

6 WORLD Head of Myanmar's military government visits China Russian rocket launches Iranian satellites into orbit 8 NATION BJP a mighty rocket that'll take J'khand to newer heights: Rajnath Congress blames Centre's policies for MSME decline, jobless growth

TREE-CUTTING ROW

HC issues notices to state govt

Directive issued to submit response by Nov 11 Advocate General terms PIL as publicity-seeking petition

GUWAHATI, Nov 5: The Gauhati High Court on Tuesday issued notices to Assam government over its plans to cut dozens of century-old trees in Guwahati to make way for a flyover.

Hearing a public interest litigation (PIL) filed by Mahesh Deka, Chandan Kumar Borgohain, and Jayanta Gogoi, a division bench comprising Chief Justice Vijay Bishnoi and Justice N Unni Krishnan Nair asked the state government to file its response by November 11.

Justice Bishnoi said the court wants to know whether there has been any move by the state government or any agency to protect the trees, which have been marked by the authorities for chopping.

The government is constructing



a four-lane 5.05-km-long flyover, the longest in the city, from Dighalipukhuri tank to Noonmati at a cost of ₹ 852.68 crore. It is scheduled to be operational by 2026.

Prominent personalities, artists,

students and residents hit the streets and criticised the BJP-led government for planning to chop around 25 trees, some as old as 200 years, along the banks of the iconic pond for the project.

"Looking to the issue raised in

the PIL petition, which is of great importance, we deem it appropriate to issue notices to the respondents," Justice Bishnoi said.

Advocate General Devajit Saikia opposed the issue of notices and said, "This is nothing but a publicity-seeking petition. The issue has already died down and if a notice is issued, a different kind of thing will come out in the media." Senior Advocate Kamal Nayan Choudhury, on behalf of the petitioners, claimed that no expert opinion has been taken for constructing the flyover, and plans for cutting the trees.

"In a democracy, the government of the day should listen to the people. The authority cannot arbitrarily decide and it must listen to our (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

'They only want to hamper development' Himanta calls Cong male cow at Dholai poll rally



GUWAHATI, Nov 5: Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Tuesday alleged that the Congress is not bothered about electoral victory or defeat, and its only intention is to put hurdles in the state's development.

Likening the opposition party to a "male cow" that cannot produce milk, he claimed that Congress

will not be able to bring development even if it gets votes.

Addressing his first rally for the state's by-elections at Dholai, Sarma said, "The Congress has no issue this election. They are not bothered about victory or defeat. They only want to hamper development. They don't want poor people to get government benefits."

"The Congress should sit at

home and take rest. They won't come to power for another 50 years," Sarma, who had been busy with assembly polls in Jharkhand as the BJP's co-in-charge there, added.

The CM further made serious accusations against the Congress party, saying it is planning to endanger the safety of Bengali Hindus in the Barak Valley region of the state.

According to Sarma, Congress is purposefully bringing up concerns in order to sow discord and instability in Assam.

Sarma said at an election rally in the Cachar district on Tuesday, "The Congress is plotting to endanger our Bengali Hindu brothers and sisters."

He emphasised his worries about the party's intentions, saying that Congress is trying to "vitiate the (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

HT BRIEFS

Heroin recovered

BOKAJAN: ₹ 7.5 crores worth of heroin was recovered from a truck at Dillai in Karbi Anglong district. The police of Dillai were checking at 6 Mile in the Dillai area when they intercepted a 6-wheeled truck with registration number AS 28 AC 1322. On thoroughly checking the truck, which was coming from Dimapur, 95 plastic cases containing heroin weighing a total of 1140.58 grams were recovered. The drug was found in the toolbox. The contraband has a market value of ₹ 7.5 crores. In this connection, Md Rahidul Islam, a resident of Thepkai, Goalpara district and Nur Alom were apprehended.

Special coaching

GUWAHATI: In a significant move to enhance the educational outcomes of students in the Tinkhang constituency, Assam Minister of Commerce, Industries and Public Enterprises, Bimal Borah, announced the launch of a special coaching program for tenth-grade students, a press release said on Tuesday. The initiative, spearheaded by the Educational Advisory Committee of Tinkhang MLA and in collaboration with the voluntary organization "Growth from Grassroots" and Tinkhang College, will provide targeted instruction in Science, Mathematics, and English. Taking to the micro-blogging site, Borah stated, "With the aim to help students prepare for the upcoming examinations, the Tinkhang MLA Educational Advisory Committee with support from noted Trust @grwthfrmgrsrts has organized a 3-month long remedial teaching program in Science, Maths, and English."

Smuggling curbed

GUWAHATI: In a significant operation aimed at curbing cross-border smuggling, the Assam Rifles successfully intercepted a large consignment of illegal areca nuts in Churachandpur district, Manipur, the Assam Rifles officials informed on Tuesday.

CM slams Cong for questioning BJP candidate's citizenship

PALONGHAT, Nov 5: Hitting out at the Congress for questioning the legitimacy of the citizenship of a BJP by-poll candidate in Assam, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Tuesday claimed that questions can also be raised on the nationality of the opposition party's top leader Sonia Gandhi.

Congress in its campaigning for the Dholai constituency has cast doubts about the citizenship of BJP candidate Nihar Ranjan Das.

Addressing a rally here while campaigning for Das, Sarma said, "If you (Congress) call Nihar Ranjan 'Bangladeshi', I will also call Sonia Gandhi 'Italian'. If you think I am afraid of Sonia Gandhi or Rahul Gandhi, let me tell you I am not."

Sarma maintained that Bengali Hindu residents of the present

Barak Valley of Assam were dwellers of what is now Bangladesh as it was the same country prior to Partition.

He blamed the Congress for creating the problems for Bengali-Hindus of Barak Valley, who had to move to present-day Assam following the partition of the country due to atrocities on religious minorities there.

Sarma also held the grand old party responsible for the Partition of India in 1947.

"Had you not bifurcated Bharat, atrocities on Hindus in Bangladesh would not have happened," the chief minister asserted.

"Hindus are facing atrocities even now (in Bangladesh). We can see this on television and social media. But you (Congress) cannot raise (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

State remembers Bhupen Hazarika on death anniversary



GUWAHATI, Nov 5: Tributes were paid to musical maestro Bhupen Hazarika on his death anniversary across Assam on Tuesday, with his songs reverberating at the different programmes organised to mark the occasion.

His contributions towards spreading the message of unity were highlighted as tributes flooded the social media.

Union home minister Amit Shah, remembering the 'Bard of Brahmaputra', posted on X: "The

maestro contributed to strengthening Bharat's unity by manifesting the greatness of our cultures and languages through his music. Bharat Ratna Dr. Hazarika Ji's legacy will continue to inspire generations of musicians."

Governor Lakshman Prasad Acharya said, "Like the ever-flowing waters of the Burhaluit, may the words of love, unity and harmony of Sudhakanth echo in the hearts of every Assamese."

"My tributes to the evergreen musician Bharat Ratna Dr. Bhupen Hazarika on his death anniversary," he added.

Calling Hazarika one of the greatest artists of the state, chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said, "The Bard of Brahmaputra, the legend of Assam, the Bharat Ratna, (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Protestors detained in Dibrugarh

HT Correspondent

DIBRUGARH, Nov 5: Several protesters were detained by the police after a tense standoff at the Assam Medical College and Hospital (AMCH) campus on Tuesday.

The situation escalated when the authorities used a JCB excavator to block access to a road by completely shutting down a gate near the campus. This move led to a confrontation between the police and the people, resulting in injuries on both sides.

To control the situation, the police resorted to using tear gas to disperse the crowd as tensions ran high. In response, protesters threw glass bottles, bricks, and stones at the police, causing further chaos.

During the clashes, additional SP Nirmal Ghosh was hit in the face, and several other police officers sustained injuries from objects hurled by the protesters. Many protesters (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

PM should not speak like 'villain from C-grade Hindi film': Congress

NEW DELHI, Nov 5: The Congress on Tuesday accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi of lowering the level of discourse during the election campaign and claimed it showed that the BJP was losing assembly elections in Maharashtra and Jharkhand.

After alleging that the INDIA bloc will snatch the "mangalsutra" in his Lok Sabha campaign speeches, Modi has stooped to calling the opposition alliance "ghus-paithiya bandhan" (an alliance of infiltrators) and claiming it will "snatch daughters and food" in Maharashtra and Jharkhand, the party said.

Congress leader Pawan Khara stated that it is unbecoming of a Prime Minister to use language similar to that of a "cheap villain from a C-grade Hindi film" and he should uphold the dignity of his office.

Taking a dig, he also asked if Modi was criticising home minis-



ter Amit Shah's work by claiming that infiltrators had free rein in Jharkhand.

"The level of the Prime Minister's language in electioneering is falling very fast. In Lok Sabha polls, while fearing defeat, he sought to divide society by spewing venom among communities. They did not get enough votes and today they are running a coalition government," he said.

"In the Lok Sabha elections, it started with buffalo, mutton, fish, mangalsutra, Muslim, and by the time it came to Jharkhand elections, it has reached to daughter

and bread."

"He used to say INDIA people will take away your daughters and mangalsutra and is now running a government in alliance with other partners," Khara said in a post in Hindi on X.

In a video message also posted on X, the Congress leader claimed the BJP's prospects are even worse in Jharkhand and Maharashtra and "they know they are losing".

"He is now again talking of 'ghuspaithiya' sarkar, that it will snatch your daughters and food. But, border security is under them as he has been in government for over 10 years. Who is giving this certificate to the BSF, the home minister, Rajnath Singh or are you criticising your foreign policy," Khara alleged.

The Congress spokesperson wondered if the Prime Minister is publicly criticising home minister Amit Shah with such statements. "Whatever (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

India to launch ESA's Proba-3 spacecraft in December

NEW DELHI, Nov 5: India will launch the European Space Agency's Proba-3 mission early next month from the spacecraft at Sriharikota. Science and Technology Minister Jitendra Singh said here on Tuesday.

Singh said the two satellites that are part of the Proba-3 mission to study the Sun were brought to Sriharikota on Tuesday morning for integration with ISRO's Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV).

"Proba-3 mission of the European Space Agency will be launched by a PSLV rocket from Sriharikota in the first week of December," Singh said at the Indian Space Conclave organised by the Indian Space Association.

The mission is likely to be launched on December 4.

The two Proba-3 spacecraft will be launched together by the PSLV-XL launcher and placed in the highly elliptical orbit which will ascend to 60,000 km away from Earth

before coming as low as just 600 km. This high orbit is required because the pair of spacecraft will perform their active formation flying for a planned six hours at a time around their maximum altitude, where Earth's gravitational pull will be diminished, as will the amount of propellant needed to fine-tune their positions. Proba-3's two satellites will enable sustained views of the Sun's faint surrounding atmosphere, or corona, that has previously only been visible for a few brief moments during solar eclipses viewed from the Earth.

To achieve this the shadow being cast between the spacecraft must remain in a precise position, which means they must fly autonomously in formation to an accuracy of a single millimetre - about the thickness of an average fingernail. This is the first time that an ESA mission is to be launched from India since the original Proba-1 Earth-observing mission in 2001. (PTI)

Tiwa students block highway

MORIGAON, Nov 5: Members of the All Tiwa Students' Union (ATSU) blocked a national highway in Assam's Morigaon district on Tuesday over a host of demands, leading to a scuffle with the police, officials said.

Hundreds of activists of ATSU and some other local groups blocked the NH-27 at Jagiroa for about two hours, they said.

They were demanding a halt to the formation of the Jagiroa Town Committee, eviction of encroachers from reserved tribal belts and blocks, and inclusion of the Tiwa Autonomous Council in the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution.

When police tried to clear the highway, the agitators resisted, leading to a minor scuffle, a senior official said.

"Later, the protesters submitted a memorandum addressed to the chief minister through the local administration, highlighting their demands," he said. (PTI)

'Courts are the conscience-keeper of Independent India' Colonial practices shouldn't be guiding principles for judiciary: Prez Murmu

NEW DELHI, Nov 5: President Droupadi Murmu on Tuesday said equal justice and getting rid of redundant colonial practices should be the guiding principles for the country's judiciary.

Addressing an event here, Murmu said she shares the views of those who admire the contribution of the "court as the conscience-keeper of Independent India", adding the apex court has developed a jurisprudence that is rooted in Indian ethos and realities.

She said the members of the Constituent Assembly would have thought about the events of the decades behind them just as "we are looking back at the last 75 years of our judicial history".

"The experience of suffering imperial arrogance, like those caused



by the bitter opposition to the Ilbert Bill and the passage of the Rowlett Act, would have hurt their sensibility," the President said.

They conceived the judiciary of Independent India as an arm of the

social revolution which would uphold the ideal of equality, she said. "Equal justice and getting rid of the now-redundant colonial practices should be the guiding principles for our judiciary. While

continuing with the useful aspects of the pre-independence jurisprudence, we should remove the legacy over-burden," Murmu said while releasing three publications of the Supreme Court of India.

She said the book titled 'Justice for the Nation', captures the high points of the Supreme Court's 75-year journey.

"It also describes the impact of the Supreme Court on various aspects of the lives of the people. Our justice delivery system must strengthen our onward march as a just and fair society."

"I am glad to observe that the report on the working of legal aid cells, released today, is devoted to the legal aid clinics operating in law schools in our country," the President said. (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

SC upholds UP madrassa law, overturns High Court ruling

NEW DELHI, Nov 5: In a major relief to madrassas in Uttar Pradesh, the Supreme Court on Tuesday upheld the constitutional validity of the 2004 state law regulating the Muslim minority educational institutions and said a statute cannot be struck down on the ground of secularism.

The significant ruling, which overturned an Allahabad High Court decision, would benefit over 17 lakh students studying in over 16,000 madrassas recognised by the Uttar Pradesh Board of Madrasa Education under the state law.

The high court had asked for the closure of such institutions and directed the state government to accommodate students in a formal schooling system.

The top court said a statute could be declared ultra vires on two grounds -- being beyond the ambit of the legislative competence or vi-



olating fundamental rights or any other Constitutional provision.

A bench comprising Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud and Justices J B Pardiwala and Manoj Misra, therefore set aside the high court verdict quashing the 2004 law on the ground that it was violative of the principle of secularism.

"The madrasa Act (Uttar Pradesh Board of Madarsa Educa-

tion Act, 2004) is within the legislative competence of the state legislature and traceable to Entry 25 of List III (of the constitution)," held the bench.

The top court, however, noted the 2004 law to the extent that it sought to regulate higher education, including the "degrees" of "Fazil" and "Kamil" (bachelor and postgraduate (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

3.69 lakh tonne of wheat and 2.91 lakh tonne of rice from FCI allocated

Govt launches Bharat wheat and rice phase-II

NEW DELHI, Nov 5: The government on Tuesday launched phase-II retail sales of wheat flour and rice under the Bharat brand at subsidised rates to provide relief to consumers from high prices.

Wheat flour (atta) will be sold at ₹ 30 per kg and rice at ₹ 34 per kg in 5kg and 10kg packets through cooperatives NCCF, Nafed and Kendriya Bhandar and e-commerce platforms.

"This is a temporary intervention to provide relief to consumers," Food minister Pralhad Joshi said after flagging off the mobile vans of these cooperatives.

The government has allocated 3.69 lakh tonne of wheat and 2.91 lakh tonne of rice from the Food Corporation of India (FCI) for the phase-2 retail intervention under the Price Stabilisation Fund.

"This intervention will continue



till the allocated stock gets exhausted. If more (is) required, we have enough stock and will allocate again," Joshi said.

Under the new pricing structure, wheat flour will be available in 5kg and 10kg packs at ₹ 30 per kg, while rice will be sold at Rs

34 per kg -- a slight increase from Phase-I rates of ₹ 27.5 and ₹ 29 per kg, respectively.

Addressing concerns over lower rice sales in Phase I, Joshi emphasised that the government's objective wasn't business-oriented.

"Our motto is to give relief to consumers and control prices in the market," he said, adding that the government would consider introducing smaller pack sizes if demanded.

The minister also called for a study to understand price firmness despite surplus rice stocks, though maintaining those prices were "largely under control", with only slight fluctuations in normal quality varieties.

The previous phase, from October 2023 to June 30, 2024, saw the distribution of 15.20 lakh tonne of wheat flour and 14.58 lakh tonne of rice.

On future allocations, Joshi assured adequate stocks for continued intervention if required. Minister of state for Food BL Verma and food secretary Sanjeev Chopra were also present at the event. (PTI)

India's rice production touches record 119.93 MT this season



NEW DELHI, Nov 5: India's rice production is likely to touch a record 119.93 million tonne (MT) in the 2024-25 kharif season on good monsoon, according to the agriculture ministry's first advance estimate released on Tuesday.

The record estimate comes amid surplus stocks in government godowns.

Rice production is projected 6.67 million tonne higher than the previous year's kharif season. The harvesting of the main kharif crop is underway across the country.

Among coarse cereals, maize output is estimated at an all-time high of 24.54 MT for the 2024-25 kharif season (July-June), up from 22.24 MT last year.

While jowar production is estimated higher at 2.19 MT, bajra output is likely to decline to 9.37 MT.

Total coarse cereals production is

pegged lower at 37.81 MT against 56.93 million tonne in the year-ago period.

The ministry estimates total foodgrain production at 164.70 MT for the 2024-25 kharif season, higher than 155.76 MT last year.

Pulses output is expected to remain almost flat at 6.95 MT compared to 6.97 MT, while oilseeds production is likely to increase to 25.74 MT from 24.16 MT.

India relies on imports to meet domestic shortages of pulses and oilseeds.

Among cash crops, sugarcane production is projected to decline to 439.93 MT from 453.15 MT last year.

Cotton output is estimated lower at 29.92 million bales (170 kg each) against 32.52 million bales, while jute/mesta production may fall to 8.45 million bales (180 kg each) from 9.69 million bales.

In a first, the ministry prepared area estimates using Digital Crop Survey (DCS) data under the Digital Agriculture Mission, replacing the manual Girdawari system.

The DCS covered all districts of Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, and Odisha in Kharif 2024, leading to "substantial rise in area under rice particularly in Uttar Pradesh", the ministry said. (PTI)

UIDAI holds workshop on enhancing Aadhaar utilisation for NE states

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, Nov 5: The Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) Regional Office, Guwahati organised a state-level workshop titled "Deriving Maximum-Impact Out of Aadhaar" at Vivanta, Guwahati on November 5, 2024.

The workshop brought together senior government officials and representatives from Assam, Tripura, Manipur, and Sikkim to discuss the expanded role of Aadhaar in promoting effective service delivery and enhancing ease of living in the Northeast region.

Dhiraj Sareen, deputy director general of UIDAI, Guwahati regional office, inaugurated the workshop by emphasising Aadhaar's transformative role as a tool for empowerment and inclusivity. Reflecting on the initiative's inception in 2009, he noted Aadhaar's critical function in providing individuals with a unique, verifiable identity, which has facilitated access to government services, subsidies, and benefits for marginalised communities.

Chief guest of the event, Ravi Kota, IAS, chief secretary, commended UIDAI for organising this informative session and highlighted Aadhaar's vital role in ensuring that direct benefit transfer (DBT) schemes reach their intended beneficiaries. He urged participants to continue innovating ways to simplify public service delivery and enhance ease of living. Further underscoring Assam's commitment to Aadhaar, MS Manivannan, IAS, commissioner & secretary, general administration Department, Govt of Assam detailed the establishment of special enrolment camps in remote areas to ensure full Aadhaar coverage. He emphasised that the integration of Aadhaar Authentication by Assam's state departments would further streamline social welfare delivery.

Sandeep R Rathod, IAS, secretary of the rural development Department, Government of Tripura, highlighted Tripura's Aadhaar achievements, citing the use of Aadhaar-based biometric authentication for ration distribution and attendance monitoring in government offices. He reinforced Aadhaar's role as a powerful tool in driving social welfare programs.

In addition to these keynote speeches, officials from UIDAI Headquarters, DITEC Assam, DBT Mission, India Post, and NPCI presented detailed insights on Aadhaar's application in delivering subsidies and benefits under the Aadhaar Act, 2016.

Special focus was given to Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) schemes and the Aadhaar-enabled Payment System (AePS), along with the role of Aadhaar authentication in promoting good governance.

Nine operators from across the Northeast region were recognised for their outstanding service and exceptional customer relations. The awardees included two operators each from Tripura, Manipur, and Sikkim, along with three operators from Assam, all of whom demonstrated exemplary dedication and commitment in their roles.

Several officials and departments were honoured with Certificates of Merit for their exemplary contributions to Aadhaar implementation and outreach.

Saregama India reports 6.2 pc fall in net

KOLKATA, Nov 5: Music label Saregama India Ltd on Tuesday reported a 6.2 per cent fall in its net profit to ₹ 44.95 crore for the second quarter of the 2024-25 financial year despite a 40.5 per cent increase in revenue.

Saregama India, which is a part of the RP Sanjiv Goenka Group, posted a net profit of ₹ 47.99 crore in the corresponding quarter of the last fiscal, a statement said. (PTI)

Stock markets stage spirited recovery

MUMBAI, Nov 5: Benchmark Sensex recovered its early losses to close higher by 694 points on Tuesday on late buying in banking, steel and oil & gas shares amid firm trends in global equities ahead of the US presidential elections.

Bouncing back from Monday's sharp fall, the BSE Sensex jumped 694.39 points or 0.88 per cent to settle at 79,476.63. During the day, it soared 740.89 points or 0.94 per cent to 79,523.13.

The NSE Nifty climbed 217.95 points or 0.91 per cent to settle at 24,213.30 as 39 of its constituents advanced and 11 declined.

Stock markets opened on a weak note and traded in a range with a negative bias in the first half as investors turned cautious ahead of the US presidential elections.

Sensex hit a low of 78,296.70 while Nifty touched 23,842.75. Value buying in the afternoon session helped indices recover losses and closed in the green.

"Markets witnessed a remarkable turnaround towards the closing hours as value buying in banking stocks along with gains in metals and oil & gas stocks aided broad market recovery.

"Optimism across Asian and European indices ahead of the US election outcome boosted local traders' confidence, although medium-term outlook still looks hazy due to scepticism over further rate cut by the Fed and subdued corporate earnings," Prashanth Tapse, Senior VP (Research), Mehta Equities Ltd, said.

From the 30-share Sensex pack, JSW Steel surged nearly 5 per cent while Tata Steel jumped nearly 4 per cent. Axis Bank, IndusInd Bank, HDFC Bank, State Bank of India, Kotak Mahindra Bank and UltraTech Cement were also among the big gainers.

Adani Ports, ITC, Bharti Airtel and Asian Paints were among the laggards.

"The domestic market experienced a sharp recovery, reclaiming most of the previous day's losses amid uncertainty surrounding the likely downgrade in Q2 GDP forecast and closely contested U.S. presidential election," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services said.

However, the recent rebound in domestic manufacturing activity data, along with the expected revival of consumption in the second half of FY25, are likely to support market

sentiment, Nair added.

The BSE midcap gauge climbed 0.48 per cent and smallcap index went up by 0.41 per cent.

Among sectoral indices, metal jumped 2.38 per cent driven by the anticipation of significant stimulus from China later this week. Bankex (2.09 per cent), commodities (1.84 per cent), financial services (1.58 per cent), telecommunication (0.83 per cent), auto (0.81 per cent), realty (0.68 per cent) and utilities (0.67 per cent) also advanced.

IT, Teck and services were the laggards.

A total of 2,468 stocks advanced while 1,478 declined and 112 remained unchanged.

In Asian markets, Tokyo, Shanghai and Hong Kong settled in the positive territory while Seoul ended lower.

European markets were trading higher. The US markets ended lower on Monday.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth ₹ 4,329.79 crore on Monday, according to exchange data.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude climbed 0.60 per cent to USD 75.53 a barrel. (PTI)

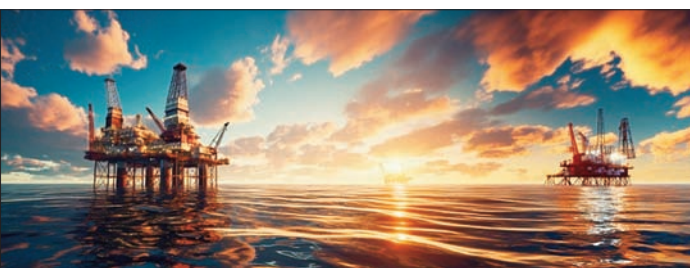
Strengthens its Net Zero by 2030 Commitment

Cairn Oil & Gas signs MoU with UNEP's OGMP 2.0

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, Nov 5: Cairn Oil & Gas, part of Vedanta Group and India's leading private oil and gas exploration and production company, has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with United Nations Environment Programme's (UNEP) flagship methane reporting and mitigation initiative - Oil & Gas Methane Partnership (OGMP) 2.0, making it the first Oil & Gas producer in India to commit to effective reduction of methane emissions, further accelerating its efforts to decarbonise its operations.

OGMP 2.0 established a comprehensive framework that includes best practices for emissions management and a robust reporting system. It emphasises accurate measurement, reporting, and verification (MRV) of methane emissions to drive reductions effectively.



Under this MoU, Cairn will establish a 5-year methane reduction target and transparently report its progress to OGMP. This would enable Cairn to analyse its emission profiles and utilise the data to mitigate emissions cost-effectively. With this partnership, Cairn reaffirms its commitment to accelerate its efforts towards becoming Net Zero Carbon by 2030.

OGMP 2.0 covers over 40% of global oil and gas production empowering companies to improve the quality and accuracy of emis-

sions data for effective methane reduction.

Welcoming Cairn to this partnership, Giulia Ferrini, OGMP 2.0 Programme Manager said, "We are thrilled to welcome our first member from India and hope that Cairn's commitment will inspire other companies from the country to join OGMP 2.0 and contribute to improving methane emissions reporting and management practices in the oil and gas sector".

Commenting on this partnership, Hitesh Vaid, chief financial

officer, Cairn Oil & Gas, Vedanta Ltd said, "We are excited to join UNEP's OGMP 2.0 to set and achieve our methane reduction targets. Setting new benchmarks in sustainable energy production, Cairn has become the first oil and gas company in India to adopt this programme. Our multi-faceted ESG strategy—spanning renewable energy integration, carbon capture utilisation and storage (CCUS), waste-to-energy projects adopting low carbon technologies, and extensive nature-based carbon solutions—highlights the extent of our dedication towards both environment and India's energy security. With OGMP 2.0 membership, we aim to not only reduce methane emissions and become Net Zero by 2030, but also drive a broader industry transformation towards responsible and sustainable energy practices."

Contd. from Page 1...

HC issues notices to state

voice. Merely because somebody is sitting at a glasshouse in Dispur, does it mean he won't listen to anybody?" he asked. After listening to all the arguments, the bench fixed November 13 as the date for the next hearing. Following a series of protests, the chief minister's office on October 30 said that chief secretary Ravi Kota chaired a meeting with senior officials of PWD (Roads) to discuss possible alternatives for the upcoming flyover in order to avoid West and East Dighalipukhuri roads.

Hundreds of people, including singers, actors and students of nearby Cotton University, have been holding night vigils in the area to prevent the administration from cutting the trees.

Netizens also took to social media to criticise the government's decision, highlighting the trees' importance as habitats for numerous resident and migratory birds.

According to an RTI reply, the Public Works Department, which is looked after by chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, stated that the authorities have decided to go ahead with uprooting the trees surrounding the historic Dighalipukhuri without carrying out any environmental impact assessment and public hearing.

As per popular legend, Dighalipukhuri was constructed by King Bhagadatta, who led the Kauravas in the Battle of Kurukshetra in the Mahabharata, during the 'swayamvar' of his daughter Bhanumati.

Historically, the pond was used by the Ahoms as a naval dockyard, especially during the 1671 Battle of Saraighat on Brahmaputra.

Its access to Brahmaputra was eventually closed during colonial times. The connecting portion was further filled, on which the Circuit House was built and later the Gauhati High Court came up.

Besides, several other landmark structures like the state museum, district library, Rabindra Bhawan, Reserve Bank of India, a part of Cotton University, which is the first college of the Northeast, Handique Girls' College, the first women's college of the Northeast, Nabin Chandra Bordoloi Hall and district courts are located in the area. (PTI)

Himanta calls Cong 'male'

atmosphere" for political purposes even if the situation in Assam is stable. In contrast to the Congress' alleged attempts to put the Bengali Hindu community in jeopardy, Sarma highlighted the BJP's continuous efforts to address and fix the problems they confront.

He said, "Congress is working against the interests of the Bengalis."

Sarma claimed that the grand old party incited violence in the state earlier, which has been effectively controlled by the BJP-led government. "The Congress was busy creating conflicts between Assamese and Bengali people. Such conflicts are no longer there. There is no difference between Brahmaputra Valley and Barak Valley now. The same development is happening everywhere," he added.

The BJP leader urged the people to vote for the party's candidate Nihar Ranjan Das, claiming that uninterupted, accelerated development of the constituency can be ensured if the MLA is from the ruling party.

"If an MLA or an MP both are from BJP, with BJP governments at Dispur and Delhi, they will work together. But if the Congress candidate wins, he will later say that he cannot get things done as the BJP is in power in the state and at the Centre," the CM added.

"The Congress is like a male cow, you can feed it as much as you want, but it cannot give you milk. Similarly, you can vote for the Congress, but it cannot give you development," Sarma said.

The chief minister asserted that the BJP has been fulfilling its poll promises, including providing one lakh government jobs, and all assurances will be implemented before the next Assembly elections in 2026.

By-elections are scheduled in five Assembly constituencies of the state on November 13. Besides Dholai, the BJP has fielded candidates in Samaguri and Behali seats, while its allies AGP is contesting from Bongaigaon and UPPL from Siddi.

These by-polls were necessitated by the election of the incumbent MLAs to the Lok Sabha.

Of these five seats, BJP and its allies held four, with Congress holding one. (With inputs from PTI)

CM slams Cong for questioning

these issues. Congress was formed to play only negative politics," the CM added. Sarma had addressed another campaign rally under the Dholai constituency earlier in the day. (PTI)

State remembers Bhupen Hazarika

Sudhakantha Dr. Bhupen Hazarika lives immortal in the hearts of everyone in Assam and beyond."

His magical voice and meaningful lyrics have stirred the emotions of listeners for years and provided a deep sense of connection with the true beauty of Assam, Sarma added.

The state's cultural department organised a programme at the memorial site of the musical maestro at Jalukbari on the outskirts of Guwahati.

Finance minister Ajanta Neog, along with other dignitaries, laid floral tributes and recalled the contributions of Hazarika to strengthening the social fabric of the state.

The All Assam Students' Union (AASU) paid floral tribute at the status of Hazarika on the banks of Dighalipukhuri in the city during the day, with college students also performing the legendary artist's immortal songs. Ten thousand earthen lamps were lit along the pond in the evening as Hazarika's songs played on the saxophone with people from different walks of life joining to pay their tributes.

Various district units of AASU also organised programmes to mark the occasion. Memorial programmes were also organised by different social organisations and educational institutions. (PTI)

Protestors detained in Dibrugarh

also suffered injuries as the police used force to control the crowd. "Around 8-9 police personnel were injured in the stone and beer bottle pelting. A couple of journalists were also hit. I was also hit in the face. My cellphone was also damaged in the attack. The crowd has been dispersed and the situation is under control now," additional SP Nirmal Ghosh said.

The protest ignited from the closure of a gate at AMCH that provided access to the Jalan Nagar Tea Estate. The gate, known as Alubari Gate, was shut down permanently by the authorities due to the proliferation of country liquor dens in the Alubari area.

Incidents of intoxication-related brawls had been on the rise, affecting the peaceful atmosphere of the AMCH campus. In July a youth was also killed in a drunken brawl in the Alubari area. The decision to close the gate was made to address these concerns and prevent further disturbances in the area.

PM should not speak like

their differences, he should improve his language. Such language and dialogues are not befitting of the Prime Minister's post," he said. "Such dialogues are spoken by a cheap villain of a C-grade Hindi film and do not befit him. You must improve upon your language," he said.

Accusing the Prime Minister of having "lost personal respect", Khara said, "At least maintain the respect and reputation of the position you hold".

"Please maintain this 'maryada' (decorum) in the leftover time you have, please keep that in mind," the chairman of the media and publicity department of the Congress said.

Prime Minister Modi on Monday launched a no-holds-barred attack on the JMM-led coalition in Jharkhand, labelling it a "ghuspaithiya bandhan" (infiltrators' alliance) for "supporting Bangladeshi infiltrators".

"Appeasement politics has reached its zenith in Jharkhand where the JMM-led coalition is busy supporting Bangladeshi infiltrators. If this continues, the state's tribal population will shrink. This is a threat to the tribal society and the country. This coalition has become a 'ghuspaithiya bandhan' and 'Mafia ka Ghulam'," Modi claimed at a rally in Garhwa.

Modi alleged that the JMM-led ruling coalition in the state of which the Congress is a part has put tribal "identity, dignity and existence" at stake by "facilitating" Bangladeshi infiltrators to make fake documents.

"Infiltrators are snatching your daughters, grabbing land and devouring your bread," he said in Chaibasa, claiming that efforts were being made to change Jharkhand's demography.

This was Modi's first visit to Jharkhand following the announcement of assembly elections, scheduled on November 13 and November 20. (PTI)

SC upholds UP madrasa law,

level degrees given by madrasas, was beyond the legislative competence of the state legislature as it conflicted provisions of the University Grant Commission (UGC) Act and was therefore unconstitutional.

"The UGC Act governs the standards for higher education and a state legislature cannot seek to regulate higher education, in contravention of the provisions of the UGC Act," it said.

The apex court noted that the high court had fallen into error and ended up "throwing the baby out with the bathwater" by striking down the entire madrasa law on the ground that conferment of such degrees has been held to be unconstitutional due to lack of legislative competence.

"The entire statute does not need to be struck down each time that certain provisions of the statute are held to not meet constitutional muster. The statute is only void to the extent that it contravenes the Constitution," it said. The top court said the constitutional validity of a statute couldn't be challenged for the violation of the basic structure of the Constitution.

"The reason is that concepts such as democracy, federalism, and secularism are undefined concepts. Allowing courts to strike down legislation for violation of such concepts will introduce an element of uncertainty in our constitutional adjudication," pointed out the bench.

The top court noted it had recently accepted that a challenge to the constitutional validity of a statute for violation of the basic structure was a technical aspect because the infraction had to be traced to the express provisions of the Constitution. (PTI)

Colonial practices shouldn't be

Murmu said such legal aid clinics contribute to imparting holistic legal education to the country's youth and sensitise them to the needs of the vulnerable segments of society.

"The status of undertrial prisoners has been an abiding concern for me. I am happy that the report on the prison system, released today, seeks to understand the role of the judiciary in reducing the number of undertrial prisoners," she said. Murmu said these three publications will help realise the objectives of free legal aid and prison reforms, besides educating the people about the exceptional role played by the Supreme Court in the country's journey as a republic.

"I congratulate the members of Bench and Bar, past and present, for making the Supreme Court of India the great institution that it is," the President said.

She said that the apex court has been organising very purposeful activities and events to commemorate the 75th year of its founding. (PTI)

Chief electoral officer Anurag Goel reviews by-election preparations

HT Correspondent

NAGAON, Nov 5: The state's chief electoral officer, Anurag Goel, arrived in Nagaon on Tuesday to review preparations for the upcoming by-election in the Samaguri assembly constituency. Goel, along with other officials, attended a meeting at the conference hall of the District Commissioner's Office to discuss election preparations with officials from various electoral cells.

During the meeting, representatives from different cells shared their progress and perspectives. Election officer Shekharan Phukan also addressed the gathering and presented a detailed update through videography, emphasising the importance of a free, fair, and peaceful election.

Goel urged all present to work diligently and sincerely to ensure the successful conduct of the by-election. Additionally, he inspected the Strong Room and oversaw the EVM commissioning.

Other notable attendees included district commissioner and district election officer Narendra Kr Shah, district development commissioner and returning officer Gunajit Kashyap, chief executive officer of Nagaon Zila Parishad Ananta Kumar Gogoi, and district police superintendent Swapnil Deka, according to an official press note issued here.

Our Biswanath Chariali correspondent adds: Anurag Goel, the chief electoral officer of the state, visited Biswanath on Tuesday to review the ongoing progress and preparations for the upcoming Behali by-election, scheduled for November 13. He held a meeting with the district election officer, election cell officers, and other concerned officials in the conference hall of the District Commissioner's Office. He instructed that all vehicles carrying polling parties must be equipped with GPS tracking. He reviewed election-related preparations across relevant departments. The meeting was attended by Amit Khatri, election observer; Munindra Nath Nagaty, district commissioner and district election officer; Subhasish Baruah, SP, Biswanath; Dhruvajyoti Das, Rakesh Das, and Hriday Kumar Das, ADCs; Dhiman Hazarika, election officer; assistant commissioners, and other officials.

DDC meeting assesses progress on development schemes & infrastructure projects



HT Correspondent

TEZPUR, Nov 5: The District Development Committee (DDC) meeting for November was held on Tuesday under the chairmanship of district commissioner Ankur Bharali, at the conference hall of the DC's Office, Sonitpur. At the beginning of the meeting, DC Bharali welcomed Lakhinandan Saharia, the newly appointed district development commissioner of Sonitpur. The formal meeting commenced with a tribute to Bharat Ratna Dr Bhupen Hazarika on his 13th death anniversary. Following this, the district commissioner reviewed the progress of work on the District Library and Baan Theatre with officials from the PWD Building Department, instructing them to expedite the pending work. He also reviewed the target achievements of departments such as Transport, Excise, Forest, and Tax, emphasising the need for continued progress.

DC Bharali highlighted the importance of publicising paddy procurement rates among farmers. He further received updates from the Public Health Engineering (PHE) Department on Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) schemes, with a focus on maintaining completed projects

and encouraging public involvement. The meeting also covered the progress of various initiatives, including the construction of Model Anganwadi Centers, the Chief Minister's Atmanirbhar Assam Abhiyan, the PM Vishwakarma Scheme, the PM Surya Ghar Scheme, and the Prime Minister Internship Scheme for 2024-25, along with other interdepartmental issues. A discussion was also held on the implementation of the 'Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain' campaign in the district.

Prior to the DDC meeting, the district commissioner chaired the District Road Safety Committee (DRSC) meeting at the same venue, where road safety concerns were discussed with committee members.

Topics included arranging training in the district under the Save Life Foundation program, as directed by the DRSC lead agency, as well as the installation of road signage and additional safety measures for the winter season and foggy conditions. Key officials from the district administration and heads of various departments, along with DRSC members, were present at the meeting.

Dr Bhupen Hazarika's death anniversary observed

BTC chief Pramod Boro unveils statue of Dr Bhupen Hazarika in Kokrajhar; other districts pay tribute to the 'Bard of Brahmaputra' with prayers, music & cultural events



HT Correspondent

KOKRAJHAR, Nov 5: BTC chief Pramod Boro unveiled a grand statue of the legendary 'Bard of Brahmaputra', Dr Bhupen Hazarika, at Sudhakantha Kanan in Kokrajhar, marking the death anniversary of the iconic cultural figure on Tuesday. The event also saw the launch of a souvenir titled 'Bhupendra Baihbhav' in his honour.

In his address, BTC Chief Pramod Boro emphasised that the statue was more than just a tribute to Dr Bhupen Hazarika—it represented the enduring spirit of unity, collective growth, and social harmony. Reflecting on Dr Bhupen Hazarika's immense contributions to Assamese music, culture, and social integration, Boro highlighted the BTC government's ongoing efforts to foster unity in diversity. He spoke about the need to preserve the distinct identities of all communities in Bodoland while ensuring their active participation in the region's socio-economic progress.

As part of this vision, Boro announced a series of development initiatives aimed at enhancing Bodoland's socio-cultural landscape. Key announcements included the construction of a statue of renowned cultural icon Kalaguru Bishnu Prasad Rabha in Tamulpur and the establishment of a Dr Bhupen Hazarika Bhawan in Baksa, with an investment of over Rs 10 crore. Furthermore, Boro extended support for the translation of over 200 songs by Dr Bhupen Hazarika into the Bodo language, a project that will be carried out in Kokrajhar.

State minister for Textiles and guardian minister of Kokrajhar, UG Brahma, also addressed the gathering, praising Dr Bhupen Hazarika's timeless legacy. He spoke about BTC's commitment to preserving the cultural identity of the region while promoting harmony and collaboration across Bodoland's diverse communities.

Former president of the Assam Sahitya Sabha and ex-DGP, Kuladhar Saikia, lauded the efforts to bring this vision to fruition. He described the statue as a powerful symbol of humanity and a reminder of Dr Hazarika's global influence, which transcends geographical and cultural boundaries.

The event was attended by several distinguished dignitaries, including MP Jayanta Basumatary, MLA Lawrence Islary, Kokrajhar DC Masanda Pertin, president of the Bodo Sahitya Sabha Dr Surath Narzary, and prominent artist Kamal Chandra Kataki, among others,

who celebrated Dr Bhupen Hazarika's enduring legacy.

Our Morigaon correspondent adds: Along with the rest of the country, Jiban Jeuti Krishak Sangha organised the 'Shradhanjali Anusthan' on Tuesday to mark the 14th death anniversary of Bharat Ratna Dr Bhupen Hazarika, the legendary musician, lyricist, singer, and filmmaker, at the historic Charon Beel. A community prayer was held, moderated by the president of Jiban Jeuti Krishak Sangha, Tulusi Deka. Floral tributes were offered at the portrait of the music legend by Kulen Das, an employee of the joint director of Health, Morigaon. The program was attended by social worker Diganta Nath, Siva Saikia, Laksheswar Deka, senior reporter Sanu Gogoi, Sunali Devi, among others.

Our Nagaon correspondent adds: Several socio-cultural and other organisations, including the Asom Jatiyatadi Yuva Chatra Parishad and the AASU of Nagaon district, along with the rest of Assam, observed the 13th death anniversary of legendary singer and musical maestro Sudhakantha Dr Bhupen Hazarika at various locations in the district on Tuesday.

Nagaon Normal School hosted a commemoration program in honour of the great musical legend, organised by Assam Silpi Kanon. The Uriyagaon Anchalik unit of Asom Jatiyatadi Yuva Chatra Parishad, along with various branches of the youth organization, observed the day by lighting candles in front of Dr Hazarika's portrait.

Similar programs were also held in different locations, including Marangial-Gadharia village, Telia Pahukata, Maj Uriyagaon, Karaiyani, and Majpathari areas.

The Nagaon Zila Sahitya Sabha organised a day-long program at Rangolu, while the Nagaon district unit of Bharatiya Ganamatya Sangha held a discussion session on Dr Hazarika's life and philosophy at its Nagaon district office. Eminent personalities, including Jyotirmoy Jana, Ashok Ram Bhattacharyya, Molan Laskar, Kabita Barua, Durlav Pavan Baruah, and Nizara Saikia, participated in the discussion.

Meanwhile, in Silghat, Kaliabor, the death anniversary of the great musical legend of Assam was observed as Humanity Day at Dr Hazarika's statue near the Brahmaputra River. The program, jointly organised by various organisations, including the Kaliabor Kendriya Chatra Santha, Kaliabor Sakha Sahitya Sabha, and Silghat Ashokastami Mela



Samiti, featured candle lighting, performances of Dr Hazarika's evergreen songs, and other cultural events.

These programs showcased the enduring legacy of Dr Bhupen Hazarika and reinforced his message of humanity and unity.

Our Tezpur correspondent adds: The Sonitpur district administration, in collaboration with the Assam government's Jyoti Bharti (Poki) and under the aegis of the historic Baan Theatre, commemorated the 13th death anniversary of Bharat Ratna Dr Bhupen Hazarika on Tuesday. The tribute ceremony was held at Bhupen Hazarika Kalahumi, Tezpur, where the MLA of Tezpur LAC, Pritihiraj Rava, in the presence of district commissioner Ankur Bharali, paid floral homage to the legendary bard at his full-length statue. They were joined by additional district commissioner Garga Mohan Das, key officials from the Office of the Cultural Development, the district administration, Baan Theatre, and several esteemed dignitaries from the fields of art, theatre, literature, and social work, all gathered to honor the memory of the luminary musician.

Addressing the audience, MLA Rava shared numerous anecdotes about the 'Bard of the Brahmaputra' from his time in Tezpur. District commissioner Bharali expressed that every creation of Dr Bhupen Hazarika is a cultural treasure, integral to Assamese society. He also highlighted the ongoing Bhasha Gaurav Saptah, observed by the state government, underscoring its importance in preserving Assamese culture and identity in contemporary times.

The day-long event also featured an all-Assam level music and singing competition dedicated to Bhupendra Sangeet in the afternoon, as well as a musical evening celebrating the artist's works.

Meanwhile, Tezpur Sahitya Sabha, Baan Theatre, Prahlad Chandra Das Memorial Nriyashala, Chatak, and several organisations in the district paid rich tribute to Bharat Ratna Dr Bhupen Hazarika and organised day-long colourful programs, including Bhupendra Sangeet, recitations, and various competitions. Additionally, Darpan News Network also paid homage to the legendary bard, with the executive director of the organisation and senior journalist Manoj Bora submitting a memorandum on the day of his death anniversary to the concerned government ministries, urging them to rename Tezpur Airport as Bharat Ratna Dr Bhupen Hazarika Airport.

Wangala Festival begins in WKA

HT Correspondent

DONGKAMUKAM, Nov 5: The 28th edition of the 100 Drums Wangala Festival kicked off on Tuesday evening at the Rajendra Memorial LP School playground with a three-day programme near Dongkamukam in West Karbi Anglong. The chairman of the Minority Development Board, Prakash Sangma, inaugurated the pandal, and it was blessed by Fr Albert Thmyriang, parish priest of Satgaon Parish.

Chairman Prakash Sangma, in his speech, said he is proud that the Garos of Karbi Anglong and West Karbi Anglong have taken significant steps to uphold the rich heritage of their culture. He recalled the forefathers who made efforts to start the festival nearly two decades ago. He concluded by urging the community to remain united for any cause.

It may be mentioned that Wangala is the most significant festival of the Garo tribe, held in October or November. The festival is dedicated to the 'God of Giver' called 'Misi Saljong', whom the Garos believe to be the provider of everything, and without dedicating offerings to him, they cannot eat. The festival will showcase traditional games and sports, drum beating, fashion shows, folk and modern songs, a traditional food-making competition, and other events.

Cachar DC fast-tracks land verification and ensures smooth Chhath Puja arrangements

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, Nov 5: With a dual focus on infrastructure expansion and cultural harmony, the district commissioner of Cachar, Mridul Yadav, has taken swift action to address two vital community needs. A high-level meeting on Monday brought together officials to accelerate land record verification and compensation for major infrastructure projects, while also ensuring meticulous preparations for the upcoming Chhath Puja festivities.

In a bid to expedite land acquisition under the Bharatmala Pariyojana, DC Yadav highlighted the importance of accurate, digitised land records to ensure transparency and efficiency in compensating landowners.

This approach is particularly crucial for the Badarup and Panchgram Bypass projects, which promise to enhance connectivity and stimulate economic

growth in the region. DC Yadav emphasised that timely disbursement of compensation is not only a commitment to development but also an assurance of fairness for local communities affected by the infrastructure expansion.

Attendees at the meeting included Dr Khaleeda Sultana Ahmed, additional district commissioner for Land Acquisition, along with circle and branch officers, who discussed strategies to remove potential administrative hurdles. This initiative underscores Cachar's commitment to seamless and transparent project implementation, signaling a brighter future for regional infrastructure.

In addition to infrastructure, DC Yadav has made comprehensive arrangements for Chhath Puja, underscoring the administration's commitment to a safe and joyful celebration. Key directives include the deployment of the State Disaster Response

Jorhat school burglary

HT Correspondent

JORHAT, Nov 5: Thieves broke into the National Telegraph School here on Monday night and made off with several items.

The stolen items included a computer CPU and UPS, five microscopes, four fans, and several utensils like a pressure cooker, pots, and stainless steel plates used for the children's midday meal, along with other items such as a clock and a bell.

Blood donation camp organised

HT Correspondent

DIBRUGARH, Nov 5: The NSS PG Unit and NSS Cell of Dibrugarh University, in collaboration with the Dibrugarh University Post Graduate Students' Union (DUPGSU), organised a successful blood donation camp at the Dibrugarh University Health Center. With support from AMCH and HDFC Bank, Dibrugarh, the event saw enthusiastic participation from NSS volunteers, leading to the collection of 26 units of blood.

Prof Devid Kardong, programme coordinator of the NSS Cell, Dibrugarh University, inaugurated the camp. Dr Amar Upadhyaya, programme officer of the NSS PG Unit, Dibrugarh University, Dr Himadri Barman, assistant programme coordinator, Dibrugarh University, and Dr Pranjit Kalita, assistant programme officer, Dibrugarh University, were also present.

Gauhati Gaushala prepares for Gopashtami Mela celebrations



HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, Nov 5: The Shree Gauhati Gaushala at Athgoan is being adorned in festive hues as preparations are underway for the grand celebration of the annual Gopashtami Mela on November 8, 9, and 10.

The organisers, led by the president of Shree Gauhati Gaushala, Jai Prakash Goenka, and chairman of the Law and Order Committee, Pramod Harlalka (Lala), are engaged in rigorous activities to make this year's event an unforgettable experience for visitors. The mela, which draws lakhs of devotees, including a large number of women and children, is a unique blend of devotion and cultural festivities.

In addition to religious rituals and

devotional programs, a children's entertainment zone and stalls selling a variety of items—from culinary delicacies to toys—are among the key attractions of the mela.

At the heart of this festival lies Gopashtami, a day dedicated to decorating and worshipping cows and calves. Gautam Sharma, secretary-in-charge, said, "Gopashtami is celebrated on the eighth day after Diwali. On this day, community members have traditionally worshipped cows and offered them fodder and jaggery (gur) as a mark of respect to Gau Mata."

In the evening, the entire gaushala will be illuminated with colourful lights, adding to the festive atmosphere, said publicity secretary Bikash Gupta. Founded in 1916, Shree Gauhati Gaushala is celebrating 108 years of its existence this year and remains the oldest and most popular charitable institution in the Northeast region, serving humanity without profit motives.

The gaushala has a rich history and continues to uphold its founding principles of Gau Sewa and Manav Sewa. Harlalka added that sufficient police personnel and private security guards will be deployed, and CCTV cameras will be installed to ensure the safety and security of visitors. Additionally, fire tenders will be on standby in case of emergencies.

AAU partners with Assure Biovention Private Ltd

MoU aims to enhance bio-inputs, organic agriculture & student mentorship



HT Correspondent

JORHAT, Nov 5: Assam Agricultural University (AAU) has signed an MoU with Assure Biovention Private Ltd., the first startup supported by AAU.

The startup was founded by Professor Bidyut Kumar Samrah, director of DBT-North East Centre for Agricultural Biotechnology, along with co-founder Binod Hazarika, proprietor of Woodcraft in Nagaon, a leading entrepreneur in Assam.

The company is the first of its kind to provide mentorship to students, researchers, and entrepreneurs from the North East region and beyond, helping them excel in their endeavours.

Assure Biovention will upscale technologies such as bioinputs (biofertilisers and biopesticides), tissue-cultured plantlets, and mushroom spawn production, among others, developed by AAU and other collaborating organisations to promote overall agricultural development in the region.

Dr Popy Borah, senior scientist at ARRI, Titabar, and Dr MV Deshpande, retired scientist from the National Chemical Laboratory, Pune, will be collaborators in the company's organic agriculture sector.

Dr Sumita Acharjee, associate professor in the department of Agricultural Biotechnology at AAU, will contribute to its academic ven-

tures. The MoU was signed by the registrar of AAU, Tapan Kumar Gohain, and Professor BK Sarmah, founder director of Assure Biovention, in the presence of the vice chancellor, deans, and directors of the University.

Vice chancellor Dr Bidyut Chandan Deka congratulated the signatories and expressed satisfaction with the development.

He praised the mission of the company to guide students in excelling academically and to support farmers and entrepreneurs in the region in promoting organic agriculture through the upscaling of innovative agri-based technologies.

Child labourer rescued from shop



HT Correspondent

MARGHERITA, Nov 5: Acting on a tip-off, a 12-year-old child labourer was rescued on Tuesday from Jindal Cosmetics, a shop owned by Amit Jindal, located on Balukad Road, Margherita, in Tinsukia district.

The operation was led by the District-level Task Force, including Utam Pegu, labour

officer; Shyam Kumar Upadhyaya, SW; DCPO Tinsukia; Debika Sonowal, sub-inspector and CWPO of Margherita Police Station; and Nilomoni Doly, case worker, Child Helpline, Tinsukia.

The 12-year-old rescued child labourer had been working at the cosmetics shop for a month. He hails from Bihar and had been residing with his parents in a rented house in Margherita.

The child was taken to Margherita Police Station, and further investigation is ongoing at the time of filing this report.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

You always admire what you really don't understand
- Blaise Pascal

Sibling rivalry in Indian politics

A sibling rivalry and a mother's appeal to be true to a father's legacy, then, there's a Chief Minister out to make hay from the family feud. Then, his Deputy Chief Minister applauds another state's Chief Minister and asks his state's Home Minister to adopt this CM's model to drive crime underground; that he would do it if he's "Home Minister". All of this when 'Batenge toh katenge' is top of the mind everywhere. The two states, Andhra Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh. The two siblings, former AP Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy and his sister YS Sharmila, who is the Andhra Pradesh Congress Chief, never shy of taking her brother to task. It may sound like settling scores but the mother stands with the daughter while the son is an answer on his own. YS Vijayamma is the widow of the late Congress Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, YS Rajasekhara Reddy. And in this battle of the 'YS', a blockbuster of a film can be made to cater to both Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, two Telugu-speaking states, where politics and movies run together. Vijayamma released an emotional letter on October 29, 2024, asking Jagan Mohan Reddy to honour his father's promise to equally divide inherited wealth. It shouldn't have been in the public domain but Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu took to 'X' and now the sibling-squabbling is out for everybody to comment.

Jagan and Sharmila are both political rivals of CM Chandrababu Naidu and Deputy CM Pawan Kalyan and they represent YSRC and the Congress respectively. The media says "the feud revolves around valuable assets" including shares, and property. This is about a family which once stood unified behind Rajasekhara Reddy, who died in 2009. The family is now a prime example of "unify when convenient, divide when profitable," which sounds like Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's 'Batenge toh katenge'. YS Vijayamma is convinced 'Batenge toh katenge' is where the YSR-family is headed for if the brother-sister duo don't pull back from the brink of the purgatory. Something like where Andhra Pradesh would be if crimes like murder and rape aren't stopped forthwith. Deputy CM Pawan Kalyan is convinced the Yogi model is the solution. And he told this to Andhra Pradesh Home Minister Vangalapati Anitha, saying things "would be different" if he was the Home Minister!

The question now is, will the brother-sister duo get out of their feuding roles and take on the ruling coalition politically as they should? YS Sharmila and YS Jagan Mohan Reddy should know that 'Batenge toh katenge' applies to them, too. Their feuding is dividing the state's Opposition and allowing the TDP, BJP and Janasena a freehand in Andhra Pradesh. If anything, the YS-siblings should take a cue from 'Batenge toh katenge' and together play the Yogi model of controlling crime - bulldozer action and half-encounter et al - as advocated by Pawan Kalyan. The thing to worry is that there is no Opposition worth its salt in Andhra Pradesh. Both Chief Minister Naidu and Deputy CM Pawan Kalyan can pretty much do whatever they want to. Like Prime Minister Justin Trudeau of Canada, who "has developed a pattern", much like Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath in Uttar Pradesh.

Dighali Pukhuri flyover debate

The ongoing debate surrounding the Dighali Pukhuri Flyover project in Guwahati has brought to the forefront not only concerns about urban infrastructure and traffic management but also pressing issues related to environmental conservation, particularly the fate of the trees surrounding this historic water body. As urbanization accelerates in Indian cities, the clash between developmental needs and ecological sustainability becomes more pronounced. The proposed flyover, which aims to ease traffic congestion in one of Guwahati's busiest areas, has faced significant opposition due to its implications for the local environment, specifically the trees that play a crucial role in maintaining the ecological balance of the region. This discourse encapsulates a broader struggle many cities face today: how to modernize and expand urban infrastructure while preserving the green spaces that contribute to the quality of urban life.

Dighali Pukhuri, a historic pond believed to date back to the Ahom dynasty, is more than just a body of water; it is a vital ecological asset for Guwahati. The pond is surrounded by a lush expanse of trees, which not only contribute to the area's scenic beauty but also serve as crucial components of the urban ecosystem. These trees provide shade, improve air quality, support biodiversity, and play a significant role in mitigating urban heat. They also have historical and cultural significance, representing the city's heritage and connecting residents to their past.

As the city grapples with increasing pollution levels and climate change, preserving these trees is essential for fostering a sustainable urban environment. The felling of trees for the construction of the flyover poses a serious threat to this delicate balance, prompting strong reactions from environmentalists, local residents, and heritage advocates. The primary argument for the construction of the flyover centers around addressing the chronic traffic congestion that plagues Guwahati. Traffic congestion not only affects daily commuters but also contributes to air pollution and overall urban malaise. Supporters of the flyover contend that its construction will enhance connectivity, reduce travel time, and ultimately lead to a more efficient

transportation network in the city. This perspective is rooted in a common urban development paradigm, which prioritizes infrastructure expansion as a means to facilitate economic growth and improve the quality of urban life. By easing the flow of vehicles, proponents argue that the flyover will not only benefit drivers but also enhance accessibility for pedestrians and local businesses in the area.

However, the anticipated benefits of the flyover come with significant environmental costs. The destruction of trees to make way for construction raises immediate concerns regarding the ecological impact on Dighali Pukhuri and its surroundings. Trees act as natural air filters, absorbing pollutants and carbon dioxide while releasing oxygen. Their removal exacerbates air quality issues, contributing to respiratory problems and other health concerns for local residents. Furthermore, the area's trees provide essential habitats for various species, including birds, insects, and small mammals. The loss of these trees threatens the biodiversity of the region, disrupting the ecological balance and diminishing the area's overall resilience to environmental challenges.

Moreover, the felling of trees can have profound implications for the local climate. Urban heat islands, characterized by higher temperatures in built-up areas compared to their rural surroundings, are exacerbated by the loss of vegetation. Trees help cool the urban environment through the process of transpiration, wherein they release moisture into the air. Their absence can lead to increased energy consumption for cooling, further straining resources and contributing to higher greenhouse gas emissions. In a city already grappling with climate change and its associated risks, such as flooding and heat waves, the decision to remove trees for infrastructure development becomes even more contentious.

Beyond the environmental implications, the debate also raises questions about the socio-cultural impact of such projects. Dighali Pukhuri is not only a natural landmark but also a cultural and recreational space for the community. The trees that line the pond provide a serene environment for residents to relax, exercise, and engage in community activities. The potential removal of these trees could diminish the area's aesthetic and recreational value, depriving locals of a vital green space in an increasingly concrete urban landscape. This loss is particularly concerning in a city like Guwahati, where green spaces are limited, and residents often rely on public parks and natural areas for recreation and relaxation.

Critics of the flyover project emphasize the need for a more holistic approach to urban planning that prioritizes sustainable development and environmental protection. They argue that instead of expanding road infrastructure, the city should invest in enhancing public transportation systems, promoting cycling and walking, and implementing traffic management strategies that reduce reliance on private vehicles.

By shifting the focus from vehicle-centric solutions to a more integrated approach to urban mobility, Guwahati could address congestion issues while preserving its vital green spaces and improving air quality. Such strategies would align with global trends toward sustainable urban development, where cities prioritize livability, environmental health, and community engagement. The Dighali Pukhuri Flyover debate has also highlighted the importance of public participation in urban planning processes. Many residents feel that decisions affecting their community should involve their voices and perspectives. The lack of extensive public consultation regarding the flyover project has fueled resentment among local residents who feel their concerns about environmental degradation and the loss of green spaces are being overlooked. Engaging the community in discussions about urban development not only fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility but also leads to more informed and balanced decision-making. It allows for diverse perspectives to be considered, ultimately resulting in urban projects that reflect the values and priorities of the community.

In addition to public participation, the debate around the Dighali Pukhuri Flyover underscores the need for transparent and accountable governance in urban planning. Decision-makers must consider the

long-term consequences of their actions and prioritize the well-being of both current and future generations. Implementing rigorous environmental impact assessments before undertaking such projects can help identify potential risks and develop mitigation strategies.

These assessments should evaluate not only the immediate ecological effects of tree removal but also the broader implications for air quality, climate resilience, and community well-being. By integrating sustainability principles into the urban planning process, cities can make informed decisions that promote both development and environmental stewardship.

Additionally, alternative solutions that prioritize the preservation of trees and the environment should be explored. For instance, the design of the flyover could incorporate innovative engineering techniques that minimize the need for tree removal. Elevated structures or green bridges could be considered to allow for the continuation of tree growth beneath the

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infrastructure.

Such designs

would not only preserve the ecological integrity of the area but also create opportunities for incorporating green spaces into urban infrastructure. Integrating nature into urban design enhances aesthetic appeal, improves air quality, and fosters a sense of community ownership.

The broader context of climate change and environmental degradation also plays a crucial role in this debate. As cities like Guwahati confront the realities of climate change, including more frequent extreme weather events and rising temperatures, the need to protect and enhance urban green spaces becomes increasingly urgent. Trees serve as critical components of urban climate adaptation strategies, helping to mitigate the impacts of heat waves, manage stormwater runoff, and enhance overall resilience to climate-related challenges. In light of these considerations, the removal of trees for the flyover project raises fundamental questions about the city's commitment to sustainability and climate action.

Furthermore, the significance of indigenous knowledge and prac-

tics in environmental stewardship cannot be overlooked. Many local communities possess valuable insights into the sustainable management of natural resources and the preservation of biodiversity. Engaging with these communities and integrating their traditional ecological knowledge into urban planning can lead to more effective and culturally relevant solutions. By respecting and valuing local wisdom, cities can foster a collaborative approach to environmental conservation that empowers residents and promotes sustainable practices.

The Dighali Pukhuri Flyover debate is emblematic of the broader tensions between development and conservation faced by urban areas worldwide. As cities continue to expand and evolve, the challenge lies in finding ways to modernize infrastructure while safeguarding the natural and cultural assets that define them. The case of Dighali Pukhuri serves as a reminder that urban planning is not merely a technical exercise but a deeply social and ethical endeavor. The decisions made today will shape the future of the city, influencing the quality of life for generations to come.

In conclusion, the Dighali Pukhuri Flyover debate encapsulates the complex interplay between urban development, environmental conservation, and community well-being. As Guwahati navigates the challenges of modern urbanization, it must prioritize sustainable practices that honor its rich heritage and protect its natural resources. The fate of the trees surrounding Dighali Pukhuri is not just a local concern but part of a global conversation about how cities can thrive in harmony with nature. The path forward requires a commitment to inclusive governance, innovative design, and a shared vision for a sustainable urban future that respects both people and the environment.

Ultimately, the outcome of this debate will not only impact the local community but will also serve as a crucial case study for other cities grappling with similar challenges in an era defined by rapid urban growth and environmental change. (The writer is Editor in Chief of the Assamese E-Magazine SAMPROTIK who can be reached at himangshur1989@gmail.com)

UK's Conservative Party turns over a new page

By: Asad Mirza

The election of Kemi Badenoch, as the new leader of Britain's Conservative Party seems to have rattled not just the common public but even the diehard Tories. But this should also be seen as the last-ditch efforts by the Conservatives to revive the party's fortunes.

Last week, Britain's chastened Conservative Party, which faced its biggest defeat and the lowest tally of seats in the House of Commons, in the general elections earlier this year, elected Kemi Badenoch as its new leader.

This marks the Tories' looking-up to a right-wing favourite who has raised concerns about identity politics, transgender rights, and state spending, to rebuild its reputation after a devastating election defeat.

Badenoch defeated Robert Jenrick in a vote of party members by 53,806 votes to 41,000, after a months-long contest to replace Rishi Sunak as the party's leader.

She's the first Black woman to lead a major British political party, and the Tories are branding this as being a diverse and inclusive party as compared to Labour, which so far has been led by White men only.

But rather disconcerting is the fact that her selection all but ensures a rightward shift to Britain's political discourse over the next several years, and creates a jarring stylistic clash between the new opposition leader and Keir Starmer, Labour's serious and straight-laced prime minister.

After winning the party's election, Badenoch outlined the tasks ahead to the Tory faithful: Hold the Labour government to account and prepare for government with "a clear plan."

Badenoch continued that the party needed to be honest "about the fact that we made mistakes, honest about the fact that we let standards slip."

However, overall, this was primarily due to the Conservatives losing the grip over the real issues, public anger and facing public's ire over their management of the economy, crime, immigration, and declining standards in public life by its leaders like BoJo and Liz Truss, who wretched by a daunting task of rebuilding Britain after the Brexit, and they completely lost the script.

Badenoch, who has often been described as one who relishes confrontation has received muted support from

her own lawmakers in her various moves for the leadership, and has leant into US-style cultural clashes on a swathe of topics, inspiring grassroots members on the Conservatives' right-wing in the process.

Curiously, Badenoch has often been compared to Margaret Thatcher and she herself has said she shares Thatcher's "values of self-reliance, personal responsibility and free markets."

Like the Iron Lady, Badenoch is reported to be fearless and combative. She believes conservatism is in crisis, and that her party must get "back on track" having lost sight of its principles and values. Yet, the comparison between the two seems rather skewed.

Charles Walker, a former Conservative lawmaker, who has followed Badenoch's political ascent with interest, says he isn't convinced that she's the new Thatcher. "It's not just about having strong views, Margaret Thatcher had her views intellectually underpinned and was pragmatic," he said.

Niall Ferguson, a Milbank Family Senior Fellow at the Hoover Institution, Stanford University, and a Bloomberg Opinion columnist opines that like Thatcher, she is middle-class, the daughter of professionals.

Like Thatcher, she studied a hard subject at university (computer systems engineering) and came to political and economic theory later in life, after experiencing the real world of the private sector.

Ferguson says further, "Best of all, from my point of view, is her sense of history. One of the books that has influenced her thinking is Daron Acemoglu and Jim Robinson's Why Nations Fail, which makes the point that Britain's spectacular rise in the 18th and 19th centuries owed more to constitutional constraints and the rule of law than to (as she put it) 'colonialism or white imperialism or privilege or whatever'. That is a fundamental argument not only about Britain's past, but also about its future, which will be prosperous only if we return our government to the principles that Badenoch holds dear.

Michael Murphy - a London-based journalist, writing for the Daily Telegraph opines that comparisons to Thatcher can obscure more than they reveal. While Thatcher was known for "excessive punctuality" and meticulous attention to detail, Badenoch is reportedly often late to meetings and disinterested in reading ministerial briefings. These traits could, at crucial junctures,

trip her up in the marathon she must now run over the next four years if she is to return the Tories to power.

The Conservatives' longing for Mrs Thatcher's ghost, decades later, points to a party adrift and out of fresh ideas. Yet Badenoch has developed her own brand of Conservatism well-suited to the times. And Labour's waning popularity could present her with an opportunity to make inroads, Murphy said further.

Meanwhile, Badenoch has received support from people like JK Rowling for her "brains and bravery" in standing up for women's rights. The Harry Potter author and Mrs Badenoch have both vocally opposed gender ideology, with the latter saying during her leadership campaign that a child cannot be trans.

Britain's first Black woman leader of a major political party, Badenoch is certain to shake up the Conservatives who suffered their worst election defeat in July under former leader and prime minister, Rishi Sunak.

In her sights is not just the left-leaning Labour government but also the right-wing populist Reform UK party led by veteran Brexit campaigner Nigel Farage, whose appeal drew traditional Conservative voters to his cause in July's election. But the anticipated swing to the right under Badenoch, 44, could alienate the more moderate wing of the party.

She says the administrations of former prime ministers such as Sunak and Boris Johnson gave up those principles in favour of an approach that meant the party "spoke right and governed left", handing votes to other parties.

Badenoch has faced a backlash for her remarks like when she said 5-10% of civil servants, or political officials working in government, were "very bad" and "should be in prison" for undermining ministers. Or comments that maternity pay was "excessive" and people should exercise "more personal responsibility" also raised eyebrows.

While some might see such slip-ups as a problem, Badenoch sees her straight talking as an asset, one she says has helped her work well in teams in government. But all this also proves that apart from a hard worker who rose from the ranks, Badenoch is a maverick who may achieve what she has set her sights on. (The author is a New Delhi-based senior commentator on international and strategic affairs, environmental issues, an interfaith practitioner, and a media consultant)

Shutdown of Indian visa likely to strain relationship with Bangladesh

By: Saleem Samad

A couple of Indian visa centres were vandalised by anti-Indian mobs in the aftermath of the collapse of the kleptocracy regime. In the absence of police and auxiliary forces in fear of reprisal from the angry students for the deaths of more than a thousand protesters, they abandoned their posts and went into hiding.

Responding to a query from a journalist, Ministry of External Affairs spokesman Randhir Jaiswal in Delhi said that India would resume normal visa operations in Bangladesh.

MEA spokesperson in New Delhi said: "We are issuing limited visas. If someone needs to come to India for medical or urgent reasons, we are providing a limited number of those visas."

He, however, said, "We are already issuing medical visas and visas for emergency requirements. Once the law and order situation improves and the situation becomes conducive to our resumption of normal visa operations (in Bangladesh), we will do that."

The MEA spokesperson mentioned the "law and order situation", which literally means Bangladesh is a lawless country.

The mindset of bigwigs sitting in the Indian capital, after Sheikh Hasina fled to Delhi, the country has plunged into chaos, like in Haiti or Kabul.

Indian media seems hesitant to raise the ongoing closure of visa processing for most categories; instead, they are busy critiquing the Interim Government of Nobel laureate Dr. Muhammad Yunus. Playing with Hindu cards worried about the threats on the Hindu community by radicalised Muslims and Islamist groups.

The Indian media hardly write a line on the intermittent attacks, vandalism of business establishments and desecration of temples during the 15 years of Sheikh Hasina's autocratic regime.

Squeezing of issuance of Indian visas to Bangladesh nationals is a tit-for-tat for widespread August incidents of idol vandalism during Durga Puja celebrations across various places in Bangladesh, India feels that the situation has not yet normalised, as indicated by the spokesperson.

Indian media and South Block have

aply ventilated their anger and frustration blaming Dr Yunus for his failure to contain the sectarian riots in several cities and towns.

Jaiswal further stated: "I would advise the interim government of Bangladesh to implement the assurances they have given (to Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi) regarding the protection of Bangladesh's religious minorities. Measures should be taken to ensure they feel safe."

On the other hand, Foreign Affairs Adviser Touhid Hossain observed that issuing of visa is a sovereign decision of India, and cannot be questioned.

The Indian High Commission has resumed operations after a brief suspension during the student movement in July but is currently issuing only a limited number of visas.

"However, we have communicated

ment for our regular operations will be able to issue visas as before."

"We will try to ensure security for the Indian Visa Centres," the Adviser added.

Meanwhile, the passenger flights from Dhaka and Chattogram have significantly reduced flights to several Indian destinations due to fewer passengers.

Similarly, the direct passenger trains from Khulna and Dhaka to Kolkata and Siliguri have also stopped for want of passengers.

Only the land borders are open to several Indian states, including West Bengal, Meghalaya, Assam, and Tripura.

The reduction of tourists to Indian cities, especially Kolkata has severely dented the hotel, restaurant and tour operator industry. Shopping tourism from Bangladesh has been equally harmed, according to Indian media.

Among the top 15 countries, Bangladesh (22.3 percent) topped in Foreign Tourist Arrivals (FTAs) in India in 2023, while the United States of America and the United Kingdom stand second and third respectively, according to the Indian Ministry Of Tourism.

Approximately 2.12 million tourists visited India in 2023, making Bangladesh the top source of FTAs in India that year.

A top Indian diplomat in the Indian High Commission posted in Dhaka confided that lack of security at the visa centres deters normal functioning.

Over a hundred non-essential Indian staff managing the centres have left for India in the aftermath of the student uprising and attacks in some centres outside the capital Dhaka.

He could not say when the visa processing centres are expected to resume normal function. The decision remains with the government in New Delhi after consultation with Dhaka.

It seems that tens of thousands of tourists are not expected to begin their journey in the coming winter. (The author is an award-winning independent journalist based in Dhaka, Bangladesh. A media rights defender with the Reporters Without Borders (@RSF_inter). Recipient of Ashoka Fellowship and Hellman-Hammett Award. He could be reached

at saleemsamad@hotmail.com; Twitter (X): @saleemsamad)

Skin detox tips to follow post Diwali

By: Shahnaz Husain

The festive season is getting over and it is time to hit the life back, isn't it? Due to the festive preparations, we tend to ignore our bodies which take a toll on our skin and hair and they start to lose their glow and shine.

The night of Diwali is usually reserved for night-long parties and for loading yourself with sugary stuff. But, in the midst of this all, one thing that goes on for a toss is your body.

Festive treats till the wee hours of the morning, eating oily foods and sweets, cleaning, post-Diwali pollution, skipping out on skincare routines, and the ensuing pollution can affect skin health.

Crackers burst during Diwali contains highly toxic heavy metals such as lead, copper, zinc, manganese, sodium, potassium, etc. which causes various skin issues.

After the Diwali festivities that involve heavy makeup and exposure to pollutants, it's high time we give our skin the love and care it deserves.

However, with the festive season over, now is a great time to detox your skin and take a break from everything.

Give your skin the love it needs post-Diwali by following these simple skincare tips for healthy skin!

1. Try intermittent fasting
Intermittent fasting involves periods of entirely or partially abstaining from eating.

There are several different ways to do intermittent fasting, but they are all based on choosing regular time periods to eat and fast.

Fasting completely for 1 or 2 days a week, known as the Eat-Stop-Eat diet, involves eating no food for 24 hours at a time while they can take water, tea, and other calorie-free drinks during the fasting period. Fastly generally begins from morning up to the second day's morning breakfast time.

One way is to drink only water

with lemon until 2 pm the next day, and have only one light meal with lots of fluid for a cleanse.

You can opt for day time restriction fasting where one can eat normally but only within an eight-hour window each day. For example, skip breakfast but eat lunch around noon and dinner by 9 p.m.

Some studies have concluded that intermittent fasting may be more beneficial than other diets for reducing inflammation and improving conditions associated with inflammation.

It is important to drink lots of water and calorie-free drinks, such as herbal teas, throughout the day. This can help ensure you get enough electrolytes, sodium,

and potassium.

After breakfast take food that is high in fibre, vitamins, and minerals, and potassium, etc. which causes various skin issues.

minerals, to keep blood sugar levels steady and prevent nutrient deficiencies. A balanced diet will also contribute to overall health.

2. Add antioxidants to your diet

Antioxidants are molecules that fight free radicals in your body. Plant-based foods are the best source of antioxidants. These include fruits, vegetables, whole grains, nuts, seeds, herbs and spices, and even cocoa.

Several vitamins, such as vitamins E and C, are effective antioxidants.

Plants have naturally occurring antioxidants such as carotenoids, flavonoids, isothiocyanates, and phenolic acids.

Berries, green tea, coffee, and dark chocolate are renowned for being good sources of antioxidants.

Antioxidant vitamins C and E have skin benefits. Antioxidants make skin softer, reduce moisture loss and protect skin cells from sun damage.

However high doses of some antioxidant supplements can be harmful. For example, they can result in the effects of some medicines. If you are on any medicines, make sure you ask your

doctor about taking antioxidant supplements.

Antioxidants help skin repair itself. Inflammation impedes the skin's renewal process. By reducing inflammation, antioxidants allow the skin to repair itself and correct visible damage. Some antioxidants, like vitamin C, can also stimulate collagen production, which is vital for youthful skin.

3. Watch out for Food consumption

Eating healthy is one of the best and essential ways to rejuvenate. The festive season is all about sweets and snacks. Oily and extra-sweet foods affect the skin leading to breakouts and clogged pores.

Now you need to shift to healthier food such as choosing whole grains over refined grains and eating more protein. Include more fruits, especially citrus fruits, salad, and sprouts in your diet.

It's recommended that you eat at least 5 portions of a variety of fruit and veg every day. They can be fresh, frozen, canned, dried or juiced.

Include a banana over your breakfast cereal, or swap your usual mid-morning snack for a piece of fresh fruit. For a healthier choice, use a small amount of vegetable or olive oil, or reduced-fat spread instead of butter, lard or ghee.

A good way to ensure you eat your salad as a starter. By doing so, you'll finish all of your greens while you're at your hungriest. It may lead you to eat fewer calories overall, which could result in improved health. Plus, eating vegetables before a carb-rich meal has been shown to benefit blood sugar levels.

Most people consume too much sodium through salt while consuming an average of 9-12 g of salt per day is recommended.

Avoid intake of excessive salt. About three-quarters of the salt you eat is already in the food when you buy it, such as breakfast cereals, soups, breads and sauces. More than 1.5g of salt per 100g means the food is high in salt.

Try to start with a healthy breakfast which is high in fibre and low in fat, sugar and salt. It can help you get the nutrients you need for good health.

The pace at which you eat influences how much you eat, as well as how likely you are to gain weight.

Your appetite, how much you eat, and how full you get are all controlled by hormones. Hormones signal to your brain whether you're hungry or full.

However, it takes about 20 minutes for your brain to receive these messages. That's why eating more slowly may give your brain the time it needs to perceive that you're full.

But if you eat too little or eat too much, your health and quality of life could be affected. This can result in negative feelings toward food.

Focusing on how and why you eat is just as important as what you eat. By being mindful of your habits and relationship with food, you can empower yourself and reveal the way to eat that is truly nourishing to your body and mind.

4. Keep yourself hydrated

Consuming junk foods and having aerated drinks and sodas for liquid can leave your body dehydrated. The skin gets dry and flaky because of the hot temperature and the pollution caused due to the crackers. Therefore, in the post-Diwali days, you should concentrate on replenishing the water content of your body.

Hydration is the secret sauce for healthy skin, and post-Diwali skin hydration is our golden ticket to restoring that dewy glow.

Make sure to drink 10 glasses of water throughout the day to keep your skin hydrated. You can also enjoy herbal teas or flavoured water to add a festive touch. This will help control your appetite and reduce the chances of overindulging in unhealthy snacks and sweets.

Water consumption at regular intervals throughout the day is essential for keeping your metabolism active and flushing out toxins.

Inculcate the habit of drinking a glass of warm lemon water early in the morning to flush out toxins in your body. A teaspoon of honey can also be added to the drink. Both lemon and honey have medicinal properties.

Additionally, including hydrating foods such as fruits and vegetables in your meals can also contribute to your overall hydration. This straightforward practice can have a remarkable impact on how you feel throughout the festive season. *(The author is an international fame beauty expert and is called the herbal queen of India)*

Post-partum depression: "Your wife isn't lazy, she's depressed"

By: Vibha

Postpartum depression (PPD) is a serious mental health condition that can affect a woman's behavior and physical health after giving birth. Symptoms include:

- Unusual crying or sadness
- Loss of interest in things you used to enjoy
- Withdrawing from friends and family
- Thoughts of harming the baby or yourself
- Changes in sleep patterns
- Change in appetite
- Feelings of worthlessness
- Inability to concentrate
- Severe anxiety and panic attacks

The prevalence of postpartum depression (PPD) in India is estimated to be around 22%, with a range of 19.8-23.3%. However, the prevalence varies by region, with the highest rates in the south and east of India, and the lowest in the north. The percentage may seem lesser, but the real reason is people consider women to just be "hormonal," and acting as such is normal.

"My daughter faced postpartum depression. I am still disappointed in myself till this day because how could I not understand my own child? She had a baby; it was premature by one month. After the pregnancy, my daughter was not the same. She suddenly started crying and yelling, and this wasn't normal for us. She isolated herself, and one year after the baby was born, she killed herself. I wish I was aware enough to know that this was postpartum depression. I wish I could have helped her." - an anonymous mother.

What causes postpartum depression?

- Hormonal changes occur after a woman gives birth. The estrogen and progesterone hormones suddenly drop, leading to depressive episodes.
- Caring for a newborn can lead to sleep deprivation, and the stress can lead to PPD.
- Genetics also play a huge

role; if it's in the family, it's more likely to continue.

• Changes in body and environment can also lead to PPD. "When my wife gave birth to our first, we were over the moon. But when she gave birth to our second, she was different. She suddenly started wanting to be alone and used to scream at our baby whenever it started crying. She would bite herself and start hysterically crying. I took her to a doctor, and they told us she was diagnosed with postpartum depression. She was later cured, and we are happy now."

How is PPD treated? Therapy, either hormonal or with antidepressants. Self-care, like giving yourself some time alone from the baby, taking care of yourself, and giving your life a meaning so you can give your baby a meaning as well. Remember, these women do not hate their children; they themselves don't understand what's going on. So many women have reported feeling that they were a danger to their babies.

When a woman gives birth, sometimes she feels that everyone cares about the baby and not her. This is not called being selfish but rather that she went through labor/surgery, and taking care of herself after giving birth is vital.

The woman is usually on nervous ground, and helping her, especially as a husband, is important. Untreated postpartum depression can last for months or longer, sometimes becoming an ongoing depressive disorder. Mothers may stop breastfeeding, have problems bonding with and caring for their infants, and be at increased risk of suicide.

Understanding a mother after such a life-changing incident requires delicate words and an enormous amount of support. Even if you suspect something that may make you feel that a mother is depressed, help her. Encourage her to go forward with therapy. Some might refuse, but it's your duty

to continue. Offer to pay for therapy, be their therapist, etc.

"A woman who is incompetent in raising a baby has failed as a mother" is a busted statement, as there is no perfect meaning of a perfect mother.

A mother is one who supports her child unconditionally and is ready to take help for the betterment of herself, her family, and her children. She's also one who is alone in making decisions sometimes, lacks support due to social stigma, and doesn't know what's best for her. She's confused because she's overwhelmed. She doesn't want to blame the child but society because they are making her feel that she is a bad mother.

Postpartum depression is a serious disorder, and sometimes keeping our ego aside is more important, as helping your wife grow will help your child as well. Postpartum depression is not a health issue only borne by the mother; it affects everyone as well. It's not her fault, obviously, so if she doesn't understand, then her surroundings should.

Educating yourself about such an issue and then raising awareness on it is a role that society needs to follow. In schools, especially in underprivileged areas, as a lot of women there have to bear more physical labor after birth. Realizing that if a woman asks for help or even to leave her alone, listen. Listen when a mother is complaining.

"When my husband (ex) found out that I was suffering through postpartum depression, he left me, took my son, and spread rumors that I am crazy, stupid, and cannot raise my child. This took a deep toll on my mental and physical health, and he won the court battle due to this. I spent three years working on myself and constantly fighting for my son when I won full custody. I wish more people would understand the condition and support women as a whole." *(Courtesy: Youth Ki Awaaz)*

What to know about irregular periods

By: Zawn Villines

If someone's menstrual cycle is shorter than 24 days, more than 38 days long, or if the length varies significantly from month to month, they have irregular periods. Doctors call this oligomenorrhea.

It is normal for the menstrual cycle length to vary slightly from month to month, especially if someone is going through puberty, breastfeeding, or approaching menopause.

Many other factors can affect period regularity, too, such as stress, medications, and mental or physical health conditions.

What causes irregular periods?

Irregular periods, or oligomenorrhea, can occur for many reasons. Many relate to hormone levels.

Estrogen, progesterone, and follicle-stimulating hormone are the main hormones responsible for regulating the menstrual cycle. If something disrupts or alters how these hormones rise and fall each cycle, it can cause irregular periods.

Occasional irregular periods are common and are not usually cause for concern. Factors that may contribute to irregular periods include:

- natural hormonal shifts
- hormonal birth control
- stress
- endurance exercise
- weight loss

More persistent irregularity may be a sign of an underlying condition. The following sections look at some of the potential causes for irregular periods in more detail.

Natural hormonal changes
During puberty, the body undergoes significant changes. It can take several years for the hormones that regulate periods to fall into a reliable pattern. During this time, it is common to have irregular periods.

Oligomenorrhea can also occur after childbirth and while breastfeeding until the hormones return to normal after having a baby.

Breastfeeding, especially exclusive and frequent breastfeeding, can suppress ovulation,

causing a person's periods to stop. Doctors call this lactational amenorrhea.

Periods also become irregular during perimenopause, which is the first stage of menopause. During this time, hormone levels begin to fall. Periods may get further and further apart until a person stops having them entirely.

Starting birth control

Hormonal birth control works by stopping ovulation. This means a person does not have a true period while they are using it. Instead, some people have no period at all, while others will have withdrawal bleeds that can seem similar to a period.

When a person first starts the pill, patch, implant, or hormonal intrauterine device (IUD), they may experience irregular bleeding during the first few months. This may become more regular as time goes on or stop entirely.

Stopping birth control

Similarly, when a person stops using hormonal birth control, this can also lead to irregular periods. It takes time for the body's hormonal cycle to begin working as usual again.

Typically, people have a withdrawal bleed 2-4 weeks after stopping birth control pills. The next bleed is a period. It can take up to 3 months for the cycle to settle into a regular pattern.

People who had irregular periods before they began hormonal birth control may return to having an irregular cycle after they stop using it.

Underlying health conditions

Irregular periods can sometimes indicate a health condition, such as:

Polycystic ovary syndrome
Polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS) is a condition where small, fluid-filled sacs, known as cysts, develop in the ovaries. PCOS causes high testosterone levels, which can prevent or delay ovulation and a person's period.

The other symptoms of PCOS include:

- acne
- excessive hair growth
- insulin resistance that may affect weight

- depression
- trouble getting or staying pregnant

Eating disorders

Eating disorders, such as anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa, and binge eating disorder, can cause absent or irregular periods. This is more likely to occur if someone has experienced severe weight loss.

The signs of an eating disorder can include:

- extreme restriction of food or calorie intake
- cutting out whole food groups from the diet unnecessarily, such as carbohydrates
- fasting, followed by binge eating
- going to the bathroom immediately after meals
- eating large amounts of food when not hungry

People who exercise excessively may also experience irregular periods. When people find it hard to stop exercising, it is known as compulsive exercise.

Endometriosis

Endometriosis is a condition in which cells that usually grow inside the uterus grow outside of it. These cells make up the uterine lining, which thickens and sheds with each menstrual cycle.

When the cells grow elsewhere, this cyclic thickening and shedding cause significant pain. Other symptoms include:

- heavy periods
- passing large blood clots
- bleeding between periods
- problems getting pregnant

Thyroid disease

The thyroid produces hormones that affect metabolism, heart rate, and other basic functions. It also helps control the timing of ovulation and periods.

People with hyperthyroidism produce too much thyroid hormone, while those with hypothyroidism do not produce enough.

Thyroid disease can make periods heavy or light and can make them more or less frequent. It can also cause ovulation to stop in some people.

- Symptoms of hyperthyroidism include:
- anxiety
 - racing heart



- trouble sleeping
- irregular periods
- feeling hot
- unexplained weight loss, or sometimes, weight gain
- Symptoms of hypothyroidism include:
 - fatigue
 - unexplained weight gain or sometimes, weight loss
 - irregular periods or infertility

- dry skin
- cold sensitivity
- depression
- hair loss

Thyroid disease is treatable. An underactive thyroid may require thyroid hormone, while radioactive iodine may help with hyperthyroidism. Some types of thyroid dysfunction require the removal of the thyroid.

Other conditions

Other health conditions associated with irregular periods include:

- type 1 diabetes
- Cushing's syndrome
- primary ovarian insufficiency
- congenital adrenal hyperplasia
- hormone-secreting tumors

Complications

Irregular periods are usually not harmful. However, persistent or long-term irregularity may raise the risk of other conditions, such as:

Iron deficiency anemia: Blood contains iron. If periods are heavy or frequent, a person may lose enough blood to cause an iron deficiency.

Infertility: Irregular periods can result from anovulation, which is when the body does not

release an egg. This can mean a person has difficulty getting pregnant.

Osteoporosis: Ovulation is a source of estrogen, which helps to keep the bones strong. If a person often does not ovulate, they may be at a higher risk for osteoporosis due to having less estrogen.

Cardiovascular disease: Similarly, a lack of estrogen can raise the risk of cardiovascular disease.

Endometrial hyperplasia: If a person has irregular periods for a long time without treatment, it may raise the risk for endometrial hyperplasia, which is when the uterine lining becomes unusually thick. This increases the risk of endometrial cancer.

Treatment

Having irregular periods from time to time is common and does not require treatment. Irregularity due to puberty, perimenopause, or contraception also does not typically require treatment.

However, someone may want to speak with a doctor if:

- the irregularity is persistent and has no apparent cause
- irregular periods could be related to a medication or health condition
- irregular periods occur alongside other symptoms, such as pelvic pain
- the person wants to get pregnant

If there is an underlying cause, a doctor will be able to diagnose it. Treatment will depend on what is causing the irregularity.

The potential treatment recommendations may include:

Hormone therapy: Birth control that contains the hormones estrogen and progesterone can help raise hormone levels, which can counteract the effects of not ovulating. It can also make bleeds regular and easier to manage or reduce the symptoms of conditions such as PCOS, which may improve quality of life.

Reaching a moderate weight: Both a lack of body fat and having excess body fat can impact menstruation. For those with PCOS who have higher body weight, maintaining a healthy weight can lower insulin levels. This leads to lower testosterone levels and an increased chance of ovulating.

Nutritional therapy: If a person wants to lose or gain weight or has an underlying condition that affects their nutrition, they may benefit from help from a dietitian. They can help a person understand the type of diet that will help with their unique circumstances and support hormone health.

Mental health treatment: If irregular periods are related to stress, anxiety, depression, or an eating disorder, a doctor may recommend psychological support. For many, this usually involves talk therapy with a psychologist. A multidisciplinary team will help with regular therapy, nutritional counseling, and support groups for those with eating disorders. People with severe underweight may need treatment in the hospital.

Additional medications: Depending on the underlying cause, people with irregular periods may benefit from certain medications. For example, a doctor may prescribe metformin for people with PCOS. This is an insulin-lowering oral drug for type 2 diabetes, which can help ensure ovulation and regular periods.

How do irregular periods affect pregnancy?

Irregular periods can sometimes make it more difficult to get pregnant, as the times a person is ovulating may also be irregular. People who skip periods

may also have months where they do not ovulate.

However, this does not mean that pregnancy is impossible. Tracking when someone is ovulating can help. Try:

Tracking periods: Mark any periods on a calendar, and look for patterns. Period tracking apps can help with pinpointing the time of likely ovulation. Ovulation almost always occurs about 2 weeks before a person's period. However, the length of time between the start of the period and the next time a person ovulates can vary.

Monitoring cervical mucus: As ovulation approaches, the cervical mucus will be more plentiful, slippery, clear, and stretchy.

Measuring body temperature: Use a thermometer to measure body temperature first thing each morning and note when it spikes. This can indicate that someone has ovulated.

Using ovulation predictor kits: These products test for a surge in luteinizing hormone, which suggests ovulation is imminent. A person has likely ovulated if there is a prolonged increase in morning body temperature after a positive ovulation test.

If these methods do not help, speak with a fertility doctor about irregular periods. They will be able to provide advice on what to do next.

Summary

Irregular periods and occasional variations in cycle length are normal. However, if a person regularly has very short or long cycles, something may be affecting their menstrual cycle.

Temporary causes for irregularity can include stress, natural hormonal changes, and starting or stopping birth control.

Certain medications and health conditions can also cause irregular periods. If this is the case, a doctor will be able to diagnose it and provide treatment recommendations.

People with irregular periods who want to get pregnant may benefit from tracking when they ovulate or speaking with a fertility specialist. *(Courtesy: Medical News Today)*

Myanmar is a vital part of Beijing's trillion-dollar Belt and Road initiative, with railways and pipelines to link China's landlocked southwest to the Indian Ocean

Head of Myanmar's military government visits close ally China for first time since taking power

BANGKOK, Nov 5: The head of Myanmar's military government embarked on Tuesday on an official visit to China, the embattled Southeast Asian nation's most important international ally, for several regional meetings.

It is the first time Senior Gen. Min Aung Hlaing has traveled to the neighboring country since his army seized power in February 2021 from the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi.

Myanmar's army suffered unprecedented battlefield defeats over the past year, especially in areas near the Chinese border. Both Myanmar's ruling generals and China's government have shown concern as pro-democracy guerrillas and armed ethnic minority groups, sometimes working hand in hand, have taken the initiative in their fight against military rule.

But Beijing is now concerned about instability that threatens its strategic and business interests in Myanmar. China's government has maintained good working relations with Myanmar's ruling military, which is shunned and sanctioned by many Western nations for the army takeover and for major human rights violations.

State-run MRTV television said that Min Aung Hlaing departed on a flight from the capital, Naypyitaw, Tuesday morning to begin his visit.

He will visit the Chinese city of Kunming on Wednesday and Thursday to attend three summits: The Greater Mekong Subregion, the Ayeyawady-



Chao Phraya-Mekong Economic Cooperation Strategy and the Cambodia-Laos-Myanmar-Vietnam Cooperation. Kunming, the capital of China's Yunnan province, is about 400 kilometers (250 miles) from the border with Myanmar.

The report said he will also have "meetings with Chinese government officials to discuss ways to enhance goodwill, economic and various sectors between the two governments and the people." China, along with Russia, is a major arms supplier to Myanmar's military in its war against resistance forces. Beijing is also Myanmar's biggest trading partner and has invested billions of dollars in its mines, oil and gas pipelines, and other infrastructure.

Russia is the only other foreign destination to which Min Aung Hlaing is known to have traveled since taking power, aside from his attendance at an April 2021 summit meeting of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations in

the Indonesian capital, Jakarta. His government's unwillingness to cooperate in efforts to achieve a peaceful resolution of his country's conflict led to him and other top Myanmar government officials being disinclined from ASEAN summits since then.

Myanmar's pro-democracy opposition has expressed concern about China welcoming a visit by Min Aung Hlaing. Kyaw Zaw, a spokesperson for the opposition National Unity Government, said in a recorded video posted on Facebook before the official announcement of the trip that he was deeply concerned about China's invitation to Min Aung Hlaing and urged the Chinese government to review its action.

"Myanmar's people want stability, peace and economic growth. It is Min Aung Hlaing and his group who are destroying these things," Kyaw Zaw said. "I am concerned that it will unintentionally incite a misunderstanding of

the Chinese government among Myanmar's public."

The shadow National Unity Government was established by elected lawmakers barred from taking their seats in 2021 and is closely linked to Suu Kyi's former ruling National League for Democracy party, which had friendly relations with Beijing. Although China is scorned by many for backing the army, the shadow government tries to avoid antagonizing Beijing too much, recognizing the influence it has in the region.

Myanmar's army has been on the defensive since late last year when ethnic armed organizations dealt it major defeats in the country's northeast.

The offensive by the "Three Brotherhood Alliance," comprising the Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army, the Arakan Army and the Ta'ang National Liberation Army, was able to quickly capture towns and overrun military bases and command centers and strategic cities along the Chinese border in northeastern Shan state.

It was widely seen at the time as having Beijing's tacit support to help stamp out rampant organized crime activities in the area controlled by ethnic Chinese. Beijing helped broker a cease-fire in January, but that fell apart in June when the ethnic rebel forces launched new attacks. China was displeased with the ongoing warfare, shutting down border crossings, cutting electricity to Myanmar towns and taking other measures to discourage the fighting. (AP)

Russian rocket launches Iranian satellites into orbit as Moscow and Tehran expand ties

MOSCOW, Nov 5: A Russian rocket on Tuesday blasted off successfully to carry a pair of Iranian satellites into orbit, a launch that reflected growing cooperation between Moscow and Tehran.

The Soyuz rocket lifted off as scheduled from Vostochny launchpad in far eastern Russia and put its payload into a designated orbit nine minutes after the launch. It was carrying two Russian Ionosphere-M Earth observation satellites and several dozen smaller satellites, including the two Iranian ones.

Iran's two satellites, named Kowsar and Hodhod, were the first launched on behalf of the country's private sector. In 2022, a Russian rocket launched an Iranian Earth observation satellite called Khayyam that was built in Russia on Tehran's order, and in February Russia put another Iranian satellite named Pars-1 into orbit.

Tuesday's launch comes as Russia and Iran have expanded ties in various spheres. Ukraine and the West have accused Tehran of providing Moscow with hundreds of exploding drones for use on the battlefield in Ukraine and helped launch their production in Russia. The Iranian drone deliveries, which Moscow and Tehran have denied, have allowed for a constant barrage of long-range drone strikes at Ukraine's infrastructure.

Moscow and Tehran are planning to further bolster their ties with a "comprehensive strategic partnership" that is set to be signed during Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian's planned visit to Russia. The date for that visit hasn't been set yet, but the Kremlin said it could happen soon.

Tuesday's successful launch of the Iranian satellites atop a Russian rocket follows a series of failed launches suffered by Iran's

civilian space program in recent years. There have been five failed launches in a row for the Simorgh program, a satellite-carrying rocket.

A fire at the Imam Khomeini Spaceport in February 2019 killed three researchers, authorities said at the time. A launchpad rocket explosion later that year drew the attention of then-President Donald Trump, who taunted Iran with a tweet showing what appeared to be a U.S. surveillance photo of the site.

At the same time, a separate Iranian space program run by the country's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard has seen successful launches from a military base outside of Shahroud, some 350 kilometers (215 miles) east of the capital, Tehran. However, satellite images analyzed by The Associated Press show Israel likely bombed the site during its Oct. 26 retaliatory strike on Iran.

The U.S. intelligence community's worldwide threat assessment this year said Iran's development of satellite launch vehicles "would shorten the timeline" for Iran to develop an intercontinental ballistic missile because it uses similar technology.

Intercontinental ballistic missiles can be used to deliver nuclear weapons. Iran is now producing uranium close to weapons-grade levels after the collapse of its nuclear deal with world powers. Tehran has enough enriched uranium for "several" nuclear weapons, if it chooses to produce them, the head of the International Atomic Energy Agency has warned.

Iran has always denied seeking nuclear weapons and says its space program, like its nuclear activities, is for purely civilian purposes. However, U.S. intelligence agencies and the IAEA say Iran had an organized military nuclear program up until 2003. (AP)

The death toll in Lebanon crosses 3,000 in the 13-month Israel-Hezbollah war: Health Ministry

BEIRUT, Nov 5: The 13-month war between Israel and Hezbollah has killed more than 3,000 people in Lebanon, the country's Health Ministry said on Monday, more than double the number of people killed since their last major war two decades ago.

The war shows no signs of ending, and Israel has said it is carrying out new operations targeting Hezbollah infrastructure across Lebanon and in parts of Syria while Hezbollah continues to launch dozens of rockets into northern Israel.

Hezbollah began firing rockets into northern Israel the day after Hamas' surprise attack into Israel on Oct. 7, 2023 ignited the war in Gaza. Hezbollah and Hamas are both allied with Iran.

For nearly a year, the conflict was mostly contained to the areas along the border between Israel and Lebanon. The conflict dramatically escalated on Sept. 23 with intense Israeli airstrikes on south and east Lebanon as well as Beirut's southern suburbs, leaving hundreds dead and leading to the displacement of nearly 1.2 million people.

Israel began a ground invasion of south Lebanon on Oct. 1, causing wide destruction in border villages but making little advances on the ground inside Lebanon. Israel says

it is destroying Hezbollah weapons and command centers near the border, including an extensive tunnel system built by Hezbollah.

The Lebanese Health Ministry said 16 people were killed and 90 injured in attacks on Sunday, bringing the death toll to 3,002. At least 13,492 have been injured.

The ministry does not differentiate between civilians and Hezbollah fighters in its toll. Israel claimed hundreds of Hezbollah fighters have been killed.

In Israel, 72 people have been killed by Hezbollah attacks, including 30 soldiers, according to the prime minister's office. More than 60,000 people have been displaced from their

homes. Also on Monday, Israel announced it terminated the agreement facilitating the work of the U.N. agency for Palestinian refugees, the main aid provider in Gaza.

It was the first step in implementing legislation passed last week that would sever ties with the agency, which Israel says has been infiltrated by Hamas, and prevent it from operating in Israel.

The agency, known as UNRWA, denies the allegations and says it takes measures to ensure its neutrality. (AP)



North Korea fires multiple ballistic missiles toward sea ahead of US election

SEOUL, Nov 5: North Korea on Tuesday fired multiple short-range ballistic missiles toward its eastern sea, the South Korean military said, as the country continued its weapons demonstrations hours before the US presidential election.

South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff didn't immediately specify the number of missiles detected or how far they flew. Japan's Defence Ministry said the missiles were believed to have already landed at sea and there were no immediate reports of damage.

The launches came days after North Korean leader Kim Jong Un supervised a flight test of the country's newest intercontinental ballistic missile designed to reach the US mainland. In response to that launch, the United States flew a long-range B-1B bomber in a trilateral drill with South Korea and Japan on Sunday in a show of force. That drew condemnation from Kim's powerful sister, who on Tuesday accused North Korea's rivals of raising tensions with "aggressive and adventurous military threats."

South Korea officials have said that North Korea was likely to dial up its military displays around the US presidential election to command the attention of Washington. South Korea's military intelligence agency said last week that North Korea has also likely completed preparations for its seventh nuclear test. Outside officials and analysts say North Korea eventually hopes to use an expanded nuclear arsenal as leverage to win concessions such as sanctions relief after a new US president is elected.

There are widespread views that Kim would prefer a win by Republican candidate Donald Trump, with whom he engaged in high-stakes nuclear diplomacy in 2018-19, seeing him as a more likely counterpart to give him what he wants than Democratic candi-



didate Kamala Harris.

During campaigning, Trump boasted about his personal ties with Kim, while Harris said she won't "cozy up to tyrants and dictators like Kim Jong Un who are rooting for Trump."

North Korean state media claimed last week that the Hwasong-19 it tested on October 31 was "the world's strongest" ICBM, but experts say the solid-fuel missile was too big to be useful in a war situation. Experts say North Korea has yet to acquire some critical technologies to build a functioning ICBM, such as ensuring that the warhead survives the harsh conditions of atmospheric re-entry. Tensions between the Koreas are at their highest point in years as Kim has repeatedly flaunted his expanding nuclear weapon and missile programmes, while reportedly providing Russia with munitions and troops to support President Vladimir Putin's war in Ukraine.

According to the US, South Korean and Ukrainian intelligence assessments, North Korea is estimated to have sent between 10,000 and 12,000 troops to Russia. If they start fighting against Ukraine forces, it would mark North Korea's first participation in a large-scale conflict since the end of the 1950-

53 Korean War.

On Monday, US State Department spokesperson Matthew Miller told reporters that as many as 10,000 North Korean soldiers were in Russia's Kursk region near Ukraine's border and preparing to join Moscow's fight against Ukraine in the coming days. That's up from the 8,000 troops that the US government mentioned Thursday.

After a meeting in Seoul on Monday, South Korean Foreign Minister Cho Tae-yul and EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell expressed "deep concern" over the possibility that Russia might transfer nuclear or ballistic missile-related technology to the North in exchange for its arms and military personnel.

Such transfers would "jeopardize the international non-proliferation efforts and threaten peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula and across the globe," they said, while calling on North Korea and Russia to immediately withdraw the North's troops from Russia.

In response to North Korea's growing nuclear threat, South Korea, the United States and Japan have been expanding their combined military exercises and updating their nuclear deterrence plans built around US strategic assets.

North Korea has portrayed the joint military drills by its rivals as rehearsals for an invasion and used them to justify its relentless pursuit of nuclear weapons and missiles.

At a UN Security Council meeting Monday, North Korea's ambassador, Kim Song, defended the North's nuclear and ICBM programmes as essential for the country's self-defence and a necessary response to what it perceives as nuclear threats from the United States. He stressed that North Korea would accelerate the build-up of "our nuclear force that can counter any threat presented by hostile nuclear weapon states." (AP)

Palestinian officials say an Israeli airstrike has killed 20 people in northern Gaza

DEIR AL-BALAH (GAZA STRIP), Nov 5: Palestinian medical officials say an Israeli airstrike in the northern Gaza Strip has killed at least 20 people, mostly women and children.

Hossam Abu Safiya, the director of a nearby hospital that received the casualties, said the strike late Monday hit a home in the town of Beit Lahya where multiple families were sheltering.

The dead included eight women and six children, according to a list provided by the Gaza Health Ministry's emergency service. There was no immediate comment from the Israeli military.

Israel has been waging a massive offensive in northern Gaza - which was already the most isolated and heavily destroyed part of the territory - for nearly a month.

It has ordered the complete evacuation of Beit Lahya, the nearby town of Beit Hanoun and the urban Jabaliya refugee camp, and has allowed almost no humanitarian aid into the area for over a month.

Tens of thousands of people have fled to nearby Gaza City in the latest wave of displacement in the war, which began when Hamas-led militants attacked southern Israel on Oct. 7, 2023.

That attack killed some 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and another 250 people were taken hostage. Around 100 captives are still inside Gaza, about a third of whom are believed to be dead.

Israel's retaliatory offensive has killed over 43,000 Palestinians, according to Gaza's Health Ministry, which does not distinguish between civilians and combatants in its toll but says over half of those killed were women and children. Around 90% of Gaza's population of 2.3 million people have been displaced, often multiple times. (AP)

India, Australia strategic partnership growing steadily: EAM Jaishankar

CANBERRA, Nov 5: External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Tuesday said that the comprehensive strategic partnership with Australia is growing steadily as he met his Australian counterpart Penny Wong for the 15th India-Australia Foreign Ministers' Framework Dialogue here.

Both the leaders also discussed "respective neighbourhoods, Indo-Pacific, West Asia, Ukraine and the global strategic scenario."

"Concluded the 15th India - Australia Foreign Ministers' Framework Dialogue with FM @SenatorWong in Canberra today. Our Comprehensive Strategic Partnership is growing steadily. Reflected in stronger political ties, robust defence & security cooperation, expanded trade, greater mobility and deeper educational linkages," Jaishankar posted on X.

"Discussed our respective neighbourhoods, Indo-Pacific, West Asia, Ukraine and the global strategic scenario," his post said.

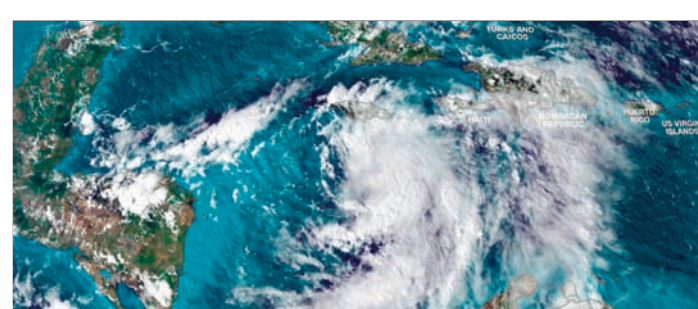
Taking to X, Wong said, "Australia and India's partnership is central to the peace, stability and prosperity of our shared region. Today, I welcomed my good friend

@DrSJaishankar to Canberra for the 15th Australia-India Foreign Ministers' Framework Dialogue."

Wong also announced that Australia will send a 'First Nations Business Mission' to India for the first time next year. The mission will support new commercial partnerships for First Nations businesses looking to engage with India and will promote First Nations businesses to new markets overseas. She further posted, "We're cooperating in important sectors including science and technology, clean energy, agriculture, education and skills, and tourism. Today, I announced the Albanese Government is funding 6 impressive projects under the Australia-India Cyber and Critical Technology Partnership."

Meanwhile, the Australian foreign ministry said in a press release that "Australia and India are close partners with strong strategic, economic and community ties - almost one million Australians trace their heritage to India. We share a vision for an Indo-Pacific region that is peaceful, stable and prosperous." (PTI)

Tropical Storm Rafael forms in Caribbean and could hit Cuba as hurricane



SAN JUAN (PUERTO RICO), Nov 5: Tropical Storm Rafael formed Monday in the Caribbean and will bring heavy rain to Jamaica and the Cayman Islands before strengthening into a hurricane and likely hitting Cuba, forecasters said.

Later in the week, it also is expected to bring heavy rainfall to Florida and portions of the US Southeast, according to the US National Hurricane Centre in Miami.

A tropical storm warning was in effect for Jamaica, and a hurricane watch was in effect for the Cayman Islands and for parts of Cuba including the provinces of Pinar del Rio, Artemisa, La Habana, Mayabeque, Matanzas, and the Isle of Youth.

A tropical storm watch was issued for Villa Clara, Cienfuegos, Sancti Spiritus, Ciego de Avila, Camaguey, and Las Tunas in Cuba. A tropical storm watch also was issued for the lower and middle Florida Keys from Key West to west of the Channel 5 Bridge, and for the Dry Tortugas.

The storm was located about 245 kilometres south of Kingston, Jamaica. It had maximum sustained winds of 75 kph while moving north-northwest at 15 kph, the centre said.

The storm was expected to move near Jamaica late Monday, be near or over the Cayman Islands late Tuesday as a hurricane and approach Cuba on Wednesday.

Most forecasts show the storm peaking as a Category 1 hurricane, "but conditions over the next few days will favour strengthening so we'll need to monitor how quickly it organises, and a stronger hurricane can't be ruled out," wrote

Canadian cop suspended for attending pro-Khalistan protest outside Hindu temple

OTTAWA, Nov 5: A Canadian police officer has been suspended for participating in a pro-Khalistan protest outside the Hindu Sabha temple in Brampton, according to a media report.

On Sunday, protestors carrying Khalistani flags clashed with people at the Hindu temple and disrupted a consular event co-organised by the temple authorities and the Indian Consulate.

There were unverified videos circulating on social media about the protest. The videos appeared to show demonstrators holding banners in support of Khalistan, as reported by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. The Peel Police is "aware of a video circulating on social media which shows an off-duty Peel Police officer involved in a demonstration," said Media Relations Officer Richard Chin in an email to CBC News.

This officer has since been suspended in accordance with the Community Safety and Policing Act," he said. "We are investigating the circumstances in totality depicted in the video and are unable to provide further information until such time that this investigation is complete."

Peel police previously said three people have been charged after violence erupted as Indian consular officials visited the Hindu Sabha Mandir temple Sunday.

Videos circulating on social media show demonstrators holding banners in support of Khalistan, the CBC report added.

Later in the day, demonstrators made their way to the Westwood Mall in neighbouring Mississauga, according to the World Sikh Organisation of Canada.

A short time after, a third protest was held outside the Malton gurdwara, a Sikh place of worship on Airport Road in Mississauga, the report added. "Although these demonstrations occurred at three different locations, they appear to be related to one another. Several incidents between protestors and worshippers broke out," police said in a news release.

India on Monday condemned the attack on the temple with an expectation that those indulging in violence "will be prosecuted".

In a statement, the Ministry of External Affairs said that New Delhi remains "deeply concerned" about the safety and security of Indian nationals in Canada.

"We condemn the acts of violence perpetrated by extremists and separatists at the Hindu Sabha Temple in Brampton, Ontario. We call on the government of Canada to ensure that all places of worship are protected from such attacks," MEA Spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal was quoted as saying in the statement. (PTI)

Sikkim forms committee for inclusion of 12 communities in ST list

Committee to submit report to the state government within three months



GANGTOK, Nov 5: The Sikkim government has set up a 12-member committee to conduct a study and make recommendations to the Centre for the inclusion of 12 communities in the list of Scheduled Tribes (STs).

Anthropological Survey of India Director BV Sharma will be the chairman of the committee, while JNU's senior professor Mahendra P Lama will be its vice chairman, according to a notification issued on Monday by chief secretary VB Pathak.

The committee will prepare a comprehensive ethnographic and anthropological report of the 12 left-out Sikkimese communities -- Bhujel, Gurung, Jogi, Kirat Khambu Rai, Kirat Dewan (Yakha), Khas (Chettri-Bahun) Mangar, Newar, Sanyashi, Sunuwar (Mukhia), Thami and Majhi, it said.

It will meticulously spell out the grounds and substantive socio-cultural, historic geograph-

ical, ecological and legal-constitutional justification as to why these 12 left-out Sikkimese communities deeply qualify for the ST status, it added.

The committee will also examine and elucidate the tri-junctional benefits that accrue from the inclusions of these left-out communities in the list of Scheduled Tribes in terms of socio-economic upliftment and cultural-ecological conservations of these and other tribes spread over the entire Indian Himalayan region and more specifically in the eastern Himalaya, consisting of Sikkim and Darjeeling Hills, the notification said.

The committee will make recommendations to the Centre for the inclusion of the 12 left-out communities on firm ethno-historical and geographical-ecology grounds.

The committee shall submit a report to the state government within three months, the notification said. (PTI)

Centre releases grant worth ₹ 78 crore for Tripura

HT Correspondent

AGARTALA, Nov 5: The Union Government has released the Fifteenth Finance Commission Grants during the financial year 2024-25, for the Rural Local Bodies (RLBs) Tripura.

A per a report for Rural Local Bodies in Tripura, the 1st installment of Untied grants amounting to ₹ 31.40 crores and 1st installment of Tied grants amounting to ₹ 47.10 crores has been released.

"These funds are for all the 1260 Rural Local Bodies including Traditional Local Bodies TTAADC (Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council), HQ; 40 Block Advisory Committees; and 587 Village Committees", said the report.

Reacting on the issue, finance minister Pranajit Singha Roy said that the grants released by the Union Government for the Rural Local Bodies, including the Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council (TTAADC), will boost development work within the district council.

He explained that the grant from the Central Government is provided under the 15th Finance Commission.

"We have many demands, including a special demands for the TTAADC. Apart from this, the state government has already allocated ₹ 30 crore to the TTAADC, separate from the state budget, to support various development projects and ensure they face no obstacles in their work.

Despite severe challenges due to flooding, we have announced DA and DR for government employees and pensioners, and declared various welfare decisions for the Tripura State Rifles and Tripura Police. The development of the TTAADC is crucial and has been a long-standing demand. Now, with support from the Centre, development in the TTAADC will get a significant boost. This grant from the 15th Finance Commission will going to help the district council," he added.

Wokha town comes alive with Tokhu Emong festivity

Various indigenous games were held on the second day of the festival



HT Correspondent

DIMAPUR, Nov 5: The Wokha town in Nagaland came alive with the commencement of the four-day Tokhu Emong, the premier festival of the Lotha Nagas, fostering a sense of togetherness and pride among the tribe.

It is the harvest and thanksgiving festival of the Lotha Naga tribe after the harvest was done. The celebration in Wokha will conclude on November 7.

The celebration that kicked off at Wokha local ground entered the second day on Tuesday, with hundred of stalls put up to promote the youth, handicrafts, and entrepreneurship in the district.

Various indigenous games such as tug of war, spear throw, grease bamboo climbing and Naga wrestling were held on the second day of the festival.

During the inaugural event On Monday, MLA and Wokha District Planning and Development Board chairman Y Mhonbemo

Humtsoe acknowledged the Lotha Hoho for honouring and celebrating Tokhu Emong, which symbolises unity, peace, and brotherhood.

He said the Lotha community has historically overcome numerous challenges, with their ancestors pioneering in various fields, including social and political arenas.

Humtsoe highlighted that the Lotha community has been a forerunner among the Nagas, contributing significantly to the social and political formation and reformation of the Naga society.

The main event of the festival in Wokha town will be held on November 7 where Nagaland's lone Lok Sabha MP Supongmeren Jamir will be present as the special guest.

In Dimapur, the festival will be celebrated with a two-day programme at State Stadium Dimapur from November 7.

KARBI ANGLONG AUTONOMOUS COUNCIL, OFFICE OF THE DIVISIONAL FOREST OFFICER:::KARBI ANGLONG EAST DIVISION D I P H U

Dated / /2024.

TENDER NOTICE FOR THE SALE OF UNCLAIMED SEIZED TIMBER

- (a) Under the Provision made in the Assam Sale of Forest produce timber lots by tender system Rule 1977 (Amended upto date) sealed tenders in the prescribed form affixing Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council Money receipt worth of Rs 10/- (Rupees Ten) only, are inviting for the unclaimed seized timber lots as shown in the prescribed schedule

(b) The tenderers are requested to drop their tender papers in the tender box which will be kept opened in the Divisional Forest Office, Karbi Anglong East Division, Diphu during the office working hours from the date of issue of this sale notice on **18/11/2024, 19/11/2024 and 20/11/2024 from 10.30 a.m. (I.S.T.) to 3.30 p.m. (I.S.T.)**.

(c) The last date for submission of tender papers is fixed on **20/11/2024**.

(d) The tender box will be **opened on the 22/11/2024** in presence of the interested bidders. If the office is closed on the last date of receiving tender for any reason, the next working day will be considered as the last date of tender submission. No tender delivered by post or hand after this date shall be considered under any circumstance.

(e) The successful tenderers shall have to deposit the bid value alongwith Dragging Cost, G.S.T. etc as shown in the statement order by the undersigned. The settlement is liable to be cancelled and shall be forfeited if the highest bidder fails to deposit the tender value and the tender shall be settled with the second highest bidder subject to fulfilment of terms and condition of the sale value.
- (a) The tender must be accompanied by earnest money draft, "as call deposit pleased to Divisional Forest Officer, Karbi Anglong East Division, Diphu" of Rs 250/- for S.T. and General Class Rs 500/- for each timber lot. Cash or money order will not be accepted as Earnest money under any circumstance.

(b) Upto date G.S.T., Caste Certificate, P. Tax and in case of Trading License & I. Tax must be enclosed alongwith the tender and without these documents no tender will be considered.

(c) The intending tenderer should inspect the timber lots at the place shown in the attached schedule before submitting tender and no claim shall be considered after any circumstances afterwards.

(d) The intending tenderers are requested to contact the office of the undersigned or the office of the concerned range office during office hours on any working days for further details of the sale notice and collect the sale notice and tender form etc on payment of Rs 100/- (Rupees One hundred) only per copy.

Enclosed:- Statement

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

Lots Statement of Unclaimed Seized Timber Lots under Karbi Anglong East Division, Diphu for the year 2023-24 and 2024-25

Sl. No.	Lots no. & Year	Species	No. of Logs	Volume	Royalty	D/Cost	Stacking	Hammer Impression	Remarks
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1.	NER/21 of 2023-24	Teak and B.Poma	28 pieces	1.875 M ³	9,921.00	3,000.00	NE/Range, Silonijan	FD-10	
2.	NER/3 of 2024-25	M-Sal	72 pieces	2.123M ³	11,892.00	2,000.00	- do -	- do -	
3.	NER/4 of 2024-25	M-Sal	64 pieces	2.051 M ³	10,484.00	2,000.00	- do -	- do -	
4.	NER/1 of 2024-25	M-Sal	53 pieces	2.123 M ³	12,732.00	3,000.00	- do -	- do -	
5.	NER/2 of 2024-25	M-Sal	54 pieces	2.051 M ³	12,300.00	3,000.00	- do -	- do -	
6.	NER/19 of 2024-25	Khakan	65 pieces	3.076 M ³	18,447.00	5,000.00	- do -	- do -	
7.	NER/20 of 2024-25	Khakan	35 pieces	2.952 M ³	17,703.00	5,000.00	- do -	- do -	
8.	NER/22 of 2024-25	Khakan	60 pieces	2.909 M ³	17,445.00	4,000.00	- do -	- do -	
9.	NER/23 of 2024-25	Khakan	60 pieces	2.850 M ³	17,091.00	4,000.00	- do -	- do -	
10.	NWR/5 of 2024-25	M-Sal	35 pieces	3.294 M ³	19,754.00	3,000.00	- do -	- do -	
11.	NWR/01 of 2024-25	Titasopa Gamari (Sawn timber) Fanta	7 pieces	0.603 M ³	4,164.00	362.00	H/Q NW/Range, Parkup Pahar	FD-34	
12.	NWR/02 of 2024-25	- do -	8 pieces	0.629 M ³	4,344.00	377.00	- do -	- do -	
13.	NWR/07 of 2024-25	Misc. Non-Sal (Sawn timber)	23 pieces	0.594 M ³	2,141.00	356.00	Langkhang Sub-Beat		
14.	NER/06 of 2024-25	M-Sal	54 pieces	2.791 M ³	16,738.00	3,000.00	NE/Range Silonijan	FD-12	
15.	NER/07 of 2024-25	M-Sal	52 pieces	2.538 M ³	15,220.00	3,000.00	- do -	- do -	
16.	NER/08 of 2024-25	M-Sal	46 pieces	2.389 M ³	14,327.00	3,000.00	- do -	- do -	
17.	NER/09 of 2024-25	M-Sal, Kodom, B.Poma, Khakan, Gamari, Bhelu	39 pieces	2.394 M ³	14,589.00	3,000.00	- do -	- do -	
18.	N/01 of 2024-25	M-Sal	20 pieces	1.157 M ³	4,170.00	500.00	N/Range Dolamara	FD-45	
19.	N/02 of 2024-25	M-Sal	20 pieces	1.443 M ³	5,201.00	500.00	- do -	- do -	
20.	N/03 of 2024-25	M-Sal	20 pieces	1.313 M ³	4,732.00	500.00	N/Range Dolamara	FD-45	
21.	N/04 of 2024-25	M-Sal	20 pieces	1.273 M ³	4,588.00	500.00	- do -	- do -	
22.	N/05 of 2024-25	M-Sal	15 pieces	0.613 M ³	3,616.00	400.00	- do -	- do -	
23.	N/06 of 2024-25	M-Sal	20 pieces	0.306 M ³	1,835.00	250.00	Kuthuri Sub-Beat	FD-45	
24.	N/07 of 2024-25	M-Sal	26 pieces	0.425 M ³	2,548.00	300.00	- do -	- do -	
25.	N/08 of 2024-25	M-Sal	14 pieces	1,626 M ³	5,860.00	600.00	- do -	- do -	
26.	N/09 of 2024-25	M-Sal	14 pieces	1.016 M ³	3,662.00	400.00	- do -	- do -	
27.	N/10 of 2024.25	M-Sal	14 pieces	1.444 M ³	5,204.00	500.00	- do -	- do -	
28.	N/11 of 2024-25	M-Sal	14 pieces	2.023 M ³	7,291.00	700.00	- do -	- do -	
29.	N/12 of 2024-25	M-Sal	14 pieces	1.456 M ³	5,248.00	500.00	- do -	- do -	
30.	N/13 of 2024-25	M-Sal	13 pieces	1.343 M ³	4,840.00	500.00	- do -	- do -	
31.	N/14 of 2024-25	M-Sal	12 pieces	1.232 M ³	4,440.00	500.00	- do -	- do -	
32.	N/15 of 2024-25	M-Sal	14 pieces	1.036 M ³	3,734.00	400.00	- do -	- do -	
33.	N/16 of 2024-25	M-Sal	14 pieces	1.154 M ³	4,160.00	400.00	- do -	- do -	
34.	N/17 of 2024-25	M-Sal	14 pieces	1.093 M ³	3,940.00	400.00	Bagori Sub-Beat	FD-45	
35.	N/18 of 2024-25	M-Sal	15 pieces	1.085 M ³	3,911.00	400.00	- do -	- do -	
36.	N/19 of 2024-25	M-Sal	15 pieces	0.947 M ³	3,413.00	350.00	- do -	- do -	
37.	N/18 of 2023-24	M-Sal	24 pieces	1.47 M ³	8,816.00	1,300.00	Deithor Sub-Beat	FD-45	
38.	N/19 of 2023-24	M-Sal	16 pieces	1.216 M ³	7,292.00	1,200.00	- do -	- do -	
39.	N/20 of 2023-24	M-Sal	14 pieces	0.854 M ³	5,121.00	700.00	- do -	- do -	
40.	N/21 of 2023-24	M-Sal	22 pieces	1.034 M ³	6,201.00	800.00	- do -	- do -	
41.	N/22 of 2023-24	M-Sal	21 pieces	0.729 M ³	4,373.00	500.00	- do -	- do -	
42.	N/23 of 2023-24	M-Sal	14 pieces	0.552 M ³	3,310.00	400.00	- do -	- do -	

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

Memo No. B /KAE/Unclaimed Seized Timber/2024-25/

Dated / /2024

JMM-led coalition fused crackers

BJP a mighty rocket that'll take J'khand to newer heights: Rajnath Singh

RANCHI, Nov 5: Terming the JMM-led coalition Diwali's "fused crackers", Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Tuesday said the BJP was a mighty rocket that would take Jharkhand to newer heights.

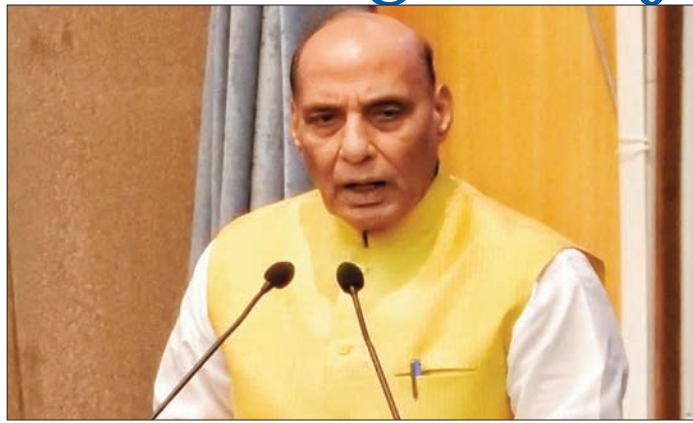
Addressing an election rally in Ranchi's Hatia, Singh said it was amply clear who would form government in the state after Chief Minister Hemant Soren's proposer Mandal Murmu deserted the "sinking ship" of JMM to join the BJP.

"The festival of Diwali has just concluded. The JMM, Congress and RJD are fused Diwali crackers now. BJP is a mighty rocket that alone will take Jharkhand to newer heights," he said.

Taking a dig at the state's ruling party over allegations of corruption against it, Singh said JMM meant 'Jamkar Malai Maro' (skim the cream).

He alleged that the JMM "sucks blood of tribals", and works against their interests.

"I ask Hemant Soren why are infiltrators coming to Jharkhand.



Why the state's tribal population shrank to 28 per cent," he said.

"We will curb infiltration, ensure the return of land grabbed by infiltrators," he added.

The defence minister said the JMM-led coalition was behind the plight of Jharkhand.

"So far, 13 CMs have governed Jharkhand. Many of them went to jails, barring the BJP chief ministers who never faced any corruption cases, be it Arjun Munda,

Raghubar Das or Babul Marandi," he said.

Singh said the JMM-led coalition believed in building its own empire, while the BJP worked for the development of all.

"The Congress, RJD, JMM believe in dynastic politics, while the BJP changes its chief every three years," he said.

Appealing to people to oust the present dispensation, he said, "Give BJP two terms, Jharkhand

will be in the row of developed states. We will not only change the government but also change the system."

He said there were three speed breakers in Jharkhand's development -- Congress, JMM and RJD. Singh said BJP revered tribals and honoured icons like Birsa Munda.

The BJP will ensure implementation of the Uniform Civil Code in Jharkhand, and keep tribals out of its ambit, he said.

"BJP undertook a special scheme for the development of 62,000 tribal villages. Never in the history of independent India such a measure was taken," he said.

Singh claimed that by 2027, India's economy will be in the third spot after the US and China.

He said the BJP will ensure the passage of a bill for one nation one election in Parliament.

Polling for the 81-member Jharkhand assembly will be held on November 13 and 20. The votes will be counted on November 23. (PTI)

Ex PM Gowda Rallies support for grandson Nikhil in Channapatna by-poll campaign

CHANNAPATNA (KARNATAKA), Nov 5: JD(S) patriarch and former Prime Minister H D Deve Gowda on Tuesday jumped into the campaign fray as he sought support for his grandson and party's candidate Nikhil Kumaraswamy from Channapatna Assembly segment, which will go for by-polls on November 13.

Making a rare public appearance in recent months, the 92-year-old leader, who is facing age-related health issues, appealed to people to ensure a big win for Nikhil in the constituency which was earlier represented by his son and Union Minister H D Kumaraswamy twice.

Assisted by his personal staff and gunmen, Gowda, with a canula on his right hand, attended multiple election meetings today and addressed people sitting in his chair as he cited knee pain.

"This election has come as this assembly seat fell vacant due to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's decision to make Kumaraswamy a central minister. There was confusion as to who should contest, other leaders have spoken about what all happened, I don't want to speak about that one person (Congress candidate C P Yogeeshwara)..." Gowda said.

He said he has several things to say about what he has done for development of Channapatna like Igloor dam, "but no need to dis-

cuss them now."

"Please, bless Nikhil Kumaraswamy, not because he is my grandson....I don't know whether I will be a centenarian, but with your blessings I will be alive, it is a guarantee, as per the horoscope that my father had got written, I will be alive, (I will see) how my grandson will develop this constituency. His father (Kumaraswamy) is a central Minister and son will be here," he said.

Channapatna by-poll is necessitated as the seat fell vacant following H D Kumaraswamy's election to Lok Sabha. Yogeeshwara, a political heavyweight in the segment, had recently quit BJP and joined the Congress.

There were plans to field Yogeeshwara on a JD(S) ticket, but he was not interested in it, and instead wanted Kumaraswamy to support him as BJP candidate, which was not acceptable to the latter and his party.

Noting that he has been in politics for 60-years, Gowda said he had never seen "such bad politics that is there now," indirectly targeting the ruling Congress in the state.

"I pray to youth, mothers and elders....enough. Such bad politics should not continue to remain in the state. I'm not saying this out of jealousy, hate or any personal angst....they don't know how to respect when the leader from an

opposition party speaks," he said.

Further, asserting that he will continue to campaign till the last day of campaigning on November 11, Gowda said he will also continue his fight against the water issues faced by the state.

"I have brought it (issues) to the notice of PM Narendra Modi. For one-and-half years more I will be a member of Rajya Sabha, I will fight along with NDA friends, 17 MPs. We will work together in the interest of the state," he said.

Reacting to former Congress MP D K Suresh's statement that Deve Gowda will come for election in an ambulance, the former Prime Minister said: "For those who said it, I'm speaking in front of you (people) openly, I will be alive for another four-six years with your blessings. I will fight for my people until my last breath in this body."

This is the third electoral battle for the actor-turned politician Nikhil. He had unsuccessfully contested the 2023 Assembly from the neighbouring Ramanagara, which had propelled Deve Gowda to the post of chief minister, and the seat that was also represented by both his parents.

He earlier had a disastrous electoral bout when he had lost to BJP-backed independent candidate Sumalatha Ambareesh in the Mandya Lok Sabha constituency in the 2019 polls. (PTI)

JMM-led coalition 'harbinger of corruption', alleges Yogi



JAMSHEDPUR, Nov 5: Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Tuesday accused the JMM-led coalition in Jharkhand of being a "harbinger of destruction and corruption".

Addressing a rally in Jamshedpur, he also alleged that the JMM is allowing entry of Bangladeshi infiltrators who indulge in "love jihad and land jihad" in Jharkhand.

Adityanath alleged that a conspiracy was hatched to change the demography of Jharkhand.

"The JMM-led coalition in Jharkhand is a harbinger of corruption and destruction. Corruption has peaked during this regime. They are allowing entry of Bangladeshi Rohingya infiltrators who are indulging in love jihad and land jihad in Jharkhand," Adityanath said at the rally.

He urged people to vote for BJP to boost nationalism over "petty issues" of caste, creed or religion.

Elections to the 81-member Jharkhand Assembly will be held on November 13 and 20, while counting of votes will take place on November 23. (PTI)

Like UP, bring BJP to power in Jharkhand to 'bulldoze' mafia: Yogi at Koderma poll rally

RANCHI, Nov 5: Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Tuesday accused the JMM-led coalition in Jharkhand of "patronising" mafia and urged people to vote for BJP which would "bulldoze" them.

Adityanath also claimed that such actions were being taken against the mafia in his home state Uttar Pradesh.

He also asserted that it is the BJP that can "guarantee security and safety" to people.

"The JMM-led coalition is patronising mafia in sectors, such as land, sand, forest, mining and liquor, in Jharkhand...Like UP, bring the BJP to power in Jharkhand to bulldoze mafia," he claimed while addressing an election rally in Koderma.

Adityanath also alleged, "Like Aurangzeb looted the country's wealth and destroyed temples, the JMM-led coalition and its ministers, including Alamgir Alam, looted Jharkhand's people."

He claimed that the BJP is the "only party" that can "guarantee the country's security and pride, women's empowerment and employment to youths".

Adityanath accused the Congress of "creating obstacles" to the construction of Ram Temple in Ayodhya.

"Ram Lala now sits in that temple after 500 years and Ram temple consecration has paved the way for Mathura and other temples," he said.

The UP chief minister claimed that PM Modi believes in 'Sabka Sath, Sabka Vikas' and the saffron party "never discriminates people on the basis of caste, creed, religion, language or gender".

"The BJP ensures no compromise with the nation's security. Pakistan earlier used to threaten India. Now, during the Modi regime, it claims in the UN that India has become a threat to it. "Chinese forces, which crossed Indian territory during the Congress regime, are now retreating," Adityanath claimed.

He also asserted that PM Modi abrogated Article 370 from Kashmir. (PTI)

Pollution occupies centre stage as BJP's Delhi Assembly poll campaign picks up pace



NEW DELHI, Nov 5: The BJP has put the pollution issue at the centre stage of its campaign strategy for the Delhi Assembly polls scheduled to be held in February next year, according to party leaders.

Along with this, corruption, bad condition of roads, water supply and poor infrastructure are among the issues with which the opposition party plans to target the ruling Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) in the elections, the BJP's Delhi unit chief Virendra Sachdeva said.

Pollution is one of the main poll planks of the party, he said.

The city's air quality has been worsening as it edged closer to the severe zone in some areas on Tuesday.

The Delhi BJP has been mounting relentless attacks on the AAP over the issue of hazardous air as well as toxic froth witnessed on the Yamuna river.

"Not just air pollution, the AAP government's failure to clean the heavily polluted Yamuna in Delhi is another issue that touches every Delhiite. People are falling ill due to worsening air quality. We cannot let the AAP government go scot-free," Sachdeva asserted.

The campaign for Delhi Assembly polls is picking up pace as is the drop in air quality of the city. The 24-hour average AQI recorded at 4 pm was reported at 381 on Monday, the second highest in the country.

Data from the Central Pollution Control Board's Sameer app, which provides hourly AQI updates, showed that out of the 38 monitoring stations, 13 were in the severe category with readings above 400.

A senior Delhi BJP leader said that with campaigning for Assembly polls likely to pick up pace during winter, the issue of worsening air quality will definitely figure in the hustings and the party will use it to attack the AAP.

The issue of pollution in the Yamuna river is also gathering momentum as lakhs of Purvanchalis settled in Delhi are celebrating their most prominent festivals Chhath.

Delhi BJP president Sachdeva recently took a dip in the black foul-smelling water of the Yamuna and accused AAP supremo Arvind Kejriwal of failing to fulfil his promise of cleaning the river by 2025.

In defence, AAP leaders have accused the BJP-ruled Uttar Pradesh and Haryana of not checking stubble burning and discharging industrial waste in the Yamuna.

The AAP has dominated the political scene in Delhi for more than a decade, almost obliterating the BJP and the Congress in the Assembly polls.

The party won 67 and 62 seats of 70 in the Assembly polls in Delhi in 2015 and 2020, respectively. While the BJP managed to win three and eight seats in the 2015 and 2020 polls, respectively, the Congress' tally was zero in both polls. (PTI)

Kharge accuses BJP of eyeing Jharkhand's resources, neglecting welfare

RANCHI, Nov 5: Claiming that the BJP has "no intention" to ensure the welfare of people in Jharkhand, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Tuesday accused the saffron camp of trying to grab power to "plunder" the state's coal and other mineral resources.

He alleged that the number of BJP leaders congregating in poll-bound Jharkhand is "higher than the total number of candidates", showing that the saffron party wanted to "snatch power from a tribal chief minister".

Kharge also accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi of being "jhootho ke sardar" (head of liars).

"The BJP is eyeing Jharkhand's 'black gold' (coal) and seeking to plunder its mineral resources. Their intention is not the welfare of the people. The BJP talks about infiltration, and why can't its governments at the Centre and in Assam act against illegal immigrants," Kharge

alleged. "PM Modi is 'jhootho ke sardar' (head of liars). He promised two crore jobs to youths. But where is employment? Beware of them who will only indulge in loot," Kharge claimed addressing an election rally in Jharkhand's Mandu.

He alleged that the BJP wanted to snatch power in the state but "no one can dare remove Hemant Soren".

Soren will be the next chief minister of Jharkhand, the Congress leader claimed.

Kharge alleged that the BJP government at the Centre worked for the "welfare of rich people".

"Five per cent of rich people amass 60 per cent of the country's wealth while 50 per cent of the poor citizens have only three per cent wealth...PM Modi waived Rs 16 lakh crore of loans of the rich but could not provide any relief to the poor, farmers and Dalits," the Congress

president claimed.

He alleged that the BJP has "no right to continue in power" at the Centre and demanded immediate clearance of Rs 1.36 lakh crore of coal dues to Jharkhand for the welfare of the state's people.

"The PM says that he belongs to the OBC category. But he works for the rich people," Kharge claimed.

Stating that though Modi often criticises the Congress, Kharge said had the grand old party not been there, the country would not have PSUs, IITs and other institutions.

"Blaming the Congress and former prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru will not help feed the poor and will not ensure the welfare of people," Kharge asserted.

"PM Modi looted people but now talks about protection of 'Maati, Beti, Roti'," the Congress chief alleged. (PTI)

AP Home Minister says she takes Pawan Kalyan's remarks 'positively' Says his remarks support her efforts on law and order

AMARAVATI, Nov 5: Andhra Pradesh Home Minister Vangalapati Anitha on Tuesday said she viewed Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan's remarks on her handling of the state's law and order situation in a constructive way.

Anitha's response followed Kalyan's criticism the previous day over deteriorating law and order conditions and increased violence against women, particularly five months into the tenure of the new coalition government comprising the TDP, BJP, and Janasena.

"I took his (Kalyan's) comments positively. His press meet was, in fact, encouraging. He provided a supportive foundation for my work and urged me to be even more assertive. That's what he communicated," Anitha told reporters.

Anitha added that, as the Home Minister, she recognises her responsibilities and the demands of



her role.

She also emphasised that Kalyan did not label her a failure.

The Home Minister noted that she had spoken to Kalyan about

the matter, and he clarified that he was referring to the alleged registration of cases based on caste under the previous YSRCP government. Further, she underscored

that Andhra Pradesh is strict about maintaining law and order.

"The Chief Minister is serious that anyone contemplating a crime should fear. He (CM) said we will bring special laws to deter criminal behaviour. This message came directly from the CM," she said.

Defending Kalyan as the Deputy Chief Minister, Anitha claimed that some people were "unnecessarily politicising" the issue.

On Monday, the Deputy CM expressed concerns about the state's law and order situation, suggesting that "things would be different" if he were the Home Minister—remarks seen as direct criticism of Vangalapati Anitha.

His comments came after recent incidents, including the rape and murder of a four-year-old girl by a relative in Tirupati district.

Meanwhile, YSRCP leader B Rajendranath sought to know who Kalyan was questioning.

"Whom are you (Kalyan) ques-

tioning? You are in power. You are the Deputy Chief Minister. Are you questioning yourself, your government, a particular minister, the CM, or the police department? We do not understand," Rajendranath said during a press conference in Hyderabad.

Rajendranath noted that while Anitha holds the Home Department portfolio, law and order is overseen by the CM. He questioned Kalyan's criticism of the police department's functioning, reasoning that the government cannot operate without the system in place.

He advised Kalyan to address crime effectively, while former Tourism Minister and YSRCP leader RK Roja suggested that Kalyan's comments reflected "failure" on the part of both the Deputy Chief Minister and Chief Minister.

Further, she alleged that the Home Minister has become "useless". (PTI)

Lies have short life, Cong's 'fake' narrative smashed: Fadnavis

NAGPUR, Nov 5: Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on Tuesday targeted the opposition Congress, saying its "fake" narrative on the Constitution has burst and asserted that lies do not last long.

In response to a question, Fadnavis said if the ruling Mahayuti -- comprising the BJP, Shiv Sena led by Chief Minister Eknath Shinde and Ajit Pawar's NCP -- gets re-elected, its constituents will sit together to decide who will be the CM. The BJP leader began his campaign for the November 20 state polls from his Nagpur South-West assembly constituency.

Fadnavis, who was the chief minister of the state from 2014 to 2019 and for a short tenure of 80 hours in November 2019, has successfully contested the assembly polls for five times from Nagpur.

This is his sixth assembly election. He has been an MLA for the past 25 years starting 1999.

Speaking to reporters during the

campaign, Fadnavis said the people have elected him five times and will support his candidature for the sixth term as well.

"My constituency is my family and my family have love for me. The people will certainly elect me," he said. Notably, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi is slated to hold 'Samvidhan Samman Sannam' in Nagpur on Wednesday.

Asked whether the opposition party is trying create a narrative again with the event, Fadnavis said "lies have a short life".

Their "fake" narrative has burst. Now they again want to stage a "drama" which would not get any response, he said targeting the opposition.

"The people very well know that it was (Prime Minister) Modi ji who showed the courage to implement the Constitution in Jammu & Kashmir and across India. The Congress never let the Constitution get implemented in Jammu and Kashmir," Fadnavis said. (PTI)

SC limits state power over private property

Supreme Court rules private properties aren't community resources

NEW DELHI, Nov 5: In a significant verdict, the Supreme Court by a majority of 7:2 on Tuesday held all private properties cannot form part of "material resources of the community" empowering states to take them over for distribution to serve "common good" under the Constitution.

The judgement of the nine-judge Constitution bench headed by Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud provided clarity on the interpretation of Articles 31C and 39(b) of the Constitution, pivotal provisions concerning the rights of individuals against the state's authority to control resources for public good.

The majority ruling has significant implications for laws impacting property and resource distribution, particularly in Maharashtra, where ageing buildings pose severe safety hazards and their restoration was a major issue.

The vexed legal question, which was decided by the top court, was whether private properties can be considered "material resources of the community" under Article 39(b) and taken over by state authorities for distribution to subserve the "common good".

The CJ authored the 193-page majority judgement on behalf of six other judges — Justices Hrishikesh Roy, J B Pardiwala, Manoj Misra, Rajesh Bindal, Satish Chandra Sharma, Augustine George Masih — to decide the two issues.

Also were on the nine-judge bench, Justice B V Nagarathna, who partially concurred with the majority view, and Justice Sudhanshu Dhulia, who dissented from the majority opinion.

The majority judgement did not agree with the view expressed by Justice Krishna Iyer in the case of Ranganatha Reddy of 1978 wherein it was held that private properties could be regarded as community resources.

"The direct question referred to this



bench is whether the phrase "material resources of the community" used in Article 39(b) includes privately-owned resources. Theoretically, the answer is yes, the phrase may include privately owned resources," noted the CJ.

The CJ, however, wrote "This court is unable to subscribe to the expansive view adopted in the minority judgement authored by Justice Krishna Iyer in Ranganatha Reddy and subsequently relied on by this court in Sanjeev Coke. Not every resource owned by an individual can be considered a 'material resource of the community' merely because it meets the qualifier of 'material needs'."

The majority view said the enquiry on whether a resource fell within the ambit of "material resource of community" must be based on the nature of the resource; the characteristics of the resource; the impact of the resource on the well-being of the community; the scarcity of such a resource being concentrated in the hands of private players. "The public trust doctrine can also be applied here," said the CJ.

The bench, in its conclusions, upheld

Article 31C, which provided immunity to certain laws from judicial scrutiny, "to the extent that it was upheld in Kesavananda Bharati v Union of India remains in force".

The Kesavananda Bharati judgement had held that "the first half of Article 31C granting immunity to laws enacted in furtherance of clauses (b) or (c) of Article 39 (on taking over of properties) against challenges based on Articles 14, 19 and 31 was valid" and the second half of the article excluding judicial review over whether a law in truth furthers the principles set out in clauses (b) or (c) of Article 39 was struck down.

The CJ, therefore, noted, "The majority judgement in Ranganatha Reddy expressly distanced itself from the observations made by Justice Krishna Iyer (speaking on behalf of the minority of judges) on the interpretation of Article 39(b). Thus, a coequal bench of this court in Sanjeev Coke erred by relying on the minority opinion."

The majority verdict said the single-sentence observation in the Mafalal case that "material resources of the community" included privately-owned resources was not part of the "ratio de-

cidendi" (rationale for the decision) and hence, not binding on the nine-judge bench.

"The term 'distribution' has a wide connotation. The various forms of distribution which can be adopted by the state cannot be exhaustively detailed. However, it may include the vesting of the resources concerned in the state or nationalisation. In the specific case, the court must determine whether the distribution 'subverts the common good'," it said.

The top court, however, did not deal with the validity of Chapter VIII-A of the Maharashtra Housing and Area Development Authority (MHADA) Act which was inserted in 1986 to empower state authorities to acquire ceased buildings and the land on which those are built if 70 per cent of the occupants make such a request for restoration purposes.

It left the issue of validity of the MHADA provision to be decided by a smaller bench in the light of present judgement.

The case stemmed from Mumbai, where many pre-1940 structures had become increasingly unsafe due to factors like age, overuse, and damage from environmental conditions.

Despite long-standing legislations, including the MHADA of 1976, which introduced mechanisms to repair and rebuild dilapidated buildings, the issue of structurally unsound housing continues.

A contentious part of the MHADA Act — Chapter VIII-A, allowing the acquisition of such buildings by cooperative societies of occupants — was challenged on constitutional grounds, leading to the present judgement.

The top court had heard 16 petitions, including the lead petition filed by the Mumbai-based Property Owners' Association (POA) in 1992. (PTI)

ED attaches land parcels in Chhattisgarh in PMLA case against insolvent UP firm

NEW DELHI, Nov 5: The Enforcement Directorate Tuesday said it has attached 73 hectares of agricultural land as part of a more than ₹ 7,300 crore bank loan "fraud" linked money laundering probe against a liquidated Kanpur-based company.

A total of 86 land parcels measuring a combined 73.34 hectares and located in the Balodabazar-Bhatapara district of Chhattisgarh, worth ₹ 31.94 crore, belonging to Shri Lakshmi Cotsyn Limited have been frozen after a provisional order was issued under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), the federal agency said in a statement.

"All these properties are registered either in the name of the company or trusted employees and other gullible persons," it said.

The money laundering case stems from a 2021 CBI FIR filed against the company, its CMD Mata Prasad Agarwal, joint MD Pawan Kumar Agarwal, deputy MD Devesh Narain Gupta and director Sharda Agarwal.

The Central Bank of India, leader of the 23 banks consortium that lent money to the company, complained to the CBI that these entities, unknown public servants

and private persons "committed cheating, criminal breach of trust, criminal conspiracy, forgery, falsification of accounts and criminal misconduct for diversion and misappropriation of public money between 2010-2018".

"The case involves an outstanding loan amount of ₹ 7,377 crore which has been already declared fraud by RBI and all assets of the accused company — Shri Lakshmi Cotsyn — have been liquidated by the Resolution Professional appointed by the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT)," the ED said. It said the company approached the banks' consortium for financial assistance in order to manufacture blended suiting and shirting, quilted fabrics, denim fabrics, technical textile fabrics, etc.

"Due to non-adherence of financial discipline, the accounts were classified as NPA (non-performing assets) by the complainant banks individually as per IRAC (Income Recognition, Asset Classification and Provisioning) norms.

"It was found in the forensic audit that the accused company did not comply with the terms and conditions of the loan agreement," it said. (PTI)

Injured passengers say overcrowding, speeding might have caused U'khand bus accident

DEHRADUN, Nov 5: Overcrowding, speeding and technical faults were among the reasons that might have led to the bus accident in Almora, according to the ill-fated vehicle's surviving passengers, many of whom are undergoing treatment at different hospitals here.

The packed-beyond-capacity bus carrying passengers returning to work after Divali fell into a deep gorge in Uttarakhand's Almora district on Monday, killing at least 36 of the more than 60 people on board.

Twenty-seven people were injured, four of them critically, when the 43-seater bus,

operated by the private Garhwal Motor Owners Union, was on its way from Pauri in Garhwal region to Ramnagar in Kumaon about 250 km away.

Karan, who is among the five being treated at the Ramdutt Joshi Hospital in Ramnagar, said, "There were 60-65 people in the 32-seater bus. We suddenly heard a sound that seemed like a tyre burst and the bus fell into the gorge."

"It was obviously overloaded. At least 20 passengers were standing in the bus since all the seats were occupied," he said. (PTI)

Odisha: Five more arrested over ₹ 6.28 cr online fraud

BHUBANESWAR, Nov 5: Odisha Police have arrested five more people in connection with duping ₹ 6.28 crore of a corporate employee through online fraud. The latest arrests were made in Kerala and the apprehended persons were brought to Odisha on transit remand on Tuesday, a police statement said.

The accused persons are residents of Malappuram, Tirurangadi and Thrissur areas of Kerala, it said. With the apprehensions from the southern state, the total number of people nabbed in connection with the case rose to 29. Earlier, 24 accused persons from different states were arrested by the crime branch of Odisha Police in connection with the case and they are now in judicial custody.

The police teams arrested nine accused from Tamil Nadu, eight from Gujarat and seven from Rajasthan, the statement said. (PTI)

Inaugurates project in Raebareli

Rahul attends district development meeting



RAEBARELI (UP), Nov 5: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Tuesday attended a meeting of the District Development Coordination and Monitoring Committee (DISHA), inaugurated a beautification project and laid the foundation stone for the construction of roads in his parliamentary constituency here in Uttar Pradesh.

Gandhi, who maintained a distance with the media during his visit, later said in a post on Facebook that the people of Raebareli told him about their problems with full authority.

On the way to Raebareli, the leader of opposition in the

Lok Sabha paid obeisance at a Hanuman temple at Churwa and met party workers.

Soon after his arrival here, Gandhi inaugurated a beautification project undertaken by the municipal corporation in Raebareli at the Degree College intersection.

Subsequently, the Congress leader later laid the foundation stone for road-construction projects under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) and then attended the DISHA meeting.

The meeting focused on various public welfare issues, including schemes such as MGNREGA, Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana and others, offi-

cial said. Gandhi presided over the meeting with administrative officials.

A blueprint for the development of the district was prepared at the meeting and central schemes were reviewed.

This was Gandhi's first meeting with local officials since becoming an MP.

According to the Union Ministry for Rural Development, DISHAs were formed to ensure better coordination among members of Parliament, state legislatures and local governments.

Gandhi left for Lucknow after the meeting.

In his Facebook post in Hindi, the Congress leader said: "No matter how old my relationship with Raebareli is, it deepens every time I visit the place. All the people of the area have given me a lot of love and told me about their problems with full authority."

"As an MP, while presiding over the first DISHA committee meeting of Raebareli, I discussed the problems and progress of the entire area with all the public representatives and officials. I also unveiled the newly-constructed

Shaheed Chowk and roads," he said.

"Raebareli has honoured me by making me their voice — I am always eager to ensure their prosperity, fulfil their needs and solve their problems," he added.

Asked about Gandhi's visit, Amethi MP Kishori Lal Sharma said central schemes of 52 departments were reviewed at the DISHA meeting, in which representatives of all the parties and block heads were also present.

Later, Uttar Pradesh minister Dinesh Pratap Singh showed a poster to reporters. In the poster, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader took potshots at Gandhi for spending less time in his constituency.

"It has been more than six months, the MP (Gandhi) has not spent a night in his constituency," he said.

"In the last six months, (Gandhi) spent only five hours. Then in five years, it will be 50 hours.

It means in five years, only two days?" the poster, titled "Raebareli ke Rahulji", said, requesting the Congress leader to spend a night in his constituency. (PTI)

Minister launches 'Tulip' to boost market access for marginalised artisans

NEW DELHI, Nov 5: Union Social Justice and Empowerment Minister Virendra Kumar on Tuesday inaugurated a digital platform dedicated to enhancing market access for artisans from the marginalised communities, including SCs, STs, OBCs, safai karmacharis, Persons with Disabilities and minority communities.

Launched under the guidance of the National Backward Classes Finance and Development Corporation (NBCFDC) and the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, the platform called Tulip aims to connect India's skilled artisans with both domestic and global markets.

Speaking at the launch of Tulip during the Shilp Samagam Mela held at Dilli Haat, the Union minister emphasised the government's commitment to fostering financial independence among India's traditional craft workers.

"Our aim is to bring people from the marginalised communities, including SCs and safai karmacharis, into the mainstream. We are working towards their empowerment, making them atmanirbhar (self-reliant)," he said, adding the ministry's effort is to provide a platform like this to accelerate their progress.

Kumar highlighted the inclusive intent behind Tulip, describing it as "a step in line with 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Prayas, Sabka Vishwas', an inclusive development model.

Paddy procurement for kharif season in Odisha to start from Nov third week

BHUBANESWAR, Nov 5: The Odisha government has decided to commence procurement of paddy from farmers for the kharif season 2024 from the third week of November, a minister said on Tuesday.

The procurement will start from Bargarh district, he said.

The decision was taken during a meeting of the cabinet sub-committee, held under the chairmanship of Deputy Chief Minister Kanak Vardhan Singh Deo on Monday.

This will be the first procurement season after the BJP came to power in the state this year.

"The BJP government is committed to fulfilling its promise to buy paddy at ₹ 3,100 per

Tulip is designed to address key challenges faced by artisans, particularly the involvement of intermediaries, by facilitating direct sales and ensuring fair compensation for their work, a senior official said.

He said the platform also promotes transparency and credibility through government backing, offering artisans a sustainable means of income generation.

Over 100 artisans and entrepreneurs from 16 states are participating in the Shilp Samagam Mela, showcasing a range of traditional products and skills.

Tulip is expected to strengthen the reach of such artisans by connecting them with a broader online customer base.

Kumar announced plans to expand the initiative further, aiming to identify artisans in "every corner" of the country and link them to the digital marketplace.

Artisans interested in joining Tulip can register through the platform for more comprehensive access to new markets, while additional support is available through NBCFDC's helpline, he said.

The Shilp Samagam Mela will run from November 5 to 15 at Dilli Haat, INA, offering visitors a vibrant display of traditional handicrafts, skill demonstrations and an opportunity to support artisan communities directly. (PTI)

An additional input subsidy of ₹ 800 per quintal of the crop will be given to farmers over and above the minimum support price of ₹ 2,300 fixed by the Centre," said Revenue Minister Suresh Pujari, who was present at the meeting.

During the meeting, modalities to be adopted at the mandi (marketing yard) level were finalised to make the entire procurement hassle-free for farmers, he said.

It was also decided in the meeting that officials would be deployed at the marketing yards till completion of the process and they would report to the government on a daily basis through a dedicated portal, Pujari told reporters. (PTI)

No: SMED/DMCH/Notice/2019/016/

NOTICE FOR RE-INTERVIEW

In pursuance to the advertisement No. SMED/DMCH/Misc/04/2019/1443 Dated 19th Sept. 2024, it is for information of all concerned candidates that the Viva-voice/ walking interview for recruitment of Hospital Administrator at Diphu Medical College and Hospital, Diphu, Karbi Anglong, Assam has been rescheduled on following date, time & venue as shown below due to less number of candidates.

Sl. No.	Name of Posts	No. of Post	Date	Time & Venue
1	Hospital Administrator	1(One)	14.11.2024	Start from 2.00 PM at Conference Hall of the office of the undersigned, Administrative Block.

Sd/-
Principal cum Chief Superintendent
Diphu Medical College & Hospital, Diphu

Janasanyog /D/ 8369/24/6-Nov-24

ENGAGEMENT UNDER SAMAGRA SHIKSHA, ASSAM

SSA-38029/3/2024-IED-SSA/1/783384/2024

The Samagra Shiksha, Assam invites online applications from Indian Citizens (as defined in Articles 5 to 8 of the Constitution of India) for the under mentioned positions under Samagra Shiksha, Assam on contractual basis. The online applications will be received from **06.11.2024 to 21.11.2024**. The posts are temporary in nature and the selected candidates will be initially engaged for a period of 11 (eleven) months only. The contractual engagement will neither be regularized under Samagra Shiksha, Assam nor will be absorbed under any job/programme of Government of Assam in future and no person (s) so engaged shall have any right (s) to claim for permanent absorption in any post (s) in the government or in the Samagra Shiksha, Assam.

Age for categories of post: The candidate should not be less than 18 years of age and not more than 62 years of age as on 01-01-2024. The age limit of the candidates will be calculated on the basis of the Matriculation/HSLC Admit Card or Pass Certificate issued by a recognized Board/Council and no other document shall be accepted in lieu of the mentioned documents.

Sl No	Name of the Post	Essential Qualification and Experience	Pay in Pay Band in Rs.
1	Additional Resource Person (ARP) [Total position - 22]	The minimum educational qualification for IE (Inclusive Education) Additional Resource Person must be Graduate from a Recognized University and <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The candidate must have special qualification of minimum 1 (One) year Diploma in Special Education in any category of disability with valid RCI CRR number. Candidates must have Minimum 3 years working experience in any Govt. Organization/NGO working in the field of disability/ SSA/DPEP. Preference: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Female candidates with disability & sibling of a disabled person or a person having a child with disability and having requisite qualification will be given priority. 	20,000/- fixed per month
2	Assistant Additional Resource Person (AARP). [Total position - 31]	The minimum educational qualification for IE (Inclusive Education) Assistant Additional Resource Person must be Graduate from a Recognized University and <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The candidate must have special qualification like 1 (One) Yr. Diploma in Special Education in any category of disability with valid RCI CRR number. Preference: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Candidates have working experience in any Govt. Organization/NGO working in the field of disability/ SSA/DPEP. Female candidates with disability & sibling of a disabled person or a person having a child with disability and having requisite qualification will be given priority. 	15,000/- fixed per month

N.B-

- The link of the recruitment portal will be available in the Samagra Shiksha website <https://ssa.assam.gov.in>
- Read the User Guidelines carefully which is available on the recruitment portal on how to submit the online application form.
- Claims for any correction will not be entertained after submitting the online registration and online application.
- Before filling the on-line application, applicant has to go through the User Guidelines for online registration and online application.
- Candidate must upload the supporting document of educational qualification, experience and others through portal.
- Only eligible candidates will have to appear in test/interview, the exact date of which will be communicated separately.
- A candidate must be in good mental and bodily health and free from any physical defect likely to interfere with the efficient discharge of his/ her duties as an Officer of the service.
- The exact date & time of the Test/ Interview will be communicated to the shortlisted candidates separately.
- Marking pattern will be on General Awareness, Personality & Aptitude, Subject matter in relevant field, Relevant Experience, etc. for the post. The applicant has to obtain minimum 50% of the total marks on the above in the interview and only then the candidates will be short-listed.
- The office will not be responsible for any non submission of online application due to any error or other problem.
- The decision of the Selection Committee in all aspects and all respects pertaining to the application and its acceptance or rejection as the case may be, conduct of test and at all consequent stages concluding in the selection or otherwise of any candidate shall be final in all respects and binding on all concerned. The Mission also reserves its right to alter and modify time and conditions laid down in the notification for conducting the various stages up to selection or withdraw the Notification at any time, duly intimating details thereof to all concerned, as warranted by any unforeseen circumstances arising during the course of this process, or as deemed necessary by the Mission at any stage.

Jansanyog/DF/1348/24/6-Nov-24



Sd/-Mission Director,
Samagra Shiksha Assam
Kahilipara, Guwahati-19

Rohit Shetty says 'Singham Again' his fastest ₹ 100 crore film, thanks audience for support

NEW DELHI, Nov 5: Director Rohit Shetty on Tuesday expressed gratitude towards viewers for making "Singham Again" his fastest ₹ 100 crore earning movie, saying he is "humbled" by their love and support.

The filmmaker said the movie, which released on November 1 during the Diwali weekend, is also his 10th film to hit the milestone. It is presented by Jio Studios in association with Rohit Shetty Picturez and Devgn Films.

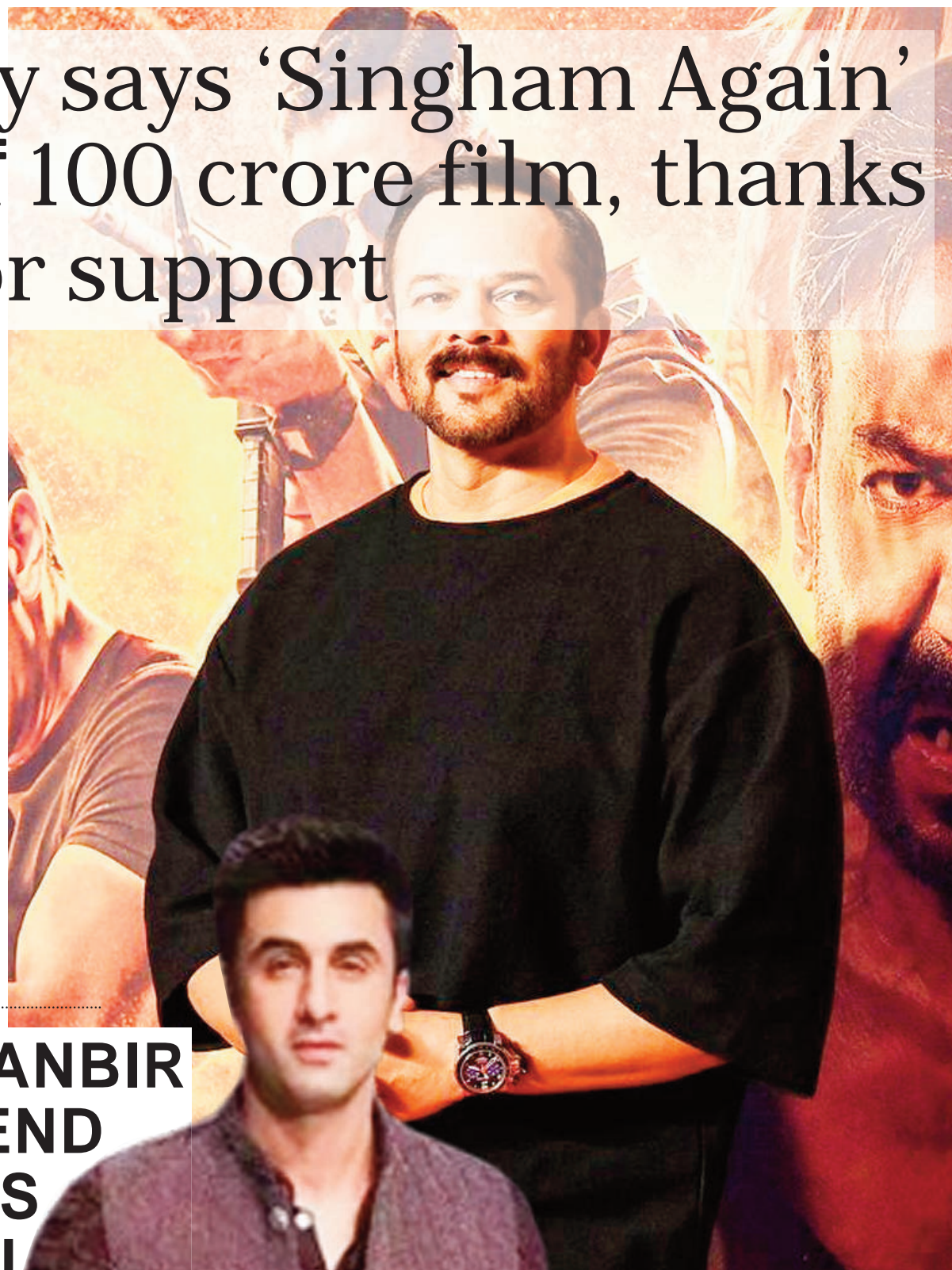
"Singham Again", the third installment in the "Singham" franchise, features a star-studded cast of Ajay Devgn, Kareena Kapoor Khan, Ranveer Singh, Akshay Kumar, Deepika Padukone, Tiger Shroff, and Arjun Kapoor.

"SINGHAM AGAIN my 10th and fastest 100 cr film. For the past 16 films one thing that has remained constant is your love, thank you for all the support and love, humbled," Shetty wrote in an Instagram post.

According to the makers, the film earned ₹ 125 crore (net) at the domestic box office in its first week-end.

Shetty's previous films "Golmaal 3" (2010), "Singham" (2011), "Bol Bachchan" (2012), "Chennai Express" (2013), "Singham Returns" (2014), "Dilwale" (2015), "Golmaal Again" (2017), "Simmba" (2018), and "Sooryavanshi" (2021) are already part of the Rs 100 crore club.

"Singham Again" is the fifth film in Shetty's ambitious cop universe, which also stars Akshay and Ranveer's characters Veer Sooryavanshi and Sangram 'Simmba' Bhalerao. (PTI)



IFFI 2024: RANBIR TO ATTEND SESSION AS PART OF RAJ KAPOOR'S BIRTH CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

NEW DELHI, Nov 5: Animal star Ranbir Kapoor will be in conversation with filmmaker Rahul Rawail to celebrate his grandfather and multihyphenate Raj Kapoor's birth centenary at the 55th International Film Festival of India (IFFI).

While Kapoor's 100th birth anniversary falls on December 14, 2024, the gala will mark the occasion on November 24 during its nine-day course in Goa.

Rawail, known for Love Story, Betaab and Aur Pyaar Ho Gaya, began his career as assistant to Kapoor working on his movies Mera Naam Joker (1970) and Bobby (1973).

"Hosted by filmmaker Rahul Rawail, the session promises to be an insightful exploration of Ranbir Kapoor's film journey, his acting techniques, and the influence of Raj Kapoor's legacy on both Bollywood and the global cinematic landscape," stated a release issued on Tuesday.

During the session, Ranbir Kapoor will also "share personal anecdotes and discuss the creative processes" behind his performances, it added.

IFFI will also showcase a digitally restored version of Awaara (1951), headlined and directed by Kapoor, popularly known as the Showman of Indian Cinema.

Organised by National Film Development Corporation of India (NFDC) and Entertainment Society of Goa (ESG) under the aegis of Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, IFFI will take place from November 20 to November 28. (PTI)



Judy Greer, Bryan Cranston, John Goodman to team up for 'Chili Finger'

LOS ANGELES, Nov 5: Judy Greer, Sean Astin, Bryan Cranston and John Goodman are set to star in the upcoming dark comedy feature film "Chili Finger". According to The Hollywood Reporter, first-time filmmaker duo Edd Benda and Stephen Helstad will co-direct the movie.

Helstad wrote the script of "Chili Finger", which also has Goodman on board as an executive producer.

"Chili Finger" revolves around a recently empty-nested mother, played by Greer known for her work in "13 Going On 30" and "The Last Thing He Told Me", who discovers a human finger in her bowl of fast-food chili. When she blackmails the restaurant for a cash payout, the situation spirals out of control and her life descends into chaos.

Character details of Astin ("Lord of the Rings" trilogy), Cranston ("Breaking Bad") and Goodman ("The Flintstones") are being kept under wraps.

"Permanent Collection" actor Sarah Herrman and Paul Stanko ("The Brothers Sun") also round out the cast of "Chili Finger".

The film, set to begin production next spring, is backed by Beyond the Porch and Gold Tree Studios. Sam Sandweiss (Darkwell Entertainment), Tim Chonacas (Gold Tree Studios) and Jo Henriquez are attached as producers. (PTI)



Anil Sharma says he was asked not to include hand-pump scene in 'Gadar': They told me it would look fake

NEW DELHI, Nov 5: It would look fake, it's not convincing, how is this even possible? These were some of the comments that Anil Sharma encountered from people around him when the director decided to include the famous hand-pump scene in his 2001 blockbuster "Gadar: Ek Prem Katha".

Sharma, however, was convinced that it was a sure-shot whistle worthy moment that would draw crowds to watch the Sunny Deol and Ameesha Patel-starrer and he was proved right.

"No one was impressed when I told them about the handpump scene. They told me it would look fake. The shooting was on hold for two hours. The entire unit was not convinced, they said 'How is this even possible?' They said don't put a commercial scene in a picture as realistic as 'Gadar'." Sharma told PTI in an interview.

"Sometimes when you are very angry, you feel like destroying everything around you. We all have experienced that feeling. So, I thought let the character uproot the

handpump. And after all these years, people still talk about that scene," he added.

"Gadar", a post-Partition drama about an interfaith couple called Tara Singh and Sakina Ali, played by Deol and Patel, was declared a blockbuster and the handpump scene went on to become a pop culture phenomenon so much so that the director decided to give it a hat-tip in his superhit follow-up "Gadar 2", which released in 2023.

Sharma, who hails from Mathura and often draws references from Hindu scriptures in his stories, said he envisioned "Gadar" as a tale from the Ramayana.

He also likened the handpump scene to the story where Lord Hanuman lifts an entire mountain when he is unable to identify the medicinal herb 'Sanjeevani' important to revive a critically injured Lakshman.

"Tara Singh may not be Hanuman, ji but the emotion is the same. So, he can uproot a handpump. Many were not convinced about it till the release of the film. Those who

watch English films don't understand how people in our small towns think. They only worry about the public that lives in Bandra, Versova, and South Delhi," he added.

The filmmaker, who started his cinema journey at the age of 17 as an assistant to "Mahabharat" series creator BR Chopra and later directed films like "Bandhan Kuchchey Dhaagon Ka", "Hukummat", "Elaan-E-Jung", "The Hero: Love Story of a Spy", "Apne" and "Veer", said he wanted to make a period film on Partition for a long time. Sharma found the right story when writer Shaktimaan Talwar gave him the script of "Gadar", in which a truck driver named Tara travels to Pakistan to bring his wife Sakina back to India post Partition.

"I told Shaktimaan ji that this story had the potential to become one of the biggest hits of the country. He asked me 'How?' I told him, 'This is Ramayana and in this story, Ram is going to bring back Sita'. In today's time, Lanka can be Pakistan. People may not understand

Ramayana but it is in their blood so they will automatically connect with the film," he recalled.

Its sequel featured Deol and Patel with Utkarsh Sharma returning as their son Jeete. In "Gadar 2", Tara Singh travels to Pakistan to bring back Jeete amid the India-Pakistan war of 1971.

Utkarsh, who is the director's son, is also part of his upcoming film "Vanvaas", starring Nana Patekar. It will be released on December 20.

Sharma said he felt a lot of vacuum after his father's death and thought about making a film on the importance of parents in one's life. In this story, the filmmaker said he talks about how elders in the family are exiled by their loved ones for various reasons.

"This is a simple film which we treated with a lot of sensitivity... This is a family film which can be watched together. With a lot of entertainment and humour, I want to tell a story that will shake the conscience of the people," said Sharma, who previously directed "Apne", a 2007 film about family. (PTI)



ISL: FC Goa look to carry forward new-found confidence against in-form Punjab FC

MARGAO, Nov 5: Back to winning ways, host FC Goa will look to carry forward its new-found confidence and scale up the ladder when it takes on Punjab FC (PFC) in an Indian Super League match here on Wednesday.

Both the teams are confident following their recent results. While FC Goa defeated Bengaluru FC 3-0 in its previous outing, PFC has won five of its last six matches. The Punjab side is placed third on the points table with 12 points from five fixtures, while FC Goa is ranked seventh, having accumulated nine points from seven games.

The Gaurs have found the back of the net on 12 occasions from inside the 18-yard box this season — most such strikes by any side this season — with Armando Sadiku (6) and Borja Herrera (4) scoring most of the goals.

For Punjab FC, it should be wary of its backline, which has not been entirely sturdy this season.

Against Bengaluru, FC Goa forced 16 high turnovers (winning the ball back within 40 metres of the opposition's goal) — the most by any side in the ISL this season.

Consequently, Punjab FC will have to be fast-paced in passing, besides also ensuring that the Gaons don't dominate possession.

Punjab FC has been on a tremendous run lately, with its only loss so far this season coming last month against The Blues.

While its vibrant forward line has played a prominent role to



its success lately, it also needed a well-coordinated performance from other departments.

Punjab FC has had three big chances per game — the highest by any side in the ISL — with eight of its nine goals this season coming from these opportunities, exhibiting the swiftness of the forward line.

The Gaurs have been dominant against Punjab FC in ISL, remaining unbeaten with one win and a draw in their last two face-offs.

FC Goa head coach Manolo Marquez affirmed that his players must stay positive regardless of the result.

"In my experience as a coach,

you cannot be too negative or pessimistic if the team doesn't do well. Obviously, you can be angry, but I don't see much difference between the top teams and the teams below (in the table)," Marquez said.

On the other hand, Punjab FC head coach Panagiotis Dilmperis admitted that he is wary of

FC Goa's style of play, but was confident of his team's performance.

"We will not adapt to them (FC Goa's playing style). We will press them to adapt to us. We don't care how they play other teams. We only care how other teams play against us," Dilmperis said. (PTI)

Jhingan, Yadwad in India probables for Malaysia football friendly

NEW DELHI, Nov 5: Seasoned defender Sandesh Jhingan, sidelined with a knee injury since January, is set for a comeback as he was on Tuesday named in a 26-member probables' list for India's friendly match against Malaysia on November 18 in Hyderabad.

Jhingan, who missed the Asian Cup and the remainder of the ISL season due to the injury, has been named in a 26-member probables list for India's home friendly against Malaysia, scheduled for November 18 in Hyderabad.

The FC Goa center-back sustained an injury to his right knee during the first half of India's game against Syria in the Asian Cup, forcing him out of the tournament. Now fully recovered, his return is expected to strengthen India's defence.

Mohun Bagan captain and defender Subhasish Bose was left out while Rahul Bheke, who led the side against Mauritius in the Intercontinental Cup in September, retained his place.

India head coach Manolo Marquez, still searching for his first win since taking over



from Igor Stimac in July, has also given a maiden national call-up to promising forward Irfan Yadwad of Chennaiyin FC.

The 23-year-old Goa-born forward has caught the attention of Marquez with a goal

and two assists in seven appearances for Chennaiyin FC in the ISL. He was roped in by Chennaiyin FC last year after a standout performance for FC Bengaluru United in the 2022-23 I-League 2, where he scored 13 goals from 11

matches.

Farukh Choudhary, Yadwad's senior teammate, has also retained his spot in the squad. Additionally, Mohun Bagan's Anirudh Thapa and Lalengmawia Ralte (Apuia) made it to the probables' list after missing out of the 23-member squad that travelled to Vietnam for an international friendly on October 12.

In their last match on October 12, India managed a 1-1 draw against Vietnam.

India Probables
Goalkeepers: Amrinder Singh, Gurpreet Singh Sandhu and Vishal Kaith.

Defenders: Aakash Sangwan, Anwar Ali, Asish Rai, Chinglensana Singh Konsham, Hmingthanmawia Ralte, Mehtab Singh, Rahul Bheke, Roshan Singh Naorem and Sandesh Jhingan.

Midfielders: Anirudh Thapa, Brandon Fernandes, Jeakson Singh Thounaojam, Jithin MS, Lalengmawia Ralte, Liston Colaco, Suresh Singh Wangjam and Vibin Mohanan.

Forwards: Edmund Lalrindika, Irfan Yadwad, Farukh Choudhary, Lallianzuala Chhangte, Manvir Singh and Vikram Partap Singh. (PTI)

Talks with ACC to revive Afro-Asia Cup after nearly two decades: Mukuhani

BENONI (SOUTH AFRICA), Nov 5: The Africa Cricket Association (ACA) has started dialogue with the Asian Cricket Council (ACC) and other stakeholders to revive the once popular Afro-Asia Cup, a common meeting ground for players from the two continents, after nearly two decades.

The Afro-Asia Cup has had only two editions to date -- 2005 in South Africa (draw) and 2007 in India (won by Asia).

A third edition of the event was scheduled to be held in Kenya in 2009 but it never happened.

"The Afro-Asia Cup, apart from the cricket, brings the much-needed financial input to the organisation, and the appetite is huge from both ends," ACA interim chairman

Tavengwa Mukuhani, who is also Zimbabwe Cricket Chair, was quoted as saying by ESPN-Cricinfo.

This tournament event gives

players from India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh a unique chance to be in the same team.

"We have had conversations with our counterparts within the Asia Cricket Council, and obviously our African contingents, they want the Afro-Asia Cup to be revived," said Mukuhani.

The ACC is yet to make any response on the matter.

The 2005 Asia Cup was captained by then Pakistan skipper Inzamam-ul-Haq and featured the likes of Rahul Dravid, Ashish Nehra and Anil Kumble.

The 2007 Asia XI included MS Dhoni, Sourav Ganguly, Harbhajan Singh, Zaheer Khan, Yuvraj Singh, Virender Sehwag and Sachin Tendulkar while Mohammed Asif, Mohammed Yousuf and Shoaib Akhtar represented Pakistan.

The ACA is also pondering over conducting the Africa Premier League, a mini version of the Indian Premier League (IPL).



While the concept is still in the planning stages, ACA CEO Cassim Suliman said details will emerge once the required approval is received from the respective African cricketing boards. "It's the mini vision of the IPL. So, we're taking that concept of the IPL and driving that concept to ensure that

everybody benefits in that aspect," he revealed.

"But the board will decide exactly who's hosting and from there, we'll take it to them from there."

"It's going to be like the IPL format, but with a lower status and then we'll grow it from there," he added. (PTI)

Verstappen's Brazil victory silences critics and impresses rivals as he closes in on 4th F1 title



SAO PAULO, Nov 5: Max Verstappen's come-from-behind win in the pouring rain at the Brazilian Grand Prix didn't just put him a lot closer to a fourth straight Formula One title.

After 10 races without a win, it also reminded everyone of why the Dutch driver is a three-time champion in the first place.

Verstappen delivered one of the best performances of his career to move up from 17th at the start and clinch a victory that increased his lead over McLaren's Lando Norris from 44 to 62 points with just three grand prix races and a sprint race remaining.

"Simply lovely," Verstappen summed it up on the team radio.

His fellow drivers were more effusive.

"Amazing," said seven-time champion Lewis Hamilton of Mercedes.

"Incredible," gushed Ferrari's Charles Leclerc.

"Fantastic," added Aston Martin's Fernando Alonso, a two-time F1 champion.

The only dissenting voice was Norris, who started on pole but finished sixth and later argued that the race was decided by luck as his team made a pit stop just before a red flag came out. "He drove well, he got a bit lucky," Norris said.

"You take a gamble, and it has paid off for them. It is not talent; it is just luck."

With only 86 points up for grabs until the end of the season, Verstappen only needs to finish ahead of Norris in Las Vegas to secure the title in two weeks.

The Red Bull driver had expected a tough weekend at Interlagos. He received a five-place grid penalty after changing his engine for the sixth time in the season; lost one point in Saturday's sprint race because of another penalty; and got unlucky during qualifying when the session was interrupted just as he was attempting to clock a fast lap, leaving him in 12th place.

But then everything went right for him in the race.

He surged past rivals at the start and had passed a handful of cars before the first lap was over. In a crash-ridden race

where visibility was hindered by the constant spray of water from the cars in front, Verstappen kept overtaking car after car and ended up finishing almost 20 seconds ahead of second-placed Esteban Ocon of Alpine.

"It was definitely an emotional win," Verstappen said. "I was really motivated and put everything into this race and I surprised myself today as I wasn't expecting to finish in P1."

The manner of the victory also sent a message to some of Verstappen's critics, who had described his driving style as being too aggressive.

"(Verstappen) silenced a few critics today," said former F1 champion Damon Hill, who himself was one of those critics.

In his post-race press conference, the Red Bull driver also took a shot at some of the British journalists who have questioned his abilities in recent weeks.

"I have a quick question here. I appreciate all of you being here, but I don't see any British press," Verstappen said, drawing laughter. "Do they have to run to the airport, or they don't know where the press conference is?"

Fans at Interlagos were also impressed by the Dutch driver's performance.

Many of them, like Carlos Santos de Araujo, 65, were hesitant to support Verstappen because of his ties to Nelson Piquet, the father of his girlfriend Kelly and the main rival of another Brazilian three-time F1 champion, the late local hero Ayrton Senna.

Sunday's race put Verstappen under a different light, de Araujo said.

"No one can be indifferent to what Max did today. I am sure he will think this the best race of his life, one of the best here at Interlagos," he said, wearing a Senna shirt and a Mercedes cap. "Hardcore F1 fans like me do like him as a driver, but today probably changed his status for us all. Anyone who thought he was just cold and sometimes arrogant will see the fighter that he was to win this. That adds to him being a champion." (AP)

Chennai Grand Masters: Top ranked Erigaisi to face Gujarathi in opening round

CHENNAI, Nov 5: World No. 4 Indian chess grandmaster and top seed Arjun Erigaisi will open his Chennai Grand Masters campaign against compatriot Vidy Gujarathi, starting here on Tuesday.

Erigaisi will play for the first time in India after crossing the historic 2800 ELO ranking mark when he takes the board.

The eight-player strong classical event will see Aravindh Chithambaram take on Iranian Amin Tabatabaei, Vachier-Lagrave Maxime will face Maghsoodloo Parham and American Grandmaster Levon Aronian will play Alexey Sarana in the opening round.

The second edition of the seven round competition will also feature a Challengers event featuring female players for the first time.

Organised by MGD1 with ChessBase India, and sponsored by the Sports Development Authority of Tamil Nadu, the tournament will be held at the

1,100-seat Anna Centenary Library.

The event will also feature two Indian women -- Harika Dronavalli and Vaishali Rameshbabu.

The Challengers participants, will fight for a prize pool of Rs 20 lakh, with the winner taking home Rs six lakh and a direct berth in the Masters next year.

In the Challenger category, Vaishali will take on Mendonca Leon Luke while Harika will play Pranav V.

In the other two matches, Ranaak Sadhwani will face off against Karthikeyan Murali while Pranesh M will play Abhimanyu Puranik.

The Challengers event, which is introduced for this year, will give Indian prodigies the chance to compete in top-level tournaments.

D Gukesh had won the inaugural edition last year but will miss this year's competition as he is preparing for the world championships title against Ding Liren of China. (PTI)

Aussie quick Boland looks to keep KL Rahul under pressure ahead of Border-Gavaskar Trophy



MELBOURNE, Nov 5: Australian pacer Scott Boland wants to extend the barren run of KL Rahul and keep him under pressure ahead of the Border-Gavaskar Trophy when he faces the Indian batter in the four-day A-Team match here from Thursday.

Rahul along with wicketkeeper batter Dhruv Jurel flew early to Australia, and will appear for India A in the second four-day game at the MCG.

"I was lucky to bowl to him in a Test over in India a couple of years ago but it'll be nice to play against him in our backyard," Boland was quoted saying by ESPNcricinfo.

Rahul made a hundred on his debut tour to Australia in 2015, a 110 at Sydney, but his overall performance Down Under remains scratchy, evidenced by an average of 20.77 across four Tests.

Boland wants to heap more misery on the 32-year-old.

"He's a world-class player but someone I think we can get on top of pretty early and hopefully stay on top of him for the majority

of the summer," said Boland.

Rahul was dropped from India's eleven after the first Test against New Zealand at Bengaluru where he made 0 and 12.

It was a continuation of his modest run since cracking a hundred against South Africa at Centurion in December 2023.

Since then, he made just two fifties across nine innings against SA, England, Bangladesh and New Zealand.

But the Bengaluru man could return to the eleven if skipper Rohit Sharma skips the first Test against the Aussies at Perth, starting from November 22, owing to personal reasons.

Boland also remained cautious about the impact of India's recent 0-3 whitewash at home by the Kiwis.

The 35-year-old said India has enough experience to make a comeback.

"There's so much more bounce here, more seam. The way they'll structure their team (in Australia) will be completely different to what you see over in India," he noted. (PTI)

Mission 2036 Olympics: India submits 'Letter of Intent' to IOC



NEW DELHI, Nov 5: India has submitted a 'Letter of Intent', expressing its desire to host the 2036 Olympic and Paralympic Games, to the International Olympic Committee's Future Host Commission, taking the first concrete step in an ambitious plan after months of informal dialogue with the IOC.

The letter was submitted by the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) on October 1, according to a source in the sports ministry.

"This monumental opportunity could bring substantial benefits, fostering economic growth, social progress, and youth empowerment across the country," the source added.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi had first talked about his government's aspiration to host the 2036 Olympics last year.

A decision on the host will not be taken before the IOC elections next year and India will also have to face competition from several other nations like Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Turkey, who are positioning themselves as strong contenders to host the sporting spectacle.

However, with the submission of a 'Letter of Intent', the nation has progressed from "Informal Dialogue" to the "Continuous Dialogue" stage of the host election process.

In this stage, the IOC conducts a 'feasibility study' of the progress of projects associated with the Games in the potential host.

"As part of the Feasibility Assessment, independent sources in a wide-ranging number of areas are taken into consideration, including in human rights, through Business for Social Responsibility (BSR), and sustainability, through the In-

ternational Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)," the IOC states on its official website.

The next phase of the process would be "Targeted Dialogue", which would require the submission of an edition-specific formal bid, which would be assessed by the Future Host Commission.

The process would finally end with a host election.

India's plan has been backed by current IOC head Thomas Bach. The last time India hosted an international multi-sport extravaganza was the 2010 Commonwealth Games here.

But for the 2036 Olympics, Ahmedabad is being seen as a front-runner to be the host city.

India's top sports administrators, including IOA President PT Usha, were at the Paris Olympics earlier this year to lobby for the country. It is also learnt that India would be pushing for the inclusion of indigenous disciplines like yoga, kho kho and kabaddi if the bid is successful.

The Sports Authority of India's Mission Olympic Cell (MOC) has even presented a detailed report on the measures needed for a successful bid to new sports minister Mansukh Mandaviya.

In this document, MOC has identified six disciplines, including yoga, kho kho, kabaddi, chess, T20 cricket and squash for inclusion in the Games if the country gets to host the quadrennial extravaganza.

However, the IOA is also mired in controversy owing to a tug of war between Usha and the body's Executive Council, which has steadfastly refused to ratify the appointment of her choice for the CEO's position, Raghuram Iyer. (PTI)

PGA Tour has big changes on horizon; what doesn't change is players having to earn it: Analysis

FRISCO, TEXAS (USA), Nov 5: The reason behind such a big change to PGA Tour eligibility is not much different from what it was some 40 years ago. Both were about trying to make the tour more competitive and to give real value to having a card.

Of course, it involved money, too. That never changes. The PGA Tour board later this month will vote on whether to reduce the number of fully exempt players from 125 to 100, along with cutting from 30 to 20 the tour cards awarded to top finishers on the Korn Ferry Tour.

It sounds even more cutthroat than golf already is, especially since it was in 1983 when the PGA Tour went the other direction.

It used to be only the top 60 on the money list the previous year were exempt from qualifying for PGA Tour events. That changed to the top 125 in what became known as the all-exempt tour. Anyone who had a tour card could expect to tee it up just about wherever he wanted, instead of having to qualify every Monday.

Those who didn't make it through qualifying put their clubs in the trunk and headed to the next stop. Back then, getting a PGA Tour card was the easy part. So, the change wasn't about the rich getting richer. It was having a reasonable chance to make a good living.

"Really, when you get down to it, there aren't very many of us who make any money out here," the late Tom Weiskopf said at the start of the 1982 season.

Craig Stadler wound up leading the money list that year with USD 4,46,462. Only 37 players topped USD 1,00,000 in earnings.

"The all-exempt tour will give more people a chance to play more tournaments," Weiskopf said. "There will be more people making money and, with 150 players able to play any time they want to, you're going to see the

competitive level of the game go up."

That's the idea behind the proposal the PGA Tour board is considering — and is likely to approve — when it meets in two weeks.

With such a bloated membership, having a tour card often meant waiting until there was room to play. The regular season is three months shorter, so there is more urgency to play.

Now factor in 125 cards, plus two-year exemptions to players who win, plus 30 cards for the Korn Ferry Tour, 10 cards for leading European tour members, five cards from Q-school, career money exemptions, and medical exemptions. Whew.

Not to be overlooked were the eight signature events with even smaller fields. More waiting. The reduction in cards — the change would take effect in 2026 — should be beneficial, at least for those who finish in the top 100 to keep full status.

There is still the concept of meritocracy. Justin Thomas went from winning a major in 2022 to failing to qualify for the post-season in 2023.

Matt McCarty started this year on the Korn Ferry Tour, won three times for an instant promotion and then won the Black Desert Championship in Utah to earn a two-year exemption and a spot in three majors next year. It's not going to be easy, nor is it supposed to be.

There's an advantage for players who finished in the top 50 — a perk for success is another way to look at it — because they are guaranteed spots in all the signature events with a USD 20 million purse and elevated FedEx Cup points. The answer, of course, is to play better. It's a phrase no one likes to hear because it's true.

"Trust me, players hate hearing that," said Camilo Villegas, chairman of the 16-member Player Advisory Council that put forth the proposed changes. (AP)

Harmanpreet Kaur rises to 9th, Smriti Mandhana remains 4th in women's ODI rankings

DUBAI, Nov 5: India captain Harmanpreet Kaur climbed to the joint ninth spot while opener Smriti Mandhana remained fourth in the latest ICC Women's ODI rankings, released here on Tuesday.

Kaur, who played an important part in her team's six-wicket victory over New Zealand in the third ODI of their ICC Women's Championship series in Ahmedabad, had slipped three slots after the first two matches. However, her 59 net out off 63 balls pushed her back into the top 10.

Left-hander Mandhana, who won the player of the match award for her knock of 100, added 23 rating points to reach a tally of 728, just five less than Sri Lanka's Chamari Athapaththu in the list led by Natalie Sciver-Brunet of England with 760 rating points.

Wicketkeeper Yastika Bhatia moved up from 48th to 45th after chipping in with 35 runs, while for New Zealand, Brooke Halliday's knock of 86 lifted her 12 spots to 24th position and Georgia Plimmer's 39 runs took her from 85th



to 74th position.

In the bowling chart, seasoned spinner Deepti Sharma gained important rating points after helping India win the series 2-1.

Deepti, who had already attained a career-high 687 rating points last week while consolidating her second place among bowlers, added 16 more to reach 703 rating points after her haul of 3/39 to hold on to the second spot.

England's left-arm spinner Sophie Ecclestone enjoys a huge lead

at the top with 770 rating points.

India pacer Renuka Singh was up four places to 32nd while Saima Thakor (up 20 places to joint-77th) and Priya Mishra (up six places to 83rd) also progressed.

India are placed in third position in the ICC Women's Championship standings with 25 points while New Zealand are sixth with 20 from 21. Australia and England are at the top with 28 points each, from 18 and 21 matches, respectively. (PTI)

Shreyas Iyer returns for Ranji Trophy



MUMBAI, Nov 5: Middle-order India batter Shreyas Iyer returned to defending champions Mumbai's 16-member side for the Ranji Trophy Elite Group A clash against Odisha starting here on Wednesday, but opener Prithvi Shaw was excluded.

Iyer had missed Mumbai's previous away clash against Tripura — a contest which was drawn — due to personal reasons and is now available for selection for the upcoming clash to be played at the Sharad Pawar Cricket Academy in Bandra-

Kurla Complex. However, Shaw, who was dropped before the team's trip to Agartala for their last game, did not find a place.

The right-handed opening batter, who was initially a part of the Mumbai team at the start of the season while also featuring in their title-winning Irani Cup campaign, was left out due to fitness and disciplinary issues.

Mumbai squad: Ajinkya Rahane (Captain), Ayush Mhatre, Angkrish Raghuvanshi, Akhil Herwadkar, Shreyas Iyer, Siddhesh Lad, Suryansh Shedge, Hardik Tamore (WK), Sidhaant Adhatarao (WK), Shams Mulani, Karsh Kothari, Himanshu Singh, Shardul Thakur, Mohit Avasthi, Mohd. Juned Khan, Royston Dias. (PTI)

Billie Jean King Cup, Davis Cup encourage donations for Spanish flood recovery efforts



MALAGA (SPAIN), Nov 5: With the finals of the Billie Jean King Cup and Davis Cup set to be played in Malaga, Spain, this month, the International Tennis Federation (ITF) is donating to the Spanish Red Cross to support relief and recovery efforts for the recent catastrophic flooding in the

country.

The ITF and its two team tournaments said in a news release Tuesday that they "express their deepest sympathy to the victims and support for the communities and families affected by the devastating floods in Spain and its regions."

The Billie Jean King Cup and Davis Cup, along with the ITF, "are donating to the Cruz Roja, and we encourage all our fans and followers to contribute as well." The ITF did not say how much it is donating.

Authorities have recovered more than 200 bodies in the eastern Valencia region after heavy downpours caused flash flooding. Police, firefighters and soldiers continued to search Tuesday for an unknown number of missing people.

The Billie Jean King Cup matches are scheduled for November 13-20, and the Davis Cup — the last event of 22-time Grand Slam champion Rafael Nadal's career — is set for November 19-24, all in Malaga. (AP)

Title-holder Novak Djokovic withdrew from ATP Finals due to injury



BELGRADE (SERBIA), Nov 5: Novak Djokovic won't defend his ATP Finals title after ruling himself out on Tuesday due to an unspecified injury.

Djokovic wrote in an Instagram story, "I was really looking forward to being there, but due to ongoing injury I won't be playing next week. Apologies to those who were planning to see me."

The year-end, eight-man ATP Finals open in Turin, Italy, on Sunday. He's won it a record seven times. Last year, he beat current No. 1 Jake Sinner in the final.

"Wishing all the players a great tournament" Djokovic added: "See you soon!"

Djokovic finishes the year with a 37-9 win-loss record highlighted by winning his first Olympic gold medal in Paris. That was his 99th tour-level title.

He didn't add to his men's record 24 Grand Slam titles this year, and after bowing out of the US Open third round, he played only a Davis Cup match and reached the final of the Shanghai Masters last month, losing to Sinner. He then withdrew injured from the Paris Masters. (AP)

Agni Chopra's dream: Playing Ranji Elite division after big start with Mizoram in Plate League

MUMBAI, Nov 5: Currently, Agni Chopra's First-Class average stands at a box office 99.06 and it has attracted as much, may be even more, attention as some of the biggest Bollywood chartbusters his father has produced.

In only nine games since his debut in the Ranji Trophy Plate league for Mizoram earlier this year, Agni, son of Bollywood filmmaker Vidhu Vinod Chopra and film critic Anupama Chopra, has garnered 1585 runs with eight hundreds and four fifties.

The beginning of this filmy sequence started in January this year when he debuted with a 166 against Sikkim at Nadiad, and from there on Agni has not stopped scoring runs in tons, literally.

This season the 26-year-old left-hander has started from where he left and has already scored 218 and 238 against Arunachal and Manipur.

So, what is the secret of his run rush?

"It's all about hunger, right?" Agni told PTI in an exclusive interview.

"Before this season started, I discussed it with my coach Khushpreet (Singh). The only thing he told me was, 'forget about the runs, you just have to focus on one thing — don't get out'."

"So I've not thought about anything else. My second goal was to score double hundreds because last year I didn't score a single double hundred," said Agni, adding that specific work on his fitness has also helped him pile up big scores.

His domination of bowlers, which has seen his average touching Bradmanesque-levels, has come in the Plate League so far, and Agni nourishes the dream of getting into Elite League with Mizoram.



"I don't think too far into the future. Of course, in terms of the larger picture, I would love to be picked in the Duleep Trophy, or India A, to play in the IPL, to hopefully, one day, represent India," he said. "For me what works best is (when) I always focus on the next game. I don't even think about the second game. I only think about what's next because in order to play for India, I have to do well in the next game."

But for it, Agni knows that, he will have to play in the Elite segment of the Ranji Trophy. "I would love to represent an Elite division

team, then maybe play for IPL and India. But to do those things, I have to play well at the level I'm playing right now and to do that, I also have to score runs in the next game. So, I genuinely think about only the next game," he said.

Agni realises that he has to shoulder a major share of responsibility of carrying Mizoram into the Elite round.

"Our Mizoram team's collective goal is to qualify for the Elite division. The goal is for us to finish on top and qualify... then I'll be able to play in the Elite division against the top level of bowlers," he

said.

"Even last year, that was our goal but unfortunately, we fell short. We lost in the semifinals; we were one game away. If we had won, we would have qualified and I would have been playing there this year itself," he continued.

"That's what I think my personal and team-wise goal is."

For cricketers, on-field success and scrutiny go hand in hand and more so in case of those who have famous parents.

Agni has a simple way of tackling the situation. "I just think it is funny. I genuinely don't even take it seriously. There is my circle of people whose opinions I value and whose opinions I trust," he said.

"Off the field, (it) is my parents and my sister. Anything related to off the field, I'll defer to them. They don't give me advice about cricket too much. I mean, I don't tell my dad how to make movies and he doesn't tell me how to play cricket," he said.

"Khushpreet Singh, my coach, is my number one guy on and off the field. Shubman (Gill) is a close friend and with him, also on the field and off the field, we have discussions," he said.

Agni had to endure disappointment during last year's IPL auction, but he hopes for better tidings in the upcoming mega auction.

"Everybody wants to be a part of that, play in the IPL. A lot of the work that I have put in is with that in mind as well and that's a big motivating factor is to play in the IPL," said Agni, who idolises Yuvraj Singh and Brian Lara. (PTI)