Israeli airstrikes rock southern suburbs of Beirut and cut off key crossing into Syria

N Korea's Kim threatens to destroy S Korea with nuclear strikes if provoked

'People of Haryana will strike blow to break 'chakravyuh' of PM's 'crony capitalist' policies'

 Sharad Pawar urges Centre to remove 50 pc cap on quota; Shiv Sena questions timing

মুখ্যমন্ত্ৰীৰ

ব্যক্তিগত খণ্ডৰ শিক্ষানুষ্ঠানৰ বাহিৰে উচ্চতৰ মাধ্যমিক, স্নাতক আৰু

স্নাতকোত্তৰ বৰ্ষত নামভূতি কৰা চৰকাৰী আৰু ভেঞ্চাৰ শিক্ষানুষ্ঠানৰ

ছাত্ৰীসকলক উদগনি যোগোৱা এক অভিলাষী আঁচনি

নিযুত মইনা আঁচনি হৈছে

দৰে সামাজিক ব্যাধি প্ৰতিৰোধৰ উদ্দেশ্যে

গ্ৰহণ কৰা এক শক্তিশালী পদক্ষেপ

গোসাঁইগাঁও মহাবিদ্যালয়, গোসাঁইগাঁও

ইউ এন ব্ৰহ্ম মহাবিদ্যালয় - দতমা

কোকৰাঝাৰ ছোৱালী মহাবিদ্যালয়

ফকিৰাগ্ৰাম মহাবিদ্যালয়, ফকিৰাগ্ৰাম

গোলকগঞ্জ উন্নয়ন খণ্ড, গোলকগঞ্জ

টিপকাই উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক বিদ্যালয়

আলমগঞ্জ ৰঙামাটি মহাবিদ্যালয়

এ এ লতিফ গার্লছ ইনষ্টিটিউচন

পশ্চিম গোৱালপাৰা মহাবিদ্যালয়

দলগোমা আঞ্চলিক মহাবিদ্যালয়

নটসূর্য ফণী শর্মা ভৱন

অভয়াপুৰী গান্ধী ময়দান

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মহৰীপাৰা সমূহীয়া কেন্দ্ৰ

ওদালগুৰি

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খৈৰাবাৰী মহাবিদ্যালয়, খৈৰাবাৰী, ওদালগুৰি

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বৰপেটা (এছ চি)

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তামুলপুৰ গোৰেশ্বৰ

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छेश्ला

পূব গোৱালপাৰা

বীৰসিং জাৰুৱা

थूर्व्

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India to continue dialogue with US on totalisation pact: Goyal

WASHINGTON, Oct 4: Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal has said that India will continue to engage with the US on the proposed social security or totalisation pact and it will take

THE HILLS TIMES

The proposed agreement seeks to do away with the requirement for an expatriate in either country to pay for social security schemes of the host country.

He said that the issue should have been resolved earlier when the dimensions were manageable.

"Now the dimension of the money collected by the (US) Treasury is so large that for any government, this will be a major decision," he told reporters here.

He added that when the Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led government came to power in 2014, the country held discussions with the US on the matter.

"The subject that has festered far too long and is not going to resolve over night...So we will continue to have the dialogue with the US...It's going to take time, we recognise that," Goval said.

He noted that the President Joe Biden administration has sent some "very" detailed questionnaire to India about the social security systems in India, which have all been responded to.

'The social security coverage details that we have shared with them, cover about 930 million people in India, more than the required threshold. So we are eligible for a

Classic Legends aim at higher sales in premium

motorcycles segment KOLKATA, Oct 4: Classic Legends Pvt Limited, which relaunched iconic brands like Jawa and Yezdi in the country almost four years back, is aiming at

higher sales in the premium motorcycles segment, an official of the company said on Friday. Starting operations in the country in 2019, the company first relaunched Jawa bikes, a Czech brand, followed by Yezdi, a brand which belonged to India.

It also launched BSA motorcycles, a UK brand, in August this "We aim to gain higher sales in the premium motorcycles seg-

ment. Presently we are selling 4,000 to 5,000 units per month among the brands which the company owns. We aim at selling one lakh units per annum in the next 12 months," said Anupam Thareja, one of the co-founders of Classic Legends. Thareja, who owns 20 per cent

stake in Classic Legends, said that Jawa and BSA bikes are also sold in the Czech Republic and the UK respectively, besides India. Classic Legends manufactures premium motorcycles in the 300 cc to 650 cc categories, he said. Thareja said that the premium motorcycle segment constitutes five per cent of the entire bike market in the country.

He said around 15 per cent to 20 per cent of the company's production will be exported from India. Thareja said that the eastern and northeastern states provide a lucrative market for



dialogue and resolution of totalisation and bringing in Social Security Agreement," he said.

At the invitation of the United States Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo, Goyal visited America during September 30-October 3. Goyal co-chaired with Raimondo the India-USA CEO Forum on October 2 and the 6th India-USA Commercial Dialogue on October 3. The issue was raised in the meeting

Under the totalisation agreement, an expatriate in either country does not need to contribute to the social security schemes of the host country. It will benefit a number of Indians, particularly from the IT sector, who are working in America and paying for social security but are unable to get any benefit out of it.

It is a long-pending demand of India-Pakistan trade relations, he

court as the trade was stopped by them and not India.

Talking about foreign companies choosing to shift base in India, the minister cited the example of iphone maker Apple and said that the company has exported smartphones worth about USD 5 billion during the first four or five months

"The expectation this year is to increase the exports to probably USD 15 or USD 16 billion. Just for Apple alone," he added.

He also said that the reason for certain companies shifting bases from China to South East Asian nations could be that after RCEP. Chinese firms invested in Asean region

"And India does not encourage of Indian origin, who contribute Chinese investments in India, that could have been a reason," he said. On critical minerals, he said India is talking to the US to explore opportunities to work together in

third countries.

"For example, whether we could look at the critical minerals in third countries to be jointly worked upon by the US and India or investments from third countries for joint projects between the US and India," he added. Critical minerals, such as cobalt, copper, lithium, nickel and rare earths, play a crucial role in the production of clean energy technologies, from wind turbine to

goods have higher duties", he electric cars. Such minerals are in When asked about resumption of demand for the production of batteries for electric cars. (PTI)

NSE, former chief Vikram Limaye, others settled TAP system case with Sebi

India for early conclusion of the to-

talisation agreement or social secu-

rity agreement with the US. It aims

to protect interests of professionals

more than USD 1 billion (as per es-

timates) each year to the US social

When asked about allegations of

certain quarters that India has high

customs duties, Goyal said that

every country protects certain

goods based on its national inter-

ests. Citing an example, he said, the

US has 163 per cent duty on peanut

butter because it is a defensive pro-

certain goods, it has low duties on

a number of items and "certain

Similarly, India has zero duty on

tection to their farmers.

NEW DELHI, Oct 4: The National Stock Exchange (NSE), its former chief Vikram Limaye and eight others on Friday settled with markets regulator Sebi a case, pertaining to alleged failure to address the bourse's TAP (trading access point) system deficiencies, after paying ₹ 643 crore.

This will be one of the highest settlement amounts and will pave the way for NSE's much-awaited initial public offering (IPO), which was delayed following the co-location issue.

The matter was settled "without admitting or denying the findings of facts and conclusions of law, through a settlement order"

Apart from NSE and Limaye, those who settled the case are Umesh Jain G. M. Shenoy, Narayan Neelakantan, V R Narasimhan, Kamala K, Nilesh Tinaikar, R Nandakumar and Mayur Sindhwad.

TAP was introduced in 2008 to manage communication between trading members and NSE's trading system, but it had several issues, including security lapses, delays in improvements, and inadequate action on complaints. Despite introducing alternative systems. TAP continued to be used until 2019 for equities and 2020 for other segments.

In its settlement order, Sebi said that NSE, on behalf of itself and other applicants, has remitted the settlement amount of Rs 643 crore on September 25, the receipt of which is confirmed.

Accordingly, "the proceedings initiated against the applicants vide the SCN (show cause notice) dated February 28, 2023, are hereby disposed of," the regu-

Sebi conducted an investigation into the NSE's TAP system and network connectivity, focusing on potential bypasses by trading members, how a 2013 complaint was handled, and whether the bourse violated securities laws.

After the conclusion of the examination, Sebi issued a show cause notice in February 2023 to entities, including NSE, alleging violations such as failure to address TAP deficiencies, delayed responses, and non-compliance with cyber security regulations.

While the proceedings were pending, the entities filed settlement applications to resolve the case without admitting guilt. After meetings with Sebi's committees and revising settlement terms, a combined settlement of ₹ 643.05 crore was agreed upon, along



with a requirement for some entities to perform pro bono community service for 14 days.

On September 25, 2024, NSE paid the settlement amount. With this payment and commitments fulfilled, the markets regulator closed the proceedings but retained the right to reopen the case if there are any violations of the settlement term. The settlement would pave the way for NSE's much-awaited initial public offering (IPO).

In August, sources stated that NSE had begun the process for its IPO and reapplied to the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) for a "no-objection' certificate (NOC) for the IPO.

After receiving the NOC from Sebi, the exchange will draft a prospectus and submit it to Sebi. Once the regulatory review is complete and approval is granted, the exchange will proceed with launching its IPO, they had stated.

NSE's listing has been delayed due to several factors, including investigations into the exchange's preferential treatment of certain entities.

Last month. Sebi dismissed regulatory violations charges against the NSE and its seven former employees, including Chitra Ramkrishna and Ravi Narain in nearly a decade-old co-location facility case citing absence of sufficient evidence. The co-location facility allows stock brokers to

place their servers at a stock exchange in consideration of a fee, giving them access to price data a fraction of a second before other participants. (PTI)

UP bioplastic policy gamechanger, to finalise ₹2000 cr PLA project post scheme fine print: BCML

KOLKATA, Oct 4: Integrated sugar producer Balrampur Chini Mills Limited (BCML) on Friday said the company will finalise its ₹ 2.000 crore investment in India's first industrial PLA (polylactic acid) bioplastic manufacturing plant once the policy fine print is released.

PLA offers a triple advantage: biobased production, biodegradability under industrial compost conditions, and chemical recyclability, making it a "game-changer" in sustainable material solutions.

As traditional plastic consumption continues to rise, threatening our environment, this forwardthinking policy couldn't have come at a better time, Executive Director of Balrampur Chini, Avantika Saraogi, told PTI in an interview. "We wholeheartedly commend the Uttar Pradesh government for pioneering India's first bioplastic policy, a game-changer in our fight against plastic pollution. We believe this strategic intervention will attract significant investments in the bioplastics sector and drive India towards a

greener economy," Saraogi said. She noted that as their project was announced in February, they were able to provide inputs to the UP government regarding sustain-



able plastics. The new policy will not only positively impact the upcoming PLA project but also encourage other players to invest in sustainability in the state, supporting the government's goal of achieving net zero emissions by 2070. Asked how the policy will specifically impact the BCML PLA project financially, Saraogi "We will need some more time to make those calculations at least a few months—because we are still in the process of finalising the exact investment figures

though broad capex is estimated at

₹ 2000 crore." The company is

awaiting detailed rules and fine

print of the regulations, which are expected shortly and will help BCML finalise the numbers for the project and measure the policy benefits, she said

BCML expects the bioplastic plant to be operational in two-anda-half years in 2026, with an initial capacity of 75,000 tonnes and a projected revenue potential of

Bioplastics account for just one per cent of current consumption, indicating significant untapped po-

about ₹ 1,700-1,800 crore.

Indian Plastic Federation President Lalit Agarwal noted that the pricing economy is preventing wider adoption, although the price gap is narrowing.

Saraogi added that the UP's bioplastic policy offers companies investing ₹ 1,000 crore or more a subsidy of up to 50 per cent of their capital investment for seven years, along with interest subvention for the same duration, with details on the level of interest subvention still awaited.

Other highlights of the policy include 100 per cent reimbursement of SGST for 10 years and duty-free electricity for 10 years. The policy also includes stamp duty exemption or remission for transactions made one year before or after the policy cutoff date, with overall benefits not exceeding 200 per cent of the investments made.

By linking agriculture to industry, the policy encourages the use of biomass, such as sugarcane, which is a key raw material for PLA bioplastics.

Officials said this approach supports the growth of agro-based economies while addressing the global demand for sustainable materials. It also provides opportunities beyond SMEs, including waste management service providers. municipalities, and recycling operators, to participate in the bioplastic supply chain. (PTI)

Contd. from Page 3...

State ministers inaugurate

tourism minister Jayanta Malla Baruah inaugurated the co-districts of Patrharkandi and Ram Krishna Nagar

The remaining 18 co-districts, including four in Kamrup (Metro), two each in Tinsukia, Dibrugarh, Sivasagar and Morigaon along with one each in Bongaigaon, Nagaon, Hojai, Sonitpur, Charaideo and Cachar, will be inaugurated on Saturday. (PTI)

Rajnath pitches for greater

in 2023-24. In July, Singh said, "India has registered the highest ever growth in the value of defence production in 2023-24. The value of production has reached $\stackrel{?}{_{\sim}}$ 1,26,887 crore in 2023-24 which is 16.8 per cent higher than the value of production of the previous financial year."

At the SIDM event, he said, "If we look closely, then we realise that the majority share is being generated by PSUs, DPSUs, with a share of Rs 1 lakh crore, while private sector share is only about Rs 27,000 crore.

There is a "big scope" to increase the participation of private industry in total defence production, he said. "We wish to see it at least 50 per cent of the total defence production. It should be our target, and the government stands by you in making efforts towards achieving this," Singh added. In his address, he also alluded to the prolonged Russia-Ukraine war. He said some experts have said that the

form of warfare was not the same as it was before, rather it has changed. But, this war shows that the importance of a defence industrial base has not lessened from what it was before, rather in the coming times, there will be a need to expand it, he said. "So, the government is ready to make all efforts," the defence minister said. Singh also spoke of the five positive

indigenisation lists (PILs), under which 509 pieces of equipment have been identified whose production will be done in India. "This list of 509 items is not static, it is a dynamic list which should keep reducing with time. We should assess on what items in the first list, we have achieved 'atmanirbharta.' Our efforts should be to achieve full self-reliance on these items over time, and shorten the list," he said. "Besides, for the defence PSUs also we released five positive indigenisation lists, under which over 5,000 such

equipment have been identified which will be built in India by Indian hands," the minister said. This list is definitely an "aspirational benchmark" for the private sector, he said.

"This list, the work and its progress should be seen not only by the government, but you should also take a step in this direction. See for yourself, if the domestic manufacturing industry can work on these PILs. And, if any issues are there they they should be resolved," Singh added.

It's not about increasing the number in the PILs, if it's not feasible then remove it. This list may have been brought to make the defence sector 'atmanirbhar,' but ultimately this list is dedicated to you, and you have to do

Militant groups mushroomed

by the use of guns. It is not the right method as it could escalate the matter, Rijiju said. When asked about Gandhi's statement that BJP and RSS were destroying the Constitution and that he was opening "Mohabbat ki dukan," he said, "A person like Rahul Gandhi becoming the leader of the opposition is a curse for our country. A person who has never read the Constitution and does not understand the spirit of the Constitution,

whose entire family insulted Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar, is talking about the Constitution as an insult itself." "I feel that such a person even touching the Constitution is not appropriate. It is bad luck that such a person has become the leader of the opposition and I have to deal with him...People from my own SC/ST and Buddhist community welcome and praise Rahul Gandhi. Shame on those who do this. You should feel ashamed for doing this and this should not happen," he said.

Gandhi became the leader of the opposition after the Lok Sabha elections held earlier this year. Before addressing the press conference, Rijiju visited Deekshabhoomi, where Dr B R Ambedkar embraced Buddhism. He said 'Sanvidhan Bhavan' will be constructed in every district of Maharashtra which will have libraries,

Peace-loving nation like India

by national poet Ramdhari Singh Dinkar to emphasise his point. He highlighted four aspects related to the defence and military scenario in the context of India -- future, empowerment, catalysing exports, and ingenious innovations. He recalled the first-ever future warfare course that took place last month in New Delhi.

"We are not trying to replicate how advanced militaries are going to fight their wars, actually we are trying to find how we are going to fight our wars. Because our environment, our threats, our geopolitical situation, our geography, everything is unique to us. And, we are going to find unique solutions, which suit us," the CDS added. Later, the defence minister addressed the gathering at the SIDM event. Singh also presented the SIDM Champion Awards which recognises outstanding achievements in defence manufacturing. He termed the awards as a reflection of the dedication and excellence of Indian manufacturers, which will serve as a benchmark for best practices in the sector. (PTI)

Govt 'freed' 22,000 bighas

fauna, and solidify Assam as a biodiversity hotspot," Sarma added.

Orang National Park is located on the northern bank of the Brahmaputra River in the Darrang and Sonitpur districts of the state. Famed for the one-horned rhinoceros and the Royal Bengal Tiger among other animals, the park covers an area of 79.28 sq km. Orang was established as a sanctuary in 1985 and declared a national

Both Kaziranga and Orang have a similar landscape of marshes, streams, and grasslands and are inhabited

Gauhati HC sets aside selection

April 2015 and 59 candidates were declared qualified for the interview which was held in September 2015 with 14 candidates selected as District Malaria Officer and the selection process was concluded by 2016. Meanwhile, a woman candidate who had qualified for the interview but was not finally selected filed a writ

petition alleging that corrupt practices were adopted with a member of the interview board calling her and asking for money for her selection but she had refused. The judges observed that they had carefully scrutinised the photocopies of the evaluation sheets of the 56

candidates and found that the marks of 28 of them had been altered with the original marks changed and no justification was given for the same. 'After taking into consideration the irregularities, which are of serious nature, the selection process cannot be termed as fair and transparent', the judges stated. The Additional Advocate General submitted before the

court that the state government is not in favour of protecting the selection process and has left the matter to the The court ruled that it is not advisable to allow APSC to conduct a fresh exercise of selection by taking into consideration the original marks obtained by the candidates who had appeared in the interview. The judges also noted that though the selection process was concluded in 2016 but till date, no appointment has been provided to the selected candidates due to the pending writ petition. 'We deem it appropriate to set aside the entire

selection process for the posts of District Malaria Officer', the judges noted. The court further directed APSC to conduct a fresh selection process for the posts of District Malaria Officer on the available vacancies in accordance with law as expeditiously as possible. (PTI)

Amazon India registers 25%

partners and sellers while spreading joy to our customers in Assam and across the country," Srikanth said. The online marketplace has over 41 service partners across 28 cities and one delivery station in the North East, and more than 10,000 sellers in Assam. It has two fulfilment centres, including one recently opened in Guwahati and one sortation centre in the North East along with hundreds of Amazon-owned and partner delivery stations. (PTI)

Living standards to see

consumption behaviour fully." "There will be organic growth in consumption as they become full-fledged consumers. Simultaneously, a rising middle class will pave the way for strong consumption, inflow of foreign investment and a vibrant marketplace," Sitharaman added.

Besides, she said, India's innovation ability will mature and improve over the coming decades. With regard to fiscal prudence, Sitharaman said, the government continues to uphold its commitment to reducing the fiscal deficit. "Aided by buoyant revenue generation, restrained revenue expenditure growth and healthy economic activity, the fiscal deficit is estimated to decline further from 5.6 per cent of GDP in FY24 (provisional actuals) to 4.9 per cent in FY25. The commitment to fiscal discipline will not only help keep bond yields in check but will translate

to lower economy-wide borrowing costs," she said. Talking about the capex plan of the government, the finance minister said, the government has budgeted to increase its infrastructure investment by 17.1 per cent to ₹ 11.1 lakh crore in 2024-25. This amounts to 3.4 per cent of GDP in FY25. (PTI)

Political parties welcome

was a moment of pride for the people of the state. "Assamese is our mother tongue and as children of this land, we are very proud that our spoken tongue has been declared a classical language. This has been possible for the great works of the state's eminent litterateurs for several centuries," he said. Assam Jatiya Parishad president Lurinjyoti Gogoi and general secretary Jagadish Bhuyan also welcomed the declaration of Assamese as a classical language.

"This is very good news for the people of Assam. This will help in further development and research of Assamese," they said in a statement. "We are very grateful to the Asam Sahitya Sabha and others who have worked relentlessly to ensure that all the criteria are met for Assamese to be declared as a classical language,"

Former Asam Sahitya Sabha president Kuladhar Saikia, during whose tenure the process for recognition of Assamese as a classical language was initiated in 2021, said that the language met all the criteria as is evident from stone inscriptions, copper plates, sculptures and folk music.

He said that a memorandum was prepared in 2021 and submitted both to the centre and the Sahitya Akademi. Saikia's term as the Asam Sahitya Sabha president had ended in 2022 but as the head of the committee that prepared the memorandum, he was asked by the present office bearers to take the matter forward.

Therefore, I wrote a letter to the Prime Minister in this regard on July 9 this year and Assamese getting the classical status will bestow on it a distinct place in the world," he added. Granting of classical status will benefit the setting up of university chairs and promotion centres, employment in academics, research, archiving, and digitization of ancient texts, and provide opportunities in translation, publishing and digital media for preserving classical heritage. (PTI)

 Israeli airstrikes rock southern suburbs of Beirut and cut off key crossing into Syria

N Korea's Kim threatens to destroy S Korea with nuclear strikes if provoked

 'People of Haryana will strike blow to break 'chakravyuh' of PM's 'crony capitalist' policies'

Sharad Pawar urges Centre to remove 50 pc



SATURDAY, OCTOBER 5, 2024

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18 more to be opened today • Jalukbari to get co-district status

State ministers inaugurate 21 new co-districts private sector in defence production

GUWAHATI, Oct 4: Twenty-one newly created co-districts in Assam were inaugurated on Friday by different ministers, an official release said. The Assam government has created 39 new co-districts in the state in a bid to take the administration to the doorstep of the citizens.

Of the 39 co-districts, 21 were inaugurated on Friday while the remaining 18 will be inaugurated on Saturday. Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Šarma was scheduled to inaugurate Jalukabari co-district (also his assembly constituency), under Kamrup Metropolitan, on Saturday.

Assam is the first state to set up co-districts which will serve as smaller administrative units below the district level, it said.

The co-districts have been set up with the objective of timely access to essential government services by citizens, to improve efficiency bringing governance to the grassroots and streamlining citizen-cen-



The co-districts will deal with land revenue matters, development works and welfare schemes, food and civil supplies, excise, panchayat and rural development and disaster management. Minister for panchayat and rural development Ranjeet Kumar Dass inaugurated the

two co-districts of Bilasipara and Golakganj in Dhubri district, while minister for handloom and textiles U G Brahma was present at Goalpara (West).

Minister for environment and forests C M Patowary inaugurated the co-district of Rangia in Kamrup

Mahanta at Kaliabor in Nagaon district, and minister for housing and urban affairs Ashok Singhal at Sipajhar and Dalgaon in Darrang district. Minister for water resources Pijush Hazarika inaugurated the codistricts of Naduar and Behali in Sonitpur district, minister for sports and youth affairs Nandita Garlosa at Gohpur in Biswanath and Education Minister Ranoj Pegu at Jonai in Dhenaji district.

Industry and commerce minister Bimal Borah inaugurated the codistricts of Margherita and Sadiva in Tinsukia district and revenue and disaster management minister Jogen Mohan at Khowang in Dibrugarh district.

Finance minister Ajanta Neog inaugurated Titabor in Jorhat district, agriculture minister Atul Bora at Bokakhat while labour minister Sanjoy Kishan was at Dergaon and Sarupathar in Golaghat district. In Barak Valley, (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Rajnath pitches for greater role of

NEW DELHI, Oct 4: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Friday said at least 50 per cent of the country's total defence production should come through the participation of the private sector.

Addressing an event by the Society of Indian Defence Manufacturers (SIDM) here, he said the Russia-Ukraine war proved that the importance of a defence industrial base has "not lessened," rather there is a need to expand it.

Singh underlined that India was an "import-dependent nation" earlier in the defence sector, but the country is taking strides towards defence exports.

He urged the stakeholders in the defence sector to keep seeing the export and import figures, and said with a target-oriented approach, the ratio between the two can be reduced. "You know well our thinking and policy in the defence sector. Our

those efforts but will endeavour to accelerate them as much as possible. Efforts to achieve self-reliance will be made more vocal, this is a firm conviction of our government," Singh said.

The defence minister highlighted government initiatives like the corporatisation of the Ordnance Factory Board, the establishment of two

industrial defence corridors, and the encouragement of private industry by the DAP to enhance the role of the private sector in defence manufacturing. "We created an environment of ease of doing business in the country," Singh said. He also spoke of the "record growth" in the value of defence production in the country (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Political parties welcome granting of classical language status to Assamese

'Status will place Assamese in a distinct place in the world'

GUWAHATI, Oct 4: The Centre's decision to grant Assamese the status of classical language along with four others was welcomed by all political parties in the state.

Assam chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Friday said that for years, there were many controversies and movements regarding the Assamese language

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, however, ended this controversy forever by 'declaring Assamese and Bengali as classical languages. For this, the people of Assam will always be grateful to Modi ji,' Sarma said in a post on X.

He said that last night he had spoken to Modi and conveyed the gratitude of the people of Assam to the Government of India for according to Assamese the status of a Classical Language.

Militant groups mushroomed in NE due to Congress' neglect: Rijiju

NAGPUR, Oct 4: Union minister Kiren Rijiju on Friday alleged that the Congress did not pay attention to Manipur and other north-eastern states during its rule, which led to the rise of many militant groups in the re-

incident that happened in the state as 500 to 800 lives were lost in the ethnic clashes in the past, but the previous governments at the Centre never paid attention.

The parliamentary affairs and minority affairs minis-'misgovernance" in the state.

"Congress people did not pay attention to Manipur and the entire north-east India, due to which many militant organisations cropped up there. Nowhere else in the world are there so many militant groups as there are in the north-east," he said.

surrendered by laying down their weapons, and came into the mainstream in the north-east, he claimed.

"The incidents that happened in Manipur were not against the Indian government. It is the result of a conflict between the Meitei and Kuki communities. It is not the first incident in Manipur. Around 500 to 800 lives have been lost in the clashes between Naga and Meitei and Meitei and Kuki communities earlier and the past

Security forces kill 28 Naxalites in Bastar region

185 Maoists eliminated so far in 2024



time, Union Home Minister (Amit Shah) stayed there for four days and Prime Minister (Narendra Modi) said in his Independence Day speech from the Red Fort that the entire country was with the people of Manipur," he said. One should not go by the perception being created to defame India with the help of Maoists and foreign powers, he said.

Normalcy is returning to Manipur slowly and efforts are being made to end the age-old rivalry and differences between the two communities. This cannot be fin-

SC directs SLSA to conduct surprise visits at Matia transit camp

NEW DELHI, Oct 4: The declared as foreigners and the fa-Supreme Court on Friday directed the Assam State Legal Services Authority (SLSA) to conduct surprise visits at the Matia transit camp for foreigners to check the facility's hygiene and food quality.

A bench of Justices Abhay S Oka and Augustine George Masih asked the secretary of the State Legal Services Authority to nominate appropriate officers to make visits to the camp without prior notice to the authorities for the purpose of verifying cleanliness.

The top court directed the state legal services authority to file a report after inspection within one month from today. The matter has been posted for hearing on November 4. Flagging the "sorry state of affairs" at a detention centre for declared foreigners in Assam, the apex court had on July 26 said that it lacked adequate water supply, proper toilets and sanitation. The bench, which was hearing a plea concerning the deportation of those who have been

cilities provided at the detention centres in Assam, said the report does not speak about the availability of food and medical help.

It had directed the secretary of the Assam State Legal Services Authority to ensure one more visit to ascertain the quantity and quality of the food supplied at the centre if cleanliness is maintained in the kitchen and the existence of medical and recreational facilities. While hearing the matter on

May 16, the apex court observed that the Centre must take immediate steps for deporting 17 declared foreigners at the detention centre in Matia. It had said that priority should be given to deport four, who have spent more than two years in the detention centre. The plea has also sought a direction to the Assam government not to detain any person declared a foreigner by a foreigners tribunal until it can show proof of possible deportation in the foreseeable future. (PTI)

Govt 'freed' 22,000 bighas in Orang National Park: CM

thrive, he said. "This huge area will now sustain diverse forms of flora and (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

tions against Maoists in Chhattisgarh, security personnel killed 28 Naxalites in a fierce encounter in the Bastar region on Friday, a senior police official said. The gunfight broke out at around 1 pm in the forest between Thulthuli and Nendur villages in Abhujmaad on the Narayanpur-Dantewada inter-district border, when a joint team of security personnel was out on an

anti-Naxal operation, Inspector General of Police (Bastar Range) Sundarraj P told PTI over the phone. Personnel belonging to the state police's District Reserve Guard (DRG) and Special Task Force (STF) were involved in the operation, he said.

Sundarraj informed that 28 Naxalites were gunned down in the encounter.

A cache of weapons, including an AK-47 rifle and one SLR (self-loading rifle), were also recovered from the encounter spot, he said.

Earlier, Dantewada Superintendent of Police Gaurav Rai had said around 30 Naxalites were killed in the gun battle. After the latest encounter, 185 Maoists have been gunned down by security forces in separate gun battles in the Bastar region comprising seven districts, includ-



ing Dantewada and Narayanpur, so far this year, police said. On April 16, as many as 29 Naxalites, including some higher-ranking cadres, were killed in an encounter with security personnel in Kanker district.

Meanwhile, Union home minister Amit Shah during his review meeting of the inter-state coordination committee in Raipur in August this year declared that the country will be free from the Maoist menace by March

Peace-loving nation like India should have enough teeth: CDS

'Conflict is an inevitable part of human life'

NEW DELHI, Oct 4: Chief of Defence Staff Gen Anil Chauhan said the current geopolitical environment is in a "flux" and every nation is hedging a bet due to "this uncertain kind of a future" on Friday.

His remarks at an event hosted by the Society of Indian Defence Manufacturers (SIDM) here come in the backdrop of a prolonged Russia-Ukraine war and escalation in conflict in parts of West Asia.

The CDS, in his keynote address, also said the Israel-Hamas and Israel-Hezbollah conflicts are likely to "escalate further." "The world we see around us is actually going

through an unprecedented kind of a crisis... The basic question that comes to everyone's mind is whether wars will continue to remain instruments of states' policy to resolve political disputes, the simple answer to all this is yes," Gen Chauhan said.

He told a gathering of defence industry leaders that he believes "conflict is an inevitable part" of human life and human nature, and wars and warfare have

been part of civilisations. War and warfare are as old as human civilisation and they will continue. The current geopolitical environment is in flux and everyone, every nation is hedging a bet because of this uncertain kind of a future,

"Another important maxim about wars is that there are no runners-up and the winner takes all. Hence, all nations are actually, trying to, as they say, keep the powder dry. India too has to follow that suit," the CDS

In his address, he also alluded to the first Joint Commanders' Conference held in Lucknow in September. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, while addressing

the conference, had said that India is committed to peace but should be prepared for a war, to preserve it. Gen Chauhan said, "A deterrence that is credible is the only way to preserve peace. Peace-loving nations

like India should have enough teeth." He also quoted a couplet from a poem (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Amazon India registers 25% YoY growth in Assam

GUWAHATI, Oct 4: E-commerce giant Amazon India on Friday said it has registered double-digit growth of 25 per cent YoY across the home, kitchen and outdoors business in Assam, especially its largest city Guwahati. It also affirmed its commitment to continue expanding

> market linkages. "As the festive season kicks off, we remain committed to offering our valued customers a wide selection of products, unparalleled convenience and exciting deals. In Guwahati we have seen a remarkable growth of 25 per cent YoY in our home, kitchen and outdoors business," KN Srikanth, director, home, kitchen and outdoors, Amazon India, said.

The demand for home décor products has risen by 30 per cent YoY in Guwahati and 35 per cent YoY in Assam. Large furniture saw a surge in demand by 50 per cent YoY. Additionally, a notable 30 per cent YoY increase in kitchen essentials, driven by rising demand for products such as pressure cookers, gas stoves and cooking pans, em-

phasised the focus on convenient kitchen solutions, Srikanth added. Underlining the importance of this northeastern state for the online platform, he said Amazon India will continue to work with local stores and MSMEs across the state and country, bringing new tools, technologies, innovations and initiatives to boost entrepreneurial spirit. "We remain dedicated to supporting our brand (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

NEW DELHI, Oct 4: India will witness the steepest rise in living standards of the common man on the back of the government's initiatives and the efforts towards doubling per capita income in a few years, finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman said on Friday.

nomic Conclave, the minister stressed that inequality in India has declined with the Gini coefficient, a statistical tool to measure inequity, showing improvement in urban as well as rural areas. "I expect these improvements to continue as the ef-

fects of the last ten years of economic and structural reforms manifest more thoroughly in the data in the coming years as the Covid shock fades from the economy," Sitharaman said. The upcoming decades, the minister said, "will see

man, truly making it a period-defining era for an In-"While it took us 75 years to reach a per capita income of USD 2,730, as per IMF projections, it will

"The upcoming decades will see the steepest rise in living standards for the common man, truly making it



a period-defining era for an Indian to live in," she

The Indian government, she said, will try to double the per capita income in a matter of a few years for its 1.4 billion strong population (which makes up 18 per cent of the global total) notwithstanding the geopolitical challenges threatening world peace.

By 2047, as India crosses the 100-year mark of independence, she said, the new Indian era will have core characteristics similar to developed countries. The Viksit Bharat will usher prosperity not just to

Indians but to the rest of the world by becoming central to a vibrant exchange of ideas, technology, and culture, she added. Speaking on the country's financial system, she said

the soundness and resilience of India's banking sector have been underpinned by a sustained policy focus on asset quality improvements, enhanced provisioning for bad loans, sustained capital adequacy, and a rise in profitability.

NPA (non-performing asset) ratios are at a multiyear low, and banks now have efficient debt recovery mechanisms. Ensuring that the financial system stays healthy and the cycle lasts longer is another of our core policy priorities, the minister said.

Highlighting the forces that will shape the Indian era, Sitharaman said, the country's youthful population provides a large base for total factor productivity

improvements, savings, and investment. While India's share of the young is set to rise over the next two decades, several other developing economies are past their demographic peak.

This will drive domestic consumption in the coming decade, she said, adding, "as of now, 43 per cent of Indians are younger than 24 years old, and they have yet to explore their (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

APSC in (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)





cap on quota; Shiv Sena questions timing

was elated to learn that alongside Assamese, Bengali has also been

Over the years, Bengali, spoken by crores of people worldwide, has inspired many personalities and played a key role in the history of India, he said. 'As a language spoken by many

recognised as a classical language

by the Union Cabinet.

in Assam, it is a double joy for us to have both Assamese and Bengali being recognised as Classical Languages on the same day. My best wishes to all Bengalis on this momentous occasion," Sarma said.

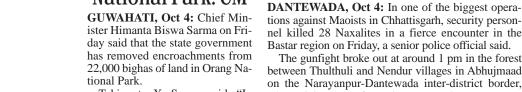
Besides Assamese and Bengali, Marathi, Pali and Prakrit were declared as Classical Languages on Thursday by the Union Cabinet. Assam Pradesh Congress president Bhupen Borah said that the declaration of Assamese as a classical

The recent violence in Manipur was not the first such

ter was talking to reporters here. When asked about violence-hit Manipur, Rijiju blamed the Congress for its

But in the last 10 years, more than 10,000 militants

"But when the incidents (of violence) took place this



Taking to X, Sarma said, "In Assam, we are scripting a new success story in wildlife conservation. Despite opposition from usual suspects, we freed 22,000 bighas from encroachments in Orang National Park." The area of Orang National Park has now increased manifold and the park has become directly linked with Kaziranga and Burha-Chapori Wildlife Sanctuary, creating an unhindered 180-km-long protected area for animals to

Gauhati HC sets aside selection of 14 District Malaria Officers

GUWAHATI, Oct 4: The Gauhati High Court on Friday set aside the selection of 14 District Malaria Officers conducted by the Assam Public Service Commission (APSC) in 2016.

A division bench, comprising Chief Justice Vijay Bishnoi and Justice N Unni Krishnan Nair, ruled that since eight years have passed after the issuance of the select list by the APSC and no appointment has been provided to any of the selected candidates, it is deemed appropriate to set aside the selection process for the posts of District Malaria Officer.

APSC had issued an advertisement on December 15, 2012, inviting applications for filling up various posts which included 14 District Malaria Officers under the Assam Health and Family Welfare department. Subsequently, a screening test was conducted by

Living standards to see steepest rise

in coming decades: FM Nirmala its association with local producers and provide them the

Addressing the 3rd edition of the Kautilya Eco-

the steepest rise in living standards for the common

take only five years to add another USD 2,000," she

THE HILLS TIMES

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QUOTE OF THE DAY

Fortune befriends the bold. -Emily Dickinson

Future of B'desh after Hasina

wo months have passed since Sheikh Hasina Wazed was ousted from power on August 5, following a student-led mass uprising under the Anti-Discrimination Front, popularly known as the Anti-Quota Movement. On August 8, Nobel Laureate Dr Muhammad Yunus was sworn in as the interim government's chief adviser, supported by a team of over a dozen advisers. Tasked with ensuring stability, security, and law and order, this interim administration is guiding Bangladesh toward fresh elections in a turbulent political environment. Dr Yunus has quickly gained public confidence, reflected in recent studies that suggest a growing section of the population supports extending the interim government's tenure. Many believe that law and order must be restored and the economy stabilised before political parties can take the helm again. In a short time, Yunus has made notable achievements, particularly during his visit to the United Nations General Assembly in New York from September 24 to 27. This visit, described by the local media as his "Mandela moment," included crucial meetings with global leaders, such as US President Joe Biden, and resulted in promises of economic aid for Bangladesh. Domestically, the interim government has made headway with its reform agenda. Six commissions have been established, with particular focus on electoral reform, administration, and the judiciary. On October 5, Dr Yunus is set to meet representatives of political parties, excluding the Awami League, to discuss law and order improvements. Additionally, he has sought international assistance for police reforms, engaging Italian Prime Minister Grigori Meloni, which led to further discussions between Italian diplomats and Bangladeshi of-

A delicate diplomatic balance with India is being maintained. Dr Yunus previously cautioned the Indian government that political remarks made by Sheikh Hasina from Indian soil could damage bilateral ties. India responded by advising Hasina to remain quiet. Consequently, Dr Yunus has opted not to pursue Hasina's extradition aggressively, a move designed to avoid embarrassing India while effectively marginalizing the Awami League. Most of its leaders are now either in hiding or have been arrested, facing a multitude of charges, including murder. In the political vacuum left by the Awami League, the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) led by Begum Khaleda Zia is emerging as the primary contender for power. The BNP, which has previously governed twice, maintains strong organisational and financial capabilities, with cordial relations with both the US and China. Despite its complex relationship with Dr Yunus, the BNP has yet to significantly influence the interim government. The military, another key player, has signalled its willingness to extend the interim government's tenure beyond the previously mentioned 12-18 months, delaying elections- a move the BNP does not

For now, Dr Yunus enjoys substantial support both domestically and internationally. His administration appears to be moving deliberately, not rushing toward elections but focusing on long-term stability. India must now recalibrate its strategy toward Bangladesh, having inadvertently fuelled anti-India sentiment in recent years. Statements by Indian leaders, including home minister Amit Shah's remarks on Bangladeshi infiltrators, have caused significant damage. Rebuilding relations will take time, and it is essential for New Delhi to allow its foreign office the autonomy to devise an innovative outreach strategy to mend ties with one of its once-closest neighbours.

Violence in Manipur: Causes, impact and solutions

By: Satyabrat Borah

anipur has been fighting with violent unrest for Lover a year. The conflict primarily involves ethnic tensions between the Meitei, the dominant group in the valley and the Kuki-Zo tribes residing in the hilly regions. This violence has various causes. It created significant impacts on the socio-political fabric of the state and potential ways for solution that require both political and community level intervention.

The main reason of the violence is ethnic strife between the majority Meitei community, primarily Hindus concentrated in the valley, and the Kuki-Zo who predominantly inhabit the hilly areas. The Meitei have been demanding Scheduled Tribe (ST) status which is strongly opposed by the hill tribes because it could destroy their political and economic advantages. The hill people fear that granting ST status to the Meitei would enable them to acquire land in tribal areas which leads to further marginalization of the indigenous hill tribes.

The state government's initiative to clear forest encroachments and crack down on drug cultivation has created more tensions. Many Kuki groups have been accused of participating in illegal poppy cultivation which leads to evictions in protected areas like Churachandpur. These actions have been recognised by the Kuki community as an attack on their livelihood and cul-

The porous border with Myanmar has led to a significant influx of refugees particularly from the Kuki-Zomi ethnic groups, heightening fears of demographic shifts. The presence of refugees has worsened competition over land and resources, adding fuel to the already simmering conflict.

Historical divisions between the Meitei and the hill tribes have persisted since British colonial rule which adopted a "divide and rule" policy. The tribal areas, accounting for 90% of Manipur's land, have long felt neglected in terms of infrastructure and development. The perceived dominance of the Meitei in political and economic spheres has further deepened this resent-

The violence has led to significant loss of life including brutal killings, arson and targeted attacks. Many families, especially from the tribal communities have been displaced, seeking refuge in makeshift camps with little hope of returning to their homes in the near future.

The unrest has destroyed the

state's economy particularly in sectors like agriculture and trade and disturbed educational institutions. Schools and colleges have been shut down which leaves thousands of students without access to education. The violence has also destructed public property including schools and businesses.

The violence has been marked by grave human rights abuses, including sexual violence, extrajudicial killings and the targeting of civilians. These incidents have left deep scars on the communities with little legal recourse or justice in sight. The courts have been criticized for their inaction regarding

The conflict has further polarized the already divided society, making reconciliation increasingly difficult. Ethnic segregation is becoming more entrenched, with calls from the Kuki-Zo community for a separate administration, a move strongly opposed by the Meitei.

A peaceful resolution to the conflict requires open dialogue between the warring communities with the state and central governments playing a mediating role. Both sides need to agree on a framework for power-sharing, land rights and governance to ensure that neither group feels marginal-

The central government needs to carefully evaluate the demand for ST status for the Meitei community and to ensure that it does not exacerbate the already volatile situation. Any decision on this must involve consultations with all stakeholders, including the tribal communities to find a fair and balanced solution.

The lack of accountability for violence, particularly in cases of human rights violations needs urgent attention. The judiciary must expedite hearings and ensure that those responsible for crimes are brought to justice. This will help rebuild trust in the state's institutions.

One of the underlying causes of the unrest is the perceived neglect of the hill districts. Investing in infrastructure, education and healthcare in these areas could help alleviate some of the economic grievances, reducing the sense of alienation among the tribal groups.

The violence in Manipur is a complex issue based on ethnic tensions, historical grievances and competition for resources. Addressing this conflict requires a multifaceted approach involving dialogue, legal reform and targeted development efforts. Only through sustained peace building efforts and inclusive governance can the state hope to emerge from this crisis.

The BJP's shift to solo strategy and Hindutva: Analyzing the party's long-term plans

Janata Party (BJP), under the leadership of Narendra Modi secured a clear majority in the Lok Sabha, it was a momentous occasion. This victory not only marked the party's unprecedented growth in Parliament but also fueled its ambitions to expand its presence in various state assemblies across the country. The BJP leadership believed that the party could now function independently, free from the need for alliances with regional or smaller parties. This optimism was highlighted in a meeting held in New Delhi in June 2014, where Prime Minister Modi urged newly elected BJP MPs to aim for "rajyon main shath pratishath BJP" (100% BJP, in power in states), signaling the party's intention to dominate not only at the national level but also in the states. This marked the beginning of a new era in BJP's strategy, with the party distancing itself from traditional allies such as Shiv Sena in Maharashtra and

Akali Dal in Punjab. Fast forward nearly a decade and the political landscape has shifted once again. Despite its early ambitions of independence, the BJP has found itself relying on alliances, such as those with the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) and Janata Dal (United) (JD(U)). However, the core leadership of the BJP is rethinking its future trajectory. There is a renewed push to encourage party workers and supporters to prepare for a future where the BJP

can once again fight elections solo,

'n 2014, when the Bharatiya with Hindutva as its primary

Union Home Minister Amit Shah, the BJP's second most influential leader after Prime Minister Modi, has been at the forefront of this renewed focus on Hindutva. During a visit to Mumbai, Shah addressed senior office-bearers and activists of the BJP, emphasizing the importance of staying committed to the party's core ideology of Hindutva. Shah's message was clear: the BJP must return to its original ideological roots and prepare for upcoming elections as a solo contender. This represents a shift in strategy, as the party distances itself from alliances and focuses on galvanizing its grassroots cadre with the message of Hin-

The focus on Hindutva comes at

a time when the BJP is analyzing its losses in the recent elections in Maharashtra. BJP's most powerful leader in the state, Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, recently blamed the party's electoral setbacks in 17 or 18 Lok Sabha constituencies on what he described as "vote jihad." According to Fadnavis, the Opposition's narrative during the election campaign that the BJP intended to change the Constitution - resonated with a significant portion of the electorate, particularly the Muslim community, which shifted its support to the Congress party and Uddhav Thackeray's Shiv Sena. This shift in votes, described by Fadnavis as "vote jihad," has become a talking

that both Shah and Fadnavis are using Hindutva to rally the party's

One of the factors driving the BJP's renewed emphasis on Hindutva in Maharashtra is the perceived communal polarization that the Opposition parties have successfully achieved in various parts of the state.

For instance, over the past few years, Maharashtra has witnessed massive agitations by Maratha activists demanding reservation in education and jobs. This agitation has caused a sharp reaction among other backward classes (OBCs), which form a significant portion of the electorate. In the 2019 elections, the BJP suffered losses in the Marathwada and Western Maharashtra regions, primarily due to the Maratha agitation.

To counter this, the BJP is now turning to a larger ideological issue

Hindutva which has been a cornerstone of its politics decades.

To energize its core voter base and cadres, the BJP is promoting leaders like Konkan MLA Nitesh Rane and Member of Parliament Anil Bonde, who are known for their hardline Hindutva stance. The party believes that by pushing a strong Hindutva agenda, it can polarize the Hindu vote, which constitutes approximately 85% of Maharashtra's population. By focusing on hardline Hindutva, the BJP hopes to overcome other political issues and consolidate its sup-

However, this focus on Hindutva is not the only element of the BJP's strategy in Maharashtra. The party is also working to reinvigorate its grassroots cadre by pitching the idea of going solo in the 2029 elections. Many BJP workers and activists, who were initially motivated by the party's 2014 slogan of "shath pratishath BJP," have grown disillusioned with the party's decision to form alliances, particularly with political adversaries like Ajit Pawar.

In recent Lok Sabha elections, there was significant resentment among BJP grassroots workers over the party's decision to share seats with the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP). In response, the party's leadership is attempting to assuage this discontent by publicly stating that the BJP will contest the 2029 elections

This is part of a By: Dipak Kurmi broader effort to give the karyakartas (grassroots workers) hope for future opportu-

independently.

DEGREE OF THOUGHT

nities and restore their enthusiasm. Interestingly, this messaging from the BJP leadership has not been entirely consistent. Just last week, during a visit to Nagpur, Amit Shah urged BJP office-bearers and leaders to "accept the alliance partners as our own." However, in his address in Mumbai a few days later, Shah indicated that the party would be prepared to fight the 2029 elections solo. This dual messaging reflects the party's attempt to balance its short-term need for alliances with its longterm vision of electoral independ-

The big question now is whether the BJP's strategy will succeed. Can the party successfully pursue a hardcore Hindutva agenda while simultaneously preparing to discard its alliance partners? How will these alliance partners react to the BJP's long-term plan of going solo? And will the BJP's grassroots cadre be persuaded by the promise of future opportunities if the party contests elections independently?

These are questions that only time can answer. However, what is clear is that the BJP is laying the groundwork for a significant shift in its political strategy. The party is banking on Hindutva to galvanize its voter base and aims to restore the faith of its grassroots workers by promising a future where the BJP can stand on its own, without the support of regional or smaller parties. As the political landscape in Maharashtra and across India continues to evolve, the BJP's long-term strategy will undoubtedly play a crucial role in shaping the party's future trajectory. Whether the BJP can achieve its goals of electoral independence and dominance through Hindutva remains to be seen, but the party's leadership is leaving no stone unturned in its efforts to realize this vision. (The writer can be reached at dipakkurmiglpltd@gmail.com)

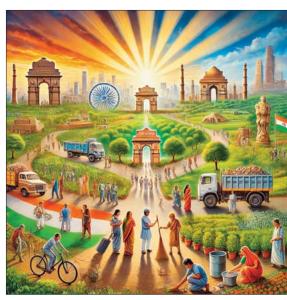
From clean India to empowered India: A decade of transformational change

Cleanliness is not just about removing dirt. It is about removing the mindset that permits it to thrive." These words, spoken by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, resonate deeply with the transformative journey that India embarked upon in 2014 through the Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM). This bold initiative, aimed at fostering cleanliness, health, and hygiene across the country, has indeed transcended its initial goals, shaping a new India where cleanliness is no longer a mere obligation but a collective consciousness. As we reflect upon a decade of progress, it becomes evident that the SBM has profoundly altered the nation's public health landscape, livelihood dynamics, and societal mindset, making it an emblem of holistic development.

In 2014, India took a collective pledge to end open defecation and promote sanitation through SBM. This monumental task was approached with clarity of vision, guided by the belief that a clean India would lead to a healthier and more prosperous society. The numbers testify to this resolve—over 110 million toilets were constructed in the first phase of the mission, providing much-needed sanitation infrastructure in both rural and urban areas. Yet, the success of SBM cannot simply be measured in the number of toilets built. As Prime Minister Modi emphasized, this campaign sought to change the behavior of millions, aiming for a permanent shift to-

wards cleanliness as a way of life. The health benefits derived from SBM have been profound. Studies, including one published in 'Nature', estimate that the program has prevented 60,000–70,000 infant deaths annually since its inception. By reducing the spread of waterborne diseases, improving sanitation infrastructure, and promoting personal hygiene, the mission has contributed to a significant drop in morbidity and mortality rates in both rural and urban areas. Furthermore, the World Health Organization projects that by 2025, an additional 677.3 million Indians will benefit from improved health and well-being, underscoring the long-term impact of this nationwide initia-

However, the benefits of SBM stretch far beyond health. This movement has sparked economic growth by creating vast employment opportunities, particularly in its early years. The construction of sanitation infrastructure alone employed 2.59 million full-time workers and provided indirect employment to 4.95 million more. More importantly, it empowered women, notably through the rise of 'Rani Mistries', female masons who became instrumental in building toilets under the program. This shift not only offered women a new source of income but also reshaped gender dynamics in many rural communities. Phase two of SBM marked a transition from merely constructing toilets to focusing on sustainable waste management. This shift has fueled the growth of India's waste management industry, generating jobs in waste collection, transportation, processing, and recycling. Women, once again, have played a pivotal role in this transformation. Through self-help groups (SHGs), women have led the charge in waste management initiatives, educating their com-



munities about waste segregation and transforming waste into valuable products. One particularly inspiring initiative, the

Light House Initiative (LHI), exemplifies this shift. Under LHI, women-led SHGs have turned multi-layered plastic waste into fashionable items such as tote bags and planters, simultaneously promoting sustainability and providing livelihoods for vulnerable communities.

These innovative solutions exemplify how the Swachh Bharat Mission is not merely about cleanliness; it is a powerful tool for community empowerment and economic growth. The efforts to mainstream marginalized waste workers through initiatives like the Plastic Circularity project demonstrate how SBM is contributing to India's broader goals of sustainable development. By providing workers with training, capacity building, and access to funding, these initiatives are helping integrate them into the formal waste value chain, thus providing them with new avenues for growth and financial stability.

The ripple effects of SBM are also visible in its alignment with international development goals. In the global context, SBM's goals dovetail with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 6, particularly target 6.2, which calls for universal access to sanitation and hygiene. By working towards this target, India is not only improving the lives of its citizens but also contributing to the global effort to ensure clean water and sanitation for all by 2030.

As India commemorates the tenth anniversary of SBM on October 2, 2024, it is essential to recognize the profound cultural shift that this campaign has inspired. What began as a mission to eliminate open defecation and improve sanitation has evolved into a movement that has redefined public behavior. Cleanliness is now seen as a shared responsibility, a collective commitment that has united millions of Indians in their pursuit of a healthier and more dignified life. This participatory approach is exemplified in the annual cleanliness drives, where citizens from all walks of life, including notable figures, contribute their time and efforts to maintain cleanliness in their localities.

Moreover, the SBM has also had an undeniable impact on India's image as a tourist destination. Cleanliness is a crucial factor in attracting tourists, and by promoting hygiene and sanitation, India has taken significant steps toward becoming a more welcoming and appealing destination for international travelers. This focus on cleanliness, combined with initiatives aimed at enhancing green spaces through tree planting and waste elimination, has the potential to further elevate India's standing on the global stage.

Despite its many successes, challenges remain. In rural areas, for example, some individuals continue to resist using the toilets built under SBM, and the government has faced criticism for employing coercive measures to enforce toilet usage. Yet, these challenges only underscore the importance of sustained efforts to change long-entrenched behaviors. The

> SBM's shift towards a focus on waste management and sustainability in Phase 2 is recognition that true change takes time and requires a long-term commitment to education and behavioral transformation.

EPIC AFFAIRS Looking ahead, the future of SBM lies in its ability to continue adapting to new challenges

and opportunities. The program's success has laid the groundwork for further innovation in sanitation and waste management, and as the government continues to invest in these areas, the potential for job creation and economic growth remains vast. With the convergence of schemes like the National Skill Development Mission and the National Rural Livelihoods Mission, SBM is well-positioned to drive India's development agenda forward.

The Swachh Bharat Mission has not only transformed India's sanitation landscape but also become a powerful engine for societal and economic change. By focusing on longterm behavioral change and sustainable development, SBM has provided a blueprint for improving health, livelihoods, and environmental sustainability. As India celebrates a decade of SBM, the mission stands as a testament to the nation's commitment to cleanliness and its vision for a healthier, more prosperous future. The road ahead is filled with challenges, but with continued dedication and innovation, the dream of a Swachh Bharat remains within reach. (The author can be reached at shashankadasnov1@gmail.com or

Pakistan's ailing economy gets some relief after getting US\$7 billion IMF facility

By: Tirthankar Mitra

t is no secret that Pakistan economy is in doldrums and International Monetary Fund (IMF) has approved \$ 7 billion Extended Fund Facility (EFF) for the beleaguered country following a staff level meeting with Islamabad. A United Nations report stated that Pakistan's economy is to face global challenges this year, with a modest GDP growth expected.

The situation in Pakistan remains chaotic after 2024 elections. Economic data shows that the crisis will continue. Inflation stood at 29 per cent in January, according to Pakistan Bureau of Statistics. As the country's foreign currency reserves continues to fluctuate, it needs \$ 30 billion in annual external

debt obligations. The Pakistan government has predicted that inflation rate will remain between 12.5-11 per cent in June-July. Inflation rate of Pak-

istan was 9.8 per cent in August. The EFF is a 37-month long loan programme. It is the 25th such programme in Pakistan's history. Under the current borrowing programme,

the latest IMF facility is the sixth. The facts

do not paint a rosy picture of Pakistan economy even as Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharief said "God willing, this will be Pakistan's last IMF programme".

What the prime minister chose to overlook was that poor governance and imprudent fiscal management have long plagued Pakistan. But it was not a human factor but Covid-19 which struck Pakistan in 2022 leading to worsening of economic crisis when the country was still receiving funds under 2019 EFF.

There were other factors too whose combination sent the Pakistan economy on a downward spiral. They were Russia's war with Ukraine and the devastating floods that rocked Pakistan in August that year.

The IMF decided in November 2022 to stop the disbursement of a pending \$ 1.18 billion under the 2019 EFF due to the government's unwillingness to meet certain demands. These included assurances on increasing energy rates, imposing more taxes and stopping artificial control on exchange

It led to disastrous results. An already cash strapped Pakistan economy was pushed to the brink. Food and oil prices shot up, with Pakistan's inflation peaking at 38 per cent in May 2023. The Pakistani rupee (PKR) fell about 20 per cent against the US dollar while the country's foreign exchange reserves dwindled to under \$ 3 billion in 2023.

SHASHANKA DAS

In 2023, Pakistan secured a nine month \$ 3 billion Stand By Agreement (SBA) from the IMF. Even as the interim government worked to ensure fiscal discipline, as of September 2024. Pakistan's inflation rate stands at 7.5 per cent, its lowest in five years.

Supported by aid inflows of its allies like China, Saudi Arabia and UAE, Pakistan's foreign exchange reserves stand at \$ 9 billion. But it still has an external debt of \$ 130 billion of which it needs to pay \$ 90 billion over the next three years.

A look at the current financial aid package reveal that an EFF is a financial assistance package offered by IMF to countries facing severe balance of payments issues. These are due to structural weakness that cannot be resolved in the short term.

It is to help implement medium term structural reforms. In Pakistan's case, these include strengthening monetary and fiscal policies including tax reforms, bolstering competition and rebuilding forex reserves. The package does not include servicing Pakistan's internal and external debts. It equals 81 per cent of last year's tax revenue.

There being no free lunches Pakistan has to undertake making sweeping tax reforms to widen its tax base. The government is committed to this in its budget for the current fiscal year. It hopes to collect up to \$6.5 billion in additional taxes.

prices have been increased by 51 per cent. It is expected to generate 64 per cent more revenue than through non-tax sources. These include petroleum levies and electricity tar-

The IMF also mandated balance in spending between Pakistan's federal and provincial governments. Taxes would be imposed on agriculture and no new subsidies would be introduced.

The conditions imposed are harsh. There is concern about lack of political support to meet the requirements of the programmes which cannot be said to be popular which makes one wonder whether the sweeping tax reforms that the move will require, will indeed work. (IPA Service)





Careers to realize a hepatitis free world

By: Ranjan K Baruah

ccording to the World Health Organization's 2024 Global Hepatitis Report, the number of lives lost due to viral hepatitis is increasing. The disease is the second leading infectious cause of death globally -- with 1.3 million deaths per year, the same as tuberculosis, a top infectious killer.

New data from 187 countries show that the estimated number of deaths from viral hepatitis increased from 1.1 million in 2019 to 1.3 million in 2022. Of these, 83% were caused by hepatitis B and 17% by hepatitis C. Every day, there are 3500 people dying globally due to hepatitis B and C infections.

Across all regions, only 13%

of people living with chronic 2025, alongside intensified efhepatitis B infection had been diagnosed and approximately 3% (7 million) had received antiviral therapy at the end of 2022. Regarding hepatitis C, 36% had been diagnosed and 20% (12.5 million) had received curative treatment.

These results fall well below the global targets to treat 80% of people living with chronic hepatitis B and hepatitis C by 2030. Bangladesh, China, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Philippines, the Russian Federation and Viet Nam, collectively shoulder nearly twothirds of the global burden of hepatitis B and C.

Achieving universal access to prevention, diagnosis, and treatment in these ten countries by

forts in the African Region, is essential to get the global response back on track to meet the Sustainable Development Goals.

World Hepatitis Day, observed on 28th July, raises awareness of viral hepatitis, an inflammation of the liver that causes severe liver disease and cancer. This year's theme is: It's time for action. With a person dying every 30 seconds from a hepatitis-related illness, we must accelerate action on better prevention, diagnosis, and treatment to save lives and improve health out-

The date of 28th July was chosen because it is the birthday of Nobel-prize winning scientist Dr Baruch Blumberg, who discovered hepatitis B virus (HBV) and



developed a diagnostic test and vaccine for the virus. We are aware that hepatitis is an inflammation of the liver that is caused by a variety of infectious viruses and noninfectious agents leading to a range of health problems, some of which can be fatal.

As it's time for action we can also think and plan a career re-

lated to ending hepatitis from our society. One may become a doctor or nurse or other health professionals to treat people who are suffering from hepatitis. As vaccines are available, aspirants may choose to work in the field of ensuring vaccines to individuals from the time of birth so that casualties could be lessened.

more options in generating awareness amongst the public. Health departments of the government organize various programmes to raise awareness. Apart from the government, other organisations like NGOs. health societies, youth clubs or educational institutions may conduct various programmes to raise awareness related to hepa-Media houses like print media

or electronic media or even social media can also play a vital role in disseminating information related to hepatitis and how one can get rid of it.

All those who eagerly want to see a hepatitis free world may take up the profession in the any career related queries)

As we are aware that prevenmedia industry and plan a strattion is better than cure, there are egy to reach out to more and more people and make them aware. There might be uses of traditional media in remote areas of our country where we can easily communicate with traditional media like street plays or theatre and dramas.

> Together we can take action to end hepatitis and it's time to take action to realize a hepatitis free world. The best way is to choose to work in the field through which we can use our passion and expertise to end hepatitis. Our action would help millions to fight hepatitis and live happily. (The author is a career mentor and skill trainer and can be reached at 8473943734 or bkranjan@gmail.com for

> > # Chemistry: 2

Zoology: 4

Political Science: 2

Export-Import Bank Of India recruitment – 50 posts, online apply

Last Date: 07/10/2024.

Export-Import Bank of India has released an employment notification for the recruitment of 50 Management Trainee (MT) vacancy in Banking Operations. Interested candidates may apply online.

Name of post: Management Trainee (Banking Operations)

No of posts: 50 posts

Category-wise vacancy:

SC: 7 # **OBC:** 13 # EWS: 5

ST: 3 # **PwBD:** 2

Pay: ₹ 48480- 2000-62480-2340-67160-2680-85920

Eligibility Criteria of Export-Import Bank of India Recruitment

Age Limit: Candidate age should not below 21 years and not above 28 years as on August 01st, 2024.

Age Relaxation: The relaxation of upper age limit for reserved categories are

OBC/ MOBC: 3 years # PwBD-OBC(NCL): 13 years

PwBD: 10 years # PwBD-SC/ST: 15 years

Essential Academic Qualification:

Minimum 60% aggregate marks / equivalent Cumulative Grade Points Average (CGPA), in Graduation. The graduation course should be of a minimum 3year full time duration.

Post Graduation (MBA / PGDBA / PGDBM / MMS) with specialization in Finance / International Business / Foreign Trade or Chartered Accountant (CA). Post Graduation course should be of a minimum 2-year full time duration, with a specialization in Finance with minimum 60% aggregate marks / equivalent CGPA. In case of CA, passing the professional examination is sufficient. Membership of ICAI is mandatory.

Candidates who have appeared / appearing for the final examination in Post Graduation or Chartered Accountancy to be held during November 2024 and are expecting their results in the year 2025 are eligible to apply. Membership of ICAI may be submitted on passing of professional examination.

Application Fee:

UR/ OBC: ₹ 600

SC/ST/PwBD /EWS and Female: ₹ 100 # Payment Mode: Online

Important Dates of Export-Import Bank of India Vacancy 2024

Starting date of submission of online application: September 18th, 2024 # Last date of submission of online application: October 07th, 2024

UPSC Engineering Services examination 2025 – 232 posts, online apply

Last Date: 08/10/2024

Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) has released the official notification of Engineering Services Examination 2025 for the recruitment of 232 vacancy in Civil, Mechanical, Electrical, Electronics & Telecommunication Engineering disciplines. Interested and eligible candidates may apply online.

Name of exam: UPSC Engineering Services Examination 2025

No of posts: 232 posts

Disciplines:

Category I: Civil Engineering. Category II: Mechanical Engineering.

Category III: Electrical Engineering.

Category IV: Electronics & Telecommunication Engineering.

Eligibility Criteria of UPSC Engineering Services Examination

Age Limit: Candidate must have attained the age of 21 years and must not have attained the age of 30 years on the 1st January, 2025 i.e., he/she must have been born not earlier than 2nd January, 1995 and not later than 1st January, 2004.

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

SC/ST: 5 years

OBC: 3 years **# PwBD:** 10 years

Educational Qualification: For admission to the examination, a candidate

Obtained a degree in Engineering from a University incorporated by an Act of the Central or State Legislature in India or other Educational Institutions established by an Act of Parliament or declared to be deemed as Universities under Section 3 of the University Grants Commission Act, 1956; or

Passed Sections A and B of the Institution Examinations of the Institution of Engineers (India); or

Obtained a degree/diploma in Engineering from such foreign University/College/Institution and under such conditions as may be recognised by the Government for the purpose from time to time, or # Passed Graduate Membership Examination of the Institution of Electronics

and Telecommunication Engineers (India); or # Passed Associate Membership Examination Parts II and III/Sections A and B

of the Aeronautical Society of India; or

Passed Graduate Membership Examination of the Institution of Electronics and Radio Engineers, London held after November, 1959.

Provided that a candidate for the post of Indian Naval Armament Service (Elec-

tronics Engineering Posts) and Indian Radio Regulatory Service Group 'A' may

possess any of the above qualifications or the qualification mentioned below

For Indian Naval Armament Service (Electronics Engg. Posts) - M.Sc. degree or its equivalent with Wireless Communication Electronics, Radio Physics or Radio Engineering as a special subject.

For Indian Radio Regulatory Service Group 'A' – M.Sc. degree or its equivalent with Wireless Communication Electronics, Radio Physics or Radio Engineering as a subject or Master's Degree in Science with Physics and Radio Communication or Electronics or Telecommunication as a special subject.

Application Fee:

Female/ SC/ST/ Persons with Benchmark Disability: Nil

Payment Mode: Visa/ Master/ RuPay Credit/ Debit Card or by using Internet

Important Dates of UPSC Engineering Services Examination 2025

Starting date of online application submission: 18/09/2024 # Last date of online application submission: 08/10/2024

SSC Constable recruitment 2024 - 39481 Constable GD posts

Last Date: 14/10/2024.

Staff Section Commission (SSC) has released the official notification for the recruitment of 39,481 vacancy as Constable (General Duty) in Border Security Force (BSF), Central Industrial Security Force (CISF), Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), Indo Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB), and Secretariat Security Force (SSF), Rifleman (General Duty) in Assam Rifles (AR), and Sepoy in Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB). Interested and eligible candidates may apply online.

Name of post: Constable (General Duty)

Name of exam: Constable (GD) in Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) and SSF, Rifleman (GD) in Assam Rifles, and Sepoy in Narcotics Control Bureau Examination-2025

No of posts: 39,481 posts

Male: 35,612 posts **# Female:** 3,869 posts

Organization-wise vacancy details:

Organization	No of posts
BSF	15654
CISF	7145
CRPF	11541
SSB	819
ITBP	3017
Assam Rifles	1248
SSF	35
NCB	22
Total	39481

Pav scale: Pay Level-3 (₹ 21,700-69,100)

Eligibility Criteria of SSC Constable GD Recruitment

Nationality: The candidate must be a citizen of India. Vacancies in CAPFs & AR are State/UT/area wise, hence a candidate must submit a domicile certificate/ PRC against his domiciled state/ UT.

Age Limit: Candidate age must be between 18 to 23 years as on 1st January 2025. Candidates should not have been born earlier than 02-01-2002 and later than 01-01-2007 in normal course

Age Relaxation: Permissible relaxations in upper age limit for different categories are as under:

SC/ ST: 5 years

OBC: 3 years **# Ex-Servicemen:** 3 years

Educational Qualification: The candidates must have passed Matriculation or 10th Class Examination from a recognized Board/ University.

Application Fee:

Candidates have to pay a certain amount as application fee depending up on their category. The details are as given below:

<u>Category</u>	ree
UR OBC/MOBC SC/ ST/ Women/ Ex-Servicemen	₹ 100 ₹ 100 Nil Nil

Payment Mode: BHIM UPI, Net Banking, by using Visa, MasterCard, Maestro, RuPay Credit or Debit cards or through cash in SBI Branches by gen-

SSC Examination Centres in Assam and Other North East States

A candidate must indicate the Centre(s) in the online Application Form in which he/ she desires to take the examination. Here's the list of centres available under North Eastern Region (NER).

Itanagar (5001) Dibrugarh (5102) Guwahati (Dispur) (5105) Jorhat (5107) Silchar (5111) Tejpur (5112) Imphal (5501) Shillong (5401) Agartala (5601) Aizwal (5701) Dimapur (5301) Kohi Churachandpur (5502) Ukhrul (5503) Kohima (5302)

Important Dates of SSC Constable Recruitment 2024

Starting date to apply online: 5th September 2024 # Last date to apply online: 14th October 2024

Schedule of Computer Based Examination: January - February 2025

Madhabdev University Recruitment 2024 – 78 Teaching & Non-Teaching Posts

Last Date: 17/10/2024.

Madhabdev University, Lakhimpur has released 2 employment notifications for the recruitment of 78 Teaching and Non-Teaching posts. Interested and eligible candidates may apply.

1. Professor

No of posts: 7

Subject-wise vacancy:

#Assamese: 1 # Botanv: 1 # Chemistry: 1 # English: 1 # Political Science: 1 # Economics: 1 # Zoology: 1

Pay: Pay Band ₹ 1,44,200.00 - 2,18,200.00

Educational Qualification: As per UGC norms

2. Associate Professor

Subject-wise vacancy:

No of posts: 14

Pay: ₹ 1,31,400.00 - 2,17,100.00

Assamese: 2

Botany: 2 # Economics: 2 # English: 2 # Zoology: 2

Educational Qualification: As per UGC norms

3. Assistant Professor

No of posts: 38

Pay: ₹ 57,700.00 - 1,82,400.00

Subject-wise vacancy: # Botany: 6 # Chemistry: 5 #Assamese: 4 # English: 3 # Education: 1 # Economics: 3 # Physics: 3 # Mathematics: 3 # Philosophy: 2

Political Science: 3 # Sociology: 1 Educational Qualification: As per UGC norms

4. Finance Officer

No of posts: 1

Pay: ₹ 30,000.00 - 1,10,000.00 GP ₹ 14,500.00 + other allowances as admissible

Educational Qualification: MA / MSc / MCom / MBA degree with atleast 55% marks or its equivalent CGPA scale, along with atleast 5 years experience in financial administration / management in university or other government/ PSU units

5. Junior Assistant

No of posts: 6

Pay: Rs. 14000.00- 60500.00 GP- Rs. 5600.00

Educational Qualification: Bachelor's degree with Computer Certificate / Diploma of six months duration from a recognized Institution

6. Library Assistant

No of posts: 1

Pay: ₹ 14000.00- 60500.00 GP- ₹ 5600.00

Educational Qualification: Bachelor's degree in Library Science with Computer Certificate / Diploma of six months duration from a recognized Institution.

7. Multi-Tasking Staff (MTS)

No of posts: 11

Pay: ₹ 12000.00 - 37500.00 GP- ₹ 3900.00

Educational Qualification: HSLC or equivalent examination passed.

Application Fee:

Junior Assistant, Library Assistant & MTS: A bank draft of ₹ 500 (₹ 375 in case of SC / ST) (non-refundable) must be paid drawn in favour of Madhabdev University, Lakhimpur payable at State Bank of India, Narayanpur Branch (IFSC :

Finance Officer, Professor, Associate Professor and Assistant Professor: A bank draft of ₹ 2000 (₹ 1500/- in case of SC / ST) (non-refundable) must be paid drawn in favour of Madhabdev University, Lakhimpur payable at State Bank of India, Narayanpur Branch (IFSC: SBIN0017208)

How to Apply for Madhabdev University Recruitment?

Prescribed Application Form for the above-mentioned posts can be downloaded

from the University website. # The name of the post and category to which the post is allotted as per the Roster Register should be written clearly on the Left Top of the envelope superscribing "Application for the Post of Category.....

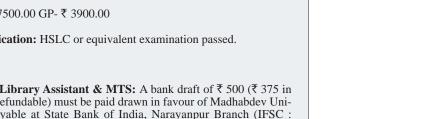
The type written filled in application along with the supporting documents must reach the following address: The Registrar

Madhabdev University, Narayanpur, PO - Dikrong, District- Lakhimpur, Assam, PIN-784164.

Important Dates of Madhabdev University Vacancy 2024

Starting date of submission of application: 13th September 2024

Last date of submission of application: 17th October 2024



6 THE HILLS TIMES

Israeli airstrikes rock southern suburbs of Beirut and cut off key crossing into Syria

ries of massive airstrikes overnight in southern suburbs of Beirut and another that cut off the main border crossing between Lebanon and Syria, a main crossing point for tens of thousands of people fleeing Israeli bombardment.

The blasts in the Beirut suburbs sent huge plumes of smoke and flames into the night sky and shook buildings km (miles) away in the Lebanese capital.

The Israeli military did not immediately comment on what the intended target was, and there was no information immediately available on casualties. Lebanon's state-run National News Agency reported there were more than 10 consecutive airstrikes in the area.

The Israeli military said on Friday that a strike in Beirut the day before killed Mohammed Rashid Skafi, the head of Hezbollah's communications division. The military said in a statement that Skafi was "a senior Hezbollah terrorist who was responsible for the communications unit since 2000" and was "closely affiliated" with high-up Hezbollah officials.

Friday's strike about 60 km (37 miles) to the east along the Lebanon-Syria border led to the closure of the road near the busy Masnaa Border Crossing.

Associated Press video footage showed two huge craters on each side of the road. People disembarked cars unable to pass the site of the strike, carrying bags of their possessions as they crossed on foot.

Tens of thousands of people fleeing war in Lebanon have crossed into Syria over the past two weeks there.

The airstrike came a day after an Is-



raeli military spokesperson said Hezbollah has been trying to transport military equipment through the border crossing.

Hezbollah is believed to have received much of its weaponry from Iran via Syria. The group has a presence on both sides of the border, a region where it has been fighting alongside Syrian President Bashar Assad's forces.

The new wave of strikes came after Israel warned people to evacuate communities in southern Lebanon that are outside a United Nations-declared buffer zone, as the yearlong conflict between Israel and the Lebanese militant group Hezbollah escalates.

Israel launched a ground incursion into Lebanon on Tuesday and its forces have been clashing with Hezbollah militants in a narrow strip along the border. A series of attacks before the incursion killed some of the group's key members, including longtime leader Hassan Nas-

Iran's Foreign Minister, Abbas

where he was expected to discuss the war between Israel and Hezbollah with

Lebanese officials. Araghchi's visit to Beirut came three days after Iran launched at least 180 missiles into Israel, the latest in a series of rapidly escalating attacks that threaten to push the Middle East closer to a regionwide war.

Iran is Hezbollah's main backer and has sent weapons and billions of dollars to the group over the years.

In the Iranian capital, Tehran, the country's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei led Friday prayers and delivered a speech where he praised the country's recent missile strike on Israel and said Iran was prepared to conduct more strikes if needed.

He spoke to thousands of people at the capital's main prayer site, the Mosalla mosque, which was decorated with a huge Palestinian flag.

Friday's strike at the border crossing was the first time this major border crossing has been cut since the beginning recorded 256,614 Syrian citizens and 82,264 Lebanese citizens crossing into Syrian territory between Sept 23 when the Israel launched a heavy bombardment of southern and eastern Lebanon — and Sept 30.

There are half a dozen border crossings between the two countries and most of them remain open. Lebanon's minister of public works said all border crossings between Lebanon and Syria work under the supervision of the state.

Israel and Hezbollah have traded fire across Lebanon's southern border almost daily since the day after Hamas' crossborder attack on Oct 7, 2023, in which the militants killed 1,200 Israelis and took 250 others hostage.

Meanwhile, the Israeli army said it carried out a strike Thursday in Tulkarem, a militant stronghold in the occupied West Bank, in coordination with the Shin Bet internal security service.

The Palestinian Health Ministry said 18 people were killed in an Israeli strike on a refugee camp there.

Violence has flared across the Israelioccupied territory since the Israel-Hamas war erupted in October 2023. Tulkarem and other northern cities have seen some of the worst violence.

Israel declared war on Hamas in the Gaza Strip in response to their Oct 7 attack. More than 41,000 Palestinians have since been killed in the territory, and just over half the dead have been women and children, according to local health officials. Nearly 2,000 people have been killed in Lebanon in that time, most of them since Sept 23, according to the Lebanese Health Ministry. (AP)

Iranian supreme leader praises missile attack on Israel, says Iran will do it again if necessary

TEHRAN, Oct 4: Iran's supreme those who had died doing so. leader on Friday praised the country's recent missile strike on Israel and said it was ready to do it again if necessary, state TV reported.

Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, in his first appearance as leader at Friday prayers in about five years, called the missile strike a "shining" job by Iran's armed

On Tuesday, Iran launched at least

180 missiles at Israel, the latest in a series of rapidly escalating attacks between Israel and Iran and its threaten to push the Middle East closer to a regionwide

war. Israel said it intercepted many of the missiles, and officials in Washington said US destroyers assisted in Israel's defence. Iran said most of its missiles hit their targets. There were no

immediate reports of casualties. Khamenei, 80, said in a 40-minute speech to thousands of people at the Mosalla mosque, the main prayer site in Tehran, that the Hamas-led attack on southern Israel nearly a year ago on Oct 7, 2023, was a legitimate action by the Palestinian people.He said Tuesday's missile barrage was based on interna-

tional law, the country's law and Islamic beliefs.He urged nations from "Afghanistan to Yemen and from Iran to Gaza and Yemen" to be ready to take action against the enemy, and praised

"Our resisting people in Lebanon and Palestine, you brave fighters, you loyal and patient people, these martyrdoms and the blood that was shed shouldn't shake your determination but make you more persistent," he said.

Khamenei gave half of the speech in Arabic as he addressed his comments to

Arab nations. Khamenei's last appearance at Friday

> after the death of Revolutionary Guard Gen Q a s s e m Soleimani, who was killed in 2020 in a US drone strike in

Baghdad. A ceremony commemorating the death of

Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah was held before Khamenei's speech. Most high-ranking Iranian officials, including President Masoud Pezeshkian and top Revolutionary Guard generals, at-

tended the ceremony. Iran is Hezbollah's main backer and has sent weapons and billions of dollars to the group. Also on Friday, Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi arrived in Beirut, Lebanon, where he was expected to discuss ongoing fighting between Israel and Hezbollah with Lebanese officials.

Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmail Baghaei, said Iran sent a shipment of aid to Lebanon, including 10 tons of

N Korea's Kim threatens to destroy S Korea with nuclear strikes if provoked

SEOUL, Oct 4: North Korean leader Kim Jong Un threatened to use nuclear weapons and destroy South Korea permanently if provoked, state media reported on Friday, after the South's leader warned that Kim's regime would collapse if he attempted to use nuclear arms.

The exchange of such rhetoric between the rival Koreas is nothing new, but the latest comments come during heightened animosities over the North's recent disclosure of a nuclear facility and its continuation of missile tests. Next week, observers say North Korea's rubber-stamp parliament is expected to constitutionally declare a hostile "two-state" system on the Korean Peninsula to formally reject reconciliation with South Korea and codify new national borders.

During a visit to a special operation forces unit on Wednesday, Kim said his military "would use without hesitation all the offensive forces it possesses, including nuclear weapons". if South Korea attempts to use armed forces encroaching upon the sovereignty of North Korea, according to the North's official Korean Central News Agency.

"If such a situation comes, the permanent existence of Seoul and the Republic of Korea would be impossible," Kim said, using South Korea's official name.

Kim's statement was a response to South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol's speech at his country's Armed Forces Day on Tuesday. Unveiling South Korea's most powerful Hyunmoo-5 ballistic missile and other conventional weapons that could target North Korea, Yoon said the day that North Korea tries to use nuclear weapons would be the end of the Kim government because Kim would face "the resolute and

overwhelming response" of the South Korean-US alliance.

Kim responded that Yoon's address fully betrayed his "bellicose temerity" and showed "the security uneasiness and irritating psychology of the puppet forces".

In a derisive comment, Kim called Yoon "an abnormal man", saying that "the puppet Yoon bragged about an overwhelming counteraction of military muscle at the doorstep of a state that possesses nuclear weapons". On Thursday, Kim's sister and senior official, Kim Yo Jong, also ridiculed South Korea's showcasing of the Hyunmoo-5 missile, saying there is no way for South Korea to counter the North Korea's nuclear forces with conventional weapons.

Since adopting an escalatory nuclear doctrine in 2022, Kim has repeatedly threatened to use nuclear weapons preemptively. But many foreign experts say it is still unlikely that he would use his nuclear arms first because his military is outmatched by the US and its allied forces. In July, South Korea and the US signed a defence guideline on integrating South Korea's conventional capabilities with the US nuclear forces to better deal with North Korea's advancing nuclear programme. South Korea has no nuclear

Animosities between the Koreas are at the worst point in years with Kim's provocative run of missile tests and the South Korean-US military exercises intensifying in a cycle of tit-fortat. All communication channels and exchange programmes between the rivals remain stalled since 2019, when a broader US-North Korea diplomacy on ending the North's nuclear programme collapsed. (AP)

Jaishankar meets Prez Dissanayake and PM Amarasuirya, assures India's continued support in Sri Lanka's economic rebuilding



COLOMBO, Oct 4: External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Friday met Sri Lankan President Anura Kumara Dissanayake and discussed "ways to deepen ongoing cooperation and strengthen India-Sri Lanka ties," and assured India's continued support to the island nation's economic rebuilding. Jaishankar, who is here on a day-

long visit, less than a fortnight after President Dissanayake was sworn in, also met Prime Minister Harini Amarasuriya and his counterpart Vijitha Herath. Jaishankar is the first foreign dig-

nitary to visit Sri Lanka since the National People's Power (NPP) government led by Dissanayake came to power on September 23.

"Honoured to call on President @anuradisanayake today in Colombo. Conveyed warm greetings of President Droupadi Murmu and PM @narendramodi," Jaishankar posted on X."Appreciate his warm sentiments and guidance for the India-Sri Lanka relations. Discussed ways to deepen ongoing cooperation and strengthen India-Sri Lanka ties for the benefit of people of two countries and the region," he said further in the post.

Soon after, Dissanayake took to X to post and said discussions focussed on boosting cooperation in tourism, energy, and investment and on continued collaboration on fisheries, security, and national unity. "Met Indian External Affairs Minister @DrSJaishankar today (04), during his official visit to Sri Lanka," he said.

"Discussions focused on boosting cooperation in tourism, energy, and investment. Dr. Jaishankar reaffirmed India's support for Sri Lanka's economic recovery. The importance of continued collaboration on fisheries, security, and national unity was also discussed, the Sri Lankan president added in his post on X.

He was earlier received at the airport by Sri Lankan Foreign Secretary Aruni Wijewardena and the Indian High Commissioner to Sri Lanka Santosh Jha. Jaishankar also met PM Amarasuriya after which he posted on X along with the photos of the two leaders: "Pleased to meet PM @Dr_HariniA today. Conveyed good wishes for her new

responsibility. Discussed Digital Public Infrastructure, training and capacity building. Agreed to work together to advance our partner-

Earlier, Jaishankar met his Sri Lankan counterpart Vijitha Herath. "Concluded wide-ranging and detailed talks with FM Vijitha Herath today in Colombo. Congratulated him once again on his new responsibilities," Jaishankar posted on his X handle.

"Reviewed various dimensions of India-Sri Lanka partnership. Assured him of India's continued support to Sri Lanka's economic rebuilding. Our Neighbourhood First Policy and Sagar outlook will always guide the advancement of India-Sri Lanka ties," he added.

"Minister of Foreign Affairs Vijitha Herath welcomed visiting Indian External Affairs Minister @DrSJaishankar at @MFA_Sri-Lanka this afternoon and discussed a range of matters of mutual interest," Sri Lanka's Foreign Ministry posted on its official X handle.

In April 2022, the island nation declared its first ever sovereign default since gaining Independence from Britain in 1948. The unprecedented financial crisis led the then president Gotabaya Rajapaksa to quit office in 2022 amid civil un-

Japan's PM expresses regret for governing party slush fund scandal, vows stronger defence

TOKYO, Oct 4: New Japanese Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba opened his first policy speech in office on Friday by expressing deep regrets over the governing party's slush funds scandal that dogged

Ishiba replaced Fumio Kishida on Tuesday with the paramount mission of quickly pacifying public anger over financial misconduct in the Liberal Democratic Party and regaining support ahead of an Oct 27 parliamentary election.

"I will achieve politics that is not for politicians but for the people," Ishiba said, pledging to provide sincere explanations and ensure that lawmakers abide by the rules. He set five policy pillars to uphold, including security, economy and disaster resilience. Ishiba said he will bolster Japan's military capability to defend itself from threats from China, Russia and North Korea under the framework of the Japan-US security alliance.

He did not mention two goals he advocated before taking office — making the Japan-US security alliance more equitable and establishing a NATO-like collective defense system in Asia — apparently to avoid controversy ahead of the election that the LDP

Omitting those goals also saves him from possibly irking Washington, but may disappoint those who saw him as willing to speak up even when he risked disagreement with his own party.

Ishiba noted violations of Japanese airspace last month by Chinese and Russian warplanes and North Korea's advancing missile technology and testing as examples of the worsening security environment that Japan faces and stressed the need for a further buildup of Japan's military.

He said he will promote a "strategic, mutually beneficial relationship" with China and increase communication on all levels to build "stable and constructive" ties. He also said he will further strengthen and expand Japan's ties with South Korea and the trilateral cooperation Japan has with it and the United States.

He called the Japan-US security alliance a cornerstone of Japanese diplomacy and security as well as the foundation of peace and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific region and international society.

The first public support ratings for Ishiba as prime minister were around 50% or even lower, the lowest levels for a new leader, according to Japanese media. Opposition leaders have criticised him for rushing to hold an election after only adding a new face and fresh image to the party without any concrete results. He plans to dissolve parliament next Wednesday for an election on Oct 27, allowing only a few days of debate on his policies. (AP)

Google says it will stop linking to New Zealand news if law passes forcing it to pay for content

WELLINGTON, Oct 4: Google said on Friday it will stop linking to New Zealand news content and will reverse its support of local media outlets if the government passes a law forcing tech companies to pay for articles displayed on their platforms.

The vow to sever Google traffic to New Zealand news sites — made in a blog post by the search giant on Friday — echoes strategies the firm deployed as Australia and Canada prepared to enact similar laws in recent years. It followed a surprise announcement

by New Zealand's government in July

forcing tech platforms to strike deals for sharing revenue generated from news content with the media outlets producing it.

The government, led by centre-right National, had opposed the law in 2023 when introduced by But the loss of more than 200

the previous administra-

that lawmakers would advance a bill newsroom jobs earlier this year — in a national media industry that totalled 1,600 reporters at the 2018 census and has likely shrunk since prompted the current government to re-

consider forcing tech companies to pay publishers for displaying content. The law aims to stanch the flow offshore of advertising revenue derived from New Zealand news prod-

Director Caroline Rainsford wrote Friday that the firm would change its involvement in the country's media landscape if it passed. "Specifically, we'd be forced to stop

ucts. Google New Zealand Country

linking to news content on Google Search, Google News, or Discover surfaces in New Zealand and discontinue our current commercial agreements and ecosystem support with New Zealand news publishers," she

Google's licensing program in New Zealand contributed "millions of dol-

lars per year to almost 50 local publications," she added.

The News Publishers' Association, a New Zealand sector group, said in a written statement on Friday that Google's pledge amounted to "threats" and reflected "the kind of pressure that it has been applying" to the government and news outlets, Public Affairs Director Andrew Holden said.

The government "should be able to make laws to strengthen democracy in this country without being subjected to this kind of corporate bullying," he said. (AP)

Nobel Prizes will be announced against backdrop of wars, famine, AI Malaysian PM reaches B'desh to discuss trade, migrant workers

DHAKA, Oct 4: Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim arrived in Bangladesh's capital on Friday to meet with interim leader Muhammad Yunus, who took over in August after the former prime minister fled during a mass

Anwar's hourslong visit will focus on trade and investment, migrant workers and the Rohingya refugee crisis, officials and media reports said. Yunus received Anwar in Dhaka's Hazrat Shahjalal In-

ternational Airport where he was welcomed with gun salutes and a red carpet reception. It is the first visit by a foreign leader to Bangladesh since Yunus took over on Aug 8 after former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina fled to India. It is also the first state visit by a Malaysian leader to Bangladesh in 11 years.

Anwar, who is arriving from Pakistan, is leading a 58member delegation. Next year, Malaysia will chair the Association for Southeast Asian Nations, and Bangladesh is eager to in-

crease its trade with that region. Bangladesh is also pursuing a policy of increasingly involving ASEAN in resolving the Rohingya refugee crisis. More than 1 million Rohingya refugees from Myanmar live in camps in Bangladesh. (AP)

STAVANGER (NORWAY), Oct 4: Wars, a refugee crisis, famine and artificial intelligence could all be recognised when Nobel Prize announcements begin next week under a shroud of The prize week coincides with the Oct 7 an-

niversary of the Hamas-led attacks on Israel,

which began a year of bloodshed and war across the Middle East. The literature and science prizes could be immune. But the Peace Prize, which recognizes efforts to end conflict, will be awarded in an atmosphere of ratcheting international violence

— if awarded at all.

"I look at the world and see so much conflict. hostility and confrontation, I wonder if this is the year the Nobel Peace Prize should be withheld," said Dan Smith, director of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute.

As well as events roiling the Middle East, Smith cites the war in Sudan and risk of famine there, the ongoing conflict in Ukraine, and his institute's research showing that global military spending is increasing at its fastest pace since World War II.

"It could go to some groups which are making

heroic efforts but are marginalised," Smith said. "But the trend is in the wrong direction. Perhaps it would be right to draw attention to that by withholding the peace prize this year."

Withholding the Nobel Peace is not new. It has

been suspended 19 times in the past, including during the world wars. The last time it was not awarded was in 1972. However, Henrik Urdal, director of the Peace Research Institute Oslo, says withdrawal would be a mistake in 2024, saying the prize is "ar-

guably more important as a way to promote and recognise important work for peace". Civil grassroot groups, and international organisations with missions to mitigate violence in

the Middle East could be recognised. Nominees are kept secret for 50 years, but qualified nominators often publicise their picks. Academics at the Free University Amsterdam said they have nominated the Middle East-based organisations EcoPeace, Women Wage Peace and Women of the Sun for peace efforts between Israelis and Palestinians.

Urdal believes it's possible the committee could consider the Sudan Emergency Response Rooms, a group of grassroots initiatives provid-



ing aid to stricken Sudanese facing famine and

buffeted by the country's brutal civil war. The announcements begin Monday with the physiology or medicine prize, followed on subsequent days by the physics, chemistry, literature and peace awards. The Peace Prize announcement will be made on Friday by the Norwegian Nobel Committee in Oslo, while all the others will be announced by the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences in Stockholm. The prize in economics will be announced the following week on Oct 14.

New technology, possibly artificial intelligence, could be recognised in one or more of the

Critics of AI warn the rise of autonomous weapons shows the new technology could mean additional peace-shattering misery for many people. Yet AI has also enabled scientific breakthroughs which are tipped for recognition in other categories.

David Pendlebury, head of research analysis at Clarivate's Institute for Scientific Information, says scientists from Google Deepmind, the AI lab, could be among those under consideration for the chemistry prize.

The company's artificial intelligence, AlphaFold "accurately predicts the structure of proteins," and is already widely used in several fields, including medicine, where it could one day be used to develop a breakthrough drug. Pendlebury spearheads Clarivate's list of scientists whose papers are among the world's most cited, and whose work it says are ripe for Nobel

recognition. "AI will increasingly be a part of the panoply of tools that researchers use," Pendlebury said. He said he would be extremely surprised if a discovery "firmly anchored in AI" did not win Nobel prizes in the next 10 years. (AP)

First-of-its-kind initiative in the country aims to bring governance closer to people

New 'co-district' initiative launched across state

HT Correspondent
BISWANATH CHARIALI, Oct 4: Two co-districts under Biswanath district were inaugurated on Friday at Behali and Gohpur. The state cabinet minister for Water Resources, Parliamentary Affairs, etc., Pijush Hazarika, inaugurated the Co-District Office at Behali. Following this, minister Hazarika addressed a public gathering at the Borgang auditorium. In his address, minister Hazarika briefly outlined various developmental and welfare schemes undertaken by the state and central governments. He further added that the introduction of 'co-districts' will bring administrative reforms and expedite both government and public works. Munindra Nath Nagatey, district commissioner of Biswanath, delivered a welcome address, and the event was also addressed by Tezpur MP Ranjit Dutta. The inaugural session was attended by Biswanath MLA Pramod Borthakur, Kamalpur MLA Diganta Kalita, Biswanath SP Subhasish Barua, former minister Prabin Hazarika, along with other officials and dignitaries.

Meanwhile, the state cabinet minister for Power, Sports & Youth Welfare, etc., Nandita Gorlosa, inaugurated the co-district at Gohpur and addressed the public at the Gohpur Parade Ground. Lukumani Bora, SDO of Gohpur, delivered a welcome address, and the event was attended and addressed by Gohpur MLA Utpal Bora and others.

The foundation stone of Bedeti Model College was laid by Dr Ranoj Pegu, minister of Education, Welfare of Plain Tribe & Backward Classes, at Bedeti. In connection with this, a public meeting was addressed by minister Pegu, MP Ranjit Dutta, and minister Pijush Hazarika.

Later, the co-district for the Naduar LAC under Sonitpur district was inaugurated by the state cabinet minister for Water Resources, Parliamentary Affairs, etc., at Kusumtola in the presence of Naduar LAC MLA Padma Hazarika and other dignitaries. The inaugural session was attended by Naduar MLA Padma Hazarika, Kamalpur MLA Diganta Kalita, Sonitpur district commissioner Ankur Bharali, and Sonitpur SP Barun Purakayastha, along with other officials and dignitaries. It is



worth mentioning that Naduar LAC, formerly known as Sootea LAC, was selected for the 'co-district' facility out of the five LACs in Sonitpur district.

Our Margherita correspondent adds: Margherita sub-division, on Friday, got its new name as the Co-District Commissioner Office, which was inaugurated by state government's minister of Industries, Commerce, Public Enterprises, Cultural Affairs, and Tinsukia district guardian, Bimal Bora, in the presence of Margherita MLA Bhaskar Sharma, Tinsukia district commissioner Swapneel Paul (IAS), Margherita co-district commissioner Prakshit Thoudam (IAS), Margherita co-district police officer Sambhavi Mishra (IPS), Margherita Municipal Board chairman Anand Kumar Sharma, other senior government officials, and many prominent and distinguished individuals from the Margherita region.

Margherita co-district commissioner Prakshit Thoudam, in his welcome address, stated that since 1884, when the Assam Railway and Trading Company was established, Margherita has become an important center for business, trade, and communication.

"Margherita was named after the Italian Queen 'Margaret' and is rich in human, mineral, water, and forest resources, with many ethnic groups living together in harmony, brotherhood, and peace for centuries. The Margherita Co-District Commissioner Office will focus on further developing the surrounding areas, marking the beginning of a new era," said Prakshit Thoudam.

Bimal Bora also planted a sapling on the campus of the Margherita Co-District Commissioner Office.

In his speech, Bimal Bora mentioned that it is a great day for the people of the 83rd Margherita Constituency, as the Margherita sub-division office will now be known as the Margherita Co-District Commissioner Office. This was made possible due to the able leadership of the dynamic chief minister, Himanta Biswa Sarma, under whose initiative a total of 39 co-districts have been formed in Assam in the first phase.

Our Jorhat correspondent adds: State minister for Finance, Women and Child Development, Ajanta Neog, who is also the

guardian minister of Jorhat district, on Friday inaugurated the Office of the Co-District Commissioner of the newly formed Titabar co-district at Titabar in Jorhat district.

Titabar, which was earlier a civil sub-division, is among 39 co-districts across the state, many of which have formally been made operational on Friday and the rest will be made operational on Saturday.

After inaugurating the Co-District Office within the Titabar SDO (Civil) Office complex, Neog, while addressing the gathering at the inaugural ceremony, said that constituting 'co-districts' within existing districts was a novel initiative of CM Himanta Biswa Sarma-led government and the first in the country, with an aim to decentralise district

Stating that the initiative was another step for the government to bring the government closer to the people, the minister said that codistricts will ensure the implementation of "our government vision of minimum government, maximum governance".

Citing the benefits of the 'co-districts', Neog said that people residing within the codistrict areas would now not have to visit the district headquarters for matters related to land, MLA funds, untied funds, or the implementation of government schemes, etc. They will be facilitated by the offices of the heads of co-districts.

Stating that a slew of essential services will be provided by the co-district administration, the minister said a co-district will have administrative control over all departments within its jurisdiction. She said that the codistrict commissioners will have magisterial powers for granting permission for events,

functions, fairs, etc. Earlier, Jorhat district commissioner Jay Shivani delivered the welcome address. MLAs of Mariani and Titabar - Rupjyoti Kurmi and Bhaskar Jyoti Baruah, respectively, Jorhat SP Shwetank Mishra, officials of Jorhat district and Titabar co-district administrations, and noted citizens attended the programme.

They will also deal with matters pertaining to food and civil supplies, excise, and disaster

BTC chief Pramod Boro distributes land pattas in Chirang



HT Correspondent

KOKRAJHAR, Oct 4: With a view to enhancing land accessibility and security for residents, Pramod Boro, the chief executive member of the Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR), presided over the ceremonial distribution of land settlement certificates, providing land pattas to 1,886 eligible beneficiaries from the Bijni, Sidli, and Bengtol Revenue Circles of Chirang district on Friday.

Speaking at the programme, the CEM of BTR, Pramod Boro, emphasised the significance of land, stating, "Land is not just a resource: it is the very essence of our existence. It offers shelter, security, and a foundation for our livelihoods. Today, we take a crucial step forward in empowering our citizens by ensuring they have rightful access to land." He also underscored the BTR government's commitment to resolving land reform issues, noting that over 1,40,000 residents have already received land pattas in the BTR region. Notably, the BTC is the first

Sixth Schedule Council in the country to have digitised all land documents, streamlining access for its citizens.

MP Rwngwra Narzary praised the BTR government's land reform initiatives, highlighting their positive impact on many citizens. He assured that the BTC government will continue promoting the distribution of land pattas moving forward.

MLA of Bijni, Ajoy Kumar Ray, praised the government's initiatives in land settlement, while BTC EM Ranjit Basumatary encouraged those without land to come forward and apply for land pattas. He emphasised that the government has reduced the premium payable for land pattas, providing significant relief to the people of BTR.

The distribution programme was attended by BTC EM Wilson Hasda, MČLA Madhav Chetry, BTC secretary Dhiraj Saud, and other dignitaries, all of whom reaffirmed their support for the ongoing efforts of the BTC to enhance land accessibility and security for

Drug-addict sets fire on house

HT Correspondent MORIGAON, Oct 4: A drug addict, identified as Rafikul Islam, also known as Tampu, was caught by the public and handed over to a de-addiction center after he allegedly set fire to his own house at Moirabari Bazar on Thursday night, creating tension in the area. According to reports, Rafikul became enraged when he was unable to obtain drugs, ransacked his house, and set it on fire. He had been on the run since the incident, but was apprehended by locals upon returning to his courtyard and immediately taken to the de-addiction center.

Teacher arrested for alleged 'cash for job' scheme

HT Correspondent
NAGAON, Oct 4: Moon Bora, a government teacher at Pub Siloni Muktab School, Nagaon, was arrested on Friday for alleged involvement in collecting money from some unemployed youths in exchange for government jobs.

Some local youths lodged complaints at Nagaon Sadar Police Station a couple of days ago, and the police registered a case under Sections 61(2)/118(4)/308(2) of the BNS in this regard, sources said. Following an investigation into the case, Nagaon police, under the supervision of ASP (Crime), Nagaon, Partha Pratim Saikia, arrested him.

The arrested teacher was being questioned at Nagaon Police Station at the time of filing this report, sources added. It was reported that the arrested teacher was a member of one of the ruling alliance parties in the state and was also a close associate of several high-profile min-

Dibrugarh to host International Dance Festival

HT Correspondent

DIBRUGARH, Oct 4: For the first time, the India International Dance Festival will be held in Dibrugarh on October 6 at the District Library auditorium. The international dance festival will be organised by the India International Dance Festival Forum in association with Aharya Production and Nupoor Kala Academy.

IIDF chief convenor Minakhee Gogoi said, "For the first time, the India International Dance Festival will be organised in Dibrugarh on October 6. Participants from West Bengal, Karnataka, Kerala, and Delhi will take part in the festival. Local participants from different districts of Assam have also enrolled for the dance festival."

"On October 5, a workshop on Odissi dance will be conducted by Dr Pompi Paul, an Odissi dancer from West Bengal. The workshop will be organised in connection with the international dance festival," Gogoi added.

UPPL welcomes 1,300 new members in Kokrajhar

HT Correspondent

KOKRAJHAR, Oct 4: The ruling United People's Party Liberal (UPPL) is gaining popularity among the people across the Bodoland region. More than 1300 new members joined the UPPL party on Friday at a grand joining programme held at Banargaon playground in Kokrajhar district.

The newly joined members, who came from various political parties and social organisations, including BPF and Congress, were warmly welcomed and felicitated with party scarves.

Pramod Boro, the chief executive member of Bodoland Territorial Region and UPPL president, along with party general secretaries Raju Kumar Narzary, Madhab Chandra Chetry, BTR executive members Ranjit Basumatary, Ukil Mushahary, Wilson Hasda, MLA Lawrence Islary, and several senior party leaders, graced the event and welcomed the new mem-

CEM Pramod Boro stated that the people of the Bodoland region have been placing their trust and faith in the UPPL. He said that the UPPL is the party of choice for people across all communities.

"I am immensely happy to welcome 1300+ new members who joined United People's Party Liberal (UPPL) at the grand joining ceremony organised by UPPL's Banargaon block committee. In just 4 years, we have already surpassed all the work done in the past 17 years. We have established peace in BTR, resolved over 1,43,000 land-related issues through initiatives like BTR Land Melas and Mission Bwiswmuthi 1.0, built 2,26,000 PMAY (G) homes, and have introduced transformative schemes rooted in UPPL's principles of Peace, Progress, Equality, and Justice. Our track record speaks for itself, which is why the people of BTR are joining us in such large numbers," CEM Boro

NAAC Peer team visits Darrang College for accreditation assessment

HT Correspondent

TEZPUR, Oct 4: A three-member National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) Peer Team headed by Prof Ram Chandra Gowda Muninarayana, former vice chancellor of Rani Channamma University, Karnataka, as chairman, arrived at Darrang College here on Friday with a two-day programme for the Accreditation of the College. The team also included Dr Sasi Kanta Dash, principal of Bharathidasan Government College for Women, Puducherry, as member coordinator, and Dr Fathima PA, principal of Abr College of Arts, Science & Commerce, Kerala, as member. The quantitative metrics of the accreditation process have already been completed with the assessment of the Institutional Information for Quality Assessment (IIQA) and the

Self-Study Report (SSR) submitted online by the College to NAAC. As part of the first-day programme, interacting with the principal of the college, Dr Polashmani Saikia, and the coordinator of the IQAC Cell, Dr Swapnali Kakati, the NAAC Peer Team visited various departments, other establishments, and facilities on the college campus to verify, validate, assess, and score the institution concerning the qualitative metrics as described by the organisation in its Self-Study Report (SSR) and interacted with faculty, staff, and the stakeholders of the college. This was followed by an interaction programme with alumni of the college, in which a large number of former students attended and interacted with the team.

The Peer Team expressed their happiness regarding the high participation of alumni, which they said was unique in comparison to several other institutions. The Peer Team was also greeted with a cultural programme on the first day, where students of the college performed folk dances, Borgeet, Sattriya dances, songs of Kalaguru Bishnu Prasad Rabha and Dr Bhupen Hazarika, along with dances, Bihu dance, Biya Naam, and other enthralling cultural programmes.

The interaction programme with the alumni was attended by noted alumni of the college, retired professor Mahendra Nath Keot, retired professor Purneswar Nath, noted lawyer Iske Alam, and Jamini Kumar Baishya, retired professor Dr Gahan Chandra Mahanta. Dr Dharmendra Kumar Sarma, assistant professor of Rangapara College Anubha Agarwala,

World Rabies Week observed in West Karbi Anglong



HT Correspondent
HAMREN, Oct 4: To mark World Rabies Week 2024, a district-level awareness meeting was organised at Hamren Sub-Divisional Civil Hospital (SDCH) in West Karbi Anglong district on Friday. The event, attended by prominent healthcare professionals and officials, aimed to raise awareness about rabies prevention and control. Dr Jagat Sing Teron, joint director of Health Services, Hamren, emphasised the importance of

Debate competition HT Correspondent

DEMOW, Oct 4: Under the patronage of the social organisation 'Suraksha' and the Nitaipukhuri Branch Sahitya Sabha, the Wave of Words 3.0, in memory of Mangal Deori and Puneswar Chetia, will organise an All Assam Inter-Educational Institute Debate Competition at the Nitaipukhuri Public Building on October 19, 2024. The topic, in the opinion of the house, is 'The widespread application of Artificial Intelligence poses significant threats to democracy and societal life'.

vention after exposure to the virus. "Rabies is a deadly disease, but it can be prevented with proper awareness and vaccination. We must work together to eliminate rabies from our community," he said. Dr Altaf Hussain, superintendent of Hamren SDCH, highlighted the hospital's efforts in providing quality healthcare services, including rabies prevention.

Other dignitaries present included Dr Montu Kumar Shyam,

Teronpi, M&HO-1, BAM, DDM, epidemiologist, AAM, microbiologist, DME, and staff nurses of Hamren SDCH. The awareness meeting stressed the importance of community engagement and intersectoral collaboration in eliminating rabies. It is worth mentioning that World Rabies Week is observed from September 28 to October 4. Rabies claims over 59,000 human lives

District-level art competition held in Biswanath



HT Correspondent

BISWANATH CHARIALI, Oct 4: The District Child Protection Unit, Biswanath, in collaboration with Child Helpline, Biswanath, organised a district-level art competition on the theme 'Child marriage, child labour', along with an essay competition and a poster-making competition on the topic 'Negative impacts of child marriage and child labour in society' at the auditorium of Biswanath College of Education, Biswanath Chariali, stated a press release. A total of 80 students from various educational institutions in the greater Biswanath Chariali area participated in the event. A signature campaign was also organised by the District Child Protection Unit, Biswanath, to raise awareness about child protection mechanisms. All the guests from various departments and participants joined the signature campaign. An exhibition-cum-mela was also organised, where handmade bags, stands, folders, diyas, papad, namkeens, and various food items by the inmates of Gramin Child Care Institution were displayed.

The event was graced by the presence of several guests, including Munindra Nath Ngatey, ACS, DC, Biswanath, Dhrubajyoti Das, ACS, ADC, Pratishaa Dutta, ACS, EO, Puspankar Patir, ACS, assistant commissioner, Ankur Pathak, district sports officer, Moti Kr Newar, chairperson, Welfare Committee, district child protection officer, Child Welfare Committee member, principal of Biswanath College of Education, officials from the District Child Protection Unit and Child Helpline, Biswanath, representatives from the District Team Poshan and DHEW, along with all block officials of Biswanath ICDS.

NFR transforms discontinued coaches into dining spots, offering a unique culinary experience for travellers & locals 16 Rail coach restaurants now operational across NFR

GUWAHATI, Oct 4: Aiming to provide a unique dining ambiance to passengers, NF Railway has been opening Rail Coach Restaurants across its major stations. These restaurants have been opened strategically in vacant spaces in the circulating area, providing a dining opportunity for both rail passengers and the general public. NF Railway has modified some of its discontinued coaches, which are not fit for train operations, into coach restaurants. These Rail Coach Restaurants have gained popularity among travellers and the pub-

As of now, 16 coach restaurants are operational across major stations of NF Railway, providing rail passengers and the general public with a unique dining experience. Under Katihar Division, two coach restaurants have been set up each











restaurant is operational each at Guwahati and Lumding stations in Lumding Division, and one at New Tinsukia station in Tinsukia Divi-The coach restaurants are designed with an aesthetic and beau-

tions. Additionally, one coach

tifully heritage look, giving a touch of local culture to attract travellers. Passengers can enjoy a quick yet delightful meal before or after their journey. Passersby and nearby residents can also enjoy dining with family and friends, experiencing the thrill of eating in train coaches. There will be facilities to buy food, snacks, and beverages at the coach restaurants. These restaurants aim to cater to the needs of passengers and the public while also generating non-fare revenue for the railways. This initiative by NF Railway is also expected to create employment opportunities for both

skilled and unskilled workers.

People of Haryana will strike blow to break 'chakravyuh' of PM's 'crony capitalist' policies: Rahul

NEW DELHI, Oct 4: Alleging that the BJP has "failed" the economy in Haryana, Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Friday said the people of the state will soon strike the next blow to break the 'chakravyuh' of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's "crony capitalist policies"

He also alleged that the "disease of unemployment" spread by the BJP has put the future of the state's youth in "deep danger" and a Congress government will ensure that employment returns and every family is prosperous.

Gandhi shared on X a video of his interaction with a group of women during his recent Vijay Sankaln Yatra

Along with the video, he said in his post in Hindi on X, "The disease of unemployment spread by BJP has put the roots of Haryana, the future of the youth and the security of the state in deep danger."

"Some sisters of Haryana gave shelter during the Vijay Sankalp Yatra, fed homemade rotis with great love and also explained the complex problems of the state." Gandhi said.

Today, Haryana has the highest unemployment in India, he said.

"The reason for this is - BJP has broken the backbone of every system that provides employment to the youth of the state in a decade," he allored

The BJP has broken the back of small businesses with flawed GST and demonetisation, Gandhi said.

It has broken the spirits of youth preparing for the army with Agniveer, he said.

The BJP has broken the courage of those doing agricultural business with black laws and broke the dreams of sportspersons by snatching their support, Gandhi further alleged.

It has broken families by stopping government



recruitment with 'Parivar Pehchan Patra', he said.

"The result of this: Youth talent getting wasted in the grip of drugs. Disappointed youth taking the path of crime. Families getting destroyed by the journey of dangers like Dunki," he said.

The Congress government coming to power in the state will provide 2 lakh permanent jobs and make Haryana drug free, he said.

"I have promised the sisters of Haryana that I will stop this devastation, I will protect their children - employment will return, and every family will be prosperous," Gandhi asserted.

In another post on X, the former Congress chief recalled that he recently spoke about delicious jalebis in Gohana and the opportunity to sell them more widely.

India has 5,500 clusters of similar small producers who can market their products to the world if given the right support, he said.

They need policies to provide them with finance, technology, networks, branding and better organisation, Gandhi stressed.

"With this support, the world can enjoy not only our mithai but apples from Sopore, jeans from Ballari, Kolhapuri chappals, pineapples from Meghalaya, makhana from Bihar, brassware from Moradabad and many more. The global success of Banarsi saris is a great example of what is possible," he said. (PTI)

GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF SURVEYS, (HILL CELL), DIPHU, K/A. Dated Diphy the 15

No. HC.87/2013-14/263

Dated Diphu the 1st Oct'2024.

TENDER NOTICE

Sealed tender affixing Non-refundable KAAC court (receipt) of Rs. 10/- (Rupees ten) only/- eventually to be drawn up hereby invited From KAAC registered contractor/reputed firms and will be received by the undersigned upto 4:00 PM or on 07/10/2024 and will be opened on the same date. Place and the hours in presence of the renderers on their authorized agent, if any. If the day of the opening of tender happens to be any holiday/Non working day the tender will be opened in the next day. The undersigned has the right to accept reject any tender without any reason thereof and will not be bound to accept the lowest tender quoted.

SI.	Group	Name of Works	Estimate	Earn	est		Time	of
No.	No.		Amounts	Mon	Money			for
			(Rs. In				complet	tion
			Lakhs)				E	
1.	Α	Construction of Boulder with Brick wall in the Asstt.	30.00 L	ST	@	1%	4(Four)	1
		Director of Surveys, (Hill Cell), Diphu.		Gene	eral @	2%	Months	
2.	В	Construction of Asstt. Director of Surveys official	32.00 L	-do-			4(Four)	
		Quarter Assam Type with Bathroom and Electric					Months	i
		fitting & fixing etc. in the Asstt. Director of Surveys,						
		(Hill Cell), Diphu.						
3.	С	Construction of Boundary Brick wall with Boulder	14.00L	-do-			3(Three)
		Pitching in the Asstt. Director of Surveys,(Hill Cell),					Months	1
		Diphu.						
4.	D	Construction of Garage at Inspection Bungalow in the	10.00 L	-do-	1		3(Three)
		Asstt. Director of Surveys,(Hill Cell), Diphu.					Months	

Details tender documents may be obtained from the Asstt. Director of Surveys, (Hill Cell), Diphu during working hours.

Terms and condition:-

- The raw to be quoted as % (Percent) above/below as per Schedule rate for Building/works etc. for all division under APWO for the year 201314.
- 2. Earnest money should be deposit In favour of the undersigned in the form of call Deposit/Bank Draft and should be attached with the tender without which no tender will be accepted.
- 3. The rate must be carried on as directed by the EE (W), KAAC/KAAC authority.

Sd/-

Asstt. Director of Surveys, (Hill Cell), Diphu

Heightened activities in Cong as Siddaramaiah faces rising political heat over MUDA case

BENGALURU, Oct 4: With Chief Minister Siddaramaiah facing rising political heat over a probe against him in the MUDA case, the Congress party in Karnataka is witnessing heightened political activities behind the scenes with a section of leaders seeking to position themselves in the event of his exit.

Amid demands by the BJP and JD(S) for his resignation over the MUDA (Mysuru Urban Development Authority) 'scam', the Chief Minister has repeatedly asserted in recent days that he won't quit as he hasn't done anything wrong and would fight the case legally.

The Lokayukta police and the Directorate of Enforcement (ED) have initiated separate investigations against Siddaramaiah and others into the alleged irregularities in the allotment of 14 sites to his wife Parvathi B M by the MUDA.

Senior leaders and Ministers G Parameshwara, H C Mahadevappa (both from SC communities) and Satish Jarkiholi (ST) met recently, fueling speculations about their collective strategy in case

the party high command opts for leadership change over the 'scam' which has cast a shadow over the 16-month-old Siddaramaiah government. Earlier, Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar, who is also the state party chief, also had separate

meetings with Parameshwara and Jarkiholi.

"Parameshwara and Shivakumar are seen to be front-runners for the top post in case Siddaramaiah

is forced to go," a senior party leader said.

Jarkiholi has said in the past that he will be in the race for CM's post only in 2028 when the next Assembly elections are due in Karnataka.

The Congress leadership has backed Siddaramaiah on the MUDA issue and sees no reason for his resignation. The ruling party has accused the BJP of misusing the central agencies and the Governor's office to destabilise an elected government. Leaders such as R V Deshapande and M B Patil have openly aired their Chief Ministerial aspirations adding to the discomfiture of the ruling dispensation but some in the party see nothing wrong in that. (PTI)

BJP eyes hat-trick, Cong a comeback after a decade as Haryana votes today

CHANDIGARH, Oct 4: The fate of Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini, Bhupinder Singh Hooda and Vinesh Phogat of the Congress besides JJP's Dushyant Chautala and 1027 other candidates will be decided on Saturday as elections to the 90-member Haryana assembly will be held with over 2 crore people eligible to vote.

The ruling BJP is eyeing a hat-trick of wins in the state while the Congress is hoping to make a comeback after a decade. Counting of votes will be held on October 8.

Haryana's Chief Electoral Officer Pankaj Agarwal said 2,03,54,350 voters, including 8,821 centurions, are eligible to exercise their franchise and the voting will be held from 7 am to 6 pm.

A total of 1,031 candidates are contesting in all 90 assembly constituencies, including 101 women. Among these candidates, 464 are contesting as independent.

A total of 20,632 polling booths have been set up for voting,

Agarwal said on Friday.

The key contesting parties in the fray are BJP, Congress,

AAP, INLD-BSP and JJP-Azad Samaj Party.

The high-octane campaign came to an end Thursday evening. The BJP's campaign was spearheaded by Prime Minister Narendra Modi who addressed four rallies, where he attacked the Congress on several issues and said they kept every matter important for the country entangled, including the Ram temple issue.

He also said corruption runs in veins of the Congress and alleged it has "turned into a party of 'dalals' (middlemen) and 'damad' (son-in-law)".

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi also addressed many public meetings where he asserted that a "Congress storm" is on its way in Haryana and his party would form the government which will be one for the poor and farmers, and a 'mohabbat ki dukan' will be opened in every corner of the state.

In the previous assembly polls in 2019, the BJP had won 40 seats, the Congress 31 and JJP 10.

The Congress has left the Bhiwani assembly seat for its INDIA bloc partner CPI(M) while the BJP is not contesting the Sirsa seat, from where Haryana Lokhit Party chief Gopal Kanda is seeking re-election.

Most seats are likely to see a direct fight between the BJP and the Congress.

Prominent among those in fray include Chief Minister Saini (Ladwa), Leader of Opposition Hooda (Garhi Sampla-Kiloi), INLD's Abhay Singh Chautala (Ellenabad), JJP's Dushyant Chautala (Uchana Kalan), BJP's Anil Vij (Ambala Cantt), Capt Abhimanyu (Narnaund) and O P Dhankar (Badli), AAP's Anurag Dhanda (Kalayat) and Congress's Phogat (Julana).

From Tosham seat, former MP Shruti Choudhry of BJP and Anirudh Chaudhary, both cousins, are contesting. (PTI)

GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR (HILLS) PANCHAYAT AND RURAL DEVERLOPMENT DIPHU, KARBI ANGLONG

No. PDDHE 02/Filling up of Posts/2023-24/610

Dated: Diphu the 3rd Oct 2004

ADVERTISEMENT

In pursuance of the Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council, Diphu Approval Letter vide No- KAAC/Esstt-94 (Pt-I)/PRD/P(B)/2016-17/56, Dtd. - 28th Aug' 2024, application in prescribe Standard Form with all testimonials and KAAC Cash Receipt of Rs. 10/- in case of ST/SC and Rs. 20/- for General Category are invited from eligible candidates who are citizen of India as defined in the Article 5 & 8 of the Constitution of India, for filling up of the following Vacant Sanctioned posts of Grade III & Grade IV as mentioned below of The Panchayat and Rural Development Department, Karbi Anglong & West Karbi Anglong Districts, both in CD and RD Wing. The last date of submission of application form is on 19th October' 2024 upto 3:00 PM in the office of the undersigned. The date of Written Test/ Viva-voce/ Interview will be intimated later on.

SI.	Name of the Posts	No. of	Scale of Pay	Pay	Grade	Qualification and Experience (as per Govt. norms)
No.		Post		Band	Pay	
1	Junior Assistant	1 (One)	14000-60500	PB-2	6200	H.S. passed with Computer Diploma of at least 1 (One) year. (Having
	(L.D.A.)					good knowledge of MS Word, Excel, etc.)
2	Gram Sevak	10 (Ten)	14000-60500	PB-2	6200	H.S. passed with Computer Diploma of at least 6 (six) months.
						(Having good knowledge of MS Word, Excel, etc.)
3	Giram Sevika	2 (Two)	14000-60500	PB-2	6200	-DO-
4	Peon	4 (Four)	12000-37500	PB-1	3900	Preferably Class X Passed
	on the production registers.			200		

General Instructions

- 1. Duly filled application must be addressed to the Deputy Director (Hills), Panchayat and Rural Development, Diphu, Karbi Anglong.
- 2. AGE: The age of the applicant should not be less than 18 years and not more than 38 years as on 01-01-2024 (Relaxation for ST/SC applicant as per Govt. rules).
- 3. Self-attested copies of certificates regarding Qualifications, Age, Caste, Employment Exchange Registration, 2 (two) copies of recent Passport size photograph, etc must be enclosed along with the form.
- 4. The envelope containing application form along with complete testimonials must be superscribed as "Application for the post of Jr. Asstt. (LDA), Gram Sevak/ Gram Sevika" and "Application for the post of Peon" to be submitted.

 5. Application received either hymost or hydrony after the lost data of submission will not be accounted and application are submission.
- 5. Application received either by post or by hand, after the last date of submission will not be accepted under any circumstances.
- $6. \ In complete \ and \ defective \ application \ will \ be \ summarily \ rejected.$
- 7. No T.A/D.A. will be provided for the purpose.
- 8. The undersigned reserves all the rights to enhance or reduce the posts and also cancel/postponed the interview at any time without assigning any reason thereof and intimation to the candidate.

Sd/-Deputy Director (Hills) Panchayat and Rural Development, Diphu, Karbi Anglong

Memo: PDDHE. 02/Filling up of Posts/2023-24/610

Dated: Diphu the 3rd Oct 2024

Tripura Cong demands white paper on recent militant surrender

AGARTALA, Oct 4: The Tripura Pradesh Congress on Friday demanded a white paper from the state government regarding the recent surrender ceremony of NLFT and ATTF cadres, along with detailed information. They also urged the government to announce a package for those displaced due to past insurgency activities.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 5, 2024

Addressing a press conference, Tripura Pradesh Congress President Asish Kumar Saha stated that the Congress fully supports steps taken for

"On September 4, a peace pact was signed with NLFT and ATTF, and a large number of cadres surrendered on the 14th of the month. After the BJP formed the government, then Chief Minister Biplab Kumar Deb declared that terrorist activities had been completely eradicated from the state. There is no presence of terrorism, and the current Chief Minister, Prof. Dr. Manik Saha, has also acknowledged this," he

Saha pointed out that, over the past

few years, people have not witnessed insurgency activities. However, all of a but no package has been provided for sudden, 584 cadres of NLFT and ATTF the flood-affected people," he said. surrendered. "At a time when around Saha further demanded that the state 20 lakh people were affected by floods,

causing losses amounting to more than

₹ 15,000 crore, there has been no sig-

nificant response from the state or cen-

tral government. Moreover, the number

of arms surrendered was far less than

the number of individuals who surren-

dered. No one knows what kind of in-

in. Despite this, a massive package was

surgency activities they were involved

government publish a white paper on the recent surrender of insurgents. He emphasized that many people were killed, displaced, or lost their livelihoods due to insurgency, yet there has been no relief or resettlement package for them. "We are demanding resettlement and a package for those who were displaced during the insurgency," he

Army to organise Walong Day in honour of fallen heroes

ITANAGAR, Oct 4: The Indian Army is all set to commemorate the 62nd Walong Day with a series of grand events, paying homage to the indomitable courage and sacrifice of the soldiers who fought valiantly during the Battle of Walong in the 1962 Sino-Indian War.

The celebrations are set to begin on October 17 with a solemn opening ceremony and wreath-laving at the Walong War Memorial, the place of remembrance of the brave hearts who laid down their lives defending the country.

The day will not just be a tribute to the past but a vibrant celebration of the gallant spirit of the Indian Army, a defence communique said here on Friday.

The month-long events are designed to both commemorate the past and to engage the local community and promote nation-

লাগতিয়াল নথিসমূহ-

২। শিক্ষা ও বয়সৰ প্ৰমাণ-পত্ৰ।

যোগে জনোৱা হ'ব

উক্ত কাৰ্যালয়ত জমা দিবলৈ অনুৰোধ জনোৱা হ'ল।

৩। ইউনিফৰ্ম পৰিহিত পাছপ'ৰ্ট আকাৰৰ ফটো ২ (দুই) কপি।

১। উক্ত প্ৰ-পত্ৰ সংগ্ৰহ আৰু জমা দিয়াৰ বাবে কোনো মাচুলৰ প্ৰয়োজন নাই। ২। প্ৰ-পত্ৰ জমা দিয়াৰ সময়ত মূল কপিসমূহ লগত আনিব লাগিব।

Date of

Interview

09.10.2024

Samagra Shiksha

PUBLIC NOTICE

Time of

Interview

9.30 am

onwards

৩। শাৰীৰিক স্বাস্থ্য ইত্যাদিৰ যোগ্যতা নিৰূপণৰ বাছনিৰ দিন আৰু তাৰিখৰ বিষয়ে পৰৱৰ্তী জাননী

PUBLIC NOTICE

Time of

Interview

9.30 am

onwards

Nos. of

candidates

SI 1 to SI 31

Nos. of

candidates

SI 1 to SI

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

General Firm / Supplier of the estimated value in the form of Bank Draft / Banker's Cheque in favour of the Joint Director.

Women & Child Dev., B.T.C, Kokrajhar. The NIT will be opened on the same day at 3:00 P.M. in presence of Suppliers in

Firms or their authorized representative. In the event of any Holiday, same time on the next working day shall be taken in to

Sd/-Mission Director

Samagra Shiksha Axom

Kahilipara, Guwahati-19

Sd/-Mission Director

Samagra Shiksha Axom

Kahilipara, Guwahati-19

১। গৃহৰক্ষী বুনিয়াদী প্ৰশিক্ষণৰ প্ৰমাণ-পত্ৰ।

৪। আধাৰ কাৰ্ড আৰু বেংক পাছবুকৰ প্ৰথম পৃষ্ঠা।

Janasanyog/D/6952/24/5-Oct-24

The month-long celebrations include battlefield treks, car rally, medical and veterinary camps. adventure treks, cycle and motorcycle expedition and the half marathon finishing at Walong. Each event symbolizes the indomitable spirit of the Indian Army and its dedication to keep the memory of the fallen heroes alive, it said.

The Indian Army's involvement in the Battle of Walong stands as a testament to the sheer bravery, dedication and an unwavering spirit of its soldiers.

Facing severe logistical challenges in the harsh terrains of Arunachal Pradesh, the soldiers of the 6 Kumaon, 4 Sikh, 2/8 Gorkha Rifles, 3/3 Gorkha Rifles and 4 Dogra fought with unparalleled gallantry, making the enemy pay dearly for every inch

ইয়াৰ দ্বাৰা কাৰ্বি আংলং আৰু পশ্চিম কাৰ্বি আংলং হামৰেণ (নগৰ/গ্ৰাম্য) জিলাৰ গৃহৰক্ষী

বাহিনীৰ ৫৫ বছৰ বয়সৰ অনুৰ্ধ স্বেচ্ছাসেৱক/স্বেচ্ছাসেৱিকাসকলক জনোৱা হয় যে যিসকল গৃহৰক্ষীৰ

প্ৰশিক্ষণৰ প্ৰমাণ-পত্ৰৰ ম্যাদ নাই বা তেওঁলোকে যদি পুনৰ গৃহৰক্ষী স্বেচ্ছাসেৱক/স্বেচ্ছাসেৱিকা

হিচাপে আগন্তুক ৩ (তিনি) বছৰৰ বাবে সেৱা আগবঢ়াবলৈ ইচ্ছুক সেইসকল গৃহৰক্ষীক অসম গৃহৰক্ষী

Their courage, even in the face of overwhelming odds, remains etched in the annals of Indian military history.

The upcoming events reflect the Army's commitment to not only remember the sacrifices of the past but also to engage with the local community, fostering a spirit of unity, resilience, and patriotism.

As the celebrations unfold, the Indian Army invites everyone to gear up and join them with renewed 'iosh' to celebrate their hard work, to honour the legacy of those who made the supreme sacrifice and commemorate their contributions towards the nation.

The day promises to be a heartfelt tribute to the heroes of Walong, ensuring that their stories of bravery continue to inspire the nation, the communique added. (PTI)

জিলা অধিনায়ক গৃহৰক্ষী বাহিনীৰ কাৰ্যালয়

কার্বি আংলং, ডিফ

Venue

State Mission

Office,

Samagra

Shiksha Axom

Venue

State Mission

Office, Samagra

Shiksha Axom

UNC temporarily suspends proposed bandh

Congress president K Meghachandra on Friday demanded an inquiry into the Ukhrul violence which led to the looting of arms from a police station and accused the Manipur govern-

ment of being suppliers of

arms to the people. A mob stormed a police station in Ukhrul town on Wednesday and looted arms during a clash between two groups in which four persons were killed and 20 others injured in a gunfight over cleaning a disputed land in the town as part of

'Swachhata Abhiyan' Meghachandra told reporters, "Manipur government has become suppliers of arms to miscreants as seen in Ukhrul violence when mobs looted yet another police station" and asked "why government weapons looted from police stations whenever violence breaks out. We are not going to call it looting but

IMPHAL, Oct 4: Manipur we are calling it as supplying of arms.

He alleged that the district administration and home department failed to quell the violence in time.

Meghachandra also demanded an inquiry to find out who was responsible for the outbreak of violence in Ukhrul and find out if there was any intelligence failure.

Meanwhile, AICC secretary and Manipur co-incharge Christopher Tilak said, "The violence in the state is a man-made crisis.' Tilak said, "The economy

of the state is at a complete standstill because of the violence that started last year. The future of youth is a big question mark. Agriculture which is the main source of employment has fallen into deep crisis and so is the health and financial situa-

Tilak claimed that the double-engine government is not "functioning prop-

সংশোধনী আইন ২০১৫ অনুসৰি কাৰ্বি আংলং জিলাৰ ডিফু গৃহৰক্ষী বাহিনীৰ কাৰ্যালয়ৰ পৰা প্ৰ-পত্ৰ সংগ্ৰহ কৰি নিম্ন উল্লেখিত নথি-পত্ৰ (আত্মপ্ৰত্যায়িত কপি) সহ অহা ইং ১৬-১০-২০২৪ তাৰিখৰ পৰা Sikkim observes first anniversary ইং ১৫-১১-২০২৪ তাৰিখলৈ কাৰ্যালয় খোলা দিনত দিনৰ ১০ বজাৰ পৰা বিয়লি ২ বজাৰ ভিতৰত of glacial lake outburst that claimed over 40 lives



GANGTOK, Oct 4: Sikkim Chief Minister Prem Singh Tamang on Friday observed the first anniversary of the glacial lake outburst flood, which claimed over

40 lives in the state. we observe this solemn day marking the tragedy of October 4, we take a moment to honour the memory of those who lost their lives and acknowledge the families whose lives were forever changed," Tamang said in a social

media post. The CM expressed his solidarity with those still grappling with grief, while also recognising the resilience and strength of survivors and the communities

affected by the disaster. "In times of profound sorrow, we are reminded of the enduring power of unity, compassion, and hope. While words may never fully capture the magnitude of our collective loss, we stand together in solidarity, offering unwavering support and heartfelt remembrance,'

Tamang extended his gratitude to the central government for its steadfast

support during the crisis. He also thanked the Indian Army, Border Roads Organisation (BRO), National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), State Disaster Management Authority (SSDMA), government officials, and others for their efforts in rescue

Dated Kokrajhar, the 4th October, 2024

and relief operations, as well as the subsequent restoration process.

The glacial Lhonak Lake, located in the upper reaches of North Sikkim, burst during the night of October 3-4, 2023, triggering floods in the Teesta River.

Within hours, the swollen

river devastated four dis-

tricts-Mangan, Gangtok,

Pakyong, and Namchi—dis-

rupting road infrastructure and telecommunication net-By the time the state government and various agencies assessed the extent of the devastation, the flood had already claimed dozens

of lives and severely damaged infrastructure. A week later, the death toll had risen to 47, with 75 people reported missing. Two months after the disaster, those missing were declared dead due to the lack

of rescue prospects. The Centre provided ₹ 44 crore in assistance for reconstruction efforts. The floods also caused significant damage to Chungthang dam and the NHPC hydroelectric power plant, resulting in losses exceeding ₹ 10,000 crore.

CORRIGENDUM NO- 4 & 5 FOR TENDER NOTICE NO.: CON/2024/ AUG/03 DATED. 05-08-2024

Corrigendum-4&5 has been ssued against Tender No. CE/ CON/LTD/EPC/2024/09. For details please visit in website www.ireps.gov.in.

CE/CON/1, Maligaor NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY

E-Tender No. SNT-28-LMG-2024-25; Dated: 01-10-2024. E-tenders are invited by the undersigned for the ollowing work. Name of work & its Location: Associate signalling works connection with TTR (FS+ TWS+ WCMSC)- 17sets (1:12) & TTR TWS+WCMSC)-18 sets (1:12) Guwahati- Chaparmukh section and TTR (TWS+WCMSC)-14sets (1:12) & TTR FS+TWS+WCMSC)-31 sets (1:12) Chaparmukh- Lumding section. Tender Value: ₹1,76,96,745.52; Bid Security ₹2,38,500.00; E-tender will be Closed at 15:00 hrs. on 25-10-2024 and Opened at 15:30 hrs. on 25-10-2024. For detail:

Sr. DSTE, Lumding
NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY

No. DMCH/MRU/24-132

RECRUITMENT FOR THE FOLLOWING CONTRACTUAL POSTS FOR A MULTI-CENTRIC PROJECT IN MULTI-DISCIPLINARY RESEARCH UNIT AT **DIPHU MEDICAL COLLEGE & HOSPITAL, DIPHU**

Applications are invited from Citizens of India for purely temporary and contractual engagement at Diphu Medical College & Hospital, Diphu, Assam for the following positions

SI. NO.	Name of Post	Number of Post	Monthly Remuneration	Minimum Qualification	Age limit
L	Project Technical Officer	2	32,000.00	Essential: M.Sc./M.Tech.(Biotechnology/ Molecular Biology / Life Sciences) from recognized university. Desirable: Minimum 2 years of experience in ICMR/DHR /CSIR/DBT/any other project/Medical college. (Working experience in Dengue/malaria vector related work, molecular biology work, culture work, microscopy, bioinformatics and Data analysis works) Knowledge of computer application/Data management. Minimum 2 Publication in SCI/Scopus indexed Journal Experience of management of Project in Medical College level/ Research Institutes	21-30 years
2.	Project Technical Support-II (Field Worker)	1	(20000+HRA	Essential: 12th pass in Science stream with 2 years' experience in field work and community engagement Destrable: • Field Experience of working in rural/tribal area • 12th pass in Science stream with 2 years' experience in field work and community engagement • Experience in quantitative and qualitative data collection • Knowledge of computer applications such as MS Excel, Word & Power point etc., data entry • Candidate fluent in local language Karbi will be given preference	21-30 years
3.	Laboratory Technician	1	(20000+HRA)	Essential: B.Sc. (MLT) from recognized university (Registered) OR Diploma MLT from recognized university (Registered) Desirable: The candidate having experience in Govt. institutions in ICMR/DHR/IDSP/CSIR/DBT/any other project/Medical college. Knowledge of computer application/ Data management. Note: Preference will be given to candidate having BSc MLT over the DMLT	21-30 years
4.	Lab Assistant/D EO (Grade 'A')	1	20000	Essential: Graduate from recognized institute with experience in MS office and data entry related work. Desirable: The candidate having experience in Govt. institutions in Minimum 1 year experience in reputed office. Preference will be given to BCA/B.Sc (IT) or equivalent university/institution. Typing speed 30 words/min. Basic knowledge of software and hardware and able to attend trouble shooting of computer devices. Ability to compile health report.	21-30 years

General Terms and Conditions:

Terms: The posts are purely temporary and are based on the tenure of the project. However, the appointment can be terminated at any time even before the end of the contract period due to any reason. In case of such premature termination, one month's notice or one month's salary in lieu of the same will be provided. The same will not hold true in ease of premature termination due to performance related issues. Candidate can leave the job prematurely giving one month's notice or one month's salary in lieu of the same.

Application and selection procedure: Candidates have to submit the application form through speed post/registered post or self submit to the office of the "Principal cum Chief Superintendent, Diphu Medical College & Hospital, Diphu, Assam 782460" in envelope having Name of Post Applied for and Candidates name and address with superscription as "Application for contractual post at DMCH" on or before 30th October, 2024. NOTE: Name of post applied and applicant name and address must be written on the envelope. If the last date is a holiday, the next working day will be counted as the last date. It is the sole responsibility of the candidate and the undersigned is not responsible for delay in receipt of application. The applications received will he scrutinized by the selection committee. The eligible candidates will be called for interview or written test followed by interview, depending upon number of eligible candidates. "The candidates are advised to check college website www.dmcassam.co.in for the Application form/ Performa format, date, time and venue of the interview. No separate communication will he sent to the

candidates. 3. Documents to be submitted:

The candidate needs to submit the application as per format attached along with this advertisement and also found in website of Diphu Medical College and Hospital. The number of rows may be added if desired by the candidate. No change in serial no, order or head of column to he made. The application in the said format to be properly typed and signed.

- Two recent self signed passport sized colored photographs are to be attached on first page of the Performa format.
- Qualification: Qualifications and degree should be from recognized institution University.
- One set of Photostat copies of ID proof and Address proof and certificates self attested must be attached with the application form. Update CV of the candidate is also to be submitted.
- All the relevant experience certificates and publications if any (as per advertisement for specific posts only) needs to be attached with the application form.
 - These are purely contractual posts and as such they will not have any claim whatsoever for regularization neither in DMC&H, Diphu, nor at DHR/ICMR. The mere fulfillment of requisite essential qualification/experience does not guarantee selection.
 - During the period of the project as well as on its termination, the DMCH, Diphu as well as DHR will have no legal liabilities relating to staff. Performance will be accessed on a regular basis.
- No TA/DA will be paid. neither for appearing in the interview nor for joining the assignment and for the period of work.
- The pay band for the above mentioned posts is subject to payment as per latest DHR guidelines and receipt of funds from the funding authority.

Principal-Cum-Chief Superintendent Diphu Medical College &Hospital Diphu :::: Assam

Janasanyog /D/6949/24/5-Oct-24















































































In pursuant to the advertisement published vide No. SSA/Esstt/Engagement/SMO/151/2023 1700 dated 20.08.2024, it is for general information to all concerned that the interview for the post of Officer In-Charge (Special Training) is mentioned below:

SSA-15015/53/2024/I/758750/2024

Name of the post No Officer In-Charge (Special Training)

SI.

The list of short-listed candidates is uploaded in the official website of Samagra Shiksha Axom at https://

The short-listed candidates are requested to attend in the interview at 9.30 am on the scheduled date.

Janasanyog/DF/1180/24/5-Oct-24

No.SSA-15015/40/2024/I/756750/2024

In pursuant to the advertisement published vide No. SSA/Esstt/Engagement/SMO/151/2023/

1016 dated 01.07.2024, it is for general information to all concerned that the interview for the post of Associate Officer (P&M) is mentioned below: Name of the

post

Associate Officer (P&M)

The list of short-listed candidates is uploaded in the official website of Samagra Shiksha Axom at https://ssa.assam.gov.in The short-listed candidates are requested to attend in the interview at 9.30 am on the scheduled

date

Janasanyog/DF/1173/24/5-Oct-24

Date of

Interview

07.10.2024

No.DWCD(BTC)266/2024-25/64 Joint Director cum CHD, Women & Child Development. B.T.C. Kokrajhar invites Notice Inviting Tender affixing

court fee stamp of Rs. 8.25/- only from Firms / Suppliers regarding "Overall Arrangement / Management of Exposure Visit to Model Gender Resource Centre in Madhya Pradesh" under SOPD-G fund during the year 2024-25 (estimated amount Rs. 19.18.000/-). The details of the NIT for the said work / project may be obtained from the office of the undersigned. Intending Finns / Suppliers may obtain NIT documents during Office hours till 1:00 P.M. of the 25th day of October, 2024. The sealed NIT with all particulars / documents viz. GST registration certificate. Pan Card etc. as required as per terms & conditions are to be submitted to the office of the Joint Director cum CHD, Women & Child Dev., B.T.C. Kokrajhar on or before 200 P.M of 25th day of October, 2024. The successful Bidder will have to submit security deposit 1% only in case of ST / SC and 2% for

The undersigned reserves the right to accept or reject any or all the offers / proposals, without assigning any reason thereof.

5202 / 21

IPR(BTC)/C/2024-25/662

i/c. Jt Director cum CHD, Women & Child Dev, B.T.C. Kokrajhar

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10 THE HILLS TIMES

Never felt like it was not my story: Sreemoyee Singh on her Iran-set documentary 'And, Towards Happy Alleys'

NEW DELHI, Oct 4: Filmmaker Sreemoyee Singh says she discovered Iranian feminist poet Forugh Farrokhzad's works when she was a university student and that gave shape to a desire to visit the country and document the stories of its people in "And, Towards Happy Alleys". The 75-minute documentary is a peek into the struggle of women, artists, and political dissidents in Iran. It is streaming on MUBI India.

The first-time filmmaker believes "And, Towards Happy Alleys" is as much about India as it is about Iran. The movie, shot in Tehran, is political but tackles issues of censorship in the country through the lens of cinema, music and poetry, she said.

"I have been singing and writing poetry all my life. Being able to express something in the right way matters to me. When I read Forugh Farrokhzad, I knew I had to go to Iran and meet these people, artists and understand how they find ways to be inspired," Singh told PTI in an interview. "I knew that I had to film their stories and, hopefully, something will shape up. We have seen so many political things around us where we have not been allowed to preserve who we are through our

art. It never felt like it was not my story to tell," she added. Not having the baggage of expectations helped Singh capture moments of truth, whether it was meeting ordinary people on the streets or interacting with Iranian directors like Jafar Panahi and Mohammad Shirvani , known for resisting government censorship at great personal risk. Singh, a PhD degree holder in film studies from Kolkata's Jadavpur University, considers the film her love letter to Iranian cinema and filmmakers because the first window to its culture was through movies. She remembers being surprised at how these films challenged her perception of the country which was known to her as a place of conflict.

"You don't think you will see such hopeful stories. I was curious to know where they found the inspiration to just have so much hope and the idea that life must go on despite what's happening around.

"I was reading Persian poetry because when you are taught the Iranian new wave, hopefully, good teachers will read out the poetry that inspired this cinema. Poetry, as a form of art, preceded everything else in Iran. It is the most important method of expression in a place like

Iran." Farrokhzad's poetry, she said, spoke to her younger self, with its expression of desire which could be "just to have a Coca-Cola, warmth of the sun or desire as we understand it".

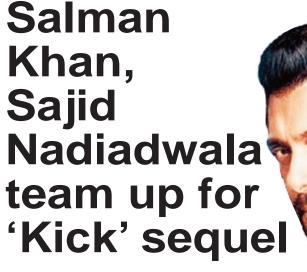
The director was surprised that Farrokhzad, whose poem has inspired the title of the documentary, spoke of desire in a place like Iran through her writings. Farrokhzad died in a car accident in 1967 at the age of 32.

Singh also found it easy to learn Persian, a language that once connected India and Iran, and that gave her an access to the culture, which would not have been possible had she been a regular tourist or someone from the

"I was expecting the kindness of the people that I saw in films but people were even kinder there. They made me so comfortable. They protected me and became like family. "And people are crazy about our cinema. Like Hindi cinema that reaches Iran... Films of Raj Kapoor, 'Sholay' and everything... They are just crazy about it...

ything... They are just crazy about it...
India is not even a land they consider
far off from their country. So, I
was loved even more." (PTI)





MUMBAI, Oct 4: Superstar Salman Khan and filmmaker Sajid Nadiadwala on Friday announced the sequel to their 2014 blockbuster movie "Kick".

The duo are currently working on "Sikandar", which is being directed by A R Murugadoss and produced by Nadiadwala's production banner Nadiadwala Grandson Entertainment.

The studio shared the news of "Kick 2" on Instagram by posting Khan's photo from the sets of "Sikandar".

"It was a great Kick 2 photo shoot Sikandar...!!! From Grand Sajid Nadiadwala @beingsalmankhan @wardakhannadiadwala #Kick2 #Sikandar," read the caption.

wala's directorial debut and emerged as one of the biggest blockbusters of 2014. It was also Khan's first film to enter the Rs 200 crore club. Also starring Jacqueline Fernandez, Randeep Hooda

"Kick", a comedy action movie, marked Nadiad-

Also starring Jacqueline Fernandez, Randeep Hooda and Nawazuddin Siddiqui, the movie was an official remake of Telugu star Ravi Teja's 2009 film of the same title.

Khan is playing the titular role in "Sikandar", scheduled to be released in theatres on Eid 2025. The movie will also feature Rashmika Mandanna, Sathyaraj, Prateik Babbar and Kajal Aggarwal.



NEW DELHI, Oct 4: "Paris Has Fallen", a spin-off show to Gerard Butler's "Has Fallen" movies, will make its debut on Lionsgate Play on October 18, the streamer announced on Thursday

Created by Howard Overman, the eight-episode show features an ensemble cast of Tewfik Jallab, Ritu Arya, Sean Harris, Emmanuelle Bercot, Ana Ularu, Camilla Rutherford, Jeremie Covillault and Karl Collins.

"Paris Has Fallen" follows the gripping story of a protection officer and an MI6 operative teaming up after a terrorist attack.

"When a terrorist group led by the villainous Jacob Pearce (Harris) attacks a high-profile event, with the French Minister of Defence as their target, protection officer Vincent Taleb (Jallab) finds himself working with street-smart MI6 operative Zara Taylor (Arya) to save the day.

"But when events take a dark turn, Vincent and Zara soon realise that the plan extends beyond just one politician. When they suspect that one of their colleagues in the security services is feeding information to Jacob, Vincent and Zara find themselves needing to rely only on each other," read the official plotline. Jallab said the opportunity to play Vincent in the ac-

tion thriller series was nothing less than a gift.

"There is everything for an actor. There is a good balance between action, personal lives, love story too. I think there is.. everything. It is the kind of show for everyone. They're gonna love it," he added.

"Paris Has Fallen" is co-directed by Oded Ruskin and

Hans Herbots. (PTI)

Govinda discharged from hospital, says revolver just fell and went off

MUMBAI, Oct 4: Actor Govinda was discharged from hospital on Friday, three days after he injured his leg when his revolver accidently went off, and answered the top of mind question of what exactly happened. "Voh giri aur chal padi," he chuckled.

The accident happened early on Tuesday morning when he was about to leave for the airport and he underwent a surgery the same day.

The 60-year-old actor, known for films such as "Love 86", "Swarg", "Dulhe Raja" and "Partner" and back in the spotlight, came out of the Criticare hospital in Juhu on a wheelchair and had a cast on his left leg.

The actor, a member of the Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena, was accompanied by his wife Sunita Ahuja and daughter Tina Ahuja. He greeted media persons and fans with folded hands.

"I was about to leave for a show in Kolkata. It was about 5 in the morning. Aur uss time par vo giri aur chal padi (and it just fell and went off). I was shocked by what happened and when I looked down, I saw a fountain of blood. Then I made a video and spoke to the doctor and got admitted," he told reporters waiting outside his home. Asked why a funloving actor like him has a revolver, he said, "When you have fame, you have to be cautious as there are people who love you and then there are those who envy you.'

Describing himself as an easy-going and fun person, the actor said his fans will hopefully learn from this and be alert as this could happen to anyone.

Govinda, known for his dancing skills and impeccable comic timing from his films in the late 1980s and 1990s, thanked his fans, Maharashtra Chief Minister Shinde, members from politics and film world for their well wishes. Sunita Ahuja told reporters earlier in the morning that her husband had been advised rest for at least six weeks.

"He is fine and will start dancing again in a few days. Everyone has prayed for him and we have the blessings of Mata rani," she said. (PTI)

'CITADEL' A DIALOGUE WITH INDIA OVER STORYTELLING, FILMS AND SHOWS: FILMMAKER ANTHONY RUSSO

NEW DELHI, Oct 4: Anthony Russo, the one half of the Russo brothers, says it's thrilling for them to join forces with Indian filmmakers for their globetrotting "Citadel" spyverse after witnessing India's passion for cinema first hand on their visits to the country to promote "Avengers: Endgame" and "The Gray Man". Anthony and his younger brother Joe Russo enjoy a massive fan following in India since they directed "Captain America: The Winter Soldier" in 2014.

Prime Video series "Citadel" is their most ambitious project and is led by Indian star Priyanka Chopra Jonas and Richard Madden of "Game of Thrones" fame

of "Game of Thrones" fame.

"We are cinema lovers. We are very passionate. We were fanatical cinema goers before we became filmmakers. So we respond very strongly to film lovers and India has such a massive passion for film. It's electrifying,"

Anthony told PTI in an exclusive interview.
"Citadel: Honey Bunny", which releases in India on November 7, is directed by Raj Nidimoru and Krishna DK. The India chapter stars

Varun Dhawan and Samantha Ruth Prabhu.

"It's a dialogue with India over storytelling, films and shows. It has been one of the most exciting parts to what we have been able to do as filmmakers is to be able to engage with Indian audiences," Anthony said about the India chapter of the series, which has an Italian companion in "Citadel: Diana", slated to release on October 10.

"Citadel", which saw Priyanka play Nadia Sinh, premiered last year on Prime Video and is already filming its second season.

is already filming its second season.

But before that, the Russos are bringing the action to India through "Citadel: Honey

Bunny", written by Sita Menon.

"Now the great thrill here with 'Citadel', we really get to partner with Indian storytellers and filmmakers as well with DK and Raj and Sita. It's not only with the audiences but now with the creators. And that is thrilling to us," said the director.

Growing up in Ohio, the US, Anthony said he and his brother would often be found watching "obscure" films from every corner of the planet at the Cleveland Cinematheque, an alternative and repetrory film theatre.

Bringing multiple cultures of countries like America, India and Italy together through "Citadel" could very well become a blueprint of diversity both in front of and behind the camera, he said.

"Citadel' presents an entirely different op-

portunity for us to do something we have

never done before... We con-

nect with people every-

where through this show, through this show's story-telling.

"The process of creative collaboration and co-creation is really intimate, powerful and strong and it's a very involved form of human communication so the fact that we can do that

and share that

dialogue with

the audiences

is the greatest thrill," he added.

"Citadel: Diana", which has Anthony, Joe and their sister Angela Russo-Otstot (AGBO) on board as executive producers, is the second series to debut from the world of "Citadel".

The show follows Matilda de Angelis' titular character, a spy in Manticore who is working undercover as a mole for its rival agency Citadel to unearth the truth behind her parents death. Between "Citadel" and "Citadel: Honey Bunny", where does "Citadel: Diana" fit in the grand scheme of things?

Angela said the two shows are set in different timelines and pay homage to their own cinematic histories in "wonderful" ways.

"Citadel: Diana' takes place in the near future, in the year 2030. It's about eight years

after the fall of 'Citadel' which we wit-

nessed in season one. So we are

roughly in a similar timeline as 'Citadel' season one and 'Diana'.
"However, in 'Honey Bunny' we are going to go back many decades to experience the childhood of Priyanka's character
Nadia. So that series
largely takes place in the 1990's and also 2000's. The two timelines which

gely takes place in the 1990's and also 2000's. The two timelines which we will be tracking," she said.

According to An-

gela, "Citadel: Honey Bunny" has a retro feel and is a bit more analog, whereas "Citadel: Diana" is slick and futuristic in terms of technology.

"The level of execution from all our film-

"The level of execution from all our film-makers, DK, Raj, Gina Gardini (showrunner) and Arnaldo Catinari (director) in 'Diana' is really exquisite. It is really thrilling for us," she added. Davil Weil, co-creator of "Citadel", said the new show allows the makers to answer many "thrilling" fan questions that emerged from the first series.

Through this long-format of global storytelling, the writer said they got a chance to "peek" between the different chapters of what they created in one series and shine a light on it in another one.

The connection is personal in both "Citadel: Diana" and "Citadel: Honey Bunny".

"People fell in love with Nadia, who wouldn't? It's Priyanka Chopra Jonas. What was so thrilling to see in 'Honey Bunny' is really diving into her origin story, who her parents were and it is a really beautiful love story at the centre... 'Citadel: Diana" allows us to peek inside Manticore, the antagonist to the Citadel spy organisation and really put a human face and a family at the centre of Manticore," David, who also serves as an executive pro-

ducer on "Diana", said.

"Citadel: Diana" also honours Russo siblings' Italian roots. "Italy has a very special culture that influences so many people around the world but certainly the fact that our family history is rooted there, it has always spoken very powerfully to us. And we've been very tuned into it. So to be able to collaborate with them is a thrill for us," Anthony said. (PTI)

EAST BENGAL SEEK REVIVAL AGAINST IN-FORM JAMSHEDPUR FC

from three straight defeats, East Bengal will seek to rejuvenate their campaign under interim coach Bino George when they face a confident Jamshedpur FC in the ISL on Saturday.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 5, 2024

After the resignation of Super Cup-winning coach Carles Cuadrat following the team's disastrous start to the season, East Bengal are in desperate need of points to lift themselves from the bottom of the table.

This match marks the Indian coach's first assignment at the helm, and he is determined to instill belief in his players.

"I have full faith in our players and their quality. They have been working very hard. Yes, the last three matches didn't go our way, and we made some mistakes. But I know the boys can come back stronger. That's what East Bengal is all about. They know their responsibilities well," George said.

In contrast, Jamshedpur FC heads into this match with momentum, having not lost to East Bengal in their last three encounters, including a 2-1 victory in February.

Despite this encouraging trend, the 'Men of Steel' are yet to secure back-to-back wins over their Kolkata rivals in the ISL.

Jamshedpur's head coach Khalid Jamil remains optimistic despite their recent loss to Odisha FC. "Every match is an opportunity to grow, and we are ready to give our best effort to secure a positive result," Jamil said.

East Bengal's captain, Cleiton Silva, is the highest goal-scorer in this fixture with three goals as he will be eager to break his scoring drought, having gone without a testing over 10 duels in each of his



contribution in his last four ISL appearances. Jamshedpur forward Jordan Murray has emerged as a big competitor, consistently con-

last six matches. East Bengal's goalkeeper Debjit Majumder has been impressive this season, averaging 3.4 saves

However, with only three clean sheets to his name, he will need to elevate his performance to thwart Jamshedpur's attacking threats.

eight times in the ISL, with Jamshedpur claiming three victories, East Bengal two, and three matches ending in draws.

Target set to take India among top-5 Olympic medal winning countries by 2047: Mandaviya

GWALIOR, Oct 4: Union talent should be identified and minister Mansukh Mandaviya on Friday said target has been set to position India among the top five Olympics medal-winning countries by 2047, when it celebrates the centenary of its independence.

In order to achieve this target, the country needs a talent-pool of world-level coaches and training, the Youth Affairs and Sports Minister told reporters here after taking part in the 10th Convocation ceremony of Laxmibai National Institute of Physical Education (LNIPE)

"I am happy to be in Gwalior as it is the workplace of late Rajmata Vijayaraje Scindia. The country is marching ahead in the sports sector."

"When India hosts the Olympics in 2036, it should rank among the top 10 nations in sports," Mandaviya said.

'And when the nation celebrates 100 years of independence in 2047, the country should rank among the top five countries in the field of sports," he

"For achieving this target, the country needs a talent pool of world-level coaches and training and the LNIPE in Gwalior is playing a major role in it," the minister added.

The country needs good coaches, training, and sporting given opportunities, he said.

Good coaches are being groomed in LNIPE by offering diploma, graduation, post-graduation and PhD degrees to them, and they will play a major role in nurturing the new generation in the sports sector, according to

Addressing the convocation ceremony earlier, Mandaviya said it was a matter of pride that he was taking part in a programme at the institute that is named after Rani Laxmibai of Jhansi, who started the battle for freedom and fought against the British, and stood as a symbol of valour.

He said that as a sports minister he has set the target of taking India among the top 10 sporting nations by 2036 and among top five by 2047.

Physical education teachers should have the feeling of "nation first" and resolve to make the country a developed, he

Degrees were offered to 121 students during the convocation

Mandaviya also inaugurated a 400-bed capacity hostel and a digital studio on the occasion.

Union minister Jyotiraditya Scindia welcomed Mandaviya on his arrival at the Gwalior airport for taking part in the convocation ceremony. (PTI)

David Skinns opens with a 60 to lead Sanderson Farms Championship

JACKSON, Oct 4: David mines the 125 players who keep Skinns of England set a personal best and a course record with a 12-under 60 to lead the Sanderson Farms Championship. And he couldn't help but be a little dis-

appointed. Skinns ran off six birdies on the back nine and six more on the front nine at the Country Club of Jackson, and he faced one last birdie putt from just inside 10 feet on his final hole. It never had a chance, missing on the low side. Skinns, a 42-year-old from England, still had a three-shot lead over Michael Thorbjornsen.

"How many 9-footers are you going to get to shoot 59?" Skinns said. "I'm sure I'm not going to get many. Tough not to be a little bit disappointed, but I really want to just look back on how in control mentally I felt, how I kept attacking. Wasn't really thinking about the future at all, which is kind of the thing I'm going to take away from today.'

The future is a big part of the Sanderson Farms Championship, one of eight PGA Tour events in the "FedEx Cup Fall" that deter-

a full card for next year.

Skinns was at No. 108, and his 60 gives him a big step in the right direction.

Former U.S. Open champion Gary Woodland, making steady progress from brain surgery a year ago, played-bogey free for a 64 and was tied with Ben Griffin.

Rickie Fowler, playing for the first time since the British Open because he missed the FedEx Cup playoffs and his wife gave birth to their second daughter, hit two shots in the water and rallied

Fowler is at No. 110 but has another year of full exemption from winning the Rocket Mortgage Classic last year.

Skinns hit only five fairways, but he was rarely out of position. The two times he was not on the putting green in regulation he made birdie. He also holed birdie putts of 55 feet and 25 feet during the round, and five other birdies outside 10 feet.

"Great to see a couple go in that maybe some days don't," Skinns said. (AP)

Buoyant Mohammedan Sporting gear up for Mohun Bagan challenge

their maiden ISL victory in an away match against Chennaiyin FC, debutants Mohammedan Sporting will aim to carry the same momentum when they square off with heavyweights Mohun Bagan in a lesser known 'Kolkata Derby' this Saturday.

With bragging rights as well as points on the line, Mohammedan Sporting will be eager to prove themselves against one of Indian football's most dominant forces and resume their rivalry in the ISL.

The black and white brigade secured their maiden win in the ISL by defeating Chennaiyin FC 1-0 last week with Lalremsanga Fanai scoring the decisive goal. Despite Chennaivin's at-

tempts to fight back in the second-half, Mohammedan's defence led by Joseph Adjei and Vanlalzuidika Chhakchhuak remained resolute to take home full three points that has kept them ahead of the city rivals on goal difference.

Mohun Bagan, who are the League Shield Winners, on the



other hand are coming on the back of a 0-3 loss to Bengaluru FC as they will be looking to regroup and infuse fresh energy to their attacking duo of Dimitri petratos and Jason Cummings. Petratos is on the brink of his 50th ISL appearance for the Mariners, and his experience will be vital in guiding the team through in

pressure cooker scenario.

The key for the midfield marshalled by Greg Stewart and Manvir Singh will be to dominate possession, pressing high up the pitch and using their full-backs to provide width.

Lalengmawia Ralte has been flawless defensively, winning

cial in stopping Mohammedan's attacks.

Despite their attacking prowess, Mohun Bagan head coach Jose Molina has expressed concern about his team's defensive frailties.

The Mariners have conceded seven goals in their three matches so far, which has put pressure on their ability to secure results.

Molina has identified that many of their defensive issues stem from mistakes in attack, emphasising that improving their offensive play will help tighten the defense.

'We're conceding too many goals, and some of them are due to mistakes at the back, but most are because of errors in attack. To improve defensively, we need to attack better," Molina said.

Mohammedan Sporting, however, may opt for a more cautious approach as they are likely to sit back, absorb pressure, and hit on the counter using the pace of Alexis Gomez and Franca up front.

Mumba Masters bounce back as Anand's Ganges **Grandmasters** stumble

LONDON, Oct 4: Five-time world champion Vishawanathan Anand went down to former world blitz champion Maxime Vachier-Lagrave as upGrad Mumba Masters registered a 14-5 win over Ganges Grandmasters on day two of the ongoing Global Chess League here on Friday.

Both teams came into this match seeking their first win, having lost their opening games by identical scores. The headline icon matchup on board one pitted the Anand against Vachier-Lagrave.

Despite holding a better position, Anand blundered a tactical sacrifice, allowing Vachier-Lagrave to turn the tables.

Although facing time pressure, the French star tapped into his blitz champion instincts, tightening his control over the game and ultimately clinching a vital victory.

upGrad Mumba Masters, who played the match as Black - took control from there, with a win on the youngsters' board and a draw on the second women's board, pushing them into the lead.

Ganges Grandmasters couldn't catch a break, and despite world number three Arjun Erigaisi's best efforts, he could only manage a draw against Vidit Gujrathi, despite being ahead on the clock.

The situation worsened when Koneru Humpy overcame Vaishali R, clinching the match for the up-Grad Mumba Masters.

While Parham Maghsoodloo secured a hard-fought victory against Peter Svidler to salvage some pride for the Ganges, it wasn't enough to save them from a 14-

With the upGrad Mumba Masters claiming their first points, Ganges Grandmasters face an uphill battle after back-to-back The situation is even worse be-

cause this is their second defeat with white pieces. They'll need to regroup quickly if they hope to stay in contention for the top

Both teams will be in action again later tonight. The match between American Gambits and Triveni Continental Kings is un-

upGrad Mumba Masters will play Alpine SG Pipers in the third match, while Ganges Grandmasters will be up against Triveni Continental Kings in the last match of the day. (PTI)

EU's top court says some FIFA rules on int'l transfers are contrary to the bloc's law

WASHINGTON, Oct 4: The free movement of professional European Union's top court said Friday that some FIFA rules on player transfers are contrary to European Union legislation relating to competition and freedom of movement, in a ruling that will likely lead to a shakeup of the soccer market's regulations and change the sport's economy.

The court's ruling came after former France international Lassana Diarra legally challenged FIFA rules following a dispute with a club dating back to a decade ago. Diarra argued that FIFA's restrictions meant he was unable to find a new club after his contract with Russian club Lokomotiv Moscow was terminated in

FIFA's rules state that if a player terminates his contract without "just cause," the player and any club wishing to sign him are jointly liable for paying compen-

sation to the previous club. "Those rules hinder the free movement of players and competition between clubs," the court said in a statement. "The rules in question are such as to impede the

footballers wishing to develop their activity by going to work for a new club.

The court added that current rules "impose considerable legal risks, unforeseeable and potentially very high financial risks as well as major sporting risks on those players and clubs wishing to employ them which, taken together, are such as to impede international transfers of those players.

Diarra had signed a four-year contract with Lokomotiv Moscow in 2013. The deal was terminated a year later after Diarra was unhappy with alleged pay cuts.

Lokomotiv Moscow applied to the FIFA dispute resolution chamber for compensation and the player submitted a counterclaim seeking compensation for unpaid wages. The Court of Arbitration for Sport found the Russian club terminated the contract with Diarra "with just cause" and the player was ordered to pay 10.5 million euros (\$11.2 million).

Diarra claimed his search for a



new club was hampered by FIFA's rules stipulating that any new side would be jointly responsible with him for paying compensation to Lokomotiv.

The former Real Madrid player also argued that a potential deal with Belgian club Charleroi fell through because of the FIFA rules, and sued FIFA and the Belgian federation at a Belgian court for

damages and loss of earnings of six million euros (\$7 million). With the lawsuit still going through Belgian courts, the case was referred to the European Court of Justice for a ruling.

Although the court said FIFA transfer regulations can help maintain a form of stability within professional squads and help guarantee the regularity of compe-

chamber for compensation and the player submitted a counterclaim seeking compensation for unpaid wages titions, it insisted that in Diarra's case "the rules in question nevertheless seem, subject to verifica-

FIFA's rules state that if a player termi-

nates his contract without 'just cause,' the

player and any club wishing to sign him

are jointly liable for paying compensation

to the previous club. Lokomotiv Moscow

applied to the FIFA dispute resolution

number of respects, to go beyond what is necessary to pursue that objective." The Diarra case, which is supported by the global players' union FIFPro, went through FIFA judicial bodies before the 2016 elec-

tion of FIFA president Gianni Infantino, who has made it a priority to modernize transfer market

Concerning competition rules,

the court slammed FIFA's rulings for restricting and preventing cross-border competition between tion (by the Belgian court) in a European clubs. "The Court recalls that the pos-

sibility of competing by recruiting trained players plays an essential role in the professional football sector and that rules which place a general restriction on that form of competition, by immutably fixing the distribution of workers between the employers and in cloistering the markets, are similar to a no-poach agreement," it said.

FIFA opts not to suspend Israel but will investigate Palestinian claims

ZURICH, Oct 4: FIFA stopped short of suspending the Israeli soccer federation on Thursday, but asked for a disciplinary investigation of possible discrimination alleged by Palestinian soccer officials.

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A senior FIFA panel overseeing governance will separately investigate "the participation in Israeli competitions of Israeli football teams allegedly based in the territory of Palestine," soccer's governing body said after a meeting of its ruling Council.

The Palestinian soccer federation has consistently asked FIFA for more than a decade to take action against the Israeli soccer body for incorporating teams from West Bank settlements in its leagues.

The compromise decisions came more than four months after Palestinian officials had urged FIFA to suspend Israel's membership at a

The request to FIFA's congress in May also cited "international law violations" in Gaza during the Israel-Hamas conflict and directed the soccer body to its statutory commitments on human rights and against discrimination.

FIFA delayed making a decision in May until after a legal review scheduled for July, then pushed back the issue two more times until a meeting of its 37-member Council on Thursday

"The FIFA Council has implemented due diligence on this very sensitive matter and, based on a thorough assessment, we have followed the advice of the independent experts," FIFA president Gianni Infantino said in a statement.

Ahead of the meeting, Palestinian soccer federation leader Jibril Rajoub and its vice president Susan Shalabi came to Zurich to lobby



FIFA officials.

"I trust and I expect that FIFA will

The Associated Press. "I am asking for the Council to follow their

The latest process follows a pattern — under Infantino and his Palestinian requests for FIFA to uphold its legal rules and the question then being steered toward ad hoc panels and other committees.

FIFA gave no timetable Thursday for the investigations it has now re-

Supporters of the Palestinian soccer campaign have criticized FIFA for not following its decision in 2022 to suspend Russian national teams from its competitions within days of the military invasion of Ukraine. European soccer body UEFA also removed Russian

Several European federations had already refused to play scheduled games against Russia, including Poland and its captain Robert Lewandowski. They said they would not go to Moscow for a World Cup qualifying playoff in March 2022.

FIFA later successfully argued at

the Court of Arbitration for Sport that keeping Russian teams in its competitions would cause chaos and be a security risk. Russian teams have not played in World Cups, European Championships or the Champions League for more than 2 1/2 years.

In the case of Israel, which has been a member of UEFA for 30 years, no European federation has refused to play its national or clubs teams. Israeli teams have played home games in neutral countries such as Hungary and Cyprus for security reasons since the Hamas attacks one year ago.

The Palestinian men's national team is currently playing in the Asian qualifying program for the 2026 World Cup, hosting Jordan three weeks ago in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The team next plays at Iraq on Oct. 10 and hosts Kuwait five days later in Doha, Qatar. (AP)

HIL to return after 7 long years; women's event added for first time

NEW DELHI, Oct 4: The muchawaited Hockey India League (HIL) will return after seven long years in a new avatar, where both the men's and women's teams will participate in the event beginning December 28.

While the men's competition will have eight teams, six sides will feature in women's event which is being held for the first

The league will be played in two venues -- Rourkela for men and Ranchi for women -- from December 28 to February 1.

The players auction for the league will be held here from October 13 to 15. A total of 10 franchise owners have come on board. Players will be auctioned in

three categories: ₹2 lakh, ₹5 lakh, and ₹ 10 lakh. The return of the HIL is not only a significant moment in the history

of the sport but also a major step

forward in promoting women's hockey. The introduction of an exclusive women's league within the HIL framework is being seen as providing a platform for female athletes to demonstrate their prowess, paving the way for a more inclu-

The franchise owners of the men's event are Chennai – Charles

sive and competitive future for In-

dian hockey.

Group, Lucknow - Yadu Sports, Punjab – JSW Sports, West Bengal Shrachi Sports, Delhi - SG Sports and Entertainment, owned by tennis legend Mahesh Bhupathi, Odisha - Vedanta Limited, Hyderabad – Resolute Sports and Ranchi - Navoyam Sports Ventures Private Limited.

The women team owners are Haryana – JSW Sports, West Bengal - Shrachi Sports, Delhi - SG Sports and Entertainment and

ruary 1 in Rourkela.

Hockey India president and chairman of HIL, Dilip Tirkey said it was his dream to revive the league since taking over the charge of the federation.

summit clash will be held on Feb-

"Premier Hockey League started the culture of league in the world. Since the day we were elected it was our dream to revive the league and today the dream has been fulfilled," Tirkey said during the launch of the event here on Fri-

"HIL has been and will be a supply chain for the national teams. HIL is going to create a history for the sport. HIL is very important for world hockey. We are thankful to International Hockey Federation (FIH) for giving us 35 days window," he said.

HI secretary general Bhola Nath Singh agreed with Tirkey, saying starting the HIL was their aim from day one after taking charge of the federation.

"The first day we joined our first though was to restart HIL. It was long time waiting. Hockey is not just a sport in India, it is in our hearts," he said. Singh informed that FIH has allotted HI five years window for the league. He also said that Odisha government has extended its sponsorship deal with

After cancellation of tri-nation tourney, India to play Vietnam on Oct 12 in football friendly

NEW DELHI, Oct 4: The Indian men's football team will play an international friendly against Vietnam on October 12 following the cancellation of a tri-nation tournament in the South East Asian country.

Lebanon pulled out of the tri-nation event, citing difficulties in flying out of the country due to the ongoing crisis at home. The tournament was planned in the FIFA international match window from October 7-15. India were earlier scheduled to play against Vietnam on October 9 and Lebanon on October 12 in the tournament at the Thien Truong Stadium in Nam Dinh, around 100 km from Hanoi.

"The Indian senior men's team will face Vietnam in a one-off friendly match on Saturday, October 12, 2024, following the withdrawal of Lebanon from the tri-nation friendly tournament," the All India Football Federation (AIFF) said in a statement.

"The match will be played at the Thien Trương Stadium in Nam Dinh, and will be designated as an official friendly, with points counting towards the FIFA Rankings.'

The AIFF said it requested the host federation to reschedule the Vietnam-India match, which was earlier scheduled for October 9. Earlier, the Vietnam Football

Federation announced Lebanon's



pulling out of tournament. 'The Lebanese team along with

the Indian team are the two guest teams that will come to Vietnam to play a friendly match with the Vietnamese team during the FIFA tournament in October 2024.

"However, according to the latest information from the Lebanese Football Federation, there are currently difficulties in flying from this country," the VFF said in a state-

"VFF shares the difficulties of the

Lebanese Football Federation and continues to keep in touch with you to agree on appropriate solutions.'

Meanwhile, the Indian team will assemble in Kolkata on October 5 and have a training session on October 6. Head coach Manolo Marquez and his squad will travel to Vietnam on October 7.

Marquez had announced a list of 26 probables on Monday. The final squad of 23 players will be announced prior to the team's

IOC tells NOCs to derecognise boxing bodies that remain tied to IBA, which calls it disturbing

NEW DELHI, Oct 4: The IOC has escalated its feud with the International Boxing Association by effectively asking member countries to derecognise national federations that remain aligned to the suspended body, a directive that the IBA lambasted as "unacceptable

In a letter sent to National Olympic Committees (NOCs) on September 30, the IOC reiterated that boxing federations that do not end



ties with IBA will be barred from the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics. "NOCs shall no longer af-

filiate or maintain institutional relations with national boxing federations that are still affiliated to the IBA", the IOC stated in its letter.

...any boxer whose national federation adheres to the IBA will not be able to participate in the LA28 Olympic Games. The NOC concerned must exclude such

a national boxing federation from its members," it warned. The IOC had issued a similar directive in May, asking NOC's to exclude National Boxing Federations from its membership if they continue to align with the IBA.

The latest development comes a few weeks after the Asian Boxing Confederation (ASBC) voted against breaking away from the IBA to join World Boxing, which has the IOC's backing.

India also joined World Boxing earlier this year but also stated that it was doing so without giving up its IBA membership. The move was criticised by the IBA which warned the country that it cannot expect to sail in two boats.

There hasn't been any clarity on the matter after that. The IBA, which has been suspended for governance related issues

and corruption, was expectedly furious with the IOC's latest missive to NOCs and called it an attempt to violate the independence of fed-"The letter sent to all National Olympic Committees (NOCs) on 30

September is a testament to the IOC's outrageous political games," the IBA stated a media release The body called the letter "deeply disappointing, and on the verge

of sporting blackmail.' IBA Secretary General and CEO Chris Roberts has written to the NOCs to explain its position on the matter.

"The unprecedented pressure from the IOC towards those NOCs is classed as 'direct interference' to independent IBA members' agendas, who expressed their democratic will to be part of the IBA and a democratically elected President that they trust," it said.

"We urge our National Federations to remain calm, and not to follow these 'gaslighting' intentions of the IOC, who wants to damage boxing. With an attempt to influence members behind the scenes, is not the way we would expect this organisation to operation," it added. The IBA has not conducted the Olympic boxing competition for

Boxing is currently not a part of the 2028 LA Olympic program. According to the the IOC, a recognised International Federation needs to be formed by early 2025, as the IBA is no longer seen as a viable choice, to guarantee boxing's inclusion in the LA Games. (PTI)

the past two editions due to its suspension

Retired IPS Sharad Kumar appointed new head of BCCI's Anti-Corruption Unit

NEW DELHI, Oct 4: Retired IPS officer Sharad Kumar, who headed anti-terror organisation NIA for four years, has been appointed as the new chief of the BCCI's Anti-Corruption Unit, bringing extensive experience to the role.

Odisha - Navoyam Sports Ven-

The remaining two franchise

owners of the women's league will

be announced later. Each fran-

chise will have a 24-player

squad, consisting of at least 16

Indian players (with a mandatory

inclusion of four junior players)

The final of the women's league

is scheduled for January 26 next

year in Ranchi while the men's

and eight international stars.

tures Private Limited.

Hailing from Bareilly in Uttar Pradesh, the appointment of 68-yearold Kumar was done on October 1 in the cricketing body. BCCI's ACU head is appointed for a three-year

His name was finalised in the BCCI's Annual General Meeting on September 29, a Board source told

He is a 1979 batch IPS officer from the Harvana cadre and has had a distinguished career especially as the

chief of the National Investigation Agency from 2013 to 2017.

He will take over from KK Mishra, also a former Haryana cadre IPS officer, who was appointed last year but did not complete his term due to unspecified reasons.

After serving in the NIA, Kumar was appointed as the Vigilance Commissioner in the Central Vigilance Commission from June 2018 to April 2020, where he also held the interim position of Central Vigilance Commissioner.

In his new role, Kumar will play a crucial part in addressing corruption issues, including match-fixing and betting scandals, thereby reinforcing the BCCI's commitment to maintaining integrity of the game.

During his tenure as NIA Director General, Kumar oversaw several high-profile investigations and oper-

Kumar played a pivotal role in enhancing the NIA's capabilities and infrastructure. During his tenure, the NIA investigated several major terror attacks in India, including the Pathankot airbase attack by terrorists of the banned Jaish-e-Mohammed.

Kumar's efforts were instrumental in disrupting terror financing networks.

His contribution to law enforcement has been recognised with the President's Police Medal for Meritorious Services in 1996 and the President's Police Medal for Distinguished Services in 2004. (PTI)

Bopanna-Dodig pair advances to second round of Shanghai Masters

DHANGHAI, Oct 4: India's Rohan Bopanna and his Croatian partner Ivan Dodig cherished their first win after joining forces, moving to the second round of the ATP Shanghai Masters with a straight-set victory over Pablo Carreno Busta and Pedro Martinez, here on



The fifth-seed Indo-Croatian pair won 6-4, 6-3 in the opening round match that

lasted 63 minutes Bopanna and Dodig fired five aces to none of their rivals, and converted three of

the eight break points they faced. They also saved four break chances on their service games,

dropping serve only once in the match. India's singles challenge has already ended with both Sumit Nagal and Ramkumar Ramanathan making first-round exits. Ramkumar had made it to the main draw through the qualifying round while Nagal had earned a direct entry. (PTI)

We can sense each other's feelings just by our facial expressions: Shafali on Mandhana

DUBAI, Oct 4: Shafali Verma, the significant other of the blockbuster Indian opening pair, says her no-holds-barred approach goes well with Smriti Mandhana's elegance and both can "sense each others feelings just by our facial expressions" while batting.

One of the factors behind the Indian women's cricket team's dominance in recent times has been the success of its openers, and Shafali admits they know how "important' they are to the team's fortunes.

"I've been opening with Smriti for the past two-three years, and now we can sense each other's feelings just by our facial expressions while batting. We know each other's strengths and weaknesses, and we give each other positive vibes," Shafali told Star Sports when asked about her on-field relationship with Mandhana.

"We understand how important we both are to the team, especially during the powerplay, so we try to perform well for ourselves, our teammates, and the country.

The younger partner added, "Smriti di is an exceptional timer of the ball, and she knows how to build an innings. These are the two things I admire most about her batting -- her timing and her ability to construct a big

India will begin their campaign in the on-



going Women's T20 World Cup with a game against New Zealand on Friday, and Shafali said it has been a dream of skipper Harmanpreet Kaur to win the tournament, in which

"Harmanpreet di is very passionate about the game. Winning the World Cup has always been a dream for her, and I hope we can

make that dream come true. She's a great player, a great teammate, and a fantastic captain who inspires and motivates us all the time," Shafali said of the skipper. Shafali made her World Cup debut as a 16-

year-old and having missed the trophy by a whisker then, she is hoping to change that this time around.

"It was a big deal for me to debut at 16, and I loved being in Australia. It wasn't just the cricket; I also enjoyed exploring the

"The tournament was special, and I performed well for the team. Thinking back to that World Cup always brings a smile to my face. We were so close to winning, but hopefully, we can change that this time around.

Playing the final against home team Australia, in front of a packed crowd at the iconic MCG, is an experience that has helped her in learning to handle pressure better.

"I couldn't hear anything because of the massive crowd. It was a completely new experience for me to play in front of such a big

"I was lost in the atmosphere and the noise, but I've learned to focus more now. I wouldn't feel the same pressure if I were in that situation again." (PTI)

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