash against England due to concussion after a freak injury on a golf course, and the absence of Marsh adds further intrigue as the five-time World Cup champions chase a place in the knockout stages of the tournament.

Alex Carey, Sean Abbott, Marcus Stoinis and Cameron Green will come into contention to replace Maxwell and Marsh for the match with England, while spinner Tanveer Sangha is travelling with the team as a reserve.

Australia are not allowed to bring in a player from outside their squad to temporarily replace Marsh. Under tournament rules, only an injury (or another reason approved by the ICC) would allow Marsh to then come back in.

Australia do have the option of replacing Marsh should the all-rounder miss the remainder of the tournament, but all replacement players need to be approved by the Event Technical Committee.

Marsh has scored 225 runs and taken two wickets so far in the ongoing World Cup, with his best of 121 with the bat against Pakistan in Bengaluru. (PTI)

## England cricketers resort to inhalers for tackling alarming pollution in India

**NEW DELHI, Nov 2:** England cricketers have resorted to a sporadic use of inhalers to deal with high-pollution levels in major Indian cities over the course of their dismal World Cup campaign. British newspaper 'I' reported that the some of the England cricketers were forced to take inhalers, usually used by people suffering from Asthma.

Test captain Ben Stokes was seen using the inhalers during training ahead of the game against Sri Lanka in Bangalore.

Delhi's air quality breached the 400-mark on Thursday to enter the 'Severe' category. The pollution has caused a major concern in Mumbai as well with India skipper Rohit Sharma

touching on the subject ahead of the Sri Lanka game on Thursday.

"I mean, in an ideal world, you don't want a situation like this, but I'm pretty sure the concerned people are taking the necessary steps. It's not ideal, everyone knows that. But obviously, looking at our future generations -- your kids, my kids -- obviously, it's quite important that they get to live without any fear."

"So, yeah, every time I get to speak outside of cricket, if we are not discussing cricket, I always talk about this. You know we have to look after our future generations," said Rohit on Wednesday.

England are currently in Ahmedabad for their

## We're two wins away from making semifinal: Phillips

**PUNE, Nov 2:** An injury-ravaged New Zealand have slumped to their third successive defeat in the World Cup but all-rounder Glenn Phillips believes they're two wins away from clinching a semifinal berth.

New Zealand, who are currently on eight points, suffered a massive 190-run loss against South Africa here on Wednesday.

"It's just two wins away, and that hopefully puts us in third or fourth place, potentially even second," Phillips, who scored a 50-ball 60, said during the post-match press conference.

"So, I think if we can just keep sticking to our basics, what we do best on the field, everything will be all right."

The Black Caps next face Pakistan (November 4) and Sri Lanka (November 9) in their remaining two matches.

Pakistan kept the door to the semifinal slightly ajar following a seven-wicket win over Bangladesh the other day.

"We try to remain level-headed throughout everything, not ride the highs too high and the lows too low. So, I think for us, it's go about our business as we've done the whole way through, just keeping things simple, sticking to what we do best."



"Obviously, the way England, Australia, South Africa, they all play a very aggressive brand of cricket and we've got our own brand and if we stick to it, we know that we're fighters, we keep coming back time and time again and when it matters most, we really put the foot down."

New Zealand's decision to field first back-

fired as Quinton de Kock (114) and Rassie van der Dussen (133) made them pay by slamming hundreds, powering South Africa to 357 for 4.

In reply, New Zealand folded for 167 in 35.3 overs.

"South Africa are incredibly strong batting first but we've got an incredibly good

bowling lineup and there was no reason that we couldn't have restricted them to a total that could have been a lot easier to chase on there," Phillips said.

"Playing on at the end, I definitely thought it got better as well. So, I think had things gone slightly differently, we could definitely have come a lot closer than we did today."

Phillips also rued the missed chances. "I mean at the end of the day a couple of tough chances were dropped, a missed run out when his back was turned to the bowler's end. You have no idea where Quinton's actually standing," he said.

"Obviously, he had a little bit more time than he thought, but at the end of the day, it's not like we've been dropping straightforward chances or creating a lot of blunders in the field. "We've definitely put a lot of pressure on the opposition in the field and we've saved a lot of runs and obviously sometimes people drop catches and that's just the way things go." New Zealand are grappling with a series of injuries, leaving them in a tricky position as the World Cup enters the business end. Five players, including regular skipper Kane Williamson (thumb), are battling injuries. (PTI)