

WORLD

- Israeli strikes kill 38 people in Gaza's Khan Younis
- Trump says China's leader will bully Harris 'like a baby'

NATION

- BJP has become 'rishtedar-wadi': Akhilesh
- India-Bangladesh border talks postponed

'NDA's policies leading to security failure in J-K'

NEW DELHI, Oct 25: The Congress on Friday slammed the NDA government at the Centre over the terror attack in Jammu and Kashmir's Gulmarg, saying its policies had completely failed to establish security and demanded that it should immediately take accountability as well as ensure the safety of Army personnel and civilians.

Two soldiers and two Army porters were killed in the attack on Thursday while another porter and a soldier were injured. Terrorists attacked a vehicle of the force six kilometres from the tourist hotspot of Gulmarg in north Kashmir's Baramulla district.

The terrorists opened fire on the Army vehicle in the Bota Pathri area when it was headed for the Nagin post in Afrawat range.

In a post in Hindi on X, leader of opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi said, "The news of the martyrdom of our brave soldiers (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Protest against Adani group in Dima Hasao

HT Bureau
DIPHU, Oct 25: A coalition of social students, NGOs, and political parties has voiced opposition over the alleged handing of 9,000 bighas of land to the Adani Group in Umrongso, Dima Hasao district, Assam.

During a press conference at the CPI (ML), Liberation, Hills Party Committee office on Friday, secretary Rabi Kr Phangcho said, "A delegation from CPI (ML-L) HPC and party affiliated organisations- Karbi Students Association (KSA), Karbi Nimso Chingthur Asong (KNCA), All India Students Association (AISA), Revolutionary Youth Association (RYA), Nirman Shramik, and AICCTU visited Umrongso's mining project area on October 22 and found that 9,000 (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

38 candidates in fray for 5 Assembly seats

Assam by-polls: 24 candidates file nominations on last day ● Scrutiny of nominations on Monday

GUWAHATI, Oct 25: A total of 38 candidates are in the fray so far for five assembly seats in Assam where by-elections will be held on November 13 as the nomination process concluded on Friday, with 24 nominees submitting their documents on the last day, an official release said.

On Friday, three candidates filed their nomination papers for Dholai, one for Sidli, five for Bongaigaon, 12 for Samaguri and three for Behali.

Prominent candidates in the fray so far are BJP's Dipu Ranjan Sarma in Samaguri, AGP's Diptimoy Choudhury, wife of eight-time party MLA Phanibhushan Choudhury, in Bongaigaon, Congress's Jayanta Bora in Behali and Bodo People's Front's Suddho Kumar Basumatary in Sidli.

The nomination papers will be scrutinised on October 28 and the



last date for withdrawal of nomination is on October 30.

The BJP is contesting three of the five constituencies -- Behali, Samaguri and Dholai -- leaving Bongaigaon and Sidli for its alliance partners AGP and UPPL respectively.

The Congress is contesting all the five constituencies.

The by-elections were necessitated following the election of the sitting MLAs to the Lok Sabha earlier this year.

Congress's Samaguri candidate Tanzil Hussain is the son of sitting MLA Rakibul Hussain who was elected to the Lok Sabha from Dhubri parliamentary constituency by a record margin of over 10 lakh votes.

Dholai's BJP MLA and former cabinet minister Parimal Suklabaidya was elected to Lok Sabha from Silchar parliamentary constituency, while his party colleague Ranjit Dutta from Behali won the Sonitpur Lok Sabha seat.

NDA's alliance partner AGP's sitting MLA from Bongaigaon Phanibhushan Choudhury was elected from the Barpeta Lok Sabha seat while the UPPL MLA from Sidli, Joyanta Basumatary, was elected from Kokrajhar parliamentary constituency. Polling will be held in the five seats on November 13 and votes will be counted on November 23. (PTI)

'India ready to work for peace' Ukraine, West Asia conflicts matter of concern: PM Modi



NEW DELHI, Oct 25: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday said the ongoing conflicts in Ukraine and West Asia are a matter of concern and India is ready to make every possible contribution for the restoration of peace.

His remarks came after talks with German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, who called upon India to contribute to find a political solution to the conflict in Ukraine that has been raging for a long time.

"The ongoing conflicts in Ukraine and West Asia are a matter of concern for both nations. India has always been of the view that war cannot be a solution to problems. India is ready to make every possible contribution for the restoration of peace," Modi said after the 7th Inter-Governmental

Consultations with the visiting German Chancellor.

Modi said he and Olaf agreed that the global forums established in the 20th century were inadequate to address the challenges of the 21st century.

"There is a need for reforms in multilateral institutions, including the UN Security Council," the Prime Minister said.

Earlier, initiating the IGC, the strategic partnership between India and Germany has emerged as a strong anchor at a time when the world is faced with tensions, conflicts and uncertainty.

Modi said India-Germany ties were a transformational partnership of two capable and strong democracies and not a transactional relationship.

"The world is passing through times of tensions, conflicts and uncertainty. In the Indo-Pacific region, (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

To appear before CBI court on October 30 Multi-crore trading scam accused brought to Guwahati



HT Correspondent
DIBRUGARH, Oct 25: The multi-crore online trading scam accused Bishal Phukan, Sumi Bora, Tarkik Bora, Amlan Bora, Ranjit Kakoti, Abhijit Chanda, Shubhan Jyoti Kurmi, and Chandan Nath were taken from the Dibrugarh Central Jail to Guwahati by road at around 8:25 am on Friday.

They were escorted by a 12-member Assam police team. All 8 accused are likely to appear before the Special CBI Court in Guwahati on October 30 in connection with ongoing investigations into the online trading scams.

Meanwhile, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) arrived in Dibrugarh on October 12, 2024, to probe two cases (No. 352/24 and 354/24) related to illegal online trading, registered against Bishal Phukan, Ranjit Kakoti, and others respectively at Dibrugarh Police Station.

Dibrugarh SP Rakesh Reddy said that on the way the team had a brief stop at the Barbaruah Police Station where a separate FIR was registered against accused Bishal Phukan apart from the one registered at Dibrugarh Police Station. After the brief halt, the team resumed the 443-km road journey to Guwahati.

Sources said that the 5-member CBI team led by an SP rank officer who has been camping in Dibrugarh in connection with the case since October 18 also left for Guwahati by flight on Friday.

Earlier on September 3, the prime accused in the multi-crore scam, 22-year-old Phukan was apprehended by the Dibrugarh Police on September 3 after the scam estimated to be worth at least ₹ 2,200 crore was uncovered.

Subsequently, other key figures in the scam, including actor-choreographer Sumi Bora, her photographer husband Tarkik Bora and her brother-in-law Amlan Bora, were also arrested by law enforcement agencies.

Two of Phukan's accomplices, actor-choreographer Sumi Bora and her photographer husband Tarkik Bora were arrested by the Special Task Force (STF) of Assam police on September 12.

A day earlier on September 11, Sumi Bora's brother-in-law Amlan Bora was arrested from the Muzaffarpur district in Bihar in a joint operation by Assam Police and Bihar Police.

The accused have been booked under section 316(2)/318(4) of the BNS 2023, along with section 21/23 of the Banning of Unregulated Deposit Scheme Act, 2019.

Issues corrosive for long-term growth: Cong slams govt on economy



NEW DELHI, Oct 25: The Congress on Friday said inequality, wage stagnation and inflation were "structurally corrosive" to India's long-term growth prospects and urged the government to address concerns over the growing financialisation of the Indian economy.

Congress general secretary in-charge communications Jairam Ramesh said the centrality of increasing the rates of private investment as a percentage of GDP in order to sustain higher rates of economic growth was incontrovertible.

These rates have fallen from 33.4 per cent (2004-

2014) to 28.7 per cent (2014-2023), he said.

Ramesh shared an article by a noted public finance economist and said it revealed issues that were a further cause for concern.

Citing the article, Ramesh said the share of passive income -- income from rent, dividends, capital gains, etc -- in the total reported income had increased from 16 per cent in 2016-17 to 24 per cent in 2023-2024.

For the corporate sector, the share of passive income (income outside of operating profits) increased from 16.6 per cent in 2016-17 to 30.7 per cent in 2023-24, the Congress leader said.

This shift in capital gains indicates a shift in corporate preferences in favour of financial investments rather than productivity-raising physical investments, Ramesh said.

The cause of this shift away from physical investments is the muted demand for goods and services in the post-Covid recovery, which has largely left the poor and the middle classes behind, he said citing the article.

Ramesh said, "Inequality, wage stagnation, and inflation are not just political issues -- they are structurally corrosive to India's long-term growth prospects." If not the opposition, the government must listen to its own chief (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Cyclone Dana spares Odisha, Bengal of major damage

BHUBANESWAR/KOLKATA, Oct 25: Cyclone Dana spared Odisha and West Bengal of any severe damage to infrastructure while flight and rail operations resumed on Friday after the cyclonic storm completed landfall, triggering heavy rains and uprooting of trees and electric poles.

Odisha chief minister Mohan Charan Majhi asserted that no fatality report has been received so far and the state achieved its 'zero casualty mission', while West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee said one person died due to the natural calamity.

The severe cyclonic storm Dana completed its landfall around 8.30 am on Friday and the system took at least eight and half hours to enter the landmass, the IMD said.

The landfall of 'Dana' started around 12.05 am on Friday between Bhitarkanika in Kendrapara and Dhamra in Bhadrak district of Odisha with wind speeds of around 110 kmph.

Majhi, who reviewed the cyclone situation in Bhubaneswar this morning, announced that the state achieved its "zero casualty mission" as there has been "no report regarding any loss of human life or injury in the severe cyclonic storm".

The chief minister said all the roads blocked by uprooted trees would be cleared during the day as the



rescue team personnel had already started working as soon as the intensity of wind reduced on Thursday night.

Majhi said many electrical installations like poles and transformers were damaged and were being repaired.

"By 6 pm on Friday, electricity will be restored in all places including the worst-hit Kendrapara, Balasore and Bhadrak district," he said.

The West Bengal CM on Friday said that one person died in the state in cyclone Dana even as the administration evacuated around 2.16 lakh people from the low-lying areas. Banerjee, who held a review meeting at the state secretariat Nabanna (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Assam to suspend mobile internet tomorrow

GUWAHATI, Oct 25: Mobile internet services will remain suspended across Assam from 8.30 am to 4 pm on Sunday for the conduct of a government recruitment exam, an official notification said on Friday.

This would be the third such instance in two months.

"Mobile internet, mobile WiFi and mobile data services of all service providers will remain suspended from 8.30 am to 4 pm in the interest of holding free, fair and transparent written examination and also to prevent arising of any law and order issues having a bearing on public safety," the order said.

Mobile internet services were earlier suspended on two days in September during the conduct of similar exams by the state-level recruitment commission. Written examinations by the Assam State School (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

AQIs in certain states and UTs reaching moderate to poor levels Health Ministry asks public to minimise exposure to bad air

NEW DELHI, Oct 25: As air pollution levels spike in many cities, the government has urged all states to enhance their preparedness and strengthen the capacity of the healthcare workforce to tackle the menace which is likely to worsen in the festival season and onset of winter.

The Union health ministry has also urged the public to use public transport and avoid heavily congested areas.

In a letter to states and UTs, director general of health services (DGHS) Dr Atul Goel has advised them to discourage stubble and waste burning and spread awareness among people about reducing firecrackers during festivities, promoting public transportation, limiting reliance on diesel-based generators, and curbing smoking.

"Additionally, individuals



should be advised to minimise their exposure to polluted air by monitoring air quality indices through government mobile applications before venturing outdoors, avoiding heavily congested areas, and opting for cleaner fuels at home for cooking, heating, and lighting," Dr Goel said in the letter written last week.

He said air pollution has recently become a serious health challenge, with the Air Quality Index (AQI) and opting for cleaner fuels at

moderate to poor levels.

This may even worsen considering the upcoming festive season and the onset of winter, he said.

Air pollution is a significant contributor to acute health conditions and exacerbates the progression of chronic diseases affecting the respiratory, cardiovascular, and cerebrovascular systems. These chronic illnesses, attributed to prolonged exposure to air pollution, often lead to an increase in premature mortality.

The adverse effects are particularly severe for vulnerable groups such as children, pregnant women, the elderly, individuals with pre-existing health conditions, and those who face higher exposure risks due to their occupations, such as traffic police officers and municipal workers, Dr Goel said. "In light of (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Only 5 extradition requests for terrorists resolved by Canada, rest in limbo: Indian envoy

NEW DELHI, Oct 25: Of the 26 requests sent to Canada for extraditing Khalistani terrorists, Ottawa has resolved only five and the rest remain in limbo, India's top envoy to that country has said, calling it the result of "inaction".

The five men are in the process of being extradited, High Commissioner Sanjay Verma told PTI in an interview this week. He said he is not at liberty to disclose the name or give details.

The interview took place on Wednesday, a couple of days after his return to New Delhi. India recalled him and five other Indian diplomats after they were named "person of interest" in a Canadian investigation into the 2023 killing of Hardeep Singh Nijjar, a Khalistani terrorist who was a Canadian citizen.

Relations between the two countries have plunged to their lowest level ever over the issue of Canada's tacit support for Khalistani extremists among the large Sikh-Canadian population of about 8 lakh. New Delhi accuses Ottawa of doing next to nothing to stop the activities of Khalistani supporters who seek to undermine the sovereignty and territorial integrity of India.

"According to the last information that I had, five of them have been resolved. Twenty-one are still pend-



ing, and these are pending since decades. So, I would say that there is an inaction rather than consultation. All the issues which get into the judicial system of a country, sometimes need consultations, because we follow two different judicial systems," he said.

But, if there is no action in the last four, five or 10 years, then "I would only call it inaction", Verma said.

Recently, the ministry of external affairs said the 26 extradition requests are for people who have been charged in India with terror and related crimes. India has also sought "provisional (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

'The Objective is to expand India's foundry exports and establish the country as a reliable source of high-quality castings'

Govt's role to enable conditions to boost exports: Bengal industry secretary

KOLKATA, Oct 25: The West Bengal government on Friday said its export and logistics policies will strengthen the state's export sector, which currently generates approximately USD 11.7 billion in merchandise exports.

At the launch of the Kolkata chapter of the National Centre for Export Promotion (NCEP), Bengal Industry and Commerce Secretary Vandana Yadav highlighted that engineering goods exports alone account for nearly USD 3.5 billion.

Addressing industry representatives at the Institute of Indian Foundrymen (IIF), Yadav emphasised that the policies are designed to create favourable conditions for the private sector, which drives 100 per cent of the state's exports. "The government's role is to en-



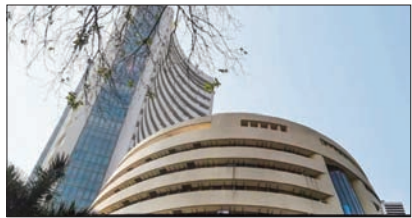
able conditions whereby you can export more," Yadav said, noting that the focus is on sustaining traditional sectors like the foundry industry while integrating modern, knowledge-based methods. She described the establishment of the NCEP as a timely initiative to enhance traditional skills and provide essential support in areas

such as training and presentation.

The new centre, IIF's fourth Centre of Excellence, joins the National Centre for Skill Development (NCS) in Chennai, the National Centre for Technical Services (NCTS) in Pune, and the Foundry Informatics Centre (FIC) in New Delhi, reinforcing IIF's commitment to advancing the sector. With the mission to elevate the Indian foundry industry's global presence, NCEP will focus on enhancing competitiveness through strategic support in capacity building, export procedures, and sustainable growth.

"The objective is to expand India's foundry exports and establish the country as a reliable source of high-quality castings," said IIF president Navneet Agarwal. (PTI)

Sensex, Nifty tank nearly 1 pc amid sharp fall in IndusInd Bank, foreign fund outflows



MUMBAI, Oct 25: Declining for the fifth straight session, equity benchmark Sensex on Friday plunged about 660 points to crash below the 80,000 level due to widespread selling pressure tracking massive foreign capital outflows and muted earnings growth.

The BSE Sensex plummeted 662.87 points or 0.83 per cent to settle at 79,402.29. During the day, it plunged 927.18 points or 1.15 per cent to 79,137.98.

The NSE Nifty tanked 218.60 points or 0.90 per cent to 24,180.80.

From the 30 Sensex pack, IndusInd Bank plunged over 18.50 per cent after the firm reported a 40 per cent decline in September quarter net profit at ₹ 1,331 crore, pulled down by concerns over its asset quality.

Mahindra & Mahindra, Larsen &

Toubro, NTPC, Adani Ports, Tata Steel, Maruti, Bajaj Finance and Titan were also among the laggards.

From the blue-chip pack, ITC climbed over 2 per cent after the diversified entity reported an 1.8 per cent increase in its consolidated net profit to ₹ 5,054.43 crore in the second quarter ended September 2024.

In contrast, Axis Bank, Hindustan Unilever, Sun Pharma and ICICI Bank were the other big gainers.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth ₹ 5,062.45 crore on Thursday, while Domestic Institutional Investors (DIIs) bought ₹ 3,620.47 crore shares, according to exchange data.

In Asian markets, Seoul, Shanghai and Hong Kong settled higher, while Tokyo ended lower.

European equity markets were trading in positive territory. The US markets ended mostly higher on Thursday.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude climbed 0.42 per cent to USD 74.69 a barrel.

In an uninspiring trade, the BSE benchmark Sensex dipped 16.82 points or 0.02 per cent to settle at 80,065.16 on Thursday. The Nifty skidded 36.10 points or 0.15 per cent to 24,399.40 in a volatile trade. (PTI)

HDFC bank group announces winners of HDFC Tech Innovators 2024

HT Bureau
GUWAHATI, Oct 25: HDFC Bank Group on Friday announced the winners of HDFC Tech Innovators 2024, said an official statement.

The top 10 winners were selected by a grand jury comprising, HDFC Bank Group leadership, venture capitalists, senior industry executives, and unicorn founders.

The program is being organised at a Group level across segments covering PropTech, FinTech, Sustainability Tech, Consumer Tech and New Age Tech.

Parag Rao, country head - Payments, liability products, consumer finance and marketing, HDFC Bank said, "We engage with start-ups at multiple levels to offer them a range of products and services that provide them ease of business."

"On the other hand, we

have extensively worked with start-ups since the Bank's early days. Our collaborations with fintech startups have enabled us to deliver cutting-edge services to customers, from seamless digital payments to AI-powered financial tools. I extend my heartfelt congratulations to all the winners of HDFC Tech Innovators 2024," the statement quoted him as saying.

"With participation from over 2000 start-ups, the 3rd edition of HDFC Tech Innovators showcases the future of technology solutions and innovation in India," said Vipul Roongta, MD & CEO, HDFC Capital Advisors Ltd.

As per the statement, the platform of HDFC Tech Innovators is created to leverage HDFC Capital over the years and to augment engagement with the start-up ecosystem and

create mutual opportunities to do business, share platforms, provide financing & investments, facilitate co-learning & co-creation of products and offerings.

"HDFC Tech Innovators 2024 is a joint initiative of HDFC Bank Group companies - HDFC AMC, HDFC Ergo, HDB Financial Services, HDFC Life, and HDFC Securities, and spearheaded by HDFC Capital and HDFC Bank to promote innovations and opportunities for technology related start-up ventures. Each of the Group companies has a legacy of working with start-ups forging partnerships that have been a win-win for both organizations," the statement added.

Further the statement added that more than 2,000 applications were received for the five categories for HDFC Tech Innovators 2024.

Airtel Payments Bank expands banking access in WB and Northeast

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, Oct 25: Airtel Payments Bank has expanded its banking access across West Bengal and the Northeastern states by enhancing banking accessibility for underserved communities, said an official statement.

The statement stated that with the establishment of more than 80,000 neighborhood banking points, the Bank is committed to fostering financial inclusion in these regions. As per an official statement, over 22,000 of these banking points are established in villages which previously had no or distant access to banking services.

"All banking points are staffed by local residents, who receive specialized training to deliver comprehensive banking services, with over 9,000 points managed by women business correspondents, highlighting the Bank's commitment to promoting gender equality," it added.

Anubrata Biswas, MD and CEO of Airtel Payments Bank on the eve of the visit of the Bank's board of directors said, "Our efforts in West Bengal and the Northeast are focused on taking banking closer to the people and empowering local communities."

"Whether it is ensuring tea garden workers receive their wages on time or supporting women business correspondents, Airtel Payments Bank is committed to reshaping financial accessibility," the statement quoted him as saying.

"With banking points within the village, residents of these villages no longer need to keep cash at home or travel long distances to access a bank branch or ATM. They can also access a range of financial services like Aadhaar Enabled Payments, insurance, and government pension schemes," the statement continued.

The statement further added that the Bank has opened around 10 million savings accounts in Northeastern States and West Bengal and the, empowering local communities with easy access to banking facilities and enhancing financial inclusion for millions while generating job opportunities.

IDBI Bank Limited announces its quarter results

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, Oct 25: IDBI Bank today, announced its quarterly results for Q2 FY25, said an official statement.

The statement added that the Net Profit stood at ₹1,868 crore for Q2 FY25, registering a strong growth of 39% YoY. The operating profit stood at ₹3,006 crore with a YoY growth of 45%.

"NIM was recorded at 4.87%, and Net Interest Income stood at ₹3,875 crore with a YoY growth of 26%. Cost of Deposit stood at 4.66% for Q2-2025 as compared to 4.22% for Q2-2024. CRAR stood at 21.98% with YoY growth of 72 bps. Return on Assets (ROA) stood at 1.97%, YoY growth of 38 bps and Return on Equity (ROE) stood at 20.35%, YoY growth of 130 bps," it added.

Further, Net Interest Income improved by 26% in Q2-2025 to ₹3,875 crore as against ₹3,066 crore in Q2-2024. Net Interest Margin (NIM) improved by 54 bps in Q2-2025 to 4.87% as compared to 4.33% in Q2-2024.

Later the statement added that the Net NPA ratio improved to 0.20% as on September 30, 2024 as against 0.39% as on September 30, 2023. PCR stood at 99.42%, YoY improvement by 32 bps.

our militaries closer together".

He noted that countries should not depend on one nation, particularly in the strategic importance of critical raw materials and certain technologies.

"For us, de-risking means diversification and this diversification is happening. Look at how India and German business have developed in recent years," Scholz said, recalling increasing cooperation between the two countries in areas like aviation, railways and automobiles.

He also said that China is an industrial giant and should give up the special treatment it has received as a developing country.

Germany is a key trading partner of India in the EU bloc. In 2023-24, India's exports to that country stood at about USD 10 billion, while imports were USD 16.7 billion. India also receives healthy foreign direct investments from Germany.

The FDI from Germany was USD 505 million in the last fiscal. During April 2000 and June 2024, the investments stood at USD 14.74 billion. (PTI)

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Ukraine, West Asia conflicts matter of

there are serious concerns about the rule of law and freedom of navigation. In times like this, the strategic partnership between India and Germany has emerged as a strong anchor," he said. The Prime Minister recalled that this was Scholz's third visit to India and marked the "triple celebration" of the friendship between India and Germany.

"In the last IGC in Berlin in 2022, we took important decisions for our bilateral cooperation. In two years, there has been encouraging progress in various sectors of our strategic relations. There has been increasing cooperation in areas such as defence, technology, energy, green and sustainable development that have become symbols of mutual trust," he said. Modi also welcomed the 'Focus on India' strategy announced by Germany.

"I am delighted that to expand and elevate our partnership, we are taking several new and important initiatives and moving from the 'Whole of Government' to the Whole of Nation approach," he said.

The IGC framework was launched in 2011 and allows for a comprehensive review of cooperation and identification of new areas of engagement between the two countries across various sectors. (PTI)

Assam scientist conferred Harry

Group in 2008, a notable achievement among Assamese conservationists. He is also the founding secretary general and CEO of Aaranyak, North East India's leading research-driven biodiversity conservation organisation. In addition to his role with the IUCN, he has been invited by Indonesian conservation agencies to assist in the management of critically endangered Javan and Sumatran rhinos.

Talukdar has also supported the Assam government in implementing the Indian Rhino Vision 2020, which involved translocating 22 wild rhinos from Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary and Kaziranga National Park to Manas National Park between 2008 and 2022, the release stated. (PTI)

Issues corrosive for long-term

economic advisor, who has himself raised alarm over the growing financialisation of the Indian economy, he said. The Congress has been attacking the government over its handling of the economy and raising concerns over "increasing" unemployment and price rise. Earlier this month, the Congress alleged that the last 10 years witnessed "highly detrimental economic trends". It said the monsoon had receded but at least "three dark clouds" of languishing private sector investment, stagnating manufacturing and the decline in real wages and productivity for labourers still loomed over the Indian economy. (PTI)

Cyclone Dana spares Odisha,

after spending the night there to monitor the situation, directed the officials to ensure that relief materials reach all those affected by the cyclone. "Only one person died in this natural disaster. The man died at his residence while conducting some cable-related work. It is quite unfortunate. The postmortem examination will give us a clear picture. If required we (state government) will help the family," Banerjee said.

Heavy rains packed with gusty winds lashed parts of southern West Bengal. In various parts of Mandarmani in Purba Medinipur and Gosaba in South 24 Parganas district, waterlogging has been reported, compounding the misery of the affected residents.

The full extent of the damage is still being assessed, but initial reports suggested that the storm brought heavy rains, which continued till Friday, causing inundation in low-lying areas.

Thirteen teams from the state's disaster management force and 14 battalions from the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) have been deployed in the Bengal coastal regions, the officials said.

Flight operations resumed at Kolkata airport in West Bengal from 8 am on Friday after being suspended since Thursday evening in view of the cyclonic storm. Train services on the south section of the Sealdah Division under the Eastern Railway also restarted at 10 am after scheduled cancellations due to the cyclone, they said. Flight and train services also resumed in Bhubaneswar on Friday morning even though cyclone Dana tore through the Odisha coast since midnight. Biju Patnaik International Airport here restarted its operation with the first flight landing around 9 am, Majhi told reporters. The East Coast Railway (ECoR), in a statement, said trains started running as per schedule, barring those cancelled earlier in its jurisdiction. The ECoR cancelled around 203 trains as a precautionary measure for the cyclone Dana. (PTI)

'NDA's policies leading to

in the cowardly attack on an Army vehicle in Gulmarg, Jammu and Kashmir, is extremely saddening. Two porters also lost their lives in the attack. I pay my tribute to the martyrs and express my deepest condolences to the bereaved families." The policies of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government at the Centre have completely failed to establish security and peace in Jammu and Kashmir, he said.

"Contrary to their claims, the reality is that the state is living under the shadow of danger due to continuous terrorist activities, attacks on our soldiers and targeted killings of civilians," Gandhi said.

The government should immediately take accountability and restore peace in the Valley at the earliest and ensure the safety of the Army and civilians, he said.

Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra also condoled the loss of lives in the terror attack and said no amount of condemnation was enough for such acts of terror. In a post in Hindi on X, Priyanka Gandhi said, "The news of the martyrdom of two soldiers in the terrorist attack in Gulmarg, Jammu and Kashmir, is extremely saddening. Two porters have also lost their lives in the attack." (PTI)

Protest against Adani group

bighas (of land) had been allocated to the Adani Company group." Phangocho condemned the BJP-led Dima Hasao Autonomous Council and Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council for seizing indigenous people's land and demanded an immediate halt to the project. "In Dima Hasao's Umrongso area, predominantly Karbi villages such as Boro Lokhindong, Choto Lokhindong, Tharvelangso, Sikilangso, Cheksolangso, Borolobang, Choto Lobang, and Chotolarpheng have been there since ancient times," he added. Phangocho said Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council (KAAC) authority must immediately halt the illegal mining of coal, sand, and felling of trees to prevent environmental degradation, climatic change and depletion of forest resources. He further stressed that giving land to multinational companies and issuing leases must be stopped immediately.

Meanwhile, on October 21, the Karbi Students Association (KSA), Mining Area Affected People Association (MAAPA), and Kopili Area Mining Affected People Association (KAMAPA) led by Indian National Congress, Assam Pradesh Congress committee submitted a memorandum to the Governor of Assam, Lakshman Acharya urging immediate cancellation of 1270-hectare new mining project proposed by the Directorate of Geology and Mining, Government of Assam, at Borolokhindong and New Umrongso village (70 hectares).

They also raised concerns against the Garampani coal mine project measuring 109-hectare Borolokhindong area of Dima Hasao District, Assam and the cancellation of the Mahabal Cement Private Limited Factory covering an area of 2000 bighas, comprising the villages of Nobodi Longkukro and Chotolarpheng.

These projects pose significant environmental and social risks to the affected communities, including Umrongso, Boro Lokhindong, Choto Lokhindong, Tharvelangso, Sikilangso, Cheko, Borolobang, Choto Lobang, Wokha Nepali Basti, Nobodi Longkukro, and Chotolarpheng. The associations have requested the government of Assam to protect the rights of poor tribal people under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution of India.

The memorandum mentioned that the tribal people living in the Garampani (Umrongso) constituency of Dima Hasao in particular the people of Umrongso 19 km, Boro Lokhindong, Choto Lokhindong, Tharvelangso, Sikilangso, Cheko, Borolobang, Choto Lobang and Wokha Nepali Basti have been facing lots of exploitation and forced to live a life of refugee in their land in the form of internal displacement and in the name development and industrialisation.

Assam to suspend mobile internet

Education Board (ASSEB) for Grade 4 posts will be conducted in two shifts in 28 districts on Sunday. Altogether 8,27,130 candidates have applied to appear in the recruitment examination to be conducted for HSLC level posts in the first shift from 9 am to 11.30 am at 1,484 centres.

A total of 5,52,002 candidates have applied to appear in the examination to be conducted for Class VIII level posts in the second shift from 1.30 pm to 4 pm at 808 centres.

"To ensure that unscrupulous elements do not resort to unfair means by using mobile phone applications and there are no loopholes in the examination process which could create mistrust among the public, the decision to suspend the mobile net services has been taken," the order signed by Ajay Tewari, additional chief secretary, home and political department, added. (PTI)

Only 5 extradition requests for

arrest" of several of the accused, which remains pending with Canada, under the Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty. Among those named by the ministry are Gurjeet Singh, Gurjinder Singh, Gurpreet Singh, Lakhbir Singh Landa and Arshdeep Singh Gill. Nijjar, who was declared a terrorist by India, was shot dead outside a guardhouse in Surrey in the Canadian province of British Columbia on June 18 last year. During the interview, the recalled envoy also spoke about the long-standing people-to-people ties between the two countries and the genesis of the Khalistani problem in Canada and how it became a hotbed of this movement.

Asked if the frosty relations can ever warm up, Verma said: "I would only want that ties between the two countries to get better. But, it should be better not because we want to make it better but because (we) both respect each other, both want to understand each other, both understand each other's core concerns."

He said India's core concern is very clear. "It has been told many times to our Canadian friends that our core concern is the anti-India elements there, the Khalistani extremists and terrorists over there, who keep challenging India's sovereignty and territorial integrity. They (Canada) will need to somewhere handle them."

He pointed out that the Khalistanis in Canada are Canadian citizens, not Indian nationals. "So, what will be the future of India, this will be decided by Indians. Foreigners will not decide it. They are... of Indian-origin but for us they are foreigners. Foreigners never had, have or will have any right to interfere in our internal affairs." (PTI)

Health Ministry asks public

this, I urge the state health departments and healthcare facilities to enhance their preparedness. This should include intensifying public awareness campaigns, disseminating targeted messaging through designated mass media channels in regional languages, strengthening the capacity of the healthcare workforce, and scaling up participation in sentinel surveillance systems for air pollution-related diseases under the National Program on Climate Change and Human Health," he said. He also stressed on raising public awareness about actions to prevent further degradation of air quality at this critical time.

These include discouraging stubble and waste burning, reducing firecrackers during festivities, promoting public transportation over personal diesel- or petrol-powered vehicles, limiting reliance on diesel-based generators, and curbing smoking. He said outdoor activities such as sports and exercise should be restricted, especially for vulnerable populations like the elderly, pregnant women, and those with pre-existing conditions such as respiratory and cardiovascular diseases. Those experiencing worsening symptoms or discomfort due to poor air quality should seek immediate medical attention. (PTI)

'We want to deepen our cooperation in defence and agree to bring our militaries closer together'

Pursuing for swift progress in India-EU free trade agreement negotiations: German Chancellor

NEW DELHI, Oct 25: German Chancellor Olaf Scholz on Friday said his government is pursuing swift progress and rapid conclusion of the negotiations for a proposed free trade agreement between India and the 27-nation European Union (EU).

"And I am sure if we both work on this together, Prime Minister, this could happen in months rather than years," he said while addressing the 18th Asia-Pacific Conference of German Business 2024 in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi here.

Scholz arrived in Delhi late on Thursday as part of his three-day official visit to India. Modi and Scholz will co-chair the seventh Intergovernmental Consultations (IGC) at Hyderabad House.

"We want the free trade agreement between the EU and India. My government is pursuing for swift progress and rapid conclusions," he said.

He also said that recently the German government has agreed on a strategy to attract skilled Indian employees to Germany.



"Today Indians are the largest group of foreign students at our universities. Last year alone, the number of Indians working in Germany grew by 23,000. That talent is a welcome addition to our labour market," Scholz said.

He added that Germany is digitising its visa process, speeding up procedures and making them more user-friendly.

"At the same time, we are reducing irregular migration and fa-

ilitating returns of those who have no right to be in our country. The message is that Germany is open for skilled workers but then we can decide who comes," he said.

In June 2022, India and the EU resumed the negotiations after a gap of over eight years. It was stalled in 2013 due to differences over several issues.

With India, the Chancellor said, "we want to deepen our cooperation in defence and agree to bring

Baksa Conference highlights agricultural diversification & cooperative growth

BTCLA Speaker urges PACS to venture into horticulture and aquaculture to drive regional development

HT Correspondent

KOKRAJHAR, Oct 25: "I urge Primary Agriculture Credit Societies (PACS) to broaden their focus beyond ration distribution," stated Katiram Boro, Speaker of BTCLA, during the inaugural address of a successful one-day conference cum exhibition held on Friday at Bathouphuri Football Field, opposite the Baksa District Court.

He encouraged the exploration of new ventures like horticulture and aquaculture and emphasised the region's comprehensive development strategy under the leadership of the CEM of Bodoland Territorial Region, Pramod Boro, urging participants to actively engage with expert insights.

Ukil Muchahary, BTR executive member (EM) Cooperation, commended the increased participation of women and underscored the importance of skill development. He expressed commitment to supporting proactive societies and urged members to take advantage of available government



schemes.

Rakesh Brahma, EM Fishery, Animal Husbandry & Veterinary, discussed the potential of scientific pig cultivation for financial stability and motivated society members to set ambitious goals.

Dr Debajit Deka, subject matter specialist at KVK Baksa, elaborated on the income-generating potential of animal farming, invit-

ing farmers to participate in training programs to enhance their practices.

Jayanta Kherkatary, CHD Cooperation, shared updates on the active implementation of central schemes, including pearl cultivation and horticulture initiatives. Dr Dhritiranjay Roy, ADO Baksa, emphasised the opportunity for cooperative members to meet local feed demands through maize produc-

tion and seed cultivation.

Rulen Hazarika, vice chairman of the Assam Pearl Development Cooperative Society, highlighted the growing market for pearls.

Renowned farmer and entrepreneur Akbar Ali Ahmed shared his experiences with dragon fruit, mosambi, and malta cultivation, encouraging farmers to seek training for improved yields. Sunil Brahma from SBI RSETI, Baksa, presented various free training programs available, including tailoring and goat farming. Dr Nabanita Pathak, DRCS Baksa, warmly welcomed all attendees.

The day-long conference included the ceremonial distribution of 1,000 muskells to the Saranbill Cooperative Society, the provision of printer-cum-photocopying machines to four cooperative societies, and the exhibition of ten stalls showcasing products from various cooperatives, including organic goods, handicrafts, and food items.

Guwahati hosts RRM for Intensified Malaria Elimination Project



HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, Oct 25: A high-level Regional Review Meeting (RRM) of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria (GFATM) supported states for the Intensified Malaria Elimination Project (IMEP-3) under the National Vector Borne Disease Control Programme (NVBDCP), chaired by Prof (Dr) Atul Goel, director general of Health Services, MoHFW, government of India, was held at Ratnamouli Palace, Guwahati, from October 23 to 25, 2024.

Other dignitaries present at the meeting included Dr P Ashok Babu, IAS, commissioner & secretary, Health & FW, government of Assam, Dr KK Tripathy, economic advisor (Vector Borne Disease), MoHFW, Dr Lakshmanan S, IAS, mission director, NHM, Assam, Dr Tanu Jain, director, NCVBDC, MoHFW, Dr PJ Bhuyan, additional director, NCVBDC, MoHFW, Dr Umesh Phangshu, director of Health Services, Assam, Dr Achyut Ch Baishya, principal GMCH, Guwahati, and Dr Kalpana Baruah, senior consultant & former additional director, NCVBDC, MoHFW. Other officials present at the review meeting included senior regional directors, state program officers (NVBDCP), national and state consultants, along with officials from partner organisations (WHO, NIMR, and TCF). Representatives from ten project states participated in the review meeting, namely Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Ma-

nipur, Tripura, Jharkhand, Odisha, and Chhattisgarh.

The goal is to interrupt local transmission and achieve zero indigenous cases throughout the country by 2027, providing an enabling environment to prevent the re-establishment of malaria. The principal objectives of the meeting were to discuss the progress toward malaria elimination for GFATM project states, review the epidemiological situation of these states, assess the implementation of vector control measures and their effectiveness, verify the financial status and expenditure of the project states, and review the implementation status of IHIP in project states.

The three-day review and dissemination meeting included presentations by both national and state teams on the ongoing programmatic activities. The meeting aimed to review the state-wise progress of malaria elimination and prevention efforts, identify programmatic areas for enhancement, facilitate the exchange of best practices and ideas among states, and develop action plans for improved program implementation. In addition to the technical sessions, field visits were conducted to three health facilities, where various components of monitoring and evaluation, procurement, entomology, finance, IEC/BCC activities, and issues and challenges of the health facilities were reviewed to gain insights into the actual implementation of the program and foster the exchange of ideas between the states.

Cachar admin gears up for smooth conduct of ADRE Phase-3

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, Oct 25: In a dedicated move to ensure the smooth and secure conduct of the Assam Direct Recruitment Examination (ADRE) Phase-3, slated for October 27, 2024, the Cachar district administration, under the leadership of deputy commissioner Mridul Yadav, has ramped up preparations. Convening a high-level coordination meeting, DC Yadav assembled top officials from key departments to fine-tune the strategies needed to ensure a seamless examination experience for thousands of aspiring candidates.

DC Yadav emphasised that a fair and transparent recruitment process is essential, reflecting the administration's commitment to upholding integrity and fostering public trust. The meeting saw active participation from district development commissioner Narsingh Bey, superintendent of police Nimal Mahanta, additional superintendent

of police (Headquarters) Subrata Sen, all additional district commissioners, and representatives from the SEBA Regional Office and other line departments. Recognising the significance of a coordinated approach, DC Yadav directed each department to assume specific roles in a collaborative effort. This strategy aims to enhance synergy, ensuring smooth execution across all levels, from traffic management to examination security. DC Yadav reiterated the importance of inter-departmental cooperation, urging officials to maintain the highest standards of vigilance and collaboration.

For efficient movement and security protocols, plans to streamline the movement of candidates and officials on exam day were thoroughly reviewed, with particular attention given to traffic management to prevent congestion near examination centers. Additionally, comprehensive security mea-

asures are being put in place to maintain a safe, controlled environment at all venues, prioritising transparency in all processes. Highlighting his commitment to integrity and maintaining transparency, DC Yadav described the ADRE as an important milestone in Assam's recruitment process, emphasising that this meticulous planning reflects the administration's dedication to fairness and integrity. He encouraged departments to give their best efforts, underscoring that the district's meticulous preparations instil confidence among candidates and reinforce public trust in the recruitment process.

With a determined focus on seamless inter-departmental coordination, Cachar district administration's proactive and thorough preparations set a robust standard, underscoring its commitment to ensuring a fair, secure, and efficient recruitment examination for all.

BJP's Diplu Ranjan Sarma files nomination for Samaguri by-election

HT Correspondent

NAGAON, Oct 25: Diplu Ranjan Sarma, the BJP candidate for the Samaguri assembly constituency by-election, filed his nomination papers here on Friday. The by-election is scheduled to be held on November 13.

BJP state president Bhabesh Kalita, ministers Pijush Hazarika, Jayanta Mallabarua, and Keshab Mahanta accompanied Diplu Ranjan Sarma during his nomination filing.

Sarma led a massive procession from Samaguri to Nagaon Nehrubali, accompanied by thousands of BJP and AGP supporters and workers.

A large public meeting was held at Nehrubali field, where several senior BJP and AGP leaders, including MPs Dilip Saikia, Rameswar Teli, Kamakhya Prasad Tasa, and several MLAs, including Rupak Sarma and Jitu Goswami, addressed the public gathering. They also criticised the Congress and MP Rakibul Hussain, asserting that the BJP will win the by-election, uprooting the Congress at Samaguri this time.

It's pertinent to mention that a total of 14 candidates from various political parties, as well as independents, including BJP and Congress, submitted nomination papers for the Samaguri by-election, out of which 12 candidates filed nominations on Friday, while two candidates filed nominations on Thursday.

NF Railway introduces five special trains for ADRE candidates

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, Oct 25: The North-east Frontier Railway has decided to operate five pairs of examination special trains to facilitate and manage the extra rush of candidates appearing for the Assam Direct Recruitment Examination (ADRE), scheduled on October 27, 2024, in Assam.

These trains will operate for one trip each in both directions and will be of immense help to the examinees.

Train No 05101/05102 (Karimganj - Silchar - Karimganj) Exam Special will depart from Karimganj at 04:00 hours and from Silchar at 21:00 hours respectively on October 27, 2024. Both trains will arrive at their respective destinations of Silchar at 06:40 hours and Karimganj at 23:40 hours on the same day. The trains will have stoppages at important stations like New Karimganj, Bhanga, Badarpur, Arunachal, etc.

Train No 05119 (Mariani - Narangi) Exam Special will depart from Mariani at 15:35 hours on October 26, 2024, to reach Narangi at 05:00 hours the next day.

Similarly, Train No 05120 (Narangi - Mariani) Exam Special will depart from Narangi at 15:30 hours on October 27, 2024, to reach Mariani at 04:00 hours on October 28, 2024. Both trains will have stoppages at important stations like Jorhat Town, Barua Barmungao, Numaligarh, Barpathar, Dimapur, Diphu, Lumding, Lanka, Chaparmukh, Jagiroad, Digaru, etc.

Train No 05139/05140 (Haibargaon

- Guwahati - Haibargaon) Exam Special will depart from Haibargaon at 14:00 hours on October 26, 2024, and from Guwahati at 15:00 hours on October 27, 2024, respectively. Both trains will arrive at their respective destinations of Guwahati at 18:15 hours and Haibargaon at 20:00 hours on the same day.

The trains will have stoppages at important stations like Senchoa, Raha, Chaparmukh, Jagiroad, Tetelia, Panikhaiti, etc.

Train No 05456 (Alipurduar - Kamakhya) Exam Special will depart from Alipurduar at 17:00 hours on October 26, 2024, to reach Kamakhya at 04:30 hours the next day. Similarly, Train No 05457 (Kamakhya - Alipurduar) Exam Special will depart from Kamakhya at 15:30 hours on October 27, 2024, to reach Alipurduar at 03:30 hours on October 28, 2024.

Both trains will have stoppages at important stations like New Coochbehar, Dhubri, Sapatgram, Kokrajhar, New Bongaigaon, Dudhnoi, Boko, Mirza, etc.

Train No 05679/05680 (Jamira - Silchar - Jamira) Exam Special will depart from Jamira at 04:00 hours and from Silchar at 15:30 hours, respectively, on October 27, 2024.

Both trains will arrive at their respective destinations of Silchar at 07:10 hours and Jamira at 19:00 hours on the same day. The trains will have stoppages at important stations like Katlicherra, Hailakandi, Katakhal, Arunachal, etc.

Ajit Teron summoned

HT Bureau

DIPHU, Oct 25: The Additional District and Sessions Judge, Karbi Anglong, Diphu, has issued a proclamation requiring the appearance of Ajit Teron, resident of Mumang, Hemari Terang Basti village, Karbi Anglong. The proclamation, dated August 28, 2024, was made following an arrest warrant issued under sections 121B and 387 of the Indian Penal Code. Ajit Teron is accused of crimes punishable under these sections and has been evading arrest. As the court has determined that the accused is concealing himself to avoid the warrant, the proclamation now mandates his appearance before the District and Sessions Court, Diphu, on October 25, 2024, to answer the charges. The authorities have urged anyone with information regarding the whereabouts of the accused to come forward, emphasising that the law will take its due course in this matter.

Two women missing in Karbi Anglong

HT Correspondent

HOWRAGHAT, Oct 25: Bina Das, 22, a married woman from Reng Reng Jhami village No 2 in North Borbil, Howraghat area of Karbi Anglong district, has gone missing. The victim's mother-in-law, Veena Das, has also been missing for the past four days. Bina Das disappeared on October 22 while on her way to her mother's house in Kaki, Lanka. The incident has caused a stir in the entire North Borbil area. The victim's family has already lodged a complaint with the North Borbil Sub-Police Station.

Dillai police seize 11.5 kg of opium worth ₹1 crore

HT Correspondent

DILLAI, Oct 25: Dillai police in Karbi Anglong apprehended one individual and recovered 11.5 kg of opium. In an operation led by the SDPO, Bokajan, Rustom Raj Brahma, the police intercepted a six-wheeler truck bearing registration number AS 01 MC 0639 on NH-36 at 6th Mile, near the Forest Beat Office at Dillai. The truck was coming from Manipur and heading towards Guwahati. 11.5 kg of opium was found in the truck, concealed inside the vehicle's dashboard. The contraband's value is estimated at ₹1 crore in the market. The driver, Amit Singh, has been apprehended in this connection.

Dibrugarh GST joint commissioner arrested by CBI

HT Correspondent

DIBRUGARH, Oct 25: Dibrugarh GST joint commissioner Rahul Kumar was arrested by the CBI, allegedly for accepting a bribe of ₹60 lakh. Rahul Kumar, the GST Joint Commissioner from Dibrugarh, fell into the CBI's net for taking the bribe while serving in Mumbai. He was apprehended in Guwahati, where he had come on special duty from Dibrugarh on Thursday.

He is likely to be produced before the Special CBI Court in Guwahati. Earlier, a CA and three GST inspectors had also been arrested in Mumbai. The bribe was allegedly taken through the CA on behalf of a company, with an initial demand of ₹80 lakh, which was later settled at ₹60 lakh.

Interactive program on transgender rights held

HT Correspondent

DIBRUGARH, Oct 25: The District Legal Services Authority, in collaboration with the Akam Foundation, successfully organised an interactive program titled "The Rights of Transgender Persons" at the Conference Hall in Dibrugarh on Thursday. The event brought together stakeholders, community members, and legal experts to discuss the legal rights and protections available to transgender individuals. A total of 21 participants attended the meeting, including 10 community members who shared their experiences and challenges regarding their legal rights. Key discussions focused on the issues faced by transgender individuals and the importance of the 'Transgender Identity Card', including the application process and necessary documentation. The meeting also emphasised the need for ongoing training and sensitisation for law enforcement personnel regarding the implementation of the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act.

The deputy superintendent of police (DSP) was present and expressed support for future training initiatives to enhance understanding and enforcement of transgender rights.

Representatives from the Perona Children House NGO expressed interest in further sensitisation and training sessions to better equip their team in dealing with transgender issues. This program marks a significant step towards fostering awareness and advocating for the rights of transgender persons in the community. Continued collaboration and dialogue are essential for creating an inclusive environment and ensuring the protection of transgender rights.

Balladev Sarma passes away

HT Correspondent

NAGAON, Oct 25: Balladev Sarma, the founder secretary of Sadou Asom Gramya Puthibharal Santha and general secretary of Srimanta Sankar Mission, breathed his last on Friday at Guwahati Medical College and Hospital due to illness for quite some time. He was 63.

Sarma was hospitalised on October 2 after suffering from a high blood pressure-related condition and underwent surgery on October 5. Despite medical efforts, he remained unconscious until his demise.

A prominent social worker, Sarma founded Sadou Asom Gramya Puthibharal Santha nearly four decades ago, which has since expanded across Assam. He received the central government's Yuva Award for his contributions. Sarma played a key role in promoting the library movement in Assam, advocating 'Reading books enlightens society' and 'Libraries are gateways to global knowledge'. He is survived by his daughter, Abhilekha Sarma, following the demise of his wife last year. Sarma's passing has saddened numerous people in Nagaon. He served as Srimanta Sankar Mission's general secretary for 13 terms and treasurer for one term.

The state Transport minister Keshab Mahanta, Public Relations minister Pijush Hazarika, MLA Rupak Sarma, former minister Girindra Kumar Baruah, and others have expressed deep condolences. Srimanta Sankar Mission and Sadou Asom Gramya Puthibharal Santha have announced three days of mourning, sources added.

Doom Dooma son earns PhD

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, Oct 25: Suvam Nath Sharma has been awarded the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D) by Assam University for his research on "Selected Retellings from the Mahabharata in English: A Study in Revisionist Mythology." He completed his research under the supervision of Lalithakim Hmar, associate professor, English, Assam University, Silchar. He is son of Lopu Nath Sharma and Sudip Nath Sharma and a native of Doom Dooma.

Hunger strike in Morigaon Cachar DC prioritises healthcare & welfare through comprehensive field visits

HT Correspondent

MORIGAON, Oct 25: A seven-hour hunger strike was staged by the district committee of the Assam Pradeshik Jogi Sammelani and its sister organisations at the Morigaon Bihutoli ground, demanding satellite autonomous status from the government in the state. The organisation, along with its sister organisations, demanded that the government protect the community by granting a satellite autonomous council, as the people of the community have been scattered across various places in the state.

The protest program was attended by the state president of the Assam Pradeshik Jogi Sammelani, Dhiren Nath, and the Jogi Jatiya Parishad's president, Kirti Nath. The president demanded constitutional safeguards for the safety of the community. The organisation's district president, Ramen Nath, secretary, Nitumoni Nath, and leaders of various organisations, including the Juba Parishad, Mahila Parishad, Jatiya Parishad, and Nath Sahitya Sabha, attended the hunger strike program.

The organisation also handed over a memorandum containing a 13-point charter of demands to the chief minister through the district administration.

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, Oct 25: In a concerted effort to strengthen healthcare services and expedite the delivery of government welfare schemes, Cachar district commissioner Mridul Yadav led comprehensive field visits to the Bikrampur Primary Health Centre (PHC) and the Narsingpur Development Block, underscoring the administration's focus on community well-being.

During his visit to Bikrampur PHC on Thursday, DC Yadav conducted a meticulous review of the facility's operations to ensure quality healthcare access for local residents. He assessed the availability of essential medicines and discussed critical health indicators, with a special emphasis on maternal and child health issues, such as infant mortality and high-risk pregnancies. Engaging closely with the medical team, staff, and patients, he highlighted the administration's commitment to patient-centered care (PCC), noting, "Accessible and quality healthcare services are essential for building a healthier community." His visit reinforced the administration's proactive approach to elevating healthcare standards, improving patient care, and addressing urgent health con-

cerns in Cachar.

Following his healthcare assessment, DC Yadav proceeded to the Narsingpur Development Block, where he reviewed the implementation of various welfare schemes alongside assistant commissioner and block development officer Neihath Haolai. His visit included a detailed inspection of the BDO office and an assessment of ongoing welfare projects. Emphasising the importance of timely and efficient project execution, he urged officials to prioritise community engagement, transparency, and service efficiency, adding, "Dedicated service and a proactive approach are essential to achieving the objectives of government welfare initiatives that aim to uplift the community."

DC Yadav's visits reflect Cachar's dual commitment to healthcare advancement and efficient welfare scheme deployment, embodying a people-centric approach that prioritises community needs and administrative responsiveness. This proactive stance by the Cachar district administration signals a dedicated effort to foster a healthier, more resilient community through robust, on-the-ground engagement.

Rajor Dal slams Congress' strategy for upcoming by-election

HT Correspondent

DEMOW, Oct 25: Rajor Dal held a press meet at Demow Press Club on Friday to address ongoing discussions surrounding the upcoming by-election. Kabindra Chetia Phukan, the working president of Rajor Dal, criticised the Congress party's approach to the by-election, calling their decision "imprudent and arrogant".

During the press meet, Phukan emphasised that even if Congress were to secure victories in all five constituencies, it would not lead to Gaurav Gogoi or Bhupen Borah becoming the chief minister. Similarly, he noted that a loss for the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) would not threaten chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma's position.

Phukan further criticised the Congress' election strategy, highlighting that the Assam Sanmilita Morcha had previously proposed a plan for the 2026 Assembly Election where the ruling and Opposition parties would each field a single candidate. He alleged that the by-election strategy, particularly in the Behali constituency, had been compromised and criticised Gaurav Gogoi's approach, describing it as arrogant and ungrateful.

Dipak Konwar, the organisational secretary of Rajor Dal, and Mrinal Ranjan Gogoi, the working president of the Demow Constituency Committee of Rajor Dal, were also present at the press meet.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

Sometimes love is stronger than a man's convictions
- Isaac Bashevis Singer

Time's up for Justin Trudeau

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau is teetering from crisis to crisis. He survived a second no-confidence motion on October 1, the second in two days, and on October 25, Trudeau faced an internal challenge from his party MPs, 24 of whom have asked him to resign by October 28. Trudeau runs a minority Liberal Party government and his government is being rocked time and again by the opposition Conservatives, which wants to force a federal election. The first no-confidence motion failed after the Conservatives ran afoul of the required number. Their leader Pierre Poilievre couldn't get the backing of the rest of the opposition parties.

Poilievre tabled his second no-confidence motion the day after, accusing Trudeau of failing Canadians on affordable housing, the cost of living, and crime-related issues. NDP leader Jagmeet Singh refused to support the Conservative motion. Trudeau has been facing growing pressure to resign after nine years at the helm. Without doubt, Trudeau is a drag on the fortunes of the Canadian Liberal Party. The Liberal Party has been lagging the Conservatives by wide margins in opinion surveys for months. Earlier this year, the Canadian Liberal party lost two by-elections, one in Toronto, and the other in Montreal, both of which were Liberal Party strongholds for years. But for Jagmeet Singh's NDP, Trudeau wouldn't have lived to fight another day.

The NDP has been helping the Liberal party to stay in power since 2021, when Canada held its last federal election. But in September of this year, Jagmeet Singh accused the Liberal Party of being "too weak" to govern. Justin Trudeau is a victim of his own party MPs, 24 of whom have set a deadline for him to throw in the towel and move on.

Trudeau's crisis is of his own making. The internal political challenge to his rule was on the anvil for months and it didn't matter how much Trudeau attempted to paper over the unhappiness in the Liberal Party over his leadership, Justin was bound to be told his time was up. Trudeau was in the closed-door meeting which saw the 24 MPs sign a letter asking Trudeau to resign. The reasons cited included dissatisfaction with his leadership and the Liberal Party's poor showing in recently held elections. No, Trudeau doesn't have to leave tomorrow or the day after. He has the option to show the middle finger to the "24". There is no immediate danger of ouster. But the closed door meeting is significant for its reminder that Justin's fate lies in the balance. At the end of the day, Trudeau cannot avoid a confrontation. The meeting challenged Justin's poor leadership and the challenge came a year short of the next election, which has to be held by October of 2025.

That means Trudeau has less than a year to turn the ship around and berth in safe harbour. Is Justin capable of showing leadership where it has been missing? The 24 MPs have no confidence in Trudeau. But Justin was all smiles when the meeting ended, saying the "Liberal Party is strong and united" and that he will be leading the party even after the October 2025 election. His elation didn't reflect on the faces of the rest of the Liberal Party.

What happened in the meeting was that the MPs told the Prime Minister the truth and the ground rules from hereon, whether Justin liked it or not. Even Justin's close allies within the Liberal Party didn't seem to be touched by Justin's optimism. For all one cared, Justin Trudeau could have been speaking to himself about himself!

Toxic colleagues and employees mental health in workplace

By: Dimple Sarma

Workplace colleagues come from various backgrounds, and among them difficult personalities are common. Toxic coworkers can be found at any level within an organization and are not limited to any gender. They often create unexpected conflicts, and we frequently find ourselves unsure of how to handle them.

The workplace, where we spend much of our day, is intended to foster productivity, learning, collaboration, and personal growth. Yet, when relationships with colleagues become strained or toxic, it can turn into a major source of stress and anxiety, undermining professional fulfilment. Toxic colleagues can create a hostile environment that deeply affects mental health, impacting our mood, self-esteem, and overall well-being. Recognizing these negative effects and finding ways to handle them is important for keeping a healthy work environment. We go to workplace with a fresh mind in the morning to deliver our best but unfortunately ended up with frustration due to continuous disturbance or trolls from co-worker.

Toxic colleagues can do anything to pull down others, planting office politics, bullies who use intimidation, gossips who spread rumours, manipulators who exploit others, and pessimists who always says no spread negativity among team. These behaviours not only disrupt the team but also disrupts the whole workplace, creating stress and tension that can lead to serious mental health issues.

Regular occurrence of these activities leads to increased stress and anxiety. Constant exposure to negativity—whether through bullying, manipulation, or criticism—keeps employees on edge. This stress can manifest physically as well as mentally to extreme level. A toxic colleague is like that rotten potato that spoils the whole bag, spreading negativity and dysfunction throughout the team.

Sometimes a toxic workplace can lead to burnout, marked by emotional exhaustion, detachment, and poor performance. An honest employee loses interest in work if he needs to deal with negative colleagues every day that drains emo-

tional energy, causing a loss of joy in work and a sense of disconnection. The impact often spills into personal life, straining relationships with family and friends due to increased irritability and impatience. While dealing with his personal life, he often acts irritably, projecting his workplace anger onto his home environment.

Prolonged exposure to such an environment can lead to severe mental health issues, like depression and anxiety disorders. These conditions not only impact work but also affect daily functioning and personal life. The stress from toxic colleagues can also cause physical problems, including high blood pressure, digestive issues, and a weakened immune system, worsening overall health and well-being.

As a victim it's important to adopt strategies to protect yourself first. Setting clear boundaries is one effective approach—limit interactions with negative people and keep a professional distance to prevent their behaviour from affecting you. Not talking to them unless it is too urgent, is good for own mental health.

Seeking support is also crucial. Talking to trusted colleagues, friends, or family can provide relief and ways to overcome it. If the situation is severe, consider seeking help from a professional to cope with stress. Documenting negative interactions, including dates and details, can be helpful if it is needed to take the issue to higher authority. This record can serve as evidence and highlight patterns that may require intervention. Focusing on self-care is essential in managing stress from toxic colleagues.

If a colleague's behaviour is affecting work and well-being, it's important to address it. It can be tried by having a direct conversation with them, if possible, escalate the issue to the higher authority. Every organization usually has policies for handling conflicts, and concerns are taken seriously. If things don't improve and mental health continues to suffer, consider other options like seeking a transfer or looking for a new job. Mental well-being should always come first—nothing is worth sacrificing mental health. *(The author can be reached at sarmadimple@gmail.com)*

Modi-Xi talks at BRICS Summit in Kazan signal a breakthrough in bilateral relations

The one-hour meeting between the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the Chinese President Xi Jinping on October 23 on the sidelines of the BRICS summit at Kazan, has signalled a breakthrough in the bilateral relations between the two largest nations of Asia and the world. What was of significance of the latest meeting was the cordial optics and the mood of the two leaders who gave definite indications of going ahead with the task of restoring normal relations based on cooperation and competition.

The stage was set with the agreement on the disengagement of the troops of both sides on the controversial Galwan area. This was a matter of satisfaction for the Indian side, but the more important was the desire to go ahead with the discussions on the border issue on which an understanding was reached. India's National Security Adviser Ajit Doval will be meeting soon his Chinese counterpart to broach the issue in its totality.

The border dispute issue has been the bane of bilateral relations between India and China since 1959; it led into a full scale war in 1962, and then in the last six decades few clashes took place including the bloody one at Galwan in 2020. But the real issue of the conflict between India and China is related to the changing perception about India's foreign policy amongst the Chinese political leadership. Once this perception changes and becomes favourable, the developments will follow in positive direction in the bilateral relationship between the two neighbours.

If we begin from the first years of the India-China relationship in 1950's, the first phase was the era of Hindi-Chini Bhai Bhai in 1954 and afterwards; then suddenly Mao Zhe Dong called Jawaharlal Nehru as an ally of imperialists in 1960's, wanted to teach India a lesson and 1962 followed. During this Mao period, China took anti-India position, and even in 1971 India-Pakistan war, took a pro-

Pak stand, without getting involved in the war. Mao died in 1976 and after Deng Xiao Ping's takeover; it was a period of only pursuit of growth and development in China. The India issue went into the background. The border dispute remained in the same state, excepting few occasional small skirmishes till Galwan clashes in 2020.

In the last ten years since Narendra Modi took over in 2014 as the Prime Minister of the BJP-led government, there has been a perceptible shift in the India's foreign policy. India has distanced itself from the developing countries, including not taking part actively in the SCO and the BRICS, and becoming a part of the four-member QUAD, which China thinks as the security bloc led by the USA to confront China in Asia-Pacific. This latest perception about India becoming more and more getting aligned with US interests has clouded China's understanding.

There is another factor. Despite being a nation led by the Communist Party, the Chinese in general have a deep nationalistic pride. Now after emerging as the second largest economy in the world and by surpassing the USA in some key areas of technology, Chinese leadership wants to reshape the Global South away from narrow US interests. Now India and China nearly match in population, though Indian GDP and the per capita income is far less compared to China. China does not take India as a peer competitor. While economists talk of the 21st century as an Asian century led by China and India, Chinese leaders term the 21st century as effectively China's century.

But there is a catch. Despite all the high GDP and per capita income growth by China compared to India, Chinese leaders are aware that India is growing fast, despite its inequality on the basis of a vibrant democracy. The elections are like carnivals for the In-



dian citizens including the poorest. This is an issue which keeps the leadership uneasy when they compare India with China.

President Xi Jinping is a product of Deng Xiao Ping period. He along with his politburo colleagues have considered a number of times some measures for democratisation of the Chinese society in the last twelve years he is at the helm as the general secretary of the Chinese Communist Party, but finally, nothing could be done.

On the other hand, India is racing fast to emerge as the third largest economy after the US and China by certainly 2030, if not by 2027. China cannot ignore this competitor with the advantage of more demographic dividend and the sharing of the same history of ancient civilisation that is more than five thousand years old.

At a personal level, Xi Jinping and Narendra Modi are of same generation. Modi was born in 1950 three years after the Indian independence and Xi Jinping in 1953, four years after China's communist takeover took place on October 1, 1949. Both are tech-savvy. Xi Jinping's daughter Xi Mingze, now 32, studied at Harvard University from 2010 to 2014. Xi gets information about the new generation through her. He follows each and every development in USA in high-tech sector including the semiconductor chips, and guides the Chinese technologists and scientists to compete with them. He has a

modern mind. Similarly despite his Hindutva obsessions, Narendra Modi is tech-friendly, and has also a mind of quick adaptation as far as technology is concerned. Both these modern minds can meet.

After the Kazan meet, as a follow-up, while the Doval-Wang boundary talks are very important, measures should also be taken to bring in FDI investment in areas required by India. The Indian government can certainly look at security aspects but there are a large number of areas where the Chinese investment can be sought without attracting security concerns. This step is needed since FDI inflows to India has dwindled in the last two years and one of the reasons is India has failed to allow global chain system of China in the country which would have led to investment by more foreign companies.

For India, growing tension between India-China limited the scope for foreign investors in China to diversify to India under China+1 strategy. Investment by USA is a case in point. USA was the second biggest foreign investor in India in 2020-21. It was US\$ 13,823 million. It plunged to US\$ 4,998 million in 2023-24 – a drop by over 63 percent.

In contrast, USA investment in ASEAN surged by over 112 percent in 2023 over 2021, presumably, this demonstrates that US investors in China preferred to shift to ASEAN than in India under China+1 strategy. This is high time; India takes advantage of China+1 strategy to boost for-

eign inflows into India.

BRICS meet discussed the issue of de-dollarization and how the process is moving.. BRICS members including China also know that this is a long process, but it has to continue. Significantly, Prime Minister Modi said that he was in favour of an alternative payment system for the BRICS members. This is a major support to de-dollarization and this has been highly welcomed by both China and Russia.

Xi Jinping's assertion for more communication and cooperation between the two countries was notable in the present era of bilateral relations. China's top leaders generally tell politically correct remarks in public but that is not always followed by actions. This time when the year is ending, Chinese President has a chance to implement in action what he said at Kazan at the BRICS meeting. As regards Narendra Modi, he has to prove that he can really exercise strategic autonomy vis-a-vis USA as the upcoming third largest economy of the world. USA needs India more than India needs USA in view of India's burgeoning domestic market.

A follow-up of the positive signals from the BRICS summit at Kazan can be carried forward by the Indian Prime Minister at the G-20 summit in Brazil in the third week of November this year. India has to take the lead in ventilating the grievances of the Global South, along with Brazil and Mexico who are best examples of following strong independent foreign policy, keeping good relations with both USA and China on their terms.

By distancing itself from QUAD and refusing to be a part of USA's anti-China Asia-Pacific strategy in a calibrated manner, India can emerge as the leader of Global South by restoring its old position. That may lead to a better era in India-China relations and ensure peace and stability in Asia-Pacific also. For Narendra Modi, that is a big challenge. Will he be daring to accept it in the weeks ahead? *(IPA Service)*

RSS at 100: A century of influence and cultural stewardship

By: Dipak Kurmi

As the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) steps into its centenary year, it stands as a remarkable example of grassroots mobilization and cultural preservation. Established in 1925, the RSS has emerged as the largest non-governmental organization in the world, maintaining a significant influence over India's social, cultural, and even political landscapes. This is achieved through its unique approach, blending tradition with contemporary relevance, while deftly navigating challenges and controversies. As it approaches its 100th year, the RSS remains a subject of both admiration and criticism, a force that has fundamentally impacted the contours of Indian society.

A legacy forged in tradition: The founding of the RSS

The RSS was founded by Dr. Keshav Baliram Hedgewar on the auspicious occasion of Vijayadashami in 1925. Initially conceptualized during a small seminar at Hedgewar's home in Nagpur, the early meetings involved figures like Vishwanath Kelkar, Bhauji Kavre, Anna Sahne, Balaji Huddar, and Bapurao Bhed. It was not until April 17, 1926, that the organisation received its present name, Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh. From these humble beginnings, the RSS grew in strength and structure, with the first daily 'Shakha' being established on May 28, 1926.

The 'Shakha' is the primary unit of the RSS, and it represents the foundational aspect of its organizational structure. These gatherings - held daily in parks, playgrounds, and community halls across the country - emphasize physical fitness, discipline, moral values, and a sense of community. This model has resonated with millions, appealing to a broad spectrum of Indian society with its focus on holistic development. For the RSS, a healthy, morally upright, and dedicated volunteer is the bedrock of nation-building.

Navigating a turbulent history: Challenges and resilience

The history of the RSS is marked by significant challenges, often in the form of outright bans and political opposition. It faced its first major crisis in 1948 following the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi, when the government imposed a ban due to suspicions about the organisation's involvement. This ban, however, was lifted unconditionally after the RSS distanced itself from the event and pledged to remain non-political. The second ban occurred during the Emergency in 1975, declared by then-Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, which saw many RSS leaders arrested for their opposition to the suspension

of civil liberties. This period, marked by political repression, only galvanized the RSS further, and when the Emergency was lifted in 1977, the RSS returned with greater influence.

The third significant challenge arose in 1992 after the demolition of the Babri Masjid. The event intensified debates over the RSS's role in Indian society, leading to another temporary ban. Yet, in each of these instances, the organisation not only survived but expanded, suggesting a deep-rooted resilience and adaptability in its organizational fabric. These episodes have only fueled the ongoing discussions about the RSS's place in Indian public life, making it a fixture of India's socio-political landscape.

The power of volunteers: The backbone of the RSS

At the core of the RSS's strength are its volunteers - Swayamsevaks - who are instrumental in executing its mission. The Sangh's basic philosophy is rooted in selfless service, with volunteers dedicating their time and energy without expecting personal gain. A unique aspect of the RSS is its pracharaks, full-time workers who leave their family lives to devote themselves entirely to organizational work. This cadre of volunteers forms the backbone of the RSS's extensive network of social, educational, and cultural projects across India.

The service-oriented approach of the RSS has allowed it to cultivate a network of over 73,000 daily 'Shakhas' operating in various locales. These gatherings are not mere physical drills; they serve as platforms for education, ideological discussion, and fostering a sense of unity among participants. The RSS aims to inculcate values of discipline, physical fitness, and patriotism, creating volunteers who are seen as committed to the idea of nation-building. This emphasis on service and discipline has drawn both admiration and scrutiny, as the organisation is often viewed as having a political agenda.

A vast network: The Sangh Parivar and its affiliates

The RSS's influence is not limited to the gatherings at the grassroots level. It has a broad and intricate network known as the Sangh Parivar, encompassing over 80 affiliated organisations. These entities span across various domains, including education, labor, rural development, women's empowerment, and tribal welfare. Each organization operates independently, yet aligns with the core ideological principles of the RSS. The Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP), Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP), Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh (BMS), and Seva Bharati are some of the most prominent af-

filates, playing crucial roles in their respective sectors.

This extensive network ensures that the RSS maintains a pervasive influence, affecting various aspects of Indian society from education to economics. Critics often argue that these affiliates serve as an indirect means for the RSS to extend its ideological reach, blending social work with political goals. Supporters, on the other hand, view this as a demonstration of the Sangh's commitment to holistic nation-building, touching every aspect of Indian life.

Cultural guardianship amid globalization: Preserving Indian heritage

A significant aspect of the RSS's mission is the preservation of India's cultural and spiritual heritage, especially in an era marked by rapid globalization. It advocates for a return to indigenous traditions, promoting Indian languages, arts, festivals, and ancient knowledge systems. This focus on cultural revivalism is seen as a bulwark against what the RSS perceives as the erosion of traditional values due to Western influences.

In its 100 years, the RSS has positioned itself as a guardian of India's diverse cultural heritage. Through initiatives aimed at reviving traditional crafts, indigenous agricultural practices, and local art forms, the Sangh seeks to reinforce a sense of pride in India's ancient civilization. This emphasis on cultural preservation, while appealing to many, has also been a point of contention, as critics argue it sometimes aligns with exclusionary interpretations of Indian history and identity.

The political dimension: Influence without direct involvement

One of the most debated aspects of the RSS is its connection to Indian politics. While the organisation officially claims to be non-political, its deep association with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is widely acknowledged. Many of India's leading political figures, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi, began their careers within the RSS. This connection has fueled the perception that the RSS is a powerful political force operating from behind the scenes, shaping India's policies and governance.

The RSS's political influence, however, is nuanced. It does not directly contest elections but often plays a pivotal role in guiding the ideological direction of its affiliated political entities. This influence has been a double-edged sword - contributing to the RSS's rapid growth and prominence but also attracting accusations of fostering a divisive agenda. The organisation's role in promoting Hindutva, a concept of Hindu nationalism, has been both praised as a force for unification and criticized for its potential to alienate religious minorities.

A global presence: Reaching beyond India's borders

Over the past century, the RSS's reach has extended far beyond India's borders. It now has a presence in over 40 countries, focusing on uniting the Indian diaspora and fostering a connection to Indian culture abroad. These overseas branches often emphasize Indian traditions, yoga, language, and spiritual values, reinforcing a sense of identity among ex-

patriate communities. This global expansion underscores the RSS's ambition to act as a cultural bridge, connecting the Indian diaspora to their heritage while promoting a positive image of India internationally.

This international outreach has found mixed reception. While many diaspora communities welcome the sense of belonging and cultural continuity the RSS provides, some remain cautious of the organisation's political undertones. Nonetheless, the Sangh's global influence continues to grow, contributing to a sense of Indian soft power on the world stage.

No grand celebrations: Humility over hubris

The RSS's decision not to hold grand celebrations for its centenary year is a conscious choice that aligns with its philosophy of humility and understated service. Dr. Mohan Bhagwat, the current Sarsangchalak, has reiterated that achievements should not be a cause for boasting but an opportunity for introspection and continued reform. This is a marked contrast to the centenary celebrations of many political and social organisations, which often feature large public events and media fanfare.

Instead, the RSS has chosen to set ambitious goals for the future. It plans to increase its presence in every administrative block across the country and boost the number of daily Shakhas to 100,000. This strategic focus underscores the RSS's belief in steady, grassroots expansion rather than grandiose displays of power or influence. The organisation's leaders emphasize the importance of building a nation rooted in service, cultural pride, and unity—principles that have guided the Sangh since its inception.

The path forward: Challenges and prospects

As the RSS steps into its second century, it faces a complex landscape marked by globalization, technological advancement, and evolving social dynamics. It must navigate these changes while remaining true to its core philosophy of service, cultural preservation, and nation-building. Critics argue that the organisation needs to modernize and adopt a more inclusive approach, especially in a diverse and pluralistic society like India. Supporters, however, maintain that the RSS's adherence to traditional values will remain its greatest strength, serving as a moral compass in a rapidly changing world.

The RSS's future success will depend on its ability to balance tradition with modernity, ideology with pragmatism, and nationalism with inclusivity. Whether one views it as a steadfast protector of India's cultural heritage or a political juggernaut with a controversial past, the RSS's role in shaping India's destiny is indisputable. As it embarks on its next century, the organisation continues to evolve, adapt, and expand, determined to remain a key player in the narrative of Indian society. The story of the RSS is not merely about its past achievements; it is about its ongoing journey to influence the future of India, while adhering to the values it has championed for a century. *(The writer can be reached at dipakurmipltd@gmail.com)*

Ending poverty as a career choice

By: Ranjan K Baruah

None of us want to live in poverty and we know that poverty is one of the worst human rights violations. Globally extreme poverty is defined as surviving on less than \$2.15 per person per day at 2017 purchasing power parity. Poverty entails more than the lack of income and productive resources to ensure sustainable livelihoods.

Its manifestations include hunger and malnutrition, limited access to education and other basic services, social discrimination and exclusion, as well as the lack of participation in decision-making.

According to the most recent

estimates, in 2023 almost 700 million people around the world were subsisting on less than \$2.15. It is projected that the global goal of ending extreme poverty by 2030 will not be achieved, with almost 600 million people still living in extreme poverty.

Through resolution 47/196 adopted on 22nd December 1992, the United Nations General Assembly declared 17 October as the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty. The observance of the day can be traced back to 17 October 1987. On that day, over a hundred thousand people gathered at the Trocadéro in Paris, where the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

was signed in 1948, to honour the victims of extreme poverty, violence and hunger. They proclaimed that poverty is a violation of human rights and affirmed the need to come together to ensure that these rights are respected.

All must stand united and fight against poverty but the best way would be to make a career in a field that would help in eradication of poverty. Well, though there is no direct career that would ensure poverty alleviation but joint effort of different professionals would certainly add in a positive way.

Roles of and responsibilities are different for different actors and players in this area. Government will have their policies and

schemes and programmes to eradicate poverty. There are ministries that focus on different programmes and activities.

As it is important to know the cause of poverty and how it impacts communities one may study courses like social work, development studies, economics, etc.

A master's degree in social sciences and humanities gives us an idea about the situation. We may look for courses like rural development or rural management as these courses are specially designed to work in a way that would empower more and more persons.

We may also focus on entrepreneurship which would bring positive transformation to end

poverty. Startups, innovations are equally important and we may choose to make our careers in this way. Positive attitude must be our asset as it would give us more motivation to work with people who are facing poverty. One may work with voluntary societies, charitable trust, nongovernmental organisations, civil society organisations, etc. There are many international organisations that work for the alleviation of poverty like the United Nations.

A mere academic qualification is not enough to be successful in this field as we have seen how poverty has affected people around the world so we must have 21st century skills. Ending poverty in all its forms is the first



of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

We must be aware that at current rates of progress, the world will likely not meet the global goal of ending extreme poverty by 2030. This brings more challenges as well as opportunities for

us to work in the field of poverty alleviation. Together we can end poverty and it will be a shame for all of us if we can't end poverty in our lifetime. *(The write is the Advisor, Skill Employment and Entrepreneurship Department of Bodoland Territorial Council and can be reached at bkranjan@gmail.com or 8473943734)*

Dhubri Judiciary recruitment 2024 – 3 Process Server, Peon & other posts

Last Date: 30/10/2024

Chief Judicial Magistrate, Dhubri has released an employment notification for the recruitment of 3 Process Server, Peon & Cleaner Vacancy in the establishment of the Chief Judicial Magistrate, Dhubri. Interested and eligible candidates may apply.

1. Process Server

No of posts: 1 (UR)

Scale of Pay: PB-1 (₹ 14000 to ₹ 70000) + GP 5200 + other allowances)

Educational Qualification:

- 1) Applicant must be a graduate in any discipline from a recognized University.
- 2) Applicant must have knowledge in official language of Assam.

2. Peon

No of posts: 1 (UR)

Scale of Pay: PB-1 (₹ 12000 to ₹ 52000) + GP 3900 + other allowances)

Educational Qualification: Applicant must be Class HSLC passed. Those who have passed HSSLC or Class XII or equivalent examination or above shall not be eligible to apply.

3. Cleaner (erstwhile Sweeper)

No of posts: 1 (SC)

Scale of Pay: PB-1 (₹ 12000 to ₹ 52000) + GP 3900 + other allowances)

Educational Qualification: Applicant must be Class-VIII passed.

Other Criteria of Dhubri Judiciary Recruitment

Citizenship: Candidate must be a citizen of India.

Employment Exchange Registration: The name of the candidate must be registered in the District Employment Exchange.

Age Limit: Candidate should not be less than 18 years and not more than 38 years as on 01.01.2024 (relaxation as per the existing Govt. Rules).

How to Apply for Dhubri Judiciary Recruitment ?

The applications with self-attested photocopies of all relevant testimonials regarding Educational qualification, Experience certificate (wherever applicable), Caste, Age proof, Employment Exchange Registration Card, along with 03 (three) recent passport size coloured photographs duly signed by the candidate on the reverse side, should reach the office of the Chief Judicial Magistrate, Dhubri, D.C. Court Building, P.S. & P.O. Dhubri, PIN 783301.

The candidates can submit their applications through post or directly in the "Drop Box" of the office of the Chief Judicial Magistrate, Dhubri.

Candidate must provide their email address and mobile phone number in the application form, without fail.

The candidate applying for the post of Peon have to furnish a self-declaration certificate along with his/her application form mentioning that "he/she has not passed HSSLC or Class XII or Equivalent examination or above".

The envelope containing the application form should mention the name of the post applied for indicating "Application for the post of Process Server/Peon/Cleaner" super-scribed on the top of the envelope.

The last date of receipt of application is 30.10.2024 till 05:00 P.M.

India Post Payments Bank recruitment 2024 – 344 Executive posts

Last Date: 31/10/2024

India Post Payments Bank has released an employment notification for the recruitment of 344 Executive Posts in India Post Payments Bank Limited (IPPB). Interested and eligible Gramin Dak Sevaks engaged with Department of Posts may apply online.

Name of post: Executive

No of posts: 344 posts

State-wise vacancy:

# Andaman And Nicobar Islands: 1	# Andhra Pradesh: 8
# Arunachal Pradesh: 5	# Assam: 16
# Bihar: 20	# Chandigarh: 2
# Chhattisgarh: 15	# Dadra And Nagar Haveli: 1
# Delhi: 6	# Goa: 1
# Gujarat: 29	# Haryana: 10
# Himachal Pradesh: 10	# Jammu And Kashmir: 4
# Jharkhand: 14	# Karnataka: 20
# Kerala: 4	# Ladakh: 1
# Lakshadweep: 1	# Madhya Pradesh: 20
# Maharashtra: 19	# Manipur: 6
# Meghalaya: 4	# Mizoram: 3
# Nagaland: 3	# Odisha: 11
# Puducherry: 1	# Punjab: 10
# Rajasthan: 17	# Sikkim: 1
# Tamil Nadu: 13	# Telangana: 15
# Tripura: 4	# Uttar Pradesh: 36
# West Bengal: 13	

Age Limit: 20 to 35 years as on 1st September 2024.

Educational Qualification: Graduate in any discipline (Regular /Distance Learning) from University/ Institution/ Board recognized by the Government of India (or) approved by a Government Regulatory Body.

Experience: Minimum 2 years of experience as a GDS.

Pay: The Bank shall pay a lump sum amount of ₹ 30,000 per month inclusive of statutory deductions & contributions as applicable to the GDSs engaged to IPPB as Executives.

Job Description:

Achievement of monthly revenue targets through direct sales of Bank's products.

Support in organizing customer acquisition events and run campaigns in the area under Branch/ Office jurisdiction to increase financial literacy.

Conduct periodic training and education sessions for GDS on IPPB products and services.

Operate seamlessly with DoP Inspectors (Sub-division) and Postmasters to drive IPPB and 3rd Party sales.

Assist GDS in acquiring new customers for IPPB and its Partner Organizations.

Assist IPPB officers in Operations.

Acquire, grow and retain customer relationships by organizing customer events and run campaigns in the area to increase financial literacy.

Develop and manage the strategic relationship with all channel partners to drive sales and disseminate marketing information, events, training and promotions which will facilitate meeting the Bank's business goals.

Any other duties assigned by the Bank from time to time.

Application Fee: The category-wise fees are as mentioned below.

Category	Fee
SC/ST/PWD	₹ 750.00
Others	₹ 750.00

Important Dates of IPPB Vacancy 2024

Starting date of online application submission: 11th October 2024

Last date of online application submission: 31st October 2024

Adarsha Vidyalaya Sangathan recruitment 2024 – 3 Accountant & other posts

Last Date: 31/10/2024

Adarsha Vidyalaya Sangathan, Assam has released an employment notification for the recruitment of 3 Accountant, MIS Programmer and Jr. Administrative Assistant vacancy in the State Office of the Sangathan. Interested and eligible candidates may apply.

1. Accountant

No of posts: 1

Educational Qualification:

M.Com from a recognized University with minimum 55 % marks or equivalent grade.

Computer Certificate/ Diploma of minimum 6 (Six) months duration with good knowledge of Tally software.

Experience:

Minimum 3 years of relevant post Educational Qualification working experience in budgeting, accounting, financial management for large scale programmes/ projects etc. In reputed institutions/ organizations.

Preference shall be given to applicants having;

^Experience of working in Government programmes or externally aided projects.

^Knowledge of Government accounting, Income Tax, GST & other taxations.

Pay: Fixed ₹ 25,000 per month with 3% of annual increment in case of continuance.

Age Limit: The maximum upper age limit of the applicant shall not exceed 40 years as on 1st January 2024.

2. MIS Programmer

No of posts: 1

Educational Qualification: BCA/B.Sc. (IT)/ B.Tech (IT) or equivalent degree from a recognized University/ Institute with minimum 60% of marks or equivalent grade.

Experience:

Minimum 3 years of post Educational Qualification experience in IT domain specially in preparing IT strategy/ e-governance/ rolling IT implementation/ MIS, Data Analytics.

Preference shall be given to applicants having experience in procurement of IT equipment.

Pay: Fixed ₹ 30,000 per month with 3% of annual increment in case of continuance.

Age Limit: The maximum upper age limit of the applicant shall not exceed 40 years as on 1st January 2024.

3. Jr. Administrative Assistant

No of posts: 1

Educational Qualification:

Graduate (Arts/ Science/ Commerce) from a recognized University with minimum of 55% of marks or equivalent grade.

Computer Certificate/ Diploma of minimum 6 (Six) months duration with knowledge of Tally software.

Experience:

Minimum 2 years of relevant post Educational Qualification experience in office management/ drafting/ budgeting/ financial management/ accounts and audit in Government or the corporate sector.

Preference shall be given to applicants;

^Working in similar capacity in Government projects/ PSU/Externally aided projects.

^Having experience of working with Tally software.

^Having knowledge of Government accounting, income Tax, GST & other taxations.

Pay: Fixed ₹ 20,000 per month with 3% of annual increment in case of continuance

Age Limit: The maximum upper age limit of the applicant shall not exceed 40 years as on 1st January 2024.

Application Fee: An application fee of ₹ 200 (Two Hundred) only shall have to be submitted through Demand Draft in favour of 'Managing Director, Adarsha Vidyalaya Sangathan, Assam' payable at Guwahati. The Original Demand Draft shall have to be produced during the document verification.

How to Apply for Adarsha Vidyalaya Sangathan Recruitment?

The candidates shall have to mail only the duly filled-up prescribed Application Form to recruitment.av.sangathan@gmail.com. The Application Form is available in the official website <https://avs.sangathan.gov.in>.

Last date of submission of Application Form through email is 31/10/2024.

Interested and eligible candidates may appear in walk-in-interview as per the schedule given below.

Schedule of Interview

Date: 5th November 2024

Time: 11.30 A M onwards

Venue: Conference Hall of AV, Sangathan, Assam, Kahilipara, Guwahati-781019.

Important Dates of Adarsha Vidyalaya Sangathan Vacancy 2024

Starting date of submission of application: 18th October 2024

Last date of submission of application: 31st October 2024



APSC recruitment 2024 – 19 Assistant Director Posts @ SCERT, Assam

Last Date: 03/11/2024

Assam Public Service Commission has released an employment notification for the recruitment of 19 Assistant Director Posts in the rank of Assistant Professor in the directorate of SCERT, Assam under the Department of School Education. Interested and eligible candidates may apply online.

Name of post: Assistant Director in the rank of Assistant Professor

No of posts: 19 posts

Name of department: Directorate of SCERT, Assam under the Department of School Education.

Scale of pay: Pay scale: ₹ 30000 to 110000, **Grade Pay:** ₹ 13900

Age Limit: The candidates should not be less than 21 years of age and not more than 38 years of age as on 01/01/2024.

Educational Qualification: Candidates may check official notification for educational qualification related information.

Other Criteria of APSC Recruitment

Citizenship: Candidates must be Indian Citizens as defined in Articles 5 to 8 of the Constitution of India.

Residency:

(i) The candidate must be a permanent resident of Assam.

(ii) The candidate must produce PRC issued in Assam for educational purpose/ Employment Exchange Registration certificate as proof of residency along with the application form.

Age Relaxation: The category-wise age relaxation is as mentioned below.

SC: 5 years

ST: 5 years

OBC/ MOBC: 3 years

PwBD: 10 years

For more details pl read the official notification/s.

Employment Exchange Registration: Candidates must be registered themselves in any of the employment exchanges of Assam.

Small Family Norms: The candidates have to submit a declaration regarding "The Small Family Norms" in Form-A at the time of applying for the post.

Application Fee: Category-wise application fee is as under.

Category	Fee (in Rs.)
General	₹ 297.20
SC/ST/OBC/MOBC	₹ 197.20
BPL/ PwBD	₹ 47.20

Important Dates of APSC Recruitment 2024

Starting date of submission of online application: 4th October 2024

Last date of submission of online application: 3rd November 2024

The killing of journalists has prompted international outcry from press advocacy groups and United Nations experts

Israeli strikes kill 38 people in Gaza's Khan Younis and 3 journalists in southern Lebanon

BEIRUT, Oct 25: Israeli strikes killed 38 people in Gaza and three journalists in Lebanon on Friday as growing worries about supply shortages in Gaza and international pressure for a cease-fire mounted.

The deaths reported by Gaza health officials were the latest in the southern Gaza city of Khan Younis, where people have in recent days lined up for bread outside the city's only bakery in operation. They came a day after United States Secretary of State Antony Blinken said that Israel had accomplished its objective of "effectively dismantling" Hamas and implored both sides to revive negotiations.

Also on Friday, an Israeli airstrike on a compound housing journalists in southeast Lebanon killed three media staffers. Outside of now-collapsed buildings rented by various media outlets, cars marked "PRESS" lay covered in dust and rubble after the strike, Associated Press photos showed.

The Israeli army did not issue a warning prior to the strike. Representatives of the news networks and Lebanese politicians accused Israel of war crimes and intentionally targeting journalists.

"These were just journalists that were sleeping in bed after long days of covering the conflict," said Imran Khan, a senior correspondent for Al Jazeera English who was among the journalists in



the compound.

In a social media post, he said he and his team were unhurt.

The Beirut-based pan-Arab Al-Mayadeen TV said two of its staffers — camera operator Ghassan Najjar and broadcast technician Mohammed Rida — were among the journalists killed early on Friday. Al-Manar TV of Lebanon's Hezbollah group said its camera operator Wissam Qassim was also killed in the airstrike on the Hasbaya region.

Al-Mayadeen's director Ghassan bin Jiddo alleged that the Israeli strike on a compound housing journalists was intentional and directed at those covering elements of its military offensive. He vowed that the Beirut-based station would continue its work.

Lebanon's Information Minister Ziad Makary said the journalists were killed while broadcasting what he called Israel's crimes, and noted they were among a

large group of members of the media.

"This is an assassination, after monitoring and tracking, with premeditation and planning, as there were 18 journalists present at the location representing seven media institutions," he wrote in a post on X.

The Israeli military did not immediately comment on the strike.

Ali Shoeib, Al-Manar's well-known correspondent in south Lebanon, was seen in a video filming himself with a cellphone saying that the camera operator who had been working with him for months was killed. Shoeib said the Israeli military knew that the area that was struck housed journalists of different media organizations.

"We were reporting the news and showing the suffering of the victims and now we are the news and the victims of Israel's crimes," Shoeib added in the video aired on Al-Manar TV.

The Hasbaya region has been spared much of the violence along the border and many of the journalists now staying there have moved from the nearby town of Marjayoun that has been subjected to sporadic strikes in recent weeks. Earlier in the week, a strike hit an office belonging to Al-Mayadeen on the outskirts of Beirut's southern suburbs, according to Lebanon's Health Ministry. Lebanon's Health Minister said Friday that 11 journalists have been killed and eight wounded since exchange of fire began along the Lebanon-Israel border in early October 2023.

In November 2023, two journalists for Al-Mayadeen TV were killed in a drone strike. A month earlier, Israeli shelling in southern Lebanon killed Reuters videographer Issam Abdallah and wounded other journalists from France's international news agency, Agence France-Presse, and Qatar's Al-Jazeera TV.

The killing of journalists has prompted international outcry from press advocacy groups and United Nations experts, although Israel has said it does not deliberately target them.

On Thursday, the Committee to Protect Journalists said it had preliminarily counted 128 journalists killed in Gaza since the war began.

Israel has accused journalists working for Al Jazeera of being members of militant

groups, citing documents it purportedly found in Gaza. The network has denied the claims as "a blatant attempt to silence the few remaining journalists in the region."

The Committee to Protect Journalists has dismissed them as well, and said that "Israel has repeatedly made similar unproven claims without producing credible evidence."

Hamas-led militants stormed into southern Israel on Oct. 7, 2023, killing some 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and abducting another 250. Around 100 hostages are still inside Gaza, a third of whom are believed to be dead.

Israel's retaliatory offensive has killed over 42,000 Palestinians, according to Gaza's Health Ministry, which does not say how many were combatants but says women and children make up more than half the fatalities. The Israeli military says it has killed over 17,000 fighters, without providing evidence.

The Israeli campaign has since expanded to Lebanon, where Israel launched a ground invasion Oct. 1, after trading fire with the Hezbollah militant group for much of the past year.

Lebanese health officials reported another day of intense airstrikes and shelling Thursday, which they said killed 19 people over 24 hours and raised the overall Lebanese death toll to 2,593 since October 2023. (AP)

Trump says China's leader will bully Harris 'like a baby' as his allies try to infantilise her

WASHINGTON, Oct 25: Donald Trump said on Thursday that China's leader would handle Vice President Kamala Harris "like a baby" if she's elected to the White House, as the former president and his top allies increasingly have moved to infantilise the Democratic nominee.

"If somehow Kamala wins, she'd have to deal with Xi Jinping," conservative radio host Hugh Hewitt said of the Chinese president. "How would he handle her?"

Trump replied, "Like a baby." "He'd take all the candy away very quickly," Trump continued. "She wouldn't have any idea what happened. It would be like a grand chess master playing a beginner."

Trump has built his political career around name-calling, inventing jeers for his opponents going back to his first run for president in 2016, when he slammed Republican primary rivals like "Low Energy" Jeb Bush, the former governor of Florida, and "Little" Marco Rubio, the Florida senator. The former president also has a long history of belittling women.

But Trump has unleashed a special array of personal — often condescending — attacks against Harris, from calling her "lazy" — a word long used to demean Black people in racist terms — to insisting she's a "stupid person" and asking whether she is "on drugs." He's also called Harris, the first woman of colour to lead a major-party ticket, "slow" and has accused her of having a "low IQ."

The latest line of attack, combining sexism and deeply personal jeers with referring to Harris as a child, comes with Election Day now barely a week off. His campaign did not immediately respond to a request for comment about the remarks.

The former president, who has escalated his already dark and inflammatory rhetoric in the race's final stretch, spoke at a rally later Thurs-

day in Tempe, Arizona, where he criticised Harris' handling of immigration. He accused Harris of perpetrating "a wicked betrayal of America" and having "orchestrated the most egregious betrayal that any leader in American history has ever inflicted upon our people," even though crime is down.

During an evening event in Las Vegas, Trump compared Harris to "a vulture" in the way he characterised her approach to tax increases.

"Even after Kamala wrecked your economy with inflation, she came after you with tip income, like sort of like a vulture would do," Trump said. "If she gets four more years, Kamala Harris will pick your pockets."

Harris has offered her own share of insults against Trump, calling him "increasingly unhinged and unstable." During a CNN town hall Wednesday she called Trump a "fascist." She was set to join a rally Thursday night in the Atlanta suburbs with former President Barack Obama and musician Bruce Springsteen.

In his Thursday morning interview with Hewitt, Trump said he watched Harris' town hall on CNN and described her as coming off "like a child, almost."

"She's an empty vessel," Trump said. "But she's beautifully pushed around by a very smart, very powerful, very liberal, viciously liberal but very, very smart, powerful party called the Democrats." Some of Trump's allies have used similar attack lines. On Wednesday, former Fox News Channel host Tucker Carlson was warning up the crowd at a Trump rally in Georgia when he suggested that Trump was ready to punish the vice president.

"Dad is pissed," Carlson told the crowd. "And when dad gets home, you know what he says? You've been a bad girl. You've been a bad little girl, and you're getting a vigorous spanking right now." (AP)



King Charles tells summit past can't be changed as leaders ask Britain to reckon with slavery



WELLINGTON, Oct 25: King Charles III told a summit of Commonwealth countries in Samoa on Friday that the past could not be changed as he indirectly acknowledged calls from some of Britain's former colonies for a reckoning over its role in the trans-Atlantic slave trade.

The British monarch told leaders in Apia that he understood "the most painful aspects of our past continue to resonate." But Charles stopped short of mentioning financial reparations that some leaders at the event have urged, and instead exhorted them to find the "right language" and an understanding of history "to guide us towards making the right choices in future where inequality exists."

"None of us can change the past but we can commit with all our hearts to learning its lessons and to finding creative ways to right the inequalities that endure," said Charles, who is attending his first Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, or CHOGM, as Britain's head of state.

His remarks at the summit's opening ceremony were an acknowledgement of the strength of feeling on the issue in countries that Britain once colonised. British Prime Minister Keir Starmer also struck an emotive tone, after earlier insisting that the meeting should avoid becoming mired in the past and "very, very long endless discussions about reparations."

Starmer said at the summit that it was important to acknowledge a "hard" shared history, and that he understood the "strength of feeling here and that there are some calls to face up to the harms and injustices of the past through reparatory justice."

Flanked by leaders from Uganda and Tanzania, Starmer said he wanted to work "together to make

sure the future is not in the shadow of the past," and promised to host a UK-Caribbean forum next year with leaders of the nations most impacted by slavery's legacy. Britain's handling of its involvement in the trans-Atlantic slave trade is seen by many observers as a litmus test for the Commonwealth's adaptation to a modern-day world. Other European nations and some British institutions have started to own up to their role in the trade.

"I think the time has come for this to be taken seriously," said Jacqueline McKenzie, a partner at London law firm Leigh Day. "Nobody expects people to pay every single penny for what happened. But I think there needs to be negotiations."

Such a policy would be costly and divisive at home, McKenzie said. The UK has never formally apologised for its role in the trade, in which millions of African citizens were kidnapped and transported to plantations in the Caribbean and Americas over several centuries, enriching many individuals and companies. Studies estimate Britain would owe between hundreds of millions and trillions of dollars in compensation to descendants of slaves.

The Bahamas Prime Minister Philip Davis on Thursday said he wanted a "frank" discussion with Starmer about the matter and would seek mention of the reparations issue in the leaders' final statement at the event. All three candidates to be the next Commonwealth Secretary-General — from Gambia, Ghana and Lesotho — have endorsed policies of reparatory justice for slavery.

Starmer said Thursday in remarks to reporters that the matter would not be on the summit's agenda. But Commonwealth Secretary-General Patricia Scotland told The Associated Press in an interview that leaders "will speak about absolutely anything they want to speak about" at an all-day private meeting scheduled for Saturday.

King Charles said in Friday's speech that nothing would right inequality "more decisively than to champion the principle that our Commonwealth is one of genuine opportunity for all."

The monarch urged leaders to "choose within our Commonwealth family the language of community and respect, and reject the language of division." (AP)

10 security personnel killed in attack at checkpoint in Pakistan



PESHAWAR, Oct 25: Ten security personnel were killed and three others injured when militants attacked their checkpoint in Pakistan's restive Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, officials said on Friday.

The security personnel were killed when a firefight erupted following the attack on Thursday at the checkpoint in the Daraban area of Dera Ismail Khan district, a police official said.

A contingent of troops rushed to the site immediately after the attack, the official said, adding that troops have launched a massive search operation to arrest the assailants. Ten security personnel have lost their lives in the attack, another official said.

No group has so far claimed responsibility for the attack. The Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) has been active in the area, with several similar attacks targeting security forces.

The Pakistani government has repeatedly accused the TTP of operating from sanctuaries in Afghanistan.

There has been an uptick in the incidents of terrorism in Pakistan since the Taliban took over the government in Kabul in 2021, dashing hopes in Islamabad that a friendly government in Afghanistan would help to tackle militancy.

The TTP was set up as an umbrella group of several militant outfits in 2007. The Pakistani government has officially declared the banned organisation as "Fina al-Khawarij", a reference to a group in earlier Islamic history which was involved in violence. (PTI)

Canada will reduce immigration targets as Trudeau acknowledges his policy failed

TORONTO, Oct 25: Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said on Thursday that Canada will significantly reduce the number of new immigrants it allows into the country after acknowledging that his government failed to get the balance right coming out of the pandemic.

Trudeau's Liberal government was criticised for its plan to allow 500,000 new permanent residents into the country in each of the next two years. On Thursday, he said next year's target will now be 395,000 new permanent residents and that the figure will drop to 380,000 in 2026 and 365,000 in 2027.

"In the tumultuous times as we emerged from the pandemic, between addressing labour needs and maintaining population growth, we didn't get the balance right," Trudeau said. "Immigration is essential for Canada's future, but it must be controlled and it must be sustainable."

Trudeau, who is facing calls from within his own party not to seek a fourth term, has endured mounting criticism over his immigration policies and the negative impact that population growth has had on housing affordability.

He said his government will reduce the number of immigrants Canada brings in over the next three years, and that this will freeze population growth over the next two years. Canada reached 41 million people in April. The population was 37.5 million in 2019.

"Even Justin Trudeau wants to close Canada's Borders," Donald Trump wrote Thursday on social media while arguing for tougher border measures in the US.

Trudeau said Canada needs to stabilise its population growth to allow

all levels of government to make necessary changes to health care, housing and social services so that it can accommodate more people in the future.

Trudeau also blamed others. "Far too many corporations have chosen to abuse our temporary measures, exploiting foreign workers while refusing to hire Canadians for a fair wage," Trudeau said. "All while under the watch of provinces, some colleges and universities are bringing in more international students than communities can accommodate, treating them as an expendable means to line their own pockets. That's unacceptable, and it needs to change."

Immigration Minister Marc Miller said the lower immigration numbers will help with the country's housing shortage.

He also acknowledged the change in public opinion about immigration. "That volume that we have put forward is of concern," Miller said. Miller said the government sees the pressures facing Canadians, and that it must adapt its policies accordingly.

"We are an open country, but not everyone can come to this country," he said, noting that Canada will continue to welcome outsiders and that the government's immigration targets remain ambitious.

Trudeau's government has long touted Canada's immigration policy and how Canada is better than peer countries in welcoming newcomers and integrating them into the economy.

Pierre Poilievre, the leader of the opposition Conservative Party, accused Trudeau of destroying the national consensus on immigration. "He has destroyed our immigra-

tion system through his own personal incompetence and destroyed 150 years of common sense consensus with the Liberals and Conservatives on that subject," Poilievre said.

"He cannot fix what he broke on immigration and housing or anything else because he is busy fighting his own caucus," he added.

Poilievre was referring to calls by some lawmakers from Trudeau's own party to not run for a fourth term. Those calls represent one of the biggest tests of Trudeau's political career, but he said Thursday that he intends to stay on through the next election.

Nelson Wiseman, professor emeritus of political science at the University of Toronto, said the Trudeau government messed up badly on immigration.

"The government's logic - to grow the economy and sustain an aging Canadian population by bringing in more young immigrants - was sound. But Ottawa has little control over meeting the housing, health, education, and other welfare needs of residents, whether they are citizens or immigrants," Wiseman said.

"These are all provincial government responsibilities, and there was little cooperation or coordination between the two levels of government," he said.

A certain percentage of Canadians have always been xenophobic, but much less so than in some other countries, Wiseman said.

"Many Canadians have turned against the recent growing immigrant and temporary worker/student influx because of the growing housing, health, education, and other welfare challenges. Ottawa has read the polls and is responding accordingly," he said. (AP)

Iran's imprisoned Nobel Peace Prize laureate sentenced to another 6 months in prison

DUBAI, Oct 25: Iranian authorities have issued an additional six-month prison sentence against Nobel Peace Prize laureate Narges Mohammadi, a group campaigning for the activist said.

The Free Narges Coalition said in a statement on Thursday that Mohammadi was sentenced on October 19 to an additional six months in prison on the charge of "disobeying and resisting orders."

According to the statement, the charge was brought after Mohammadi staged a protest against the execution of another political prisoner in the women's ward of Evin Prison on August 6. Mohammadi is the 19th woman to win the Nobel Peace Prize and the second Iranian woman after human rights activist Shirin Ebadi in 2003. Mohammadi, 52, has kept up

her activism despite numerous arrests by Iranian authorities and years behind bars.

She is being held at Iran's notorious Evin Prison, which houses political prisoners and those with Western ties. She already had been serving a 30-month sentence, to which 15 more months were added in January. Iran's government has not acknowledged her additional sentencing.

The latest order reflects the Iranian theocracy's anger that she was awarded the Nobel prize in October 2023 for years of activism despite a decades-long government campaign targeting her.

Mohammadi was a leading light for nationwide, women-led protests sparked by the

death last year of a 22-year-old woman in police custody that have grown into one of the most intense challenges to Iran's theocratic government. That woman, Mahsa Amini, had been detained for allegedly not wearing her headscarf to the liking of authorities. The statement demanded Mohammadi's unconditional release, saying her health situation "has deteriorated drastically during her long incarceration and she is suffering from heart disease." (AP)



4 astronauts return to Earth after being delayed by Boeing's capsule trouble and Hurricane Milton

CAPE CANAVERAL, Oct 25: Four astronauts returned to Earth on Friday after a nearly eight-month space station stay extended by Boeing's capsule trouble and Hurricane Milton.

A SpaceX capsule carrying the crew parachuted before dawn into the Gulf of Mexico just off the Florida coast after undocking from the International Space Station mid-week.

The three Americans and one Russian should have been back two months ago. But their homecoming was stalled by problems with Boeing's new Starliner astronaut capsule, which came back empty in September because of safety concerns.

Then Hurricane Milton interfered, followed by another two weeks of high wind and rough seas.

SpaceX launched the four — NASA's Matthew Dominick, Michael Barratt and Jeanette Epps, and Russia's Alexander Grebenkin — in March. Barratt, the only space veteran going into the mission, acknowledged the support teams back home that had "to re-



plan, retool and kind of redo everything right along with us ... and helped us to roll with all those punches."

Their replacements are the two Starliner test pilots Butch Wilmore and Suni Williams, whose own mission went from eight days to eight months, and two astronauts launched by SpaceX four weeks ago. Those four will remain up there until February.

The space station is now back to its normal crew size of seven — four Americans and three Russians — after months of overflow. (AP)

Philippine police official says 33 people killed mostly in landslides set off by storm south of Manila

MANILA, Oct 25: A Philippine provincial police chief said Friday that 33 people were killed mostly in landslides set off by Tropical Storm Trami in a province south of Manila.

The deaths caused by landslides and flash floods in Batangas province brings to 65 the overall death toll from Trami, which blew away Friday from the northwestern Philippines, Batangas police chief Col Jacinto Malinao Jr said.

Eleven other villagers remain missing Malinao Jr. told The Associated Press by telephone from the lakeside town of Talisay, where he stood beside a villager whose wife and child were buried in the deep mound of mud, boulders and trees. With the use of a backhoe and shovels, police scrambled to search into 10 feet of mud, rocks and debris and found a part of a head and foot that apparently were those of the missing woman and child.

"He's simply devastated," Malinao said of the villager, whose wife and child were buried in the landslide that happened Thursday afternoon amid torrential rains.

"He's in shock and couldn't speak and we're only asking him to point to where their bedroom was located so we can dig in that part." (AP)

Gymnast Dipa Karmakar's coach Bishweshwar Nandi joins BJP in Tripura

Nandi recently participated in a virtual meeting with the Union sports minister



AGARTALA, Oct 25: Bishweshwar Nandi, the coach of gymnast Dipa Karmakar who won bronze in the 2014 Commonwealth Games, joined the BJP in a simple ceremony at his residence here on Friday. Agartala Mayor and BJP MLA Dipak Majumder welcomed Nandi

to the party.

"I am deeply influenced by how the BJP is managing the country, whether in sports or other areas, which is why I joined the party," said Nandi, a Dronacharya award recipient for his exceptional contributions to gymnastics.

He recently participated in a virtual meeting with the Union Sports Minister to discuss India's preparations for the 2036 Olympics.

Along with India, several other nations such as Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Turkey are positioning themselves as strong contenders to host the sporting spectacle. The International Olympic Committee (IOC) is expected to decide the host next year after holding its elections.

Dipa Karmakar, who blazed a trail by becoming the first Indian woman gymnast to compete at the Olympics and finish a historic fourth, announced her retirement on October 8, ending a career in which she inspired awe for routinely performing the highly-difficult Produnova vault.

The diminutive 31-year-old from Tripura grabbed headlines with her fourth-place finish in the vault final of the 2016 Rio Games, losing an Olympic medal by just 0.15 points. (PTI)

Mass social work conducted across Nagaland



HT Correspondent

DIMAPUR, Oct 25: In view of the upcoming Hornbill Festival, a mass social work was conducted across Nagaland on Friday following a directive from the state government.

In Dimapur, the district-wide mass social work was carried out to promote cleanliness and improve public spaces throughout the district.

The district administration, government employees, Dimapur Municipal Council, East Dimapur Town Council, Dimapur Urban Council Chairmen Federation, colony and ward chairmen, village council leaders, school and college students, various NGOs, and civil society organizations in the social work.

Dimapur DC Dr Tinojngshi Chang acknowledged the efforts and contribution of all those involved who despite unfavourable weather condition worked together to clear the streets, public areas, and community spaces, demonstrating a commitment to making

Dimapur cleaner.

In Chumukedima, large-scale social work initiative was carried out with active participation of the district administration, various government departments, social organisations and local colonies.

The social work activities included cleaning of National Highway 29, public areas, planting trees and raising awareness about cleanliness and environmental sustainability.

Local volunteers, department officials, and social bodies joined hands to ensure the event's success.

The event involving various departments and colonies highlights the unity and dedication of the community toward a better future, he added.

The mass social work also carried out in places like Medziphema, Pftusero, Kiphire, Phek, Shamator, Niuland, Jakhama, Tizit, Chozuba, Chesore, Tening, Peren, Tuensang, Longkhim, Bhandari, Mon and Zunheboto.

BSF foils smuggling bid in Meghalaya

SHILLONG, Oct 25: Troops of the BSF, Meghalaya, foiled cattle and garlic smuggling attempts to Bangladesh by apprehending three Indian nationals along with two vehicles loaded with cattle and garlic worth more than Rs 6 lakh near the international border of Meghalaya in the last 48 hours, a BSF source said.

The cattle and garlic were intended to be smuggled into Bangladesh through the bordering area of the East Khasi Hills district.

Based on specific information, a vehicle was intercepted by 193rd Bn BSF troops deployed near the international border in East Khasi Hills. The BSF troops intercepted a Maruti Alto car, loaded with four cattle, which were intended to be smuggled into Bangladesh. The apprehended Indian national along with seized vehicle and cattle were handed over to the Dangar police outpost, the BSF source added.

In another operation, troops of the 110th Bn

State-level Kala Utsav held in Kohima



HT Correspondent

DIMAPUR, Oct 25: The Samagra Shiksha Nagaland organised the state-level Kala Utsav at the State Institute of Rural Development in Kohima, aiming to foster and showcase the artistic talent of secondary school students.

This annual event provides a platform for students to explore and celebrate arts and cultural diversity at various levels — school, district, state and national. The event is aimed to initiate a comprehensive process of identifying, exploring, understanding, practicing, evolving and showcasing artistic talent of students, an official report said on Friday.

At the formal event on Thursday, school education director

Wonthungo Tsopoe spoke on cultural values that students should imbibe.

Exhorting the students state mission director, Samagra Shiksha Nagaland, Temsunaro Aier spoke about how the Kala Utsav initiative is an important platform to display the rich heritage and culture of Nagaland.

The programme witnessed participation from the district winners for various competitions such as tribal folk vocal music, tribal folk dance, traditional instrumental music, 2d visual art, mono act and traditional storytelling.

The winners will represent the state at the national-level Kala Utsav 2024 to be held at Bhopal in January 2025.

YMA urges state govt to set up proper shelter homes for refugees

AIZAWL, Oct 25: Mizoram's largest civil society organisation, the Young Mizo Association (YMA), urged the state government to set up proper shelter homes for over 42,000 refugees currently residing in the state, a leader said on Friday.

Central Young Mizo Association (CYMA) president Lalhmachhuana told PTI that during the organisation's conference on Thursday, several key resolutions were passed, including a call for the government to arrange proper accommodation and support for people from Myanmar, Bangladesh, and Manipur currently sheltered in various parts of the state.

He emphasised the need for the government to set up proper shelter homes and enforce guidelines for managing and assisting refugees and internally displaced people.

In October 2022, the YMA had urged the Mizo National Front (MNF) government, led by former chief minister Zoramthanga, to create a systematic mechanism for handling refugees.

According to an official from the state home department, a total of 33,004 Myanmar nationals, includ-

ing 12,572 children, are currently sheltered across all 11 districts of Mizoram.

Additionally, over 2,000 Bawm people from Bangladesh's Chittagong Hill Tracts and 7,756 internally displaced people from Manipur have also sought refuge in the state.

Most refugees and internally displaced persons are staying outside relief camps, often with relatives or friends, or in rented accommodations, while some are residing in relief camps across the state, an official said.

The YMA also called for the establishment of a separate investigative agency within the state Lokayukta, which currently relies on the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) for its operations. Additionally, they urged strict monitoring of road construction projects undertaken by the National Highway Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited (NHIDCL) and other agencies.

During the conference, the organisation announced plans to intensify its efforts against drug abuse and to promote the protection of the Mizo language. (PTI)

Three NSCN-K cadres in police net for robbing student

GUWAHATI, Oct 25: Three cadres of the NSCN-K (Khango) were arrested by the police in Dimapur, Nagaland for allegedly assaulting a student and snatching his phone and money.

According to reports, the incident took place in the Thakur Bari area of Dimapur, Nagaland on



October 10. According to reports, the victim was allegedly robbed at around 3:50-4 am on October 10 when he was on his way to participate at a sporting event.

The student was stopped by the trio near the Thakur Bari area. They allegedly assaulted him and then stole his mobile phone and all the money he had then.

The accused managed to flee with the items shortly after robbing and before any help could arrive. The student immediately reached the police station and lodged a complaint.

Based on the details provided, the police apprehended the three suspects. They were identified as Phushito Yeptho (52 years), Akheto Shohe (48 years) and Vikiho Aye (37 years). They were all identified as members of the NSCN-K (Khango) faction. The suspects were nabbed following an intensive operation, the police said.



HT Bureau

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Trade licenses for non-tribal taxi operators demanded



HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, Oct 25: Titosstarvell Chyne, Opposition Leader of the Khasi Hills Autonomous District Council (KHADC) in Meghalaya, advocated for non-tribal owners of tourist and local taxis to obtain trade licenses to operate within scheduled areas

under the council's jurisdiction.

Chyne stated that non-tribals must secure trading licenses to conduct business in Sixth Schedule areas, adhering to the 1954 Trading By Non-Tribals Regulation.

This requirement should equally apply to local and tourist taxis

owned by non-tribals operating in these areas, he said.

To enforce compliance, Chyne urged the state government to collaborate with the council, mandating non-tribal permit applicants to submit trading licenses.

Currently, the council verifies trading licenses for incoming trucks and buses but Chyne recommended extending this scrutiny to tourist taxis.

While addressing the tourist taxis association's demands, Chyne cautioned against measures harming the state's tourism sector.

He stressed considering the livelihoods of residents dependent on tourism.

Meghalaya govt confirms railway projects are still under consideration

SHILLONG, Oct 25: Transport Minister Sniawbhalang Dhar on Friday said the state government has not abandoned the proposed implementation of railway projects in the state. Speaking to reporters, Dhar said, "We have not abandoned it. We are yet to take a call because, first of all, we will try to take everybody — all stakeholders — on board."

"When everybody is on board then only we will take a call as a govern-

ment," he added.

It may be mentioned that the Centre has proposed two railway projects in the state — the 22 km Tetelia-Byrnihat tracks and the 108 km Byrnihat-Shillong line.

The Tetelia-Byrnihat project will be implemented at a cost of Rs 496 crore. However, these projects have faced roadblocks due to strong opposition from different quarters apprehending

Giriraj Singh inaugurates NIFT Shillong, emphasises Northeast's textile significance

SHILLONG, Oct 25: Union Minister of Textiles Giriraj Singh emphasised the importance of innovation and the role of Northeast India in the country's textile industry.

The Union Minister was speaking at the official inauguration of the permanent campus of National Institute of Fashion Technology in Shillong on Friday, alongside the 12th convocation ceremony for the 123 graduating class of 2024.

The Union Minister further highlighted the significant contribution of the Northeastern region to the textile sector, noting that handloom, technical textiles, and handicrafts account for over 45,000 crore in exports. "The Northeast plays a vital role in our billion-dollar market," he stated, reinforcing the notion that the region is essential to the department's identity.

Expressing his delight in attending the vibrant programme, he said, "Today marks a pivotal moment for NIFT Shillong, where we not only inaugurate a state-of-the-art campus but also celebrate the culmination of years of hard work by our graduates. Your journey does not end here; it begins anew. Embrace the challenges ahead and strive to innovate and inspire. The future of fashion is in your hands."

During his address, the Minister further highlighted the need for technology in design, stating, "If our students create beautiful de-



signs through hard work, we must equip them with tools and technology to protect their creativity."

Recalling his initial days in the department, he said, "I will elevate this department to a level where it is recognised across the country and the world." Recounting his conversation with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, he noted, "After agriculture, the most significant employment opportunities lie in textiles."

Hinting on the huge potential of the textile industry in India, he said that India's textile industry is expected to grow to 350 billion US dollars by 2030 generating crores of jobs in the process.

He also highlighted the necessity of integrating Artificial Intel-

ligence (AI) into the design process, reflecting the Prime Minister's belief that "design permeates all sectors, especially fashion, which will be our strength."

Singh also lauded VisionNxt, a pioneering initiative by NIFT stating, "We need not depend on other nations," announcing plans to establish NIFT campuses outside India. He expressed hope of India being recognised by its Bharat brand and green sustainable textile products on the world stage as he urged the students, "Whichever company or brand you work with, take the Bharat brand with you wherever you go." He also said that VisioNxt, the Indigenous trend forecasting initiative, will fulfil the fashion aspirations of the people of this country. (NNN)

Huge cache of arms, ammunition seized in Manipur

IMPHAL, Oct 25: Security forces seized huge cache of arms and ammunition during search operations in Manipur's Imphal East, Thoubal and Chandul districts, a police statement said on Friday.

Four live hand grenades, one detonator, one 9mm pistol with magazine, one .32 pistol, one wireless radio set, 30 live am-

munition, 31 blank cartridges, one explosives weighing about 2.5 kg, one 303 rifle, one 12 bore double barrel gun and one Pompi gun were seized from Leirong Vaiphei village in Imphal East district, it said.

From B Phainom village in Thoubal district, security forces seized one 9 mm SMG carbine along with a magazine, two

SMG carbine magazine, one hand grenade, 13 live rounds, one detonator, two tear smoke shell soft nose, and two radio sets.

From Songkhom and Gunjil village in Chandul district, Assam Rifles on Wednesday seized one automatic weapon (FGC-9) MK-II (9mm), seven live rounds, two local made

mortar Pompi, one bomb of local mortar (Pompi), one single barrel gun and two radio set.

Meanwhile, a 56 year old man was apprehended from T Khullen naka check post in Senapati District for possession of nine packets of 4.8 mm pellets SBBL plastic cartridges, the statement said. (PTI)

USTM & Catholic University of Mozambique inaugurate ICIMST-2024

Publication captures the research and discussions from the previous edition of the conference

GUWAHATI, Oct 25: The Department of Computer Science, University of Science and Technology Meghalaya (USTM), in collaboration with the Catholic University of Mozambique, inaugurated the 3rd International Conference on Innovation in Management, Science, and Technology (ICIMST-2024) here today. The two-day event is being held on October 25 and 26 with participation from academic and research institutions worldwide.

The inauguration ceremony was graced by Prof Sushanta Karmakar, from IIT Guwahati, as the chief guest. Addressing the gathering, Prof Karmakar emphasized the importance of innovation in research and the vital role interdisciplinary collaboration plays in advancing knowledge.

In a significant highlight of the ceremony, a book on the Conference Proceedings of the 2nd Inter-



national Conference on Innovation in Management, Science, and Technology, and Automation in Sports was officially released. This publication captures the research and discussions from the previous edition of the conference, serving as a valuable resource for scholars and researchers.

The guest of honour for the session was Prof Doutor Nelson Amade, Vice-Reitor of the

Catholic University of Mozambique, who highlighted the international significance of the conference and the growing collaboration between institutions. Another distinguished guest, Maiden Alfinete, from the Catholic University of Mozambique, also attended the event.

Throughout the two days of the conference, more than 70 research papers will be presented across

multiple parallel sessions chaired by prominent dignitaries from reputed institutions such as NIT Rourkela, Chandigarh University, Guwahati University, Cotton University, Shah Jalal University of Science and Technology (Bangladesh), and Excel Engineering College, Tamil Nadu.

Following the inauguration, a workshop on "Advanced Research Methodology: Its Key Concepts and Roles in Research" was conducted, offering valuable insights into research approaches and methodologies for the attendees. The workshop aimed at enhancing the understanding of key research concepts, setting a promising tone for the conference's academic discourse.

ICIMST-2024 is set to provide an international platform for scholars, researchers, and practitioners to share their innovative ideas and contributions to the fields of management, science, and technology.

Yogi's minister retorts

BJP has become 'rishtedar-wadi': Akhilesh

LUCKNOW, Oct 25: Samajwadi Party (SP) president Akhilesh Yadav on Friday said the BJP, which accused his party of being "family-oriented", has become "rishtedar-wadi" (relative-oriented).

Yadav's remark comes a day after the BJP fielded Anujesh Yadav as its candidate for bypoll in Karhal assembly seat in Uttar Pradesh's Mainpuri district against SP's Tej Pratap Yadav.

Anujesh is related to Akhilesh, both being brothers-in-law.

BJP leader and UP MoS (Independent charge) for Social Welfare Asim Arun countered the SP chief's jibe, saying it was "not a contest between relatives" but "a fight of policies, a fight between truth and lies, and one between criminals and those abiding by law."

"Today is the last day for filing nominations. The BJP's list is out."

"They used to accuse us of being family-oriented, but now they've surpassed us and have become 'rishtedar-wadi'," Akhilesh said while addressing a pro-



gramme in Karhal's Dihuli, according to a post shared by the SP's official X account.

Accusing the BJP government of being "the most corrupt in the state's history," the SP chief said, "The BJP has hollowed out Uttar Pradesh. They have deceived the farmers, youth and traders alike, and they've destroyed the agricultural markets."

The BJP has fielded Anujesh Yadav, uncle-in-law ('fufa') of SP

candidate Tej Pratap Yadav, on the Karhal seat, considered an SP stronghold since 1993.

This race will see a "fufa versus bhatija (nephew)" contest, with Tej Pratap Yadav facing off against Anujesh Yadav, who is related to him by marriage.

Yadav also noted Karhal's historic ties with his late father and SP founder Mulayam Singh Yadav, stating, "Karhal has an unbreakable bond with Netaji and

socialists. This byelection will yield a historic result and Tej Pratap Yadav will win by a landslide."

Meanwhile, minister Arun said Anujesh Yadav filed his nomination as BJP candidate for Karhal bypoll on Friday.

Addressing a programme in support of Anujesh in Karhal, Arun said, "This is not a contest between relatives of a family, but a fight of policies, a fight between truth and lies, and one between criminals and those abiding by law."

Narrating an anecdote, Arun said he has served in the police.

"Once I was in the adjoining Aligarh district and frequently police would arrest criminals from Mainpuri or vice-versa. But in the last seven years, have you heard of any such arrests in Mainpuri, or kidnapping incidents?"

"Why is that? Because it is the same law but the enforcer has changed. It is the same bulldozer which now got the correct driver," Arun said.

Campaigning in support of the

BJP candidate, he asked the crowd if it wanted the jungle raj back in the region. Arun also slammed former SP block head Nawab Singh Yadav, who has been jailed in connection with the rape of a minor.

The minister also took a jibe at the SP harping on PDA (pichhde, Dalit, alpasankhyak) family, saying the BJP was working for all sections of the society.

Byelections for nine assembly seats, including Karhal, in Uttar Pradesh are scheduled for November 13, with results to be declared on November 23.

In a statement issued from the SP headquarters, Yadav said, "The BJP knows they will never win Karhal or Milkpur (seat in Ayodhya). Despite their efforts, they're losing internal surveys in Milkpur, which is why they postponed the election there. They are aware of their defeat in Karhal as well."

He further predicted a "major loss" for the BJP coalition in the upcoming elections. "The BJP alliance is headed for a historic defeat," Yadav claimed. (PTI)

India-Bangladesh border talks postponed



NEW DELHI, Oct 25: The DG-level border talks between India and Bangladesh, scheduled to be held in Delhi next month, have been postponed following a change in plan by the neighbouring country, official sources said on Friday.

The bi-annual talks led by the heads of the Border Security Force (BSF) and its Bangladeshi counterpart the Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) were to be tentatively held between November 18 and 22 in the national capital, the first such meeting after the collapse of the Sheikh Hasina government on August 5.

Sources told PTI that the Bangladeshi side informed about the postponement and indicated that they were working on "an early date" for the meeting to be held.

Overall, it will be the 55th edition of the Director General (DG)-level talks between the two forces that also includes officials from the home and external affairs ministries, and anti-narcotics, Customs and some other federal agencies from both the countries that have a stake in border management.

The last edition of these talks were held in Dhaka in March.

The BSF guards a 4,096-kilometre-long international front with Bangladesh on India's eastern side.

The sources had earlier said the next meeting, whenever it took place, was expected to be held on the traditional issues and subjects related to "comprehensive" border management, curbing cross-border crimes and mutual coordination in

sharing real-time intelligence along the front.

The recent developments in Bangladesh "may guide the contours" of the discussions, they had said.

An interim government led by 84-year-old Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus is in charge of affairs in Bangladesh at present.

"Overall, the situation is under control along the India-Bangladesh border. There is good connect with our counterparts post the August 5 developments in Bangladesh. However, the field units are on alert mode since that day," a senior BSF officer posted along the front-line said.

A home ministry official said a comprehensive review of this border was recently undertaken at the ministry level and the situation was stated to be "satisfactory".

Some friction points were noted during this review meeting that was chaired by Union Home Secretary Govind Mohan and the BSF, Customs and immigration authorities deployed along the front were asked to be "ruthless" against illegal infiltration and cross-border crimes, the official said.

At the same time, they have been directed to ensure all humanitarian assistance, like always, in genuine cases, the ministry official added.

The DG-level border talks were held annually between 1975 and 1992 but made bi-annual in 1993 with either side alternatively travelling to the respective national capitals of New Delhi and Dhaka. (PTI)

Revanth Reddy accuses NDA govt of discrimination against southern states



HYDERABAD, Oct 25: Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy on Friday accused the BJP-led NDA government of discrimination against the southern states in the allotment of funds and developmental projects.

Attacking Prime Minister Narendra Modi, he asked what has the Centre done for the country and also alleged that the BJP raises emotional issues to win elections and tries to split other parties.

Taking a jibe, he said the NDA government's contribution was that it brought the three black farm laws, since repealed, and caused unemployment in the country.

"You are trying to bring a south-north division in the country. Whenever Congress was in power, whenever Congress leaders were prime ministers, there was a practice to give the President post to south India when a leader from the north is the prime minister," he said at an event organised by a media organisation. From Neelam Sanjiva Reddy to APJ Abdul Kalam, several leaders from the south became Presidents as per a "gentleman's agreement between north and south," he claimed. "But, you have refused to give anything to the south. You want our votes, our money. But, you are trying to give hatred in return," he said. The previous UPA regime under the leadership of Sonia Gandhi and Manmohan Singh took revolutionary decisions, including right to education act, right to information act, and food security act, he said.

He said the BJP and Modi are only focused on winning elections. The chief minister alleged that Telangana and other southern states are not getting their due share proportionate to their contribution to the Central exchequer. Referring to the delimitation of constituencies, he claimed that the southern states have implemented the policy of family planning but the Centre is not ready to appreciate the south. He alleged that the GIFT City and bullet train were given to Gujarat which happened to be the native state of PM Modi. He wondered whether Modi's goal of making India a five trillion dollar economy would be accomplished by developing Gujarat alone. Modi has developed the Sabarmati riverfront in Ahmedabad, but BJP in Telangana is opposing Musi riverfront development in Hyderabad as the southern state would compete with Gujarat, he claimed. He also accused the BJP and BRS of trying to stall the progress of Telangana. How come G Kishan Reddy and Bandi Sanjay Kumar are opposing the government's policies on a day-to-day basis despite being union ministers, he asked. Reddy also said the state government has plans to set up a Gandhi ideology centre at the Bapu Ghat, a memorial for Gandhiji on the banks of the Musi river in Hyderabad. Hitting out at BRS president K Chandrasekhar Rao, the chief minister asked whether the former has the right to continue as Leader of Opposition as he has only attended Assembly sessions for just 10 minutes during the last 10 months. (PTI)

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India, China begin troop disengagement at two friction points: Sources

NEW DELHI, Oct 25: India and China have begun troop disengagement at the two friction points at Demchok and Depsang Plains in eastern Ladakh and this process is likely to get completed by October 28-29, Army sources said on Friday.

The process follows an agreement signed between the two countries on patrolling and disengagement of troops along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh, a major breakthrough to end the over four-year standoff.

Sources said that patrolling will begin at the two friction points once the disengagement is done and both sides will move their respective troops and dismantle temporary structures.

Eventually, they added, the patrolling status is expected to move back to pre-April 2020 level.



The agreement framework was first agreed upon at the diplomatic level and then military-level talks took place, the army sources said, adding the nitty-gritty of agreement was worked in Corps Commander-level talks.

Adhering to agreements between the two sides, Indian troops have begun to pull back equipment to rear locations in these areas.

The ties between the two Asian

giant nations nosedived following a fierce clash in the Galwan Valley in June 2020 that marked the most serious military conflict between the two sides in decades.

Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri on October 21 said in Delhi that the agreement was finalised following negotiations over the past several weeks and that it would lead to a resolution of the issues that arose in 2020. (PTI)

Amarinder slams CM Mann, AAP over 'tardy' paddy procurement in Punjab

CHANDIGARH, Oct 25: BJP leader Amarinder Singh on Friday lashed out at Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann over the "tardy" paddy procurement in the state, alleging the latter "turned his back on the farmers" facing hardships in the mandis.

Visiting the grain market in Khanna where farmers are complaining of slow paddy purchase, the former Punjab chief minister hit out at the Mann-led AAP government and told reporters that the grain markets are bursting at the seams as paddy has not been lifted from the mandis.

Claiming that the farmers never faced any problem in crop procurement when he was the chief minister, Singh, who was accompanied by BJP leader Fateh Jung Bajwa, said, "We always lifted paddy and wheat and never faced any problem. So why are they (AAP government) facing problems? I was a Congress chief minister when BJP was in power at the Centre."

Replying to a query on lesser yield of the PR-126 variant sown in Punjab, Singh asked who told the farmers to sow this particular variety.

"It was the chief minister. But where is he now? He should have come here. When farmers are facing problems, he has turned his back on them," Singh said.

"Farmers had sown this variety (PR-126) at his (Mann) behest. Has he visited any mandi anywhere in Punjab yet," Singh asked.

The veteran politician also said that before suggesting any



variety, it is important to get it tested twice or thrice.

"It is his (Mann) duty to go to Delhi. If there is any problem with the Food Corporation of India, he should meet the agriculture minister, the prime minister and the home minister. Is it my duty or his," Singh asked.

On AAP blaming the Union government for the farmers' plight, Singh said, "Why should the Centre want to do any

such thing? It wants the crop to be lifted. It is the responsibility of the state government to ensure smooth purchase of paddy."

Later, Singh said in a post on X, "Visited Khanna Dana Mandi today and met with our hard-working farmers, arthiyas and labourers. Unfortunately they are facing hurdles due a tardy job of procurement planning by @AAPPunjab govt."

"I have assured the farmers and arthiyas that I will urge the Central government to intervene to ensure smoother procurement."

The lifting of paddy from the mandis in Punjab has been hit after the state rice millers refused to mill the crop till their demands were met.

The rice millers have also expressed concern over the out-turn ratio (post milling yield) of the PR-126 variety, claiming that it will cause them huge losses.

They said the out-turn ratio of this variety is less than 67 per cent, which has been fixed by the Centre.

The rice millers are demanding to be allowed to give 64 kg of rice out of one quintal of paddy because of lesser yield of the PR-126 variety.

They have also complained of space crunch for storing fresh paddy and want the Centre to liquidate the existing wheat and paddy stock to create sufficient space.

The arthiyas (commission agents), meanwhile, are also demanding a raise in their commission. (PTI)

Need for rural, urban local bodies to also open avenues for employment: Adityanath

MAHARAJGANJ (UP), Oct 25: Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Friday underscored the need for rural and urban local bodies to focus on development projects that not only improve civic amenities but also create employment opportunities.

The chief minister made these remarks during a public address in Maharajganj district adjoining Gorakhpur where he inaugurated 505 development projects totalling Rs 940 crore and unveiled the newly constructed office building of Nagar Panchayat Chowk Bazar.

"Prime Minister Narendra Modi has set an ambitious target for 'Aatm Nirbhar' and 'Viksit Bharat' by 2047, encouraging citizens to engage with both development and heritage. The government is working on a war footing to realise this goal, but there is also a unique role for local bodies, gram panchayats and the public to reflect on how they can contribute in building a developed India," Adityanath said.

"It is crucial for nagar panchayats and local bodies to connect with developmental areas that not only expand civic services but also open avenues for employment," he added.

The projects inaugurated and for



which foundation stones were laid span critical sectors, including roads, education, vocational training, healthcare, support for stray cattle, vending zones for street vendors, drinking water facilities, tourism development, police services and fire brigades.

Highlighting the commitment of the central and state governments to make India a developed nation, Adityanath said, "Major highways, airports, medical colleges, IITs, schools and colleges are being constructed. Additionally, significant advancements are underway in industry and employment."

"To support this development

sachivalayas to assist issuance of essential certificates, such as income, birth, death and residence. This enables residents to access these services locally rather than travelling to tehsils or district headquarters, while also providing employment to youth from the village," he said.

He further explained, "The second employment opportunity comes from the operation of public toilets, where the gram panchayats hire a woman caretaker, with her salary funded through user charges.

The third role in villages is that of BC Sakhi, who facilitates banking transactions for villagers and earns honorarium and incentives. Currently, there are 42,000 BC Sakhis active across Uttar Pradesh."

A Self-Help Group (SHG) member who works on the field to do banking transactions using her laptop, desktop, mobile or tab is called a BC Sakhi.

Expanding on employment potential, the chief minister stated, "The fourth job opportunity arises with the establishment of convention centres in villages. These centres will not only provide venues for events such as weddings but also create maintenance-related jobs for locals."

"Firstly, computer operators have been appointed at the gram

The fifth employment opportunity, he mentioned, will be at the ration shops.

"In addition to ration distribution, general consumer goods will now be sold at these shops, supported by government-built warehouses. It will provide jobs for local residents," Adityanath said.

The chief minister said these initiatives will help implement government schemes effectively while advancing the vision of self-reliant panchayats as part of a self-reliant India.

CM Adityanath remarked that if gram panchayats, which receive limited funds, create additional sources of income, the government will provide substantial support, ensuring no shortage of resources. This approach, he noted, will also apply to nagar panchayats.

He encouraged the local bodies to pursue self-reliance, emphasising that with the government's support, gram and nagar panchayats have every reason to become financially independent.

"This will require hard work and dedicated effort. By developing public facilities, gram and nagar panchayats can steadily advance toward self-sufficiency," he added. (PTI)

Ex-Jharkhand CM AJSU's Sudesh Mahto file nominations

SARAIKELA/ RANCHI, Oct 25: Former Jharkhand Chief Minister Champai Soren, AJSU party chief Sudesh Mahto and others on Friday filed their nomination papers from their respective constituencies for the upcoming state assembly polls.

Soren filed his nomination as BJP nominee from Saraikela, which is among 43 assembly constituencies going to polls in the first phase on November 13.

The nomination process for the first phase, which started on October 18, is set to conclude on October 25.

Soren, who joined the BJP on August 30 citing "insult" and "humiliation" at the hands of JMM leaders, claimed that there is a wave in favour of the saffron party in the state.

"There is a wave in favour of the BJP in the Kolhan region as well as entire Jharkhand. The BJP will win all 81 seats and form the government this time," he said.

The former CM said that the population of tribal has decreased in Jharkhand's Santhal Pargana region. "The present government in Jharkhand has never worked to stop Bangladeshi infiltrators," he alleged.

The JMM candidate from Saraikela seat, Ganesh Mahli, who

recently joined the party after defecting from the BJP, also submitted his documents before the election officials on Friday.

The JMM in its fourth list of candidates on Thursday announced the name of Mahli as party nominee for the seat.

AJSU party chief Sudesh Mahto filed his nomination from Silli, which is among 38 assembly constituencies that will go to the polls in second phase on November 20.

Mahto was accompanied by Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma to the nomination centre. Exuding confidence about his victory, Mahto said that people would vote for development.

AJSU party is an ally partner of BJP-led NDA in Jharkhand.

As per the seat-sharing arrangement in NDA, BJP will contest 68 seats, AJSU party 10, JD(U) 2 and LJP (RV) 1.

The Jharkhand assembly polls will be held in two phases - November 13 and November 20 - with the counting of votes on November 23.

As many as 433 candidates filed nomination papers for the 43 assembly constituencies in the first phase till Thursday. The filing of nominations for the second phase began on October 22 and will continue till October 29. (PTI)

Unified HQ plans to curb J&K terror

Focus on peace, youth, and anti-terror actions in J&K

UDHAMPUR, Oct 25: The Unified Headquarters has discussed the spate of terrorist attacks in Jammu and Kashmir at a meeting in Srinagar and formulated a strategy, a senior army official said on Friday, highlighting the focus is on breaking the cycle of violence and dismantling the terror ecosystem.

While he refused to divulge details, Northern Army Commander Lieutenant General M V Suchindra Kumar did say, "The core of this strategy is to strengthen the relationship between citizens and soldiers while encouraging nationalist and mainstream narratives, particularly among youths."

The focus is on breaking the cycle of violence, dismantling the terror ecosystem, empowering the youth and women, facilitating education, promoting sports, and reviving the region's rich historical and cultural heritage, he said.

"I must assure you that situation is under control," the Army Commander told reporters here.

There has been a spike in terror attack in Jammu and Kashmir in recent days. Two soldiers and as many civilian porters engaged by the Army were killed in an attack on an army vehicle in Gulmarg on



Thursday.

This came five days after six non-local labourers and a local doctor were killed when terrorists fired indiscriminately upon them at the Z-Morh tunnel construction site in the Gagangir area of central Kashmir's Ganderbal district.

Before that, a labourer from Bihar was shot dead by terrorists in Shopian district on October 18.

Earlier on Thursday, terrorists shot at and injured a labourer from Uttar Pradesh, Shubam Kumar, in the Tral area of Pulwama district.

On security forces' ongoing response, Lieutenant General Kumar said the security forces have been

able to neutralise 720 ultras in Jammu and Kashmir over the past five years. "As far as residual terrorists are concerned, multiple agencies keep updating figures. They are varying between 120 to 130. Now, the recruitment figures are in single digits... and is at its lowest."

He said that the anti-infiltration grid along the Line of Control and focused counter-terrorism operations in the hinterland have managed to create an environment of peace and development in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

"The adversary is frustrated due

to our successes. Their aim is to push terrorists across, but we have foiled infiltration attempts. Their goal is to instill fear among the population, but we will not allow it," he stated.

He said that the peace, prosperity, and improved security situation is due to the concerted and synergised efforts of the Indian Army and all other agencies and stakeholders. "The Indian Army will continue to strive to provide a secure environment to the people of the Union Territories of J&K and Ladakh."

"Our endeavors in kinetic and non-kinetic operations have facilitated greater security," he said.

Referring to the security situation in the Jammu region, he said that various agencies are undertaking operations to achieve the desired outcomes.

"Village Defence Groups (VDGs) have ensured the security of remote areas for decades. The VDG setup is being strengthened, with over 600 VDGs being established and 10,000 modern weapons provided to them. They are also being trained," he said.

Responding to a question about terrorist attacks in Kashmir, he said

HC refuses early hearing on bail plea of Shifa-ur-Rehman



NEW DELHI, Oct 25: The Delhi High Court has dismissed a plea seeking an early hearing on the bail of Jamia alumni president Shifa-ur-Rehman in an Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) case of Delhi riots.

In its order on October 21, a bench of Justices Navin Chawla and Shalinder Kaur, refused to grant the request but said "endeavour will be made" to hear it on the fixed date.

"Keeping in view the nature of this (cases) board, it is not possible to accede to this request. The appeal is already listed for hearing on November 25, 2024, when an endeavour will be made to hear the same...The application is, accordingly, dismissed," held the bench.

The high court had on October 7 listed the bail plea of Jamia Millia Islamia alumni president Rehman,

along with the similar applications by other co-accused in the case -- Umar Khalid and Sharjeel Imam -- on November 25 for hearing. Rehman moved court in June, 2022 challenging a trial court order that had refused to grant him bail following which a notice was issued to the Delhi police on June 3, 2022.

The trial court had dismissed Rehman's bail plea on April 7, 2022, saying there were reasonable grounds to believe the accusation against him was "prima facie" true.

The police have said there was material to show his role in the alleged conspiracy and riots.

The bail matters were previously being heard by Justice Suresh Kumar Kait, who was recently elevated as the chief justice of the Madhya Pradesh High Court.

Rehman, Khalid, Imam and several others have been booked under the stringent UAPA provisions apart from the Indian Penal Code for allegedly being the "masterminds" of the "larger conspiracy" behind the February 2020 riots, which left 53 people dead and over 700 injured.

The violence had erupted during the protests against the CAA and NRC. (PTI)

Exam for 111 posts in Rajasthan govt cancelled

JAIPUR, Oct 25: The Rajasthan Public Service Commission (RPSC) has cancelled a competitive examination for recruitment to 111 senior posts of the Local Self Government Department following breach of confidentiality during the conduct of the test.

In the Revenue Officer Grade II and Executive Officer Class-IV Competitive Examination, 2022 conducted by the Commission on May 14 last year, 1,96,483 candidates had appeared for 111 posts.

Of them, a total of 311 candidates were included after the exam in the list issued for eligibility check and document verification.

There were incidents of cheating at examination centres at Bikaner and three FIRs were registered there on the day of the examination.

"It is clear from the FIRs and their challan reports that cheating took place at the examination centres through ultra-modern electronic devices. Regarding the complaints received, the Commission had written to SOG (Special Operations Group) and ATS (Anti-Terrorist Squad) on June 12 this year for investigation of the complaints," a release from the RPSC said.



On the candidates appearing suspicious in the document verification, the Commission also re-examined the documents of several candidates from August 2 to 8. It prepared an inquiry note and sent a report to Additional Director General, ATS and SOG for further investigation.

ADG ATS and SOG has informed the Commission that serious facts have come to light regarding the secrecy of the examination during the examination.

The SOG has also registered a case and several accused have been arrested.

"In view of all the above facts, the Commission found that during

Coaches of goods trains derail in UP's Meerut, Saharanpur; no one hurt

MEERUT/SAHARANPUR (UP), Oct 25: Coaches of two goods trains derailed in Meerut and Saharanpur in Uttar Pradesh on Friday, officials said. "No one was injured in the two incidents. Two coaches of a goods train derailed in the Kaiserganj area of Meerut", they added.

Railway Superintendent, Moradabad, Ashutosh Shukla said the incident occurred while shunting the goods train and no one was injured.

He said two wheels of the two coaches of the goods train came off near the Meerut City station at around 9 am. "In a similar incident, two coaches of another goods train derailed near the Saharanpur railway station in the early hours. No injury was reported in the incident", the officials said.

"The derailed goods train, originating from Ferozepur, Punjab, was approaching the Saharanpur railway station when the incident occurred. The cause of the derailment is currently under investigation. Nobody was injured", Divisional Railway Manager (DRM), Ambala, Mandip Singh Bhatia said. (PTI)

EC team intercepts vehicle, finds jewellery worth ₹ 139 crore inside



PUNE, Oct 25: A static surveillance team (SST) of the Election Commission on Friday found jewellery worth ₹ 139 crore being transported in a logistics service firm's vehicle here.

A city-based jeweller's firm claimed that it was a legitimate consignment.

SSTs have been deployed in the city in view of the November 20 Maharashtra assembly elections.

A tempo belonging to Sequel Global Precious Logistics was intercepted in Sahakarnagar area here, said Smartana Patil, deputy commissioner of police (zone 2).

"Upon inquiry, the team found that the boxes in the vehicle contained jewellery and the vehicle had come from Mumbai...we informed the Income Tax department and election officials about it," she

Police custody of 9 accused extended till Oct 26

BABA SIDDIQUE MURDER CASE

MUMBAI, Oct 25: A court here on Friday extended till October 26 the police remand of nine accused in the Baba Siddique murder case.

The NCP leader and former Maharashtra minister was shot dead on October 12 near his MLA son Zeeshan Siddique's office in Nirmal Nagar in Bandra East.

Nine persons, who were arrested on various dates, were produced before Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate (Esplanade Court) V R Patil at the end of their initial remand on Friday.

While police sought extension of remand by three days, the court extended it by one day till Saturday.

The nine comprise Gurmail Baljit Singh (23), Dharmaraj Kashyap (21), Harish Kumar Nisad (26), Pravin Lonkar (30), Nitin Gautam Sapre (32), Sambhaji Kisan Pardhi (44), Pradeep Dattu Thombre (37), Chetan Dilip Pardhi and Ram Fulchand Kanoujia (43).

As per police, Haryana resident Singh and Uttar Pradesh native Kashyap as well as wanted accused Shivkumar Gautam shot at Siddique, while Pune-based Pravin Lonkar's brother Shubham is allegedly associated with jailed gangster Lawrence Bishnoi. He and other wanted accused had conspired to carry out the hit and supplied firearms to the shooters.

Nisad, a scrap dealer from Pune, provided financial help for the operation, as per police.

Sapre is from Dombivali, while Pardhi, Thombre and Pardhi (27) are from Ambarnath in Thane district. Kanoujia is a resident of Panvel in Raigad. Main shooter Shivkumar Gautam as well as key accused Shubham Lonkar and Mohammed Zeeshan Akhtar are currently on the run. A lookout circular (LoC) has been issued against the three. (PTI)

Delhi: 2 held for killing 19-year-old woman, burying her body

NEW DELHI, Oct 25: Delhi Police have arrested two men for allegedly killing a 19-year-old woman and burying her body in a pit in an abandoned area in Haryana, officials said on Friday.

The accused were identified as Sanju alias Saleem (victim's boyfriend), Pankaj and Ritik, police said.

The police received a complaint from the victim's brother on October 22 stating that his sister had gone missing. He suspected that a man, whom his sister recently befriended, might have been involved in her disappearance, they said.

"Upon receiving the complaint, multiple teams were formed to investigate. The woman's phone was switched off," a senior police officer said.

During the course of the investigation, the police apprehended Sanju and Pankaj. They confessed to the crime and said that they had rented a car on October 21 and took the victim



he asked his friends Pankaj and Ritik to arrange for a car to go on a long drive.

"They all boarded the car and drove towards Rohtak. So far, we know that they killed her and buried her body under four-foot-deep pit in an abandoned area in Madina of Rohtak district" the police officer said.

"Our team recovered the victim's body from the pit in the abandoned area in Madina," another police officer added.

Police further said that a case has been registered. They are looking for the third accused in the case, Ritik, the officer said.

Sources in the police said that some of the family members are also claiming that the victim was pregnant and teams are investigating the case from all angles.

Meanwhile, the victim's mother demanded strict action against the accused. She said that her daughter was a social media influencer and used to make short videos for different platforms.

"We got to know that she met a boy a few months back. They became good friends and started talking. It was shocking when we came to know that his real name was Saleem. He confessed to killing my daughter and buried her body. We want strict action against all the accused," she said. (PTI)

along with some of her belongings.

A senior police officer, privy to the investigation, said that they had earlier suspected that the woman wanted to marry Sanju but he kept asking for some more time.

The police also found that on the day of Karwa Chauth (October 21), when the victim was fasting, she reportedly had a fight with Sanju and they decided to meet. Following this,

Sessions court grants bail to Sanjay Raut as he challenges conviction in defamation case

MUMBAI, Oct 25: A sessions court here on Friday granted bail to Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Sanjay Raut as he challenged his conviction in a defamation case filed by BJP leader Kirit Somaia's wife Medha Somaia.

Raut has filed a revision application in the session's court against his conviction and the 15-day jail sentence awarded by a magistrate's court.

The Rajya Sabha member appeared before the court on Friday and sought bail. The court granted him bail in the sum of ₹ 50,000.

Judicial Magistrate (First Class) Aarti Kulkarni on September 26 held Raut guilty of defamation under Indian Penal Code section 500. Besides sentencing him to 15 days in jail, the court also imposed

a fine of ₹ 25,000 on him.

The court, however, suspended the sentence for 30 days to enable him file an appeal.

Raut, in his revision application before the sessions court, said the magistrate's order was "bad in law and improper on facts".

Medha Somaia had claimed that Raut made baseless and defamatory allegations in the media against her and her husband, accusing them of being involved in a ₹ 100 crore scam related to the construction of public toilets in Mira Bhayander Municipal Corporation area.

"As Raut appeared in person, we did not oppose his bail application, following which the court granted it," said advocate Laxman Kanai, Somaia's lawyer. (PTI)

No. SLRC-G-IV/Assam/Advertisement for Analogous Posts-IV/2023-24/01/100

(PUBLIC APPEAL)

This is for information to the general public that the written examinations for Class-IV posts under the State Level Recruitment Commission for Class-IV Posts will be held on 27th October, 2024 in different districts of the State. The Assam State School Education Board (erstwhile SEBA) will conduct the examinations on behalf of the Commission. A large number (13,79,132) of candidates shall appear for the examinations in as many as 1484 different examination centers spread across the state of Assam.

With a view to hold the examination in a free, fair and transparent manner and to select the best candidates purely on merit, Government of Assam has made elaborate arrangements for the examination. However, it has been observed on many such earlier occasions in our State as well as in other States that some unscrupulous elements resorted to unfair means using different Mobile Applications such as Facebook, WhatsApp, X (Twitter), Telegram and YouTube etc. which are based on internet/Wi-Fi connectivity. There exists a substantial apprehension that the anti-social elements or through social media and may try to destabilize the process of examination. Some may even try to sell fake question papers using different social media platforms.

We fervently appeal the general public not to believe in such anti-social news and also not to fall prey to such fake news.

To ensure that there remain no loopholes in the examination process which might have the potential to create doubt in the public mind on the fairness of the recruitment process, the Government of Assam has taken necessary steps to temporarily disable the Mobile internet/Mobile data/Mobile Wi-Fi connectivity in the entire State of Assam from 08:30 A.M. to 04:00 P.M. on 27th October, 2024 (Sunday).

All are requested to bear with the inconvenience in the interest of holding a free, fair and transparent recruitment examination and thereby securing the future of the youths of the State.

Sd/-
Secretary, State Level Recruitment Commission for Class-IV Posts

Janasanyog/D/7900/24/26-Oct-24

Aman Gupta sparks innovation at Ignite 2024

Top startups honored at CU's national fest

CHANDIGARH, Oct 25: Chandigarh University's two-day national startup fest, Ignite 2024, concluded on Thursday, spotlighting young innovators and featuring insights from boAt co-founder and Shark Tank India judge Aman Gupta.

Gupta shared advice on brand-building, competition, and leveraging India's supportive ecosystem for startups, encouraging students to embrace entrepreneurship early.

A felicitation ceremony, attended by Chandigarh University Chancellor and Rajya Sabha MP Satnam Singh Sandhu, honored alumni with five Startups Excellence Awards, and presented five Business Ex-



cellence Awards to parents recognized as business leaders. Ignite's Startup Haat exhibition highlighted 60 university startups and five external ones, with 35 chosen to receive resources, mentorship, and support through CU's Technology Business Incubator (CU-TBI). CU-TBI also an-

availability, supportive policies, and RBI-backed fintech initiatives. He also praised the influence of content creators who successfully built brands, urging students to create their own stories to drive demand. Panels included insights from Pankaj Setiya (RBI), Balbir Singh (SIBBI), and Ishita Thaman (NITI Aayog), who spoke on policies supporting startups and India's rising rank in the Global Innovation Index. The event concluded with awards for exceptional startups, including Jai Chachra (Social Impact), Lovelesh Dutt (Fintech), Kartik Bhalla (Tech), and Kunwar Nabh (Edutech). (PTI)

E-AUCTION FOR PARKING CONTRACT

E-Auction leasing for Parking Stand at Lumding Division. Auction Catalogue No.: PARK-GHY-02-24. Auction Start (All Lots): At 11:00 hrs. on 07-11-2024. Seq No. AA/1; Lot No.: PARKING-LMG-GHY-MX-119-24-2 (Parking-Mixed).

Description: Parking Lot for two wheelers, three wheelers and four wheelers at location circulating area of Guwahati Railway Station in Lumding Division. Rate Unit: Annual Licensing Fee; Days: 1095. Closing date & time: At 11:30 hrs. on 07-11-2024. Initial Cooling off period is 30 minutes. Successive lots closing interval 10 minutes. Note: Participant/bidders are requested to visit e-Auction leasing module of IREPS website www.ireps.gov.in for more details. Sr. DCMLumding

NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY
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PROTECTION OF SLOPE IN HIGH CUTTING AND CONSTRUCTION OF GABION WALL

Tender Notice No. CE/CON/2024/OCT/03; Dated: 21-10-2024. Open tender through e-tendering system is invited from experienced and reputed contractor(s)/firm(s) for the following works. Tender No. CE-CON-DK-PW-2024-05. Name of work: Protection of slope in high cutting and construction of Gabion wall with backfill and structural fill behind the wall at Pihema yard in between Ch.-59.440km to Ch.- 60.700km in connection with Dimapur (Dhansir)-Kohima (Zuba) New BG Railway Line project. Approximate Value: ₹24,46,75,556.52/- E-tender will be closed at 14:30 hrs. on 26-11-2024 and opened at 15:30 hrs. on 26-11-2024. For details of Tender please visit www.ireps.gov.in.

Chief Engineer/Con/6, Malgaon
Northeast Frontier Railway
(Construction Organisation)
"Serving Customers with a smile"

Alia Bhatt slams online videos, clickbait articles claiming she had 'Botox gone wrong'

MUMBAI, Oct 25: Bollywood star Alia Bhatt on Friday strongly hit back at claims circulating in online videos and clickbait articles that she had a botched Botox procedure.

The "Jigra" actor posted a lengthy statement on her Instagram Stories and said the rumours about her undergoing a cosmetic surgery are "beyond ridiculous" and "damaging". "Absolutely NO JUDGEMENT towards anyone who chooses cosmetic corrections or surgery-your body, your choice. But wow, this is beyond ridiculous! To the random video floating around literally claiming I've had Botox gone wrong (and to the numerous clickbait articles) - I have a 'crooked smile' and a 'weird way of speaking' according to YOU," she said.

"This is your hypercritical, microscopic judgment of a human face. And now you're confidently tossing around 'scientific' explanations, claiming I'm paralysed on one side? Are you kidding me?" she added.

Bhatt, 31, criticised that "serious claims" about her are being "casually thrown out there with zero proof, no confirmation, and absolutely nothing to back it up".

"What's worse, you're influencing young, impressionable minds who might actually believe this garbage. Why are you saying this? For clickbait? Attention? Because none of it makes sense," she added.

The actor said women are often judged through an "absurd lens" and are objectified on the internet for "our faces, bodies, personal lives, even our bumps".

"We should be celebrating individuality, not tearing it apart under a microscope. These types of judgments perpetuate unrealistic standards, making people feel like they're never 'enough' It's damaging, and it's exhausting," she added. What is even more saddening is that such kinds of judgement is perpetuated by women, Bhatt said.

"Whatever happened to 'live and let live'? To 'everyone has the right to their own choices'? Instead, we've become so accustomed to picking each other apart that it's almost normalised. "Meanwhile just another day of even tougher entertainment with scripts made up by the Internet," she concluded the statement.

Bhatt was most recently seen in filmmaker Vasan Bala's "Jigra", which re-

She will be next seen in action movie "Alpha" with Sharvari. (PTI)



'Rhythm of a Flower', 'Nocturnes' bag top honours at MAMI 2024; 'Girls Will Be Girls' get 3

MUMBAI, Oct 25: Filmmaker Amit Dutta's "Rhythm of a Flower", and "Nocturnes", directed by Anirban Dutta and Anupama Srinivasan, won top honours at the closing ceremony of the MAMI Mumbai Film Festival 2024 here on Thursday.

The film gala, organised by the Mumbai Academy of the Moving Image (MAMI), came to a close with a ceremony where the South Asia Competition jury awarded the Golden Gateway Award to "Rhythm of a Flower" ("Phool Ka Chand") and the Silver Gateway Award to "Nocturnes".

The jury was led by Rada Sesic and included Clarence Tsui, Kate Laurie, Jerome Baron, and Marie Fuglestein Laegreid.

The Special Jury Prize was presented to Manoj Bajpayee-starrer "The Fable", directed by Raam Reddy. Shuchi Talati's "Girls Will Be Girls", which is produced by actor couple Richa Chadha and Ali Fazal, was honoured with a Special Mention.

"I know what we all went through during the making of 'The Fable'. It all started before COVID-19, so we went back, then we again went back up the mountain. We waited patiently as we all believed in the film. I would like to thank Raam for considering me for this film," Bajpayee said.

"Girls Will Be Girls" also received the NETPAC Award and was honoured with the Film Critics Guild Gender Sensitivity Award for challenging traditional gender stereotypes and advancing nuanced narratives. Additionally, the film was recognised with the Rashid Irani Young Critics Choice Award.

While receiving the award for her co-production, Chadha said the recognition means a lot to her and the team of "Girls Will Be Girls".

"This will always be an Indian film, even if it's an international co-production. Kudos to the MAMI Film Festival for pulling it off. It's always about the freedom of expression, and that is what matters," Chadha said.

Fazal added, "I've been watching the entire process of filmmaking from the sidelines. Richa and I are co-producers with multiple others. It has been the most humbling and huge learning process as actors to watch Shuchi at play and all the actors." Talati, a first-time director, said she is overwhelmed by the accolades her movie has received.

"I feel sometimes filmmakers make a distinction between art-house, independent, and commercial cinema, as if this particular genre will only have a small section of the audience. But I feel what we are taking away from the awards and from the screenings is the love the audience gave to our film," she said.

In the Dimensions Mumbai, a sidebar section of the festival, the Gold Award went to "BMCLD" by Shreela Agarwal. The Silver Award was shared by "A Tale of Two Cities" by Sameeha Sabnis and "I Was Painted Red" by Bhagyesh Rajshirke.

The Dimensions Mumbai jury included Amit Masurkar, Chaitanya Tamhane, and Paromita Vohra.

The awards for the Royal Stag Barrel Select Large Short Films were also announced.

The best film award went to "Ade (On A Sunday)" by Theja Rio, while the Special Jury Prize went to "Coming Back to Life (Et Moi, Je Revis)" by Mantra Watsa for excellence in short filmmaking.

The jury of this segment included actors Aditi Rao Hydari, Rajshri Deshpande, and filmmaker Hansal Mehta. In addition to these awards, the MAMI festival also celebrated contributions to cinema with the Best Book on Cinema award given to "The Age of Heroes: The Incredible World of Telugu Cinema" by Mukesh Manjunath. The closing ceremony was followed by the screening of Sean Baker's "Anora", which had its South Asia premiere. Earlier this year, the film won the Palme d'Or at the 77th Cannes Film Festival. (PTI)

KRITI SANON ON 'DO PATTI' CO-STAR KAJOL: FINALLY I GOT TO DO SOME MEATY SCENES TOGETHER

MUMBAI, Oct 25: Bollywood star Kriti Sanon says she was thrilled to finally share significant screen time with senior actor Kajol in her upcoming movie "Do Patti".

The mystery thriller film, which also marks Kriti's production debut, features her in a dual role alongside Kajol. It is their second collaboration after "Dilwale" in 2015.

The actor said she was glad to share some "meaty scenes" with Kajol, something they couldn't do when they worked on "Dilwale", which was directed by Rohit Shetty and also starred Shah Rukh Khan and Varun Dhawan.

"I was excited that finally, I will get to do some meaty scenes with her which I didn't get during 'Dilwale'. I feel she's just getting better and better in the way she looks and the way she is just on set. "I love that it's always collaborative and we're discussing the scene and she's really involved, whether it is helping you here and there or also patting your back, which means a lot coming from her. I had a blast and was like, 'Oh my God, I'm finally getting to do this!'" Kriti told PTI in an interview.

Kajol said she couldn't get to know Kriti during the making of "Dilwale" as they didn't have too many scenes together.

"This was quite a welcome surprise. She has definitely grown and you can see that from 'Dilwale' to here, it's been quite a journey picking up a

National Award along the way as well. So, it's been a wonderful experience to watch that," the actor said. Written by Kanika Dhillon and directed by debutant Shashanka Chaturvedi, "Do Patti" revolves around twin sisters and a determined police inspector (played by Kajol) who is investigating a case of an attempted murder in the fictional town of Devipur, Uttarakhand.

Kriti said Kajol's cop character serves as the "moral compass" of the story and through her eyes, the mystery gets unravelled.

"She's the one sort of narrating this story and through her you get to know bits and parts of the story. It's like this really strong character. I feel like she comes with so much of gravity and just credibility, the performer that she is," she added.

Asked why it took her a long time to play a cop on screen, Kajol said she was waiting for the right project to come along. "I have been offered cop roles before, but I always felt it was not something that could be taken lightly. It had to be a really good script for me to accept it. (PTI)



Fun but nerve-racking to invite people in our lives: Stars of 'Fabulous Lives vs Bollywood Wives'

NEW DELHI, Oct 25: The four stars of "Fabulous Lives vs Bollywood Wives Season 3" say they have a blast whenever they are together and the show somewhat captures this dynamic but it is not easy to open their lives and homes for judgement.

Maheep Kapoor, Neelam Kothari Soni, Seema Kiran Sajdeh, and Bhavana Pandey are back with the new season of the very binge-able show which sees the quartet navigate their personal and professional lives. The new season, which pits them with three women from Delhi, premiered on the streamer last week.

Maheep, who is the wife of Sanjay Kapoor, said she dove straight "into the deep end" when she said yes to the Karan-Johar produced show.

"It's tough to let people into your homes and lives, and be up for judgement... Sometimes I forget there are cameras around. There is a comfort zone with these girls. I cannot censor myself. This is the way we are and it comes across in the show..."

"It's not fun and games for us. It takes a big toll on us mentally because we are putting ourselves out there and we are giving a point of view and we are hoping people will get our point of view. It's nerve racking," she told PTI in an interview.

Neelam, also an actor and jewellery designer, said before every season starts shooting, she makes "mental notes" about how much she wants to put out there.

"We balance each other out. If we shoot today, then we decide how that goes, and we decide what we shoot tomorrow based on our conversations."

"I don't want to know anything. I go into it completely blind... It's not work for us. It's so much fun. It's become a part of who we are," added Seema.

In a tender moment from the latest season of "Fabulous Lives vs Bollywood Wives", the viewers see Seema and her son Nirvaan, whom she shares with former husband-producer Sohail Khan, discuss about her moving on in life.

All conversations in the show are "real", said Seema who introduced her current love interest Vikram at the end of the season. They were engaged before her marriage with Sohail. "Even the conversations that happened between my son and me last season or this season, I didn't know that was the question he was going to ask me. There's no guard when it's only him and me... It's common knowledge that I have no filter," she added.

What was different this time was that three "wives" -- Riddhima Kapoor Sahni, Shalini

Passi, and Kalyani Saha Chawla -- from the Delhi society circuit.

Did the fabulous four from Mumbai get a "culture shock" when this new trio joined the show? Their answer: "Not really" as all of them have some or the other connection to Delhi. Bhavana, also an entrepreneur, said she has lived and studied in Delhi and still is in touch with her friends here.

Neelam shared the same sentiment. "Each of us knew what Delhi is all about. We have travelled to Delhi, Samir

(Soni, her husband) is from Delhi. We already knew the dynamics of the way Delhi people throw parties, their

lifestyle."

Seema said her cousin, who got married in Delhi, has been living in the city for 40 years. "I al-

ways make fun of her, her whole demeanour has changed. It was exactly what I thought it would be. Bombay and Delhi are like chalk and cheese," she added.

Maheep said she too "wasn't completely blown over".

But what probably no one was expecting was Shalini, a philanthropist, an art collector, and artist, to dance in the rain and enter the beach waters fully clothed. Neelam and

Bhavana, who witnessed the whole scene unfold in front of their eyes on the show, were shocked and their reaction is viral on social media.

"People have been commenting that 'Oh, we would do this, we do that'. No, I'm sorry. That's not what people do, especially when it's raining. Bhavana and I were shocked and fasci-

nated. We couldn't stop laughing," said Neelam. Bhavana said she would have had the same reaction even if someone from the Mumbai gang had done something like that.

"It doesn't have anything to do with Bombay or Delhi. If Seema or Maheep did that, I would react the same. It's not like Shalini did it that we went crazy reacting. I think we would look like crazy people if we didn't react. That scene lands because of our reaction." Over three seasons, the four have become "tighter and closer" as a group, said Neelam. "We have had our fights as you can see, we've kissed and made up. We were really unsure about hanging around with the Delhi people. That also made us tighter," said Maheep, adding Shalini brought her "A-game" to the series.

She said she gets "nervous" every time a new season of "Fabulous Lives vs Bollywood Wives" drops.

For Seema, it's like doing homework.

"I didn't watch season one because I was terrified. But I sat down to watch whole seasons two and three like homework. These three (her co-stars) were asking me 'So, what did you think of this or that?' I look at it from an audience perspective... This show is made at the edit table, so some things can catch you by surprise." (PTI)



NorthEast United FC hope to halt Jamshedpur FC's winning streak



GUWAHATI, Oct 25: Jamshedpur FC will look to continue their winning streak when they face a doughty NorthEast United FC in an away Indian Super League (ISL) match here on Saturday.

The Jamshedpur side is placed second on the table, having accumulated 12 points from five games, and the hosts have managed only five points from as many contests and are positioned 10th.

But beyond those contrasting

numbers, the Highlanders have remained unbeaten in their previous two fixtures against the Red Miners.

Meanwhile, scoring a goal in this match will mark NEUFC's joint-longest goal-scoring streak against JFC, having done so earlier between January 2021 and February 2022.

But JFC have also been taking risks up front, as indicated by their passing accuracy of 57.1% in the opposition's half this season.

The number also proves that they have been creating chances in the final third, allowing them to score 10 goals until now.

Their possession rate of 36.2% is the lowest in this ISL, but it allows them to play fearless football by letting the opposition dominate with the ball before launching their counter-attack.

NorthEast head coach Juan Pedro Benali played down the talk that his team is under pressure after managing just one win in

their last five games.

However, he stressed on the need to improve their defence.

"There is no pressure on us. But, we are hungry. I don't look at points, but I look at the goals scored against us. Two goals against us per game is too much," Benali said on the eve of the clash.

"We need to decrease that and if we do so, then we will automatically do well as we are one of the teams to have scored the most goals this season."

On the other hand, Jamshedpur head coach Khalid Jamil said his team is desperate to finish on a high.

"Everyone is doing well. All the focus is on tomorrow. We have a vital game coming up," Jamil noted.

"NorthEast United FC have a very good coach and a good mix of Indian and foreign players. They are overall one of the best teams in the ISL," he added. Kickoff: 5:00 pm IST. (PTI)

Messi and Inter Miami will take on Atlanta United in an MLS Cup playoff opener

FORT LAUDERDALE (USA), Oct 25: Inter Miami's Lionel Messi played in only one Major League Soccer loss in 2024. It was in May, at home, against Atlanta United.

Messi makes his MLS playoff debut Friday night — at home, against Atlanta United.

Inter Miami, which set the MLS records for most points and best winning percentage in the regular season, gets a big challenge right out of the gate in the playoffs by facing an Atlanta team in a best-of-three Eastern Conference first-round series. Messi is coming off a hat trick in the regular-season finale, a 6-2 romp past New England. And even though he missed nearly half the MLS season because of injury and commitments to Argentina's national team, Messi is still a serious contender for league MVP after 20 goals and 16 assists in 19 appearances.

"If I could vote for him, I would have voted for him," Inter Miami defender Julian Gressel said. "Yes, because for me, the MVP stands for the best player in the league. And Leo, is that, by far. You know, there's other people out there that have the definition of an MVP that maybe makes the team better or that a team can't live without. In a sense, to me, Leo is that, too."

MVP or not, Messi is obviously the key to Inter Miami's MLS Cup hopes. Friday night will be the first home playoff match in club history. If Inter Miami wins this series, it would stay home for the rest of the season — with home-field edge for the single-game conference semifinals, conference final and MLS Cup, provided it keeps

winning.

"This was always about creating history for Miami," said soccer icon David Beckham, part of Inter Miami's ownership group — and the person who originally announced plans to bring an MLS team back to Miami more than a decade ago. "This was always about our family, La Familia, the people in this stadium, the people in this city."

Messi's arrival midway through 2023 was the big step toward Inter Miami getting to the global stage. The team won the Leagues Cup last year shortly after Messi arrived, won the Supporters Shield this year as the best MLS regular-season team and now goes after the MLS playoff title.

There are some ties that bind these franchises. Among them: Inter Miami coach Gerardo "Tata" Martino was with Atlanta in 2018 when that team won the MLS Cup, and Gressel played for that Atlanta team as well.

Atlanta got to this series by beating Montreal in a wild-card match Tuesday. Its reward: Messi, again. "He's arguably the best player that's ever played," Atlanta United interim coach Rob Valentino said. "We've faced him a few times and we know obviously his qualities, but also at the same time, they have other players that are good, too. There has to be a focus on him — and his teammates around him."

The stadium almost certainly will be sold out on Friday night and Miami has known for weeks that it would be opening the playoff march on its home field." (AP)

Divergent views on whether Aussie teenager Sam Konstas should be selected for India series

MELBOURNE, Oct 25: Former Australia Test opener Chris Rogers and current team paceman Josh Hazlewood differed on whether 19-year-old New South Wales opener Sam Konstas should be picked for the upcoming Border-Gavaskar Trophy against India with experience of only six first-class games.

Konstas has played six Sheffield Shield games with twin centuries against South Australia (152 and 105) grabbing the attention of Cricket Australia's selection committee head George Bailey, who has picked him in the Australia A side for the opening match of a two-game four-day first-class series against India A at Mckay later this month.

Along with Konstas, 32-year-old Marcus Harris, who has previous experience of playing against India, and Nathan McSweeney are in contention for a place in the Test squad.

"I know there's a lot of talk about Konstas," Rogers told SEN Radio.

"I would just ask the question is he going to help win us this series, and if he's not, if we don't think

he's going to make that much of a difference, I would just leave it for this summer just because going and facing India could set you back a little bit," Rogers added.

The senior Indian team is due to tour Australia for a five-match Test series starting November 22 in Perth. Since Konstas has only played six games scoring 457 runs, Rogers feels that there is still some time before he is thrown into the deep end of the pool. "And there's no rush, he's only 19, there's going to be a big future for him."

Maybe a softer landing. I know some people won't agree with that, but I think to go up against India, you've got to be resilient, you've got to have things in order when it goes wrong, because they're going to challenge you hard.

"I would be looking for someone a little bit more established at the moment, and then in the future say we can look at something different," Rogers said.

However, Hazlewood, who has bowled to Konstas at the Australia nets, feels that he is ready for international cricket. (PTI)

After 20 years at the top of chess, Magnus Carlsen is making his next move

STAVANGER (NORWAY), Oct 25: Few chess players enjoy Magnus Carlsen's celebrity status. A grand master at 13, refusing to play an American dogged by allegations of cheating, and venturing into the world of on-line chess gaming all made Norway's Carlsen a household name. Few chess players have produced the magical commodity that separates Norway's Magnus Carlsen from any of his peers: celebrity.

Only legends like Russia's Garry Kasparov and American Bobby Fischer can match his name recognition and Carlsen is arguably an even more dominant player. Last month, he beat both men to be named the International Chess Federation's greatest ever. But his motivation to rack up professional titles is on the wane. Carlsen, 33, now wants to leverage his fame to help turn the game he loves into a spectator sport.

"I am in a different stage in my career," he told The Associated Press. "I am not as ambitious when it comes to professional chess. I still want to play, but I don't necessarily have



that hunger. I play for the love of the game." Offering a new way to interact with the game, Carlsen on Friday launched his application, Take Take Take, which will follow live games and players, explaining matches in an accessible way that, Carlsen says, is sometimes missing from streaming platforms like YouTube and Twitch. "It will be a chillier vibe," he says.

Carlsen intends to use his experience to provide recaps and

analysis on his new app, starting with November's World Chess Championship tournament between China's Ding Liren and India's Gukesh Dommaraju. He won't be competing himself because he voluntarily ceded the title in 2023.

Carlsen is no novice when it comes to chess apps. The Play Magnus game, which he started in 2014, gave online users the chance to play against a chess engine modeled against his own gameplay. The company ballooned into a suite of applications and was bought for around \$80 million in 2022 by Chess.com, the world's largest chess website.

Carlsen and Mats Andre Kristiansen, the chief executive of his company, Fantasy Chess, are betting that a chess game where users can follow individual players and pieces, filters for explaining different elements of each game, and light touch analysis will scoop up causal viewers put off by chess's sometimes rarefied air. The free app was launched in a bid to build the user base ahead of trying to monetizing it. "That will come later, maybe with advertisements or deeper analysis," says Kristiansen. While Take Take Take offers a different prospect with its streaming services, it is still being launched into a crowded market with Chess.com, which has more than 100 million users, YouTube, Twitch, and the website of FIDE the International Chess Federation. World Chess was worth around \$54 million when it got listed on the London Stock Exchange. (AP)

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Rabiot could punish his detractors when Marseille faces PSG in French league

PARIS, Oct 25: Marseille's Adrien Rabiot could come back to haunt his Paris Saint-Germain detractors on Sunday when the clubs meet in the French league.

The midfielder won five league titles with PSG and made over 200 appearances. For supporters of both clubs, joining the other team is the ultimate soccer betrayal.

Going to Marseille was bad enough, but Rabiot's popularity among PSG fans had long-since diminished. When he was still at the club, Rabiot was roundly jeered by PSG fans during a Champions League game against Liverpool amid frustrations over agonizingly long contract talks.

His mother and agent Veronique Rabiot said after that match in 2018 that there was "no way back" for him at PSG, where he came through the club's youth academy and was once a firm favorite among fans.

He eventually left to join Juventus, helping the Italian giant win the Serie A title in 2020 and two Italian Cups. A robust defensive midfielder with good technique and excellent ball distribution, Rabiot became an integral part of France's midfield along the way, scoring at the 2022 World Cup.

Given his high profile, his relatively young age of 29, and his vast experience, it was some coup when Marseille signed him in the offseason on a free transfer when he had the option of joining much bigger clubs.

During last Sunday's 5-0 win at Montpellier, he linked up well with fellow midfielders Amine Harit and Pierre-Emile Højbjerg. With four seasons in the Premier League with Tottenham and 85 caps for Denmark, the 29-year-old Højbjerg is another strong signing by coach Roberto De Zerbi.

Sunday's game could be the hardest domestic test of the season for PSG, which leads second-placed Monaco on goal difference — with both unbeaten.

But a victory for third-place Marseille would move it level on points with PSG, which has struggled to impress in the Champions League, losing to Arsenal and drawing at home to PSV Eindhoven on Tuesday.

With PSG's midfield lacking in physicality, Marseille looks to have the edge there and in turn this could increase the pressure on PSG's defense. (AP)

Consistency vital for India to cross semifinal hurdle in big hockey events: German great Furste

NEW DELHI, Oct 25: Being a two-time Olympic gold-medallist, former German hockey captain Moritz Furste knows a thing or two about consistency and he feels the ability to deliver even performances in a series of games is the "little missing piece" in India's admirable resurgence in the last one decade.

The Indian men's hockey team was nowhere close to the top sides of the world 15 years back but it made significant strides to win back-to-back Olympic bronze medals in Tokyo and Paris.

The Indians are currently placed fifth in the world rankings and are seen as capable to upstage any top side in the world. "I think 15 years ago India was far away from the top-five nations, really far away but that changed to India now being one of the 6 teams competing for medals in any tournament," Furste told PTI in an interview on the sidelines of the two-match Test series between India and Germany

here that saw both teams winning a game but the latter claiming the series following a shootout.

"I feel there is still one little piece missing and that's making the final and really play for the gold medal. That's usually consistency, the Indians still really struggle to have seven games at the same level. You only get there through these games, like semifinal at the Olympics," said the player who was part of the 2008 and 2012 Olympic gold-winning German teams.

"But now the next step for them is winning a semifinal. They reached semifinals, won bronze medals but the next step must be winning semifinals."

Asked if the failure to cross the semifinal hurdle is down to mental fortitude, the 39-year-old former defender said: "Not necessarily a mental block. I have been in such situations. We lost five semifinals in the German league."

"Making a semifinal is one



thing but that one day when you you know if I win this I have a medal. That is the difference and in order to win that you need to be at the top of your game," he explained. Furste, who played in the

European style of play has benefitted the Indians.

The European style is defence-centric with greater emphasis on counter-attacking instead of rushing to make launch the first attack that has been the trademark of both the Indian and Australian team.

"They structured their game much more in European style now and that was a very important step for them. I just hope they can keep up what they have been doing over the last 10 years in order to stay on top of the game," he observed.

Even though Germany is not a part of the Commonwealth Games, the celebrated player said empathised with the disappointment that many players are feeling over hockey's ouster from the 2026 Glasgow CWG. He called it a step in the backward direction.

"Hockey is very important for global sport, not only India but for other countries. I am not that familiar with Commonwealth Games as Germany is not a part of that but

that definitely is a setback," Furste is in India to promote his venture Hyrox, which is a fitness competition that combines 8km running and eight functional workout stations. It is an indoor hybrid fitness racing event that alternates running with functional exercises. "I founded seven years ago a company which has been running events all over the world successfully. 5,00,000 participants over 40 countries, we do 82 events of our fitness race. I am really happy that we are now coming to India," he said.

"We never had an event in India but in May next year we will have our first event in Mumbai. Then we come to Delhi and Bengaluru in 2025 and roll out from there to at least 10 more cities."

"It is a combination of running and endurance workout, just like a triathlon, running and eight functional workouts. It is a race we created for people who go to the gym," he signed off. (PTI)

After pace, India fail spin test; New Zealand lead soars to 301 runs in Pune

PUNE, Oct 25: India's inadequacies against quality spin bowling stood thoroughly exposed, leaving the side staring at its first ever home Test series loss to New Zealand after the visitors claimed a formidable 301-run lead on day two of the second Test here on Friday.

Tom Latham (86) led New Zealand's charge with the bat after Mitchell Santner's brilliant 7/53 destroyed India. His knock consolidated a handy 103-run first-innings lead that the Kiwis had grabbed before reaching 198/5 at stumps.

Tom Blundell (30 not out) had Glenn Phillips (7 not out) for company when stumps were drawn. The only silver lining for India was Washington Sundar's continuing good show. He completed 11 wickets in the match, adding four more to his career-best first-innings haul of seven.

New Zealand are looking at a historic maiden Test series win in India, having first come here in 1955-56.

None of the New Zealand batters faced any apparent trouble batting on the pitch shortly after the star-studded Indian line-up cut a sorry figure for the second time in this series, making elementary mistakes.

In the last Test in Bengaluru, their all-time lowest score at home of 46 all-out caused India's first loss to New Zealand in 36 years in



their own backyard.

India haven't lost a Test series at home since their defeat to England in the 2012-13 season and their unbeaten record in 18 series since then is under serious threat now.

India's highest successful chase in Tests at home was 387 against England at Chennai in December 2008.

On Friday afternoon, India folded at a mere 156 in 45.3 overs as spunky New Zealand continued to perform way better than the hosts.

As India endured yet another

'one bad session of play', six wickets fell in the morning for a mere 91 runs which made the pitch look unfavourable for batting when it was not the case.

Skipper Latham led from the front as he blunted the Indian spinners with ease but New Zealand batters deserved full credit for executing their plans.

The Kiwis' batters were formidable in defence while they rotated the strike deftly to keep pressure on the Indians.

Latham did well to raise hopes for a first century since December

2022 but Washington Sundar ended his progress at 86 off 133 balls with 10 fours.

Every added run tightened the screws further on India whose spinners appeared to have been out-bowled by their Kiwi counterparts.

While Sundar completed his maiden 10-for in Tests with 4/56 after his 7/59 in the first innings, R Ashwin took 1/64. Ravindra Jadeja (11-1-50-0) continued to be wicket-less in the game wherein spinners have ruled the roost.

While Santner's orthodox spin

tested the Indians' defence and resolve, India's failure to rotate strike added to their woes.

The biggest shock for India in the day arrived in the 24th over when their batting superstar Virat Kohli missed a juicy full toss from Santner to be cleaned up for a nine-ball one.

The sight of Kohli missing an innocuous full toss angling into his wickets, going past his awkwardly swinging bat to crash into the middle and leg stumps and leaving the batter stare at the ground beneath him in utter despair, was something that will linger for some time to come.

Yashasvi Jaiswal had done fairly well to reach 30 with four boundaries but going with hard hands to defend a delivery outside off, spinning away from his bat to take an edge to the first slip, gave Glenn Phillips his first wicket.

If that wasn't enough, Rishabh Pant's (18) failure to read the lack of bounce while going for a mighty heave across the line against the part-time spin of Phillips, resulted in the ball crashing into his off-stump, leaving India in a desperate situation at 83 for five.

Sarfraz Khan (11), whose recent outings include 222 not out in Irani Cup and 150 in the last innings at Bengaluru, only had himself to blame after recklessly hitting one straight to mid-off for William O'Rourke to grab an easy catch, off Santner. (PTI)

David Warner's leadership ban has been lifted by Cricket Australia



SYDNEY, Oct 25: David Warner's lifetime captaincy and leadership ban has been lifted by Cricket Australia, a move which could see the retired test player captain the Sydney Thunder in the Twenty20 Big Bash league this season.

Warner received the penalty for his role in the 2018 sandpaper scandal in South Africa, on top of a one-year ban from cricket, which was also imposed on Steve Smith with a lesser playing suspension given to Cameron Bancroft, who was caught on film rubbing and scuffing the ball with yellow sandpaper at a test match in Cape Town.

But the leadership sanction was lifted Friday by an independent three-member review panel who deemed the opener had met the necessary criteria.

Warner appeared before the independent panel content earlier this month. It ruled that he met the criteria to be considered for future

leadership roles.

"The respectful and contrite tone of his (Warner's) responses, as well as the content impressed the Review Panel and led it to the unanimous view that he was sincere and genuine in acknowledging responsibility for the conduct and in his statement that he had extreme remorse for his conduct," the panel said in a statement Friday.

"Mr. Warner's conduct and behavior since the imposition of the sanction has been excellent and he appears to have made a substantial change, one example of which is that he no longer sledges or tries to provoke the opposing team."

Warner played his final test match in January against Pakistan, an Australian win. He has also said he will no longer play one-day internationals, only the T20 format of the game.

The move could also be considered an early birthday present from Cricket Australia — Warner turns 38 on Sunday. (AP)

All India Sub-Junior Ranking Badminton Tournament underway



HT Correspondent

DIBRUGARH, Oct 25: Union minister Sarbananda Sonowal on Friday inaugurated the the Yonex-Sunrise All India Sub-Junior Ranking Badminton Tournament 2024 (U-13 Boys & Girls) at multipurpose indoor stadium in Dibrugarh.

Around 354 young players representing 26 states across India are participating in the tournament.

The states participating in the tournament include Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, Gujarat, Haryana, Jharkhand, Kerala, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, West Bengal, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Himachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Odisha, Punjab, Puducherry, and Bihar.

A total prize money of ₹ 3 lakh will be awarded to the top players.

This event is a significant milestone for Dibrugarh as it enters the national badminton stage, offering young talent an excellent platform to showcase their skills and compete at a high level.

Guwahati dominates Day 3 of All Assam Karate Championship securing 81 medals

HT Bureau

DIPHU, Oct 25: On the third day of the ongoing All Assam Karate Championship at the Sarsing Teron Multipurpose Sports Complex, organised by the Karbi Anglong Sports Association (KASA) in collaboration with the All Assam Karate Association (AKA) and Karbi Anglong Karate Association (KAKA), the Guwahati team continued to dominate the competition. They secured 81 more medals today, bringing their total to 32 gold, 26 silver, and 39 bronze medals. The team is expected to add to their tally on the fourth day of the competition.

The All Assam Karate Association (AKA) follows with a total of 24 medals: 6 gold, 2 silver, and 16 bronze. Dibrugarh also secured 24 medals, including 8 gold, 7 silver, and 9 bronze. Lakhimpur collected 18 medals with 4 gold, 5 silver, and 9 bronze, while Kamrup matched this tally with 2 gold, 5 silver, and 11 bronze. Sivsagar collected 16 medals, comprising 3 gold, 7 silver, and 6 bronze, while the host district, Karbi Anglong, showed improvement by securing 5 medals on Friday. Sonitpur added 12 medals, including 2 gold, 3 silver, and 7 bronze, and Tinsukia collected 6 medals.

Both Rangia and Darrang secured 15 medals each. Rangia earned 3 gold, 2 silver, and 10 bronze, while Darrang accumulated 4 gold, 5 silver, and 6 bronze. Jorhat collected 21 medals, consisting of 7 gold, 3 silver, and 11 bronze. Bongaigaon secured 8 medals, with 4 gold, 2 silver, and 2 bronze, while the Dibrugarh University Sports Board earned 6 medals, comprising 1 gold, 2 silver, and 3 bronze.

Charaideo collected 5 medals on

Friday, including 2 gold and 3 bronze, while Bokaghat secured 6 medals with 1 gold, 1 silver, and 4 bronze. West Karbi Anglong earned 1 silver medal, Titabor also secured 1 silver, Bajali took home 1 bronze, and Nagaon earned 2 bronze medals. Additionally, Goalpara collected 1 gold and 3 silver, Dhubri secured 1 silver, and Nalbari earned 1 gold.

Result:

In the sub-junior 9 years girls, Kata Bidisha Choudhary of Guwahati in gold, Nanali Talukdar of Barpeta in silver and Asmita Kardong of Tinsukia and Yashika Sharma of Sonitpur in bronze. In Sub-junior 12 years boys Kata Manash Khawar and Abik Gohan of Dibrugarh in gold and silver respectively and Himangshu Borah of Lakhimpur and Aartinasan Neog of Jorhat in bronze.

In the sub-junior 12 years girls, Kata Unicy Das of Guwahati in gold, Tonni Borpatro of Dibrugarh silver and Protayasha Bora of Jorhat and Bely Prabha Pathak of Barpeta silver. In Sub-junior 13 years boys Kata Bastab Patim Ranin Dihingia gold, nong'eh Timung of Karbi Anglong in silver and Arhan Kashyap of Nagaon and Nayan J borah of Jorhat silver.

In Sub-junior 13 years girls, Kata Grachi Chetia of Dibrugarh won gold, Tanisi Das and Subhasna Das of Guwahati received silver and bronze medals and Nayan Basore of Barpeta also received bronze. Cadet male (14-15 years) kata Takshel Majumdar and Suraj Debnath of Guwahati received gold and silver respectively and Himangshu Saikia of Sonitpur and Geet Bordoloi of AAKA bronze.

Cadet female (14-15 years) Kata Dhritismita Choudhury of Barpeta gold, Prabasi Bordoloi of Morigaon

silver and Pankhuri Gogoi of Dibrugarh and Nancy Rajkhuwa of AAKA in bronze. In Junior (16-17 years) male kata Aryan Sharma of Jorhat gold, Rishiraj Sonowal of Jorhat silver and Pranay Phukan of Dibrugarh and Subhranil Saikia of Tinsukia in bronze.

In junior (16-17 years) female kata Bhattacharjee of AAKA in gold, Priyashi Chetia of Dibrugarh University in silver and Gitanjali Nath and Gorisa Gogoi of Lakhimpur both received bronze.

In U-21 (18-20 years) men katha Geet Gunian Das and Arup Das of Guwahati shared gold and silver each and Nihar Hazarika of Dibrugarh University and Abinash Das of Bongaigaon got bronze. In U-21 (18-20 years) women kata Sweta Hazarika of Jorhat gold, Bhaswati Nahanta of Kamrup silver and Upasana Das and Bhagirathi Das of Guwahati in bronze.

In senior (18 years and above) men kata Tirthankar Baishya and Geetgunjan Das of Guwahati received gold and silver respectively and Angkok Rongphar of Karbi Anglong and Nihar Hazarika of Dibrugarh University in bronze.

In senior (18 years and above) women kata Abhirupa Kashyap and Swarupa Paul of Guwahati received gold and bronze respectively and Sweta Hazarika of Jorhat and Bhaswati Mahanta of Kamrup got bronze.

In sub-junior 12 years boys kumite - 40 kg, Himangshu Borah of Lakhimpur gold, Dhritinayan Baruah of Kamrup silver and Kritartha Kashyap of AAKA and Saeed Ahmed of Bongaigaon in bronze. In Sub-junior 12 years boys kumite 45 kg.

Tomanjit Das of Rangia gold, Karan Kashyap of Guwahati silver and Krishanu Protim Borah of Jorhat and Dimsang Borah of Sonitpur in bronze.

In sub-junior 12 years kumite 50 kg, Abik Gohain of Dibrugarh gold, Amshuman Anurag of Guwahati silver and Himangshu Sing Didiary of Darranga and Prithu Bordoloi Buma of AAKA bronze.

In sub-junior 12 years boys kumite -55 kg, Abinash Pathak of Rangia gold, Chinmoy Gogoi of Dibrugarh University silver and Chirag Barman of Barpeta and Krittik Bharadwaj of Bjali in bronze.

In sub-junior 12 years boys kumite +55 kg, Hiyankan Kumar Das of Barpeta in gold, Pronil Das of Guwahati in silver and Kabaynav Gogoi of Charaideo and Prachujya Hazarika of Dibrugarh in bronze.

In sub-junior 12 years girls kumite -35 kg, Gudex Tanti of Bokaghat gold, Mahi Kumari and Arpita Das of Guwahati in silver and bronze respectively and Kritika Saikia of Darrang in bronze.

In sub-junior 12 years girls kumite -42 kg, Rashmi Radhan of Charaideo in gold, Abishmita Baichos of Bongaigaon in silver and Nainika Das of Sonitpur and Subhamita Sen of Guwahati in bronze.

In sub-junior 12 years girls kumite -47 kg, Bhumika Kachari of AAKA in gold, Adarshani Gogoi of Titabor in silver and Bhakti Kachari of AAKA and Nisha Borah of Sonitpur in bronze.

In sub-junior 12 years girls kumite -52 kg, Harshita Konwar of Sivsagar in gold, Alisha Doley of Guwahati silver and Rimjini Boruah of AAKA and Nikarika Nath of Darrang in bronze.

Giving up on Test dream would be doing injustice to my younger self: Glenn Maxwell

NEW DELHI, Oct 25: Australia's white-ball star Glenn Maxwell may not have donned the Baggy Green for seven years, but the 36-year-old believes he would be doing "injustice" to his younger self by giving up his Test cricket dream, which still burns brightly within him.

From overcoming a broken leg to scoring Australia's fastest double century with his 201 in the lead-up to their 2023 World Cup triumph, Maxwell has enjoyed remarkable highs in his career.

However, his Test appearances remain limited to just seven matches, with his last outing during Australia's 2017 tour of Bangladesh.

"I think if I gave up on that Test dream now, I don't think I'd be doing justice to that younger Glenn Maxwell who was dying to put on the baggy green when he was a kid," he tells ESPNcricinfo. "And I think while there's still a glimmer of hope, I'll keep going for it."

Though his selection for the upcoming India series is unlikely, Maxwell remains committed to chasing a Test spot on the Sri Lanka tour in January after nar-



rowly missing out in 2022.

"I think the hard thing with Test cricket is, when I grew up, that's all I wanted to do," Maxwell says. "I definitely got my chance at Test level a bit prematurely. It all happened really fast when I got my chance to debut. It was just a whirlwind. I had no idea what I was doing. I probably hadn't had the experience at first-class level that I would have liked."

"And then when I came back in 2017, I felt like I was a ready-made first-class cricketer and was really at peace with my game and

where I was at. A lot of these things in Test cricket are timing. Adam Voges is probably the perfect example. He came in and he averaged 60-odd (61.87) in his Test career. He got his opportunity when he was at the top of this game."

"I suppose the thing I'm proud about in my Test career -- I was able to sort of fight back at different times, get back in squads and be really resilient that way."

Maxwell's lack of first-class centuries -- only seven in 69 matches, including a lone Test ton

in Ranchi -- has been a hurdle for Test selection, Maxwell writes in his soon-to-be-released autobiography. He recalls a frustrating exchange with selector Trevor Hohns during the 2017-18 season, after notching scores of 60, 64, 45 not out, 278, and 96 in consecutive games.

When Maxwell questioned his exclusion from the Ashes squad, "The answer was blunt: 'Not enough tons.'" "It's the only time I've come close to losing it in a situation like that," Maxwell writes in The Showman.

Australia's selectors have eased requirements for Shield cricket in preparing for Sri Lankan Tests, encouraging Maxwell's quiet red-ball return with Victoria's second XI. Managing a leg injury, Maxwell feels ready to adapt quickly to red-ball batting if picked for the Sri Lanka tour.

"The interesting thing about last week, even just playing the second XI game, was having a few technical changes and working through them, having a few different sets of eyes looking at your batting, and just trying to work your way through that has been really enjoyable," he says.

"I remember in 2022 (in Sri Lanka) the first couple of net sessions that I had working through all those cracks, and working through your different techniques of facing spin that's exploding, was so enjoyable. And it doesn't take long when you're really experienced in those conditions to work out a way to play over there."

"It's probably what makes Cameron Green's success over there so extraordinary, the fact that it's the first time he's played Test cricket over there in those conditions, and he was so successful and strong-minded in the way he was going to go about it. It takes a strong mind to have success over there. I'd just love to be over there."

The Aussie gun allrounder also recounts his mental-health journey, his turbulent relationship with coach Justin Langer during his tenure from 2018-20.

Maxwell also reflects his past tensions with Steven Smith under his captaincy were partly his fault, but their relationship has since strengthened.

Maxwell also writes about his freak golf-cart injury in Ahmedabad during the ODI World Cup. (PTI)

No drinking water shortage for fans on second day of India-New Zealand Test

PUNE, Oct 25: After facing difficulties in finding drinking water on the opening day, fans were in for a better experience on the second day of the second Test between India and New Zealand here with the host association making necessary arrangements at the MCA Stadium.

Around one lakh litres of RO water in 20-litre cans was arranged for the second day's play on Friday, well distributed among the booths to avoid the lapse on the first day, an official informed PTI.

As many as 3,800 bottles of 20 litre each were made available for use on the second day amid a hot and humid Friday, while another 500 were kept in the stadium's vicinity for back-up.

"Another batch of 700 has been kept elsewhere, in case of requirement at later stages," the official said.

MCA CEO Ajinkya Joshi, secretary Kamlesh Pisal and other officials met the media here on Friday to discuss the issues related to the venue.

The MCA said it has arranged a nine acre area for parking but it remains to be seen if there is any improvement in the quality of approach roads to the stadium here located in Gahunje, just off the Mumbai-Pune Expressway.

Angry fans had raised slogans against the host Maharashtra Cricket Association here on Thursday after finding no water at the booths. Pisal had subsequently tendered an apology.

"Our sincere apologies to all the fans for the inconvenience caused. We will ensure things will be alright going forward. We have already addressed the water issue," he had said.

The volunteers and security personnel had swung into action immediately to provide packaged water bottles to the fans from other storage areas, but the distribution of the same took time and that had led to fans being upset.

The issue occurred due to delay in arrival of the vehicle which was transporting water from the plant to the stadium.

Since the ODI World Cup last year, the host cricket boards have been arranging free drinking water at stadiums. (PTI)