

## Good News

Newly opened our Namsai Branch  
Office: 2<sup>nd</sup> Mile, Namsai,  
Arunachal Pradesh.  
(M) 7002786249, 9612845442



26 YEARS OF DEDICATED JOURNALISM

www.thehillstimes.in

# THE HILLS TIMES

PUBLISHED SIMULTANEOUSLY FROM GUWAHATI & DIPHU

Voice of the hills people

Vol .No. XXVI

Issue No. 128

RNI-ASSEN/2000/12862

DIPHU, KARBI ANGLONG, FRIDAY, MAY 23, 2025

PAGES 12

PRICE ₹ 8

## Himanta calls on FM, discusses plans to build ₹ 10 lakh cr GSDP by 2027-28

CM also updated Sitharaman on Assam's economic progress

**NEW DELHI, May 22:** Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Thursday met Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and apprised her about the rapid strides made by Assam on the economic front following a slew of initiatives taken by the state government.

The initiatives include mobilisation of resources and generating revenue resulting in Assam emerging as one of the country's fastest growing states, an official release said.

During the meeting, chief minister Sarma outlined Assam's growth trajectory and the plans on the anvil to build a ₹ 10 lakh crore Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) by 2027-2028.

He also apprised the Union finance minister about the rapid strides made

by Assam on the economic front following a slew of initiatives by the state government, the release said.

Sitharaman appreciated the initiatives taken by the Assam government to bolster the economy of the state and the country as a whole and assured to extend all possible help and support in the days ahead.

Later, taking to X, the chief minister wrote, "It was a privilege to call upon Hon'ble Finance Minister Smt @nsitharaman Ji today in New Delhi. We had a good discussion on Assam's growth trajectory, how it has emerged among the country's fastest growing States and on our plans to build a ₹ 10 lakh cr GSDP by 2027-2028."

Senior officials from the Ministry of Finance and the government of Assam were present during the meeting. (PTI)



## Assam govt forms commission to resolve KAAC territorial disputes under 6<sup>th</sup> Schedule

**HT Correspondent**

**KHERONI, May 22:** The Government of Assam has announced the formation of a commission to examine claims, counterclaims, objections, and demands related to the inclusion and exclusion of areas within the Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council (KAAC) under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution of India.

This move follows provisions outlined in the Memorandum of Settlement (MoS) signed with various Karbi groups.

According to an official notification, the commission will be chaired by Dr. Ballepu Kalyan Chakravarty, IAS, additional chief secretary to the Government of

Assam. "It will be supported by the Deputy Commissioners of Morigaon, Nagaon, Hojai, West Karbi Anglong, Karbi Anglong, and Dima Hasao, who will serve as ex-officio members," the notification stated.

The commission aims to establish a formal mechanism to evaluate and resolve issues concerning the territorial and administrative jurisdiction of the KAAC.

This initiative is considered a significant step toward addressing long-standing demands of the Karbi community while ensuring a transparent and structured process for resolving disputes. The commission is expected to play a vital role in promoting peace and development in Assam's hill areas.

## Mob kills Royal Bengal tiger in Golaghat

**GOLAGHAT, May 22:** A Royal Bengal tiger was killed by a mob, who also took away some of the body parts of the animal, in Golaghat district of Assam on Thursday, officials said.

The incident took place at Dumukhia village in Khumtai area where the villagers killed the adult male tiger, who had attacked a few people in the last couple of days, a forest department official said.

"The people considered the tiger to be a man-eater and so killed it. We retrieved the carcass and found that some body parts like a portion of skin, one leg and some meat are missing," he added.

As per reports, the villagers surrounded the tiger from different sides and then chased it before killing it. They used local weapons like machetes, sticks and rods to attack the tiger. "On receiving information about the attack, a team of forest and police officials rushed to the spot. But the big cat had already been (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

## Two-day NE Investors Summit from today

Event will showcase our wonderful 'Ashta Lakshmi': Scindia

**NEW DELHI, May 22:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate a two-day investors summit on Friday that will showcase the investment potentials in the northeastern states and opportunities to access the captive markets in the region and the neighbouring countries.

The 'Rising Northeast Investors Summit', to be held here on May 23 and 24, aims to attract investments to the Northeast and will see the participation of chief ministers from northeastern states, Union ministers, top bureaucrats, foreign diplomats and more than 2,000 delegates, policy-makers, industry leaders and investors, among others, officials said.

They will participate in discussions across nine-plus priority sectors such as agriculture, food processing, textiles, tourism, entertainment, education, healthcare, IT and energy.

Minister for Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER), Jyotiraditya Scindia, said the greatest potential for India in the future is the northeastern region.

"The event will showcase our wonderful 'Ashta Lakshmi' -- our eight states, which stand at the heart of the transformative growth that our country represents," Scindia said.

The prime minister's resolve, commitment and vision aim to ensure that the northeastern region becomes the pivot for the future growth and the future path of India, as the country advances towards its goal of 'Viksit

Bharat' by 2047, he said.

"Northeast's cultural tapestry along with the reservoir of natural resources and the strategic geographical positioning of the region have translated it into the most powerful gateway to Southeast Asia," Scindia said.

The minister also said that last 10 years' committed investment, the prime minister's resolve on infrastructure, healthcare and education have set the platform for the rise of the Northeast into an economic power, not just for India, but for the world.

The Northeast's geo-strategic advantage, abundant natural resources, skilled workforce and access to captive markets in the neighbouring countries will also be showcased at the summit, officials said.

The region is an emerging frontier for businesses and the summit will offer an ideal platform for forging alliances, partnerships and acquiring a clear vision of the opportunities available for expanding businesses, making new investments, setting up green field manufacturing projects and associated activities, an official in the DoNER ministry said. The pre-summit activities organised by the ministry attracted investment proposals worth more than Rs 1 lakh crore across all the northeastern states, the officials said. In the run-up to the summit, an Ambassadors' Meet was organised here in coordination with the Ministry of External Affairs on April 15 to give exposure to foreign investors on the northeastern region. (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

## Tender for Jorhat-Majuli Bridge floated: CM



**NEW DELHI, May 22:** The Road Transport and Highways ministry has floated the tender for the much-awaited Jorhat-Majuli bridge over the Brahmaputra, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said on Thursday.

The 6.81-km-long two-lane bridge will be built at an estimated cost of Rs 600.51 crore, according to a state government release.

Sarma has been persuading the ministry to expedite the tender process.

He thanked Union minister Minister of Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari for turning the dream project into a reality.

Later, taking to X, Sarma wrote, "Great news for Assam. The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has today floated the tender for the much-awaited Jorhat-Majuli Bridge - 7a 6.81 km, 2-lane bridge with an estimated cost of Rs. 600.51 crore."

"My heartfelt gratitude to Hon'ble Union Minister @nitin\_gadkari Ji for making this effort into a reality," he said. (PTI)

## Freedom for Sumi Borah after over 8 months

**HT Correspondent**

**DIBRUGARH, May 22:** Sumi Borah, one of the prime accused in the multi-crore online trading scam, was released from Dibrugarh Central Jail on Thursday evening after securing bail in all cases registered against her.

A popular actor and choreographer, Borah was arrested by the Special Task Force (STF) of Assam Police on September 12, 2024.

She spent over eight months in judicial custody before completing bail formalities and walking out of the high-security prison around 7:10 pm.

Although she had received bail in the Dibrugarh Police Station case (Case No. 352/24) and Dulaijan Police Station case (Case No. 198/24) in April, she remained in custody due to the pending Barbaruah Police Station case (Case No. 85/24). On May 21, the Gauhati High Court granted her bail in the Barbaruah case, clearing the way for her release.

Dressed in all black, Borah avoided media queries as she exited the prison.

Borah, along with 22-year-old Bishal Phukan—identified as the mastermind—and her husband

Tarkik Borah, is accused of orchestrating the fraudulent scheme that duped hundreds of investors across Assam.

The high-profile case, reportedly Assam's largest financial fraud to date, is currently under investigation by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).

It may be noted that Phukan and Tarkik Borah were granted bail on May 3 after spending eight months in jail. Phukan was released from

Dibrugarh Central Jail, while Tarkik Borah was released from Guwahati Central Jail the same day.

The scam came to light following Bishal Phukan's arrest on September 3, 2024, which exposed a sophisticated operation promising investors a 100% return within 60 days. Instead, the accused allegedly funnelled the funds into shell companies and indulged in extravagant spending on luxury cars, five-star hotels, and designer jewellery.

Investigators allege that Sumi Borah and her husband played a crucial role in luring investors, using their public image to build trust. Social media evidence revealed a lavish lifestyle funded by the scam's proceeds.



## Indus Waters Treaty will remain in abeyance till Pak stops cross-border terrorism: India

**NEW DELHI, May 22:** India on Thursday once again asserted that the Indus Waters Treaty with Pakistan will remain in "abeyance" until Islamabad "credibly and irrevocably" abjures support to cross-border terrorism as "water and blood" cannot flow together.

External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal also said that any bilateral talks with Islamabad will only be on vacation of illegally occupied territories of Kashmir by Pakistan.

"You are well aware of our position that any India-Pakistan engagement has to be bilateral," he said in response to a question on US President Donald Trump showing interest in helping India and Pakistan in resolving the Kashmir issue.

"I would like to remind you that blood and terror don't go together," Jaiswal said.

"On terrorism itself, we are open



to discussing the handing over to India of terrorists whose list was provided to Pakistan some years ago," he said.

Jaiswal added: "I would like to underline that any bilateral discussion on Jammu & Kashmir will only be on the vacation of illegally occupied Indian territory by Pakistan." Asked about the Indus Wa-

ters Treaty, it will remain in abeyance till Islamabad stops supporting cross-border terrorism.

"It will remain in abeyance until Pakistan credibly and irrevocably abjures its support for cross-border terrorism. As our prime minister has said, 'Water and blood cannot flow together'," he added.

India on April 23 announced a

raft of punitive measures against Pakistan including suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty.

The measures were announced a day after the Pahalgam terror attack that killed 26 civilians.

India carried out precision strikes on nine terror infrastructures early on May 7 in response to the Pahalgam terror attack.

Following the Indian action, Pakistan attempted to attack Indian military bases on May 8, 9 and 10.

The Pakistani attempts were strongly responded to by the Indian side by inflicting heavy damages to a number of key Pakistani military installations including air bases, air defence systems, command and control centres and radar sites.

Foreign Secretary Vikram Misra on May 10 announced that India and Pakistan reached an understanding to stop all firings and military actions on land, air and sea, with immediate effect. (PTI)

*'I'm confident the new Haibargaon station will bridge distances and meet people's aspirations'*

## PM virtually inaugurates redeveloped British-era Haibargaon rail station in Assam

**GUWAHATI, May 22:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday virtually inaugurated the redeveloped Haibargaon railway station, a 138-year-old British-era structure built to facilitate tea cultivation in Assam.

The small railway station in Nagaon district has been given a complete facelift at a cost of ₹ 15.85 crore and was a part of 103 Amrit Bharat stations across the country virtually inaugurated by Modi.

An official of the Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) said the programme at the station was attended by Assam Governor Lakshman Prasad Acharya, Union minister of State for External Affairs Pabitra Margherita and Assam Revenue minister Keshab Mahanta.

Speaking on the occasion,



Acharya said inauguration of 103 Amrit Bharat stations across the country is a very important step towards building a new India.

"I am confident that this redeveloped station at Haibargaon will not

only reduce geographical distances but will also fulfil the aspirations of the common people while boosting tourism, connectivity and regional development of my Assam," he added.

Acharya offered his gratitude to Modi and Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw for this visionary, powerful and public welfare scheme.

Situated in central Assam's Nagaon district, Haibargaon holds historical importance in the entire region. It once served as a key node during British rule due to Nagaon's prominence in tea cultivation and modern education.

Originally built in 1887, the station has now been transformed into a world-class facility, drawing admiration for its beautiful architecture and modern amenities. The station has also been adorned with murals and thematic sculptures that beautifully depict Assamese culture and heritage, adding to its visual appeal. (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

## 'Sindoor' runs in my veins; playing with blood of Indians will cost Pakistan dearly: PM Modi

**BIKANER (RAJ), May 22:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday asserted that the country's enemies have learnt what happens when 'sindoor' becomes gunpowder, and lauded India's armed forces for creating such a trap that Pakistan was forced to go down on its knees.

In his first public address in Rajasthan after Operation Sindoor that was launched in the aftermath of the Pahalgam terror attack, the prime minister slammed Pakistan, and said in response to the attack on April 22, "we destroyed nine biggest terror hideouts in 22 minutes".

"The world and the enemies of the country have seen what happens when 'sindoor' turns into 'barood' (gunpowder)," he said at the public meeting in Palana in Bikaner, which shares border with Pakistan.

"Ab toh Modi ki naso mein lahu nahi garam sindoor beh raha hai (Not blood but sindoor runs in Modi's veins)," he said, adding, Pakistan will have to pay a heavy price for every terrorist attack.

He said India's response to the terror attack was not a game of vengeance but a "new form of justice" and there will be no trade or talk with Pakistan, there will be talk only about Pakistan-occupied Kashmir.

In a stern message to Pakistan, he said India is not going to be scared by nuclear threats and if there is a terrorist attack on the country then it will give a befitting



reply. "If there is a terrorist attack on India, it will get a befitting reply. The time and methods will also be decided by our army and the conditions will also be ours. India is not going to be scared by the threat of atom bomb. Thirdly, we will not see the perpetrators of terror and the government patronising the terrorists separately. We will consider them as one," he said, adding these are three "sutras" from Operation Sindoor.

He said the game of Pakistan of state and non-state actors will not work anymore. Lauding the armed forces for carrying out Operation Sindoor, he said "Our government gave free hand to all three armed forces. Together they created such a trap that Pakistan was forced to go down on its knees". (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

KARBI ANGLONG AUTONOMOUS COUNCIL  
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER.: DIPHU WATER RESOURCES DIVISION,  
DIPHU.

NO. EE/DPH/WR/TB- 30/Pt-V/2017-18/45

Dated. 22/05/2025

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Sealed tender in plain paper to be eventually drawn to H/F-2 Form affixing non refundable council cash receipt of Rs. 10.00(rupees ten) only for group separately is hereby Invited from the registered contractors/supplers of Class-I (A, B, C) & Class III of W.R Deptt of Diphu W. R. Division, Diphu and will be received in the office of the undersigned upto 2.00 P. M. of 11<sup>th</sup> June, 2025 (provided it remain a working day, else the next working day will be treated as last date of receiving and opening of tender and be open on the same date, hour and place. In tending tenderers or their authorised agents may remain present at the time of opening of tenders, if they so desired. It the opening of tender date falls on any bandh then the next working day will be valid. Earnest money:- 2% in general and 1% for S.C/S.T/OBC to be enclosed along with the tender in each group separately in the form of NSC/Cal deposit from any National Bank.

Sl. No	Packaged No.	Name of the Scheme	Tender Amount (Rs. In lakhs)
1	1	Immediate measures to restore Kheroni area near PHE water supply from devastation of river Diphu in Karbi Anglong District for the year 2925-26	20.00
2	2	Immediate Treasures to restore Diphu, Mania road area new Buddhist Temple from devastation of river Diphu in Karbi Anglong District for the year 2025-26.	20.00
3	3	Immediate measures to restore 7 mile near Shiv Temple from devastation of over Diphu in Kat Anglong District for the year 2025-26.	20.00
4	4	Immediate measures to restore Langsoket High School al Langsob-el from devastation of over Langsob-el in Karbi Anglong District for the year 2925-26.	10.00
5	5	Immediate measures to restore Rongbarbong Dally Market - Hidisajir road from devastation of river Diphu in Karbi Anglong District for the year 2025-26.	20.00
6	6	Immediate measures to restore 5 mile area from devastation of river Diphu in Karbi Anglong District for the year 2025-26	20.00
7	7	Immediate measures to restore Rongp village Near Mania Market from devastator M over Diphu in Karbi Anglong District for year 2025-26.	20.00
8	8	Immediate measures to restore Rongkanthir village 7 mile from devastation of river Diphu in Karbi Anglong District for the year 2025-26	20.00
9	9	Protection of Birla area near R.C.C Bridge dorm stream from the erosion of river Dale in East Karbi Anglong District for the year 2025-26.	49.51
10	10	Construction of flood vat/ at Chephongsajir Left bank of river Lorulango in East Karbi Anglong District for the year 2025-26.	15.00
11	11	Construction of flood wall at Diphu near LIC office from the erosion of river Dorm in East Karbi Anglong District for the year 2025-26.	49.51
12	12	Construction of flood wall at Rongbanim village from the erosion of river Barimso in East Karbi Anglong District for the year 2025-26	15.00
13	13	Immediate measures of restoration at Thevang Lunse Rongp village area devastated from river Delon in Karbi Anglong District for the year 2025-26.	20.00
14	14	Immediate measures of restoration at Dolamara Binhum killing Village road devastated from river Distrikt in Karbi Anglong District for the year 2025-26.	15.00
15	15	Immediate measures of restoration at Main Chekong Terang Arong area devastated from river Diploo in Karbi Anglong District for the year 2025-26.	15.00
16	16	Construction of Boulder Spur at Do-Mele Sosan Ghat area for prevention from the erosion of River Dhansiri in Karbi Anglong District for the year 2025-26	50.00
17	17	Construction at Boulder Spur at Koch Gaon area for prevention from erosion of River Dhansiri in Karbi Anglong District for the year 2025-26.	20.00
18	18	Promotion of Balipathar Shyamgaon from the erosion of L/B of River Laichan in Karbi Anglong District for the year 2025-26.	20.00
19	19	Immediate measures to restore at Gaharighuli area from devastation of River Dhansin In Karbi Anglong District for the year 2025-26.	20.00
20	20	Immediate measures to restore at Balipathar Changmaini Suk from devastation of Rivet Dhanisin Karbi Anglong District for the year 2025-26.	20.00
21	21	Immediate measures to restore al Nagakhuli was from devastation of River Dhansin In Karbi Anglong Distort for the year 2025-26.	25.00
22	22	Immediate measures to restore al Jangel Gaon from devastation of Irrigation Canal Alur Ban in Karbi Anglong District for the year 2025-26.	40.00
23	23	Construction of Slope pitching at Donsing Twang residential from erosion of river Dishani in Karbi Anglong district for the year 2025-26.	25.00
24	24	Immediate measures at Dengseh Toka gar from the erosion of river Dikhani in Karbi Anglong district for the year 2025-26.	10.00
25	25	Immediate measures at Kelhe Rongp gaon now embankment from the erosion of river Dikharu in Karbi Anglong district tor the year 2025-2026.	10.00
26	26	Immediate measures at Panditghat area from the erosion of river Jamuna in Karbi Anglong district for the year 2025-2026.	20.00
27	27	Immediate measures at Sallie Rongphar gaon from the erosion of river Langsomew in Karbi Anglong district for the year 2025-26	20.00
28	28	Immediate measures of funeral wound at Swargathi village from the erosion of river Karkanthi in Karbi Anglong district for the year 2025-26.	20.00
29	29	Immediate measures at Swargatu village from the erosion of over Karkanthi in Karbi Anglong district for the year 2025-26.	20.00
30	30	Immediate measures at phakri No.1 from the erosion of river Karkanthi in karbi Anglong district for the year 2025-26.	20.00
31	31	Immediate measures to restore Dekoipi aroi from the erosion of river Dekoi in Karbi Anglong district for the year 2025-26.	25.00
32	32	Immediate measures to remote Dekoipi aroi from the erosion of river Dekoi in Karbi Anglong district for the year 2025-26.	25.00
33	33	Immediate measures to restore Langherang area from the erosion of river Langherang In Karbi Anglong district for the year 2025-26.	25.00
34	34	Immediate measure to restore Phulonl area from the erosion of river Langsomew in Karbi Anglong district for the year 2025-26.	25.00
35	35	Immediate measures to restore Udarnarjan area from the erosion of river Udharjan Karbi Anglong district for the year 2025-26	25.00
36	36	Immediate measure to restore Kale Hansep house born the erosion of river Hanna in Karbi Anglong district for the year 2025-26	20.00
37	37	Immediate measure to restore Jamuna gaon area from the erosion of over Jamuna in Keith Anglong district for the year 2025-26.	10.00
38	38	Extension of Exhibition Stall at KPH, Taralngso.*pkg 38	15.00
39	39	Immediate measure to restore different reaches from Doksnoka to Cherakani from the erosion of river Dikrut In Karbi Anglong district for the year 2025-26.	30.00

1. The details particulars can be seen in the office of the undersigned in any working day during Office hours before the last date of receiving the Tender.
2. Tenderers are to produce attested photocopy of upto date Regn. Certificate, trading licence, income tax, sale tax, professional tax, clearance certificate, along with the application. Without which tender paper will be rejected.
3. All the terms and conditions are as per N.I.T. and F-2/H/K-2 form of the tender.
4. The payment will be made subject to availability of fund received from the KAAC.
5. The Schemes are under SOPD-G (2025-2026)
6. All Works must be completed within Stipulated time-
7. The undersigned reserved the right to accept/reject any or all tender in part or in full without assigning any reason thereof and the undersigned does not bind himself to accept the lowest tender rate.

Sd/-  
Executive Engineer  
Diphu Water Resources Division,  
Diphu.

Memo No. EE/DPH/WR/TB- 30/Pt-V/2017-18/45-(A)

Dated. 22/05/2025

## Sensex tumbles 645 pts on global sell-off, rising US bond yields

**MUMBAI, May 22:** Benchmark Sensex declined by nearly 645 points while Nifty retreated to 24,600 level due to selling in IT, oil and FMCG shares amid a global equity rout triggered by surging bond yields and US debt concerns. The 30-share BSE Sensex tanked 644.64 points or 0.79 per cent to settle at 80,951.99 with 27 of its constituents ending lower. The index opened lower and tanked further 1,106.71 points or 1.35 per cent to hit a low of 80,489.92 during the day due to across-the-board selling. The NSE Nifty tumbled 203.75 points or 0.82 per cent to 24,609.70. From the Sensex firms, Mahindra & Mahindra, Bajaj Finserv, Tech Mahindra, Power Grid, ITC, Hindustan Unilever, Reliance Industries and Maruti were the biggest laggards. IndusInd Bank, Bharti Airtel and UltraTech Cement were the gainers. "The key benchmark indices witnessed declines amid US fiscal concerns that the proposed budget bill could significantly increase the na-

tional debt, pushing US treasury yields higher due to tepid long-term bond demand. Adding to the pressure, a major credit rating agency's downgrade of the US credit outlook sparked broad-based selloffs across Asian markets," Vinod Nair, head of research, Geojit Investments Limited, said. US bond yields breached the 5 per cent mark while Japanese bond yields surged to 3.5 per cent which prompted sell-off in riskier assets and emerging markets like India. "Indian equities followed their global counterparts and witnessed major sell-off after a sharp spike in US and Japanese bond yields made investors risk averse towards equities," Prashanth Tapse, Senior VP (Research), Mehta Equities Ltd, said. The BSE midcap gauge declined 0.33 per cent while small-cap index went up by 0.17 per cent. Among sectoral indices, energy dropped the most by 1.25 per cent, followed by FMCG (1.25 per cent), BSE Focused IT (1.19 per cent), oil & gas (1.13 per cent), IT (1.09 per cent) and auto (0.87 per cent). (PTI)

Contd. from Page 1...

## All party delegations brief

Dhabi and conveyed India's strong resolve to counter state-sponsored terrorism originating from Pakistan soil. Shinde said in a post in X: "We proudly shared India's decisive success with 'Operation Sindoor' and highlighted the ongoing terrorism threats emanating from Pakistan". Besides Shinde, the delegation comprises Manan Kumar Mishra (BJP), Sasmit Patra (BJD), E T Mohammed Basheer (IUML), S S Ahluwalia (BJP), Atul Garg (BJP), Bansuri Swaraj (BJP), former diplomat Sujan R Chinoy, and India's ambassador to the UAE Sunjay Sudhir. "We are taking a firm stand for global security and respect for international peace," Shinde said. The delegation led by Jha to Japan includes BJP MPs Aparajita Sarangi, Brijlal, Pradhan Barua and Hemang Joshi, Congress leader and former external affairs minister Salman Khurshid, TMC MP Abhishek Banerjee, CPI(M)'s John Brittas, and former ambassador Mohan Kumar. "All-Party Parliamentary Delegation met H E Mr Takeshi Iwaya, Foreign Minister of Japan. India's national consensus and resolute commitment to combat terrorism in all forms was reaffirmed. FM reiterated Japan's support to India's fight against terrorism and expressed appreciation for the restraint shown by the Indian side. He called for punishing the perpetrators of terror activities," said a post on X by India's Embassy in Japan. The delegation also met with Yoshihide Suga, Japan's former prime minister and chairman of Japan India Association. "India's commitment to combating cross border terrorism was reaffirmed. HE Mr Suga reiterated Japan's strong commitment to support India in its fight against terrorism," the Embassy said in another post. Earlier, the delegation also interacted with leading Japanese think tanks in Tokyo and briefed them on India's zero tolerance to terrorism. "Regional security challenges including state backed terrorism was discussed during the interactive session. Participants expressed strong support for India's fight against terrorism," the Embassy added. The members also met with Takashi Endo, chairman of Japan's House of Representatives Committee on National Security. "India's resolute commitment to combating terrorism in all its forms was unequivocally emphasised," the Embassy said in a post on X and added: "Takashi Endo conveyed Japan's solidarity in India's fight against terror." The delegation members paid floral tributes at the Mahatma Gandhi statue in Edogawa, Tokyo. India is sending seven multi-party delegations to 33 global capitals to reach out to the international community on Pakistan's designs and India's response to terror. Tensions between India and Pakistan escalated after the Pahalgalam attack, which claimed 26 lives. India carried out precision strikes on terror infrastructure in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir in the early hours of May 7, following which Pakistan attempted to attack Indian military bases on May 8, 9 and 10. The Indian side responded strongly to the Pakistani actions. The on ground hostilities ended with an understanding on stopping the military actions following talks between the directors general of military operations of both sides on May 10. (PTI)

## Mob kills Royal Bengal

killed," the official said. Seeing the security personnel, all the villagers fled from the scene, he added. "A case has been registered by the forest department," the official said. (PTI)

## Two-day NE Investors Summit

Ambassadors and high commissioners of more than 75 countries took part in the event. Many industry houses and investors have already committed large amount of investment interest, while more than Rs 1 lakh crore worth of MoUs and letters of intent have already been signed, the officials said. (PTI)

## PM virtually inaugurates

Once considered very small and ordinary, Haibargaon now boasts a grand entrance, spacious concourse area, organised parking, modern waiting halls, modular and accessible toilets, ramps and user-friendly ticket counters. Elderly visitors, who came to witness the inauguration ceremony, recalled the days of coal-powered steam engines and a modest station layout, expressing amazement at the vast improvements, including spacious areas and a wide array of passenger-friendly features. Commenting on the development, chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma in a post on X said that the redeveloped Haibargaon station has restored a piece of history. "This iconic 138-year-old station, a key gateway to Kaziranga, has been refurbished at a cost of ₹ 15.85 cr under the #AmritBharatStation scheme. It will now offer enhanced passenger amenities and ensure ease of access to the station with a host of facilities," he added. NFR said in a statement said that the inauguration ceremony stands out as a landmark in the national rollout of the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme (ABSS) as Haibargaon becomes the first railway station in Assam among 50 stations identified in the state, to be inaugurated under this ambitious scheme. Haibargaon has been redeveloped at a project cost of ₹ 15.85 crore, and it signals the beginning of a new chapter for rail infrastructure in the region, it added. "The redevelopment of Haibargaon station is symbolic not only of technological and architectural upliftment, but also of the government's intent to bring NE India into the fold of rapid national development. "It is a proud moment for NFR as well as Assam, as it leads the state's participation in one of the Indian Railways' most ambitious station redevelopment initiatives," the statement said. The selection of Haibargaon as the first station to be inaugurated under ABSS in Assam reflects its strategic importance and the successful execution of the project with a clear vision for passenger-centric modernisation, it added. "With its upgraded amenities, improved accessibility and cultural aesthetics, the station sets a benchmark for the 49 other stations in Assam lined up for redevelopment," the NFR said. (PTI)

## ‘Sindoor’ runs in my veins

Noting that Pakistan had tried to target the Nal air base in Bikaner but could not cause any damage to it, he said in contrast "No one knows when Pakistan's Rahimyar Khan air base will open again. It is in ICU. The attack has destroyed it". "Pakistan can never win a direct fight against India. Whenever there is a direct fight, Pakistan has to face defeat again and again. That is why Pakistan has made terrorism a weapon to fight against India," he said. Modi recalled his public rally in Rajasthan's Churu after the 2019 Balakot airstrike, and said he had then stated that, "Saugandh mujhe is mitti ki, mein desh nahi jhukne dunga, mein desh nahi mitne dunga (he had taken a vow that he would not let the country down)". "Today, from the land of Rajasthan, I want to say to the countrymen that those who had set out to erase sindoor have been wiped out. Those who shed the blood of Hindustan have paid for every drop of it. Those who were proud of their weapons are now buried under a pile of rubble," he said. "This is not a game of vengeance, but this is a new form of justice, this is Operation Sindoor. This is not just anger, this is the fierce form of a capable India. This is the new form of India," he said. Referring to the 2016 surgical strikes and the Balakote air strike, Modi said earlier India carried out attacks by entering into their houses but now the attack was directly on their chest. He said Pakistan used to spread terror, kill innocent people and create an atmosphere of fear in India. "Now, Modi, the servant of 'Maa Bharti', is standing here with his head held high. Modi's mind remains cool but his blood is hot," he said. He said there will be no trade or talk with Pakistan, there will be talk only about Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. "And if Pakistan continues to export terrorists, it will have to beg for every penny. Pakistan will not get India's rightful share of water. Playing with the blood of Indians will cost Pakistan dearly. This is India's resolve and no power in the world can shake us from this resolve," he said. The prime minister observed that security and prosperity both are necessary for the creation of a developed India. "This is possible only when every corner of India becomes strong," he added. Modi also spoke about the multi-party delegations being sent abroad to to highlight India's resolve to confront state-sponsored terrorism emanating from Pakistan and assert its right to self-defence following Operation Sindoor. "To expose the truth, our all party delegations are reaching all over the world. The real face of Pakistan will be shown to the whole world," he said. India carried out precision strikes under Operation Sindoor on terror infrastructure early on May 7 in response to the April 22 Pahalgalam terror attack that killed 26 people. Following the Indian action, Pakistan attempted to attack Indian military bases on May 8, 9 and 10. The Indian forces launched a fierce counter-attack on several Pakistani military installations. India and Pakistan reached an understanding on May 10 to end the military confrontation after four days of intense cross-border drone and missile strikes. (PTI)

## Haibargaon station also features Assamese cultural motifs Haibargaon Railway Station redeveloped under Amrit Bharat Scheme: Guv attends inauguration

**HT Bureau**

**GUWAHATI, May 22:** Governor Lakshman Prasad Acharya on Thursday attended the inauguration of the newly redeveloped Haibargaon Railway Station in Nagaon district, according to an official statement.

The station has been upgraded under the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme, which was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi through a virtual event that saw the inauguration of 103 railway stations across 18 states and Union Territories.

The scheme aims to modernize railway stations across the country by introducing improved amenities, local cultural elements, and facilities for divyangjans, while also promoting eco-friendly practices.

Terming the event a historic moment, Governor Acharya expressed gratitude to the Prime Minister and Union Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw for including Haibargaon in the scheme.



He said the redevelopment represents the collective aspirations of the people of Assam.

According to the official statement, the Governor noted that Indian Railways has transformed over the past decade into an instrument of national unity and regional development.

The revamped Haibargaon station features Assamese cultural motifs, including the Gamosa,

Bihu dance elements, and Ahom architecture, in line with the spirit of "Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat."

He also stated that the station's redevelopment would boost regional connectivity and tourism, serving as a gateway to destinations such as Kaziranga National Park, Laokhowa Wildlife Sanctuary, and Bordowa Than.

Additionally, 50 more stations across Assam are set to be up-

graded under the scheme.

The Haibargaon station now incorporates eco-friendly features like solar energy, rainwater harvesting, and green building practices, supporting the Green India and Swachh Bharat missions.

Governor Acharya emphasised the impact of the 'Act East, Act Fast, Act First' policy in transforming the Northeast through enhanced connectivity and infrastructure.

He called on citizens to contribute to the cleanliness and upkeep of the new facility, describing it as a shared dream realized through collective effort.

The event was attended by Minister of State for External Affairs

Pabitra Margherita, Assam Minister for Science, Technology and Climate Change Keshab Mahanta, MLAs Rupak Sharma, Jitu Goswami, and Shashikant Das, along with Northeast Frontier Railway General Manager Chetan Kumar Srivastava and Luming Division DRM Sameer Lohani.

## Sonitpur DDC reviews development, flood preparedness

**HT Correspondent**

**TEZPUR, May 22:** The monthly meeting of the District Development Committee (DDC) was held on Wednesday, May 21, at the District Commissioner's office in Sonitpur.

The meeting was chaired by District Commissioner Ankur Bharali and attended by senior officials including District Development Commissioner Lakhinandan Saharia, Co-District Commissioners Dyotiva Bora (Dhekiajuli) and Manash Kumar Saikia (Naduar), Additional District Commissioner Twahir Alam, and heads of various departments.

In his opening remarks, DC Bharali urged officials to resume regular duties with renewed focus following the conclusion of the Panchayat elections and stressed the timely implementation of key government flagship programmes.

He highlighted the need to address infrastructure and logistics for the newly announced Co-Districts of Barchalla and Rangapara, which are to be operational soon as per the state government directive.

With the monsoon approaching, Bharali sought updates from the Water Resources Department on



embankment repairs, removal of encroachments, and other flood-related issues.

The Fishery Department was instructed to raise awareness among fish farmers on safe practices during floods and to strictly monitor the use of banned fishing nets.

The Irrigation Department was directed to coordinate with the Agriculture Department on implementing the PM-KUSUM scheme.

Discussions also covered repair and maintenance of Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) schemes, including those on forest land.

Special emphasis was placed on enforcing traffic regulations on the Kaliabhomora Bridge, particularly to prevent overspeeding.

The DC also called for expediting work on plastic waste management units in Balipara and Rangapara.

Other agenda items included co-ordination between the Public Health Engineering and Health Departments for updates on the NHM-JJM app, and progress under various schemes such as DoHUA, PWD (Buildings and Roads), Social Welfare, CMAAA, and PM Vishwakarma.

Towards the end, the Joint Director of Health Services urged all departments to raise public awareness about the dangers of mushroom poisoning, stressing education on avoiding wild mushrooms and seeking prompt medical help in suspected cases.

## Contraband seized

**HT Bureau**

**DIPHU, May 22:** In a significant bust, the Karbi Anglong police seized approximately 2.977 kilograms of morphine, valued at around ₹1.5 crore in the illicit market during a routine check at the Dillai police checkpoint around 10:30 PM in Karbi Anglong, Assam on Tuesday.

The contraband was recovered from a LP truck (NL-07AA-2238) originating from Dimapur, with the morphine concealed in six plastic-wrapped packets.

Two individuals, Aishek Gurung (21) from Senapati district, Manipur, and Moayanger Jamir (20) from Dimapur, Nagaland, were taken into custody for further interrogation.

According to officials, the narcotics were transported from Manipur and were en route to Bokajan when intercepted.

The seizure and verification were conducted under the supervision of the Additional Superintendent of Police and Bokajan SDPO, Rustum Raj Brahma.

## Doctor suspended after arrest in assault case

**HT Correspondent**

**MARGHERITA, May 22:** The Governor of Assam, Dr Laxman Prasad Acharya, has ordered the suspension of Dr Selix Alam, Senior Medical and Health Officer (Sr. M&HO) at RWFC Ketetong BPHC, Tinsukia, effective from the date of his arrest on February 26.

The order was issued following a report from the Director of Health Services (Family Welfare), Assam, referenced under letter no 394164/4 dated April 25, 2025.

It states that Dr Alam was taken into custody by Margherita police in connection with Case No. 22/2025 under Sections 127(2) and 68(d) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), and subsequently sent to judicial custody in Tinsukia.

Exercising the powers under Rule 6(2) of the Assam Services (Discipline and Appeal) Rules, 1964, the Governor deemed Dr Alam to be under suspension from service with effect from the date of his arrest.

## Wildlife Photo Exhibition by Aaranyak opens in Guwahati

**HT Bureau**

**GUWAHATI, May 22:** A captivating wildlife photography exhibition featuring 46 striking images of diverse animal species opened to the public at Gauhati Artists' Guild in Chandmari on Thursday.

The event, hosted by leading biodiversity conservation organisation Aaranyak, is part of its ongoing year-long 35th anniversary celebrations, according to an official statement.

The exhibition, commemorating the International Day of Biological Diversity, was inaugurated by noted photographer and former Assam bureaucrat Sanjib Gohain Baruah. The displayed photographs, contributed by photographers from across the country, largely highlight the rich biodiversity of Assam and the northeastern region.

In addition to wildlife imagery, the exhibition features a visual timeline showcasing Aaranyak's conservation work since its inception in 1989, documenting key initiatives by various divisions of the organisation. Speaking at the event, Sanjib Gohain Baruah praised Aaranyak's effort in curating the exhibition and stressed the importance of responsible wildlife photography.

He highlighted the growing popularity of the field

due to the increasing accessibility of advanced photography equipment.

Aaranyak senior scientist Dr Partha Jyoti Das underscored the need for photography workshops targeting emerging wildlife photographers to further energize the practice across the state.

Udayan Borthakur, Aaranyak's Organising Secretary and a renowned wildlife photographer who spearheaded the initiative, described the exhibition as a modest yet meaningful tribute to the organisation's sustained conservation efforts. He also acknowledged the hard work of the exhibition's organising team, particularly its convener Chinmoy Swargiary.

Aaranyak Finance Secretary Jimut Prasad Sharma spoke on how advancements in technology have enhanced the quality and appeal of wildlife photography, while Publicity Secretary Bijay Sankar Bora emphasised the role of visual storytelling in fostering conservation awareness among the general public, especially younger generations.

The exhibition inauguration was conducted by Aaranyak's Senior Administrative Officer Bobby Nath and was well attended by staff and well-wishers.

The exhibition will remain open to the public until May 25.

## NABARD holds plantation drive at Fisheries College

**HT Correspondent**

**NAGAON, May 22:** The District Development Office of NABARD, Nagaon, organised a plantation drive titled 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' at the College of Fisheries (CoF), Raha, on Thursday, as part of a broader campaign under the observance of the International Year of Cooperatives – 2025. The drive aimed to promote environmental sustainability and co-operative-based development.

Saplings of various fruit-bearing trees, including mango, litchi, apple, ber, cherry, sweet orange (malta), guava, and sapodilla (chiku), were planted by invited dignitaries, faculty members, and students.

District Development Manager of NABARD, Rajendar Perna, highlighted that the plantation initiative marks the beginning of a series of activities planned under IYC-2025.

These include Cooperative Literacy Camps, women SHG/JLG awareness events, and promotional campaigns on natural and organic farming, climate-smart agriculture, and solar villages through cooperatives.

Assistant Commissioner Bidyashree Langthasa commended the success of last of CoF Dr P C Bhuyan expressed gratitude to NABARD for choosing the college campus for the drive and urged students to nurture the saplings.

Lead District Manager Khurshid Ansari also addressed the gathering, stating that small efforts like this drive can lead to significant community impact. The event saw participation from members of the college's Internal Quality Assurance Cell and NSS volunteers.



## Wild elephants destroy Boro Paddy in Panpur

**HT Correspondent**

**BISWANATH CHARIALI, May 22:** Several hectares of Boro paddy cultivated by farmers in the Panpur area under Jamugurihat have been destroyed by herds of wild elephants straying from the sixth addition of Kaziranga National Park, according to local sources.

The incident occurred during the night, when elephants entered the agricultural fields and ravaged the crops.

The farmers, who had invested heavily in hopes of securing a good harvest before the summer season, have been left devastated. Despite repeated occurrences,

locals allege that the Diplonga Range Office has not implemented effective measures to protect farmland from such wildlife incursions.

The affected farmers have urged the authorities to take immediate steps to safeguard their crops and provide compensation for the losses incurred.

## Joutha Sangrami Mancha demands arrest of Tanu Shahi

**HT Correspondent**

**SIVASAGAR, May 22:** The Joutha Sangrami Mancha, a coalition of 12 student and youth organisations in Sivasagar district, has demanded the immediate arrest of Tanu Shahi of Duliagan, accusing her of insulting the Assamese community and using abusive language during an altercation at BN Singh Petrol Depot.

In a press conference held on Thursday, Mancha leaders expressed strong resentment over the incident, which led to the arrest of Sankarjyoti Baruah.

The organisation condemned what it termed as police excess, particularly the handcuffing of Baruah following the altercation.

Speaking to the media, Diganta Tamuly, Chitu Baruah, and Jadov Gogoi criticised the police for failing to act against Shahi despite 11 FIRs reportedly filed against her at Duliagan Police Station.

## Aaranyak facilitates exposure visit for Pobitora community to Kaziranga-Karbi Anglong landscape

**HT Bureau**

**GUWAHATI, May 22:** In an effort to promote community-based conservation and sustainable development, leading biodiversity conservation organisation Aaranyak recently facilitated a two-day exposure visit for members of the Eco Development Committee (EDC) and Crop Protection Group of Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary to Kaziranga National Park and the adjoining Karbi Anglong landscape, according to an official statement.

The initiative aimed to foster knowledge exchange and build collaboration between communities engaged in conservation efforts. Pobitora, known for its dense population of one-horned rhinoceroses, has long been a model for human-wildlife coexistence, while Kaziranga has earned global recognition for its successful conservation and tourism practices.

The visiting team received an orientation from Dr Jayanta Kr Roy, Senior Manager in Aaranyak's Herpetofauna Research and Conservation Division, who highlighted community-driven tourism initiatives in the Kaziranga-Karbi Anglong region. He pointed to the success of local businesses such as homestays and handmade tea enterprises as examples of how conservation and economic sustainability can go hand in hand.

Aaranyak representative Bhaskor Barukial led the group on a village walk and storytelling session, offering insights into the historical and



cultural context of local communities. The team also visited "Pirbi," a community-owned enterprise supported by Aaranyak, where they learned about its operational model and discussed the potential for launching similar initiatives in Pobitora.

On the second day, the group toured Kaziranga National Park and met with Range Officer Bibhuti Ranjan Gogoi and Deputy Ranger Tarun

Gogoi. The interactions focused on conservation strategies, human-wildlife conflict management, and community participation. The team was also taken on a jeep safari and visited a weaving centre established by Nirupama Mushahary, who was trained by the Forest Department in 2016. The centre now employs 15 individuals and offers training to local women.

The programme concluded with a community lunch in Chandrasing Rongpi village and a final session at Choran Ahem, where local leader Mangal Teron shared his community's transformation from poaching to livelihood generation through a food centre. Teron's efforts in community development earned him the Assam Gaurav award.

The exposure visit facilitated meaningful dialogue on responsible tourism, conservation, and sustainable development. It was funded by IUCN CAG and coordinated by researcher Ujjal Bayan with support from Kakali Baishya, under the guidance of Dr Deba Kumar Dutta, Senior Manager of Aaranyak's Rhino Research and Conservation Division.

## PUBLIC NOTICE

No. SSA-15015/73/2024-ESTABLISHMENT-Sarba Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) I/1075869/2025

In pursuant to the advertisement published vide No. SSA-15015/73/2024-ESTABLISHMENT-Sarba Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) I/786820/2024 dated 25.10.2024, it is information to all concerned candidates that the result of Skill Test for the post of Electronic Data Processor under Samagra Shiksha Axom held on 08/02/2025, 10/02/2025 & 11/02/2025 is uploaded in the official website at <https://ssa.assam.gov.in> and candidates can check their results in the official website at <https://ssa.assam.gov.in>. The qualified candidates are requested to appear in the interview before the State Level Selection Committee at 10.00 am on 29.05.2025 in the State Mission Office, Samagra Shiksha Axom, Kahilipara, Guwahati-19 with original certificates/testimonials & experience certificates.



Sd/-Mission Director  
Samagra Shiksha Axom  
Kahilipara, Guwahati-19  
DIPR /D/HLT/269/23-May-25

## SRIMANTA SANKARADEVA UNIVERSITY OF HEALTH SCIENCES (A State University of the Govt. of Assam)

Narakasur Hilltop, Bhangagarh, Guwahati-781032, Assam  
Phone: 06026177313 (O) E-mail: [ssuhs\\_assam@yahoo.in](mailto:ssuhs_assam@yahoo.in) Website: [www.ssuhs.in](http://www.ssuhs.in)

No.SSUHS/184/2025/3770

## EDUCATIONAL NOTICE

### ENTRANCE EXAMINATION FOR ADMISSION INTO POST BASIC B.SC. NURSING COURSE IN THE INSTITUTES OF ASSAM FOR THE SESSION 2025

In pursuance of the Assam Gazette Notification No. MER. 206054/786 dated 07-11-2023 and Notification No. MER. 488929/19 dated 26-07-2024, the Entrance Examination for selection of candidates for admission into Post Basic B.Sc. Nursing Course in the Institutes of Assam for the session 2025 is going to be held on 20-07-2025 at Guwahati. Online Application Forms shall be available on University website: [www.ssuhs.in](http://www.ssuhs.in) from 02-06-2025 to 30-06-2025. The distribution and reservation of seats shall be according to the directives of the Government of Assam. There is no Govt. seat for Post Basic B.Sc. Nursing Course. The online application Form must be filled up after carefully going through the instructions given along with the Form.

The requisite entrance examination fee (non-refundable) shall have to be paid by the candidates available in the online application portal. However, the confirmation of payment in the application portal will be available after 72 hours of successful payment. Examination fee is exempted for PwD (Divyang) category of candidates having disability of 40% and above.

Details of the Entrance Examination including eligibility criteria and requirements are available at the University website: [www.ssuhs.in](http://www.ssuhs.in).

Admit Cards will be available online at [www.ssuhs.in](http://www.ssuhs.in) (application portal) from 07-07-2025 which can be downloaded after log in.

Candidates are strictly advised to keep record of the Application Number and Password used by them while submitting the online form, without which they will not be able to download Admit Cards.

However, the applicants may call the Help Line No. 7977259728/8108014947 for any assistance.

Sd/-  
Controller of Examinations  
Srimanta Sankaradeva University of Health Sciences

DIPR /D/HLT/16/23-May-25

## AFFIDAVIT

I, Dhanpal Sahu son of Sriram Sahu and Tuntun Devi resident of Jengkhla, West Karbi Anglong through Notary would like to mention that in my Voter ID my name wrongly recorded as Dhanipal Sahu and in my Aadhaar Card also wrongly recorded as Monipal Sahu. My correct name is Dhanpal Sahu.

## QUOTE OF THE DAY

*Older men declare war. But it is the youth that must fight and die - Herbert Hoover*

## Israeli operation in Gaza on

**A**s famine looms over Gaza, with 57 children reportedly dying from the effects of malnutrition over the past 11 weeks, the Israeli operation in Gaza continues unabated. Though some western leaders have voiced concern over the fast-deteriorating situation in Gaza, no practical solution or confronting Israel for its anti-human behaviour against the Palestinians, appears to be on the horizon. Israel is still blocking aid for Gaza despite promise to lift siege, the UN has said. Four days after Benjamin Netanyahu announced he was lifting the siege of Gaza, Israel is still blocking food from reaching starving Palestinians, the UN has said, as the leader of the country's centre-left Democrats party said his country was becoming a pariah nation that "kills babies as a hobby". Only five trucks of aid had reached Gaza by Tuesday afternoon and aid workers had not been given permission to distribute even that token shipment, Jens Laerke, spokesperson for the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) told a Geneva press briefing. Even that shipment would do little to reduce widespread hunger after 11 weeks of near total siege; it is just a fifth of what reached Gaza daily before the war, when people were well-fed.

Looming famine in the territory has provoked international outrage and heavy diplomatic pressure on Israel's prime minister to allow food to reach more than 2 million people trapped in Gaza. On Sunday night Netanyahu announced he was ending the siege on Gaza because a "starvation crisis" would damage his country's global standing. Yair Golan, the leader of the opposition Democrats who served as deputy chief of staff for Israel's military before entering politics, said that after an unjustifiably brutal campaign, much of the damage had already been done. For most of the war, opposition to Netanyahu among Jewish Israelis has focused on the failure to bring back hostages or the conduct of the campaign, rather than the deaths of Palestinians in Gaza, or the hunger and destruction there. The few who have focused on Palestinian suffering have faced harsh policing under the far-right security minister, Itamar Ben-Gvir.

Meanwhile, the UN has rejected a new US-Backed Gaza Aid Plan as it says the plan is not impartial or neutral, and it (UN) won't be involved. A US-backed organisation, Gaza Humanitarian Foundation (GHF), plans to oversee aid distribution in Gaza by end-May, but the UN rejected the model as biased. The foundation, with \$100 million in commitments, aims to deliver aid via secure sites, while Israel assists. The United Nations says the US-backed distribution plan does not meet its long-held principles of impartiality, neutrality, and independence. UN aid chief Tom Fletcher has said time should not be wasted on the alternative proposal. Israel stopped all aid deliveries to Gaza on March 2 after accusing Hamas of stealing aid, which the Palestinian militants deny. In early April, Israel proposed what it described as "a structured monitoring and aid entry mechanism" for Gaza. It was swiftly rejected by UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, who said it risked "further controlling and callously limiting aid down to the last calorie and grain of flour."

## Arming the world: India's rise in defence exports

**O**ver the past ten years, India's defence sector has undergone a remarkable transformation—from a modest assembler of imported components to a formidable global supplier of indigenously developed weapon systems. What began as a strategic ambition under the twin banners of Make in India and Atmanirbhar Bharat has now emerged as a full-fledged national capability, with defence exports surging from a modest ₹686 crore in FY 2013-14 to an impressive ₹23,622 crore in FY 2024-25. This thirty-four-fold leap is not just a statistic—it is a testament to India's technological ingenuity, robust policy support, strengthened R&D ecosystem, and unprecedented private-sector participation.

In addition to economic benefits, the strategic dividends are manifold. Defence exports enhance India's diplomatic toolkit by offering security cooperation as a pillar of bilateral relations. For instance, Armenia has emerged as a significant partner in recent years, procuring a range of Indian systems including artillery, radars, missiles, bullet-proof vests, and night-vision equipment. Similarly, the Philippines' acquisition of BrahMos missile batteries signals growing trust in India's defence capabilities, especially in the Indo-Pacific.

## From Assembly Lines to Export Hubs: The Evolution

India's defence export trajectory over the past decade has been characterised by both ambition and deliverance. Once seen as a primarily import-dependent state, India now exports a spectrum of military hardware, including sophisticated systems like the BrahMos supersonic cruise missile, Akash air defence missiles, Pinaka multi-barrel rocket launchers, artillery guns, radars, and aircraft such as the Dornier-228. These systems are not just functional—they are increasingly being validated in combat scenarios and are winning the trust of global buyers.

A key structural transformation has been the growing role of the private sector. Today, nearly 100 private companies, alongside the traditional Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs), account for over 60% of India's defence exports. This diversification has brought with it a culture of competitiveness, agility, and market orientation. Furthermore, the development of domestic supply chains—particularly through MSMEs and startups—has deepened the industrial base.

Strategic and Economic Payoffs  
The economic implications of this boom are significant. Every exported missile or system not only

earns precious foreign exchange but also fuels a broader industrial ecosystem that generates employment, stimulates innovation, and fortifies national self-reliance. Thousands of skilled jobs have been created across manufacturing, integration, software development, and maintenance sectors.

The psychological edge that Operation Sindoor provided cannot be understated. It marked India's entry into an exclusive club of nations whose defence platforms are not only technologically advanced but also tested under fire. This milestone significantly boosts India's marketing capability on the global arms bazaar.

The psychological edge that Operation Sindoor provided cannot be understated. It marked India's entry into an exclusive club of nations whose defence platforms are not only technologically advanced but also tested under fire. This milestone significantly boosts India's marketing capability on the global arms bazaar.

## Challenges of Late Entry and Global Competition

Yet, challenges remain. India is a late entrant in a domain long dominated by legacy exporters from the US, Russia, France, and the UK. These countries benefit from entrenched geopolitical networks, extensive lobbying capabilities, and decades of user trust. Their military-industrial complexes are deeply intertwined with global defence frameworks, making market penetration difficult.

However, what India lacks in legacy, it compensates for with cost-effectiveness, customization, and modular innovation. India's defence offerings are not only more affordable than their Western counterparts but are also highly adaptable to regional needs. This gives India a competitive edge, particularly in the Global South, where cost constraints and versatile operational environments require agile solutions.

## Strategies for Success: The Road Ahead

To fully capitalise on its newfound momentum, India must adopt a comprehensive go-to-market strategy. First, systematic international promotion through defence expos, joint military drills, and live-fire demonstrations will help build confidence in Indian platforms. Sanitised performance data—such as kill ratios, system endurance, and mean time between failures—must be made available to potential clients.

Second, flexible financial packages are crucial. Credit guarantees, low-interest loans, lease-to-own options, and deferred payments—facilitated through institutions like the EXIM Bank—can help India compete in markets where Western of-

ferings come bundled with financial incentives.

Third, robust post-sale service matters. Offering full-spectrum support—including on-ground training, site preparation, modular upgrades, and in-region maintenance hubs—will help secure long-term relationships and repeat orders.

## Targeting the Right Markets

India's ideal defence customers are nations facing regional insecurity or those seeking to diversify away from traditional suppliers. Countries like Armenia, Vietnam, Indonesia, Malaysia, Egypt, Brazil, and several African nations present ripe opportunities. These states are often caught between regional power rivalries and are seeking reliable, affordable, and politically neutral suppliers.

India must also leverage its diplomatic missions. Defence attachés posted in embassies must be trained and empowered to act as strategic marketers, highlighting India's track record and coordinating demonstrations, financing options, and co-development projects.

Participation in global defence summits—such as IDEX in the UAE, Eurosatory in France, and Army-2025 in Russia—should be consistent and proactive. India must not just exhibit its wares but narrate the strategic story behind its offerings.

## Sustaining Momentum through Innovation

Sustaining this growth will require continuous innovation. India must now focus on developing next-generation capabilities, including AI-based surveillance, unmanned aerial and undersea systems, cyber defence platforms, and space-based ISR assets. While the current exports are dominated by conventional systems, the future lies in autonomous, network-centric, and multi-domain solutions.

Further, regulatory streamlining is imperative. Defence export clearances must become faster and more predictable. Single-window systems for export licensing, offsets, and end-use verifications will significantly reduce bureaucratic drag.

The creation of a dedicated De-

fence Export Promotion Council (DEPC), with representation from the armed forces, the Ministry of External Affairs, and industry bodies, can help align operational requirements with market opportunities. This institutional framework can also monitor competitor moves and anticipate emerging buyer demands.

## The 2029 Vision: A \$6 Billion Milestone

India has set an ambitious target of \$6 billion in defence exports by 2029. Achieving this will require scaling up production, enhancing delivery timelines, and expanding the defence R&D ecosystem. It will also necessitate nurturing strategic partnerships, both bilateral and multilateral, that position India not merely as a seller of arms but as a co-developer of regional security architecture.

If India can sustain its trajectory, double down on innovation, and strategically position its offerings, the \$6 billion target will not just be achievable but could be a stepping stone to even greater ambitions.

## India's Defence Export Renaissance

The past decade has been nothing short of a renaissance for India's defence industry. From assembling parts to designing, manufacturing, and exporting advanced weaponry, India's journey embodies the spirit of Atmanirbhar Bharat—self-reliant, confident, and globally engaged.

Operation Sindoor stands as a defining moment, not merely in military terms but in market perception. It proved that Indian systems are not only cost-effective but combat-proven and mission-ready.

As India deepens its footprint in global defence markets, the real success will lie in its ability to forge lasting partnerships—ones built not just on arms deals, but on trust, shared security interests, and mutual technological growth. In this new era, India is not just a defender of its own borders—it is emerging as a builder of global peace and security. *(The author can be reached at shashankadasnov1@gmail.com or 9706619975)*

## What does the military leadership of two Indian female officers signify?

By: Deborshi Gautam

**I**n retaliation for the inhumane acts carried out by Pakistan-backed terrorists in Pahalgam, Jammu and Kashmir, the Indian Army launched a strike on terrorist camps operating on Pakistani soil. The terrorist attack in Jammu and Kashmir clearly indicated that it was not merely an attack but a well-planned conspiracy by the Pakistani government, Pakistani army, and Pakistan's intelligence agencies to spread communal tension in India. Nearly nine terrorist camps located in Pakistan were destroyed by the Indian Army's strikes. Importantly, India targeted only terrorist camps—no harm was done to the Pakistani military or civilians. However, Pakistan, which harbors and supports terrorism, could not

on merit.

- Indian women are strong and always ready to serve the nation.
- Indian women have the power to lead the country and are equally devoted to its defense, just like their male counterparts.

The two female officers became living examples before the world of how Indian women stand equally with men in defending the country. Pakistan often attempts to spread false narratives that religious minorities, particularly Muslims, are persecuted in India. The presence of Byomika Singh and Sophia Qureshi at the press briefing served as a fitting response to such misinformation. India demonstrated that all Indian citizens, regardless of religion, caste, or community, unite as one for the nation.

Pakistan and its army must now clearly understand that, unlike the training in religious and ethnic divisions provided in their military, the Indian Army trains all individuals equally—irrespective of religion or caste. The leadership of Indian women in the military not only strengthens the armed forces but also enables them to take swift and intelligent action against enemies. This was evident in Operation Sindoor, which the world witnessed.

Just as Indian mothers are nurturing and protective toward their children, they become impenetrable fortresses when it comes to defending their motherland. Operation Sindoor demonstrated not only India's robust defense and formidable strike capability but also showed that there is no gender or communal discrimination in India. Suitable authority lies in the hands of capable individuals. India's democratic structure is strong, and values like patriotism and brotherhood are deeply rooted.

Every eligible and skilled citizen of India has the right to serve in the armed forces. Based on merit and capability, individuals can earn promotions and ascend to top military positions. Under well-established rules and policies, every citizen—regardless of religion, caste, or gender—has the right to reach the highest ranks in India's military.

Operation Sindoor proved that whether it is a man or a woman, every officer in the Indian Army is ready to lead any challenging mission at any time, and every soldier is committed to ensuring the mission's success. The two female officers showcased to the world that the Indian Army is in no way inferior to any other military in the world. *(The author is the Executive Editor of an Assamese e-magazine, Sobdabak. He can be reached at 6913930829)*

## Pakistan-China ties consolidate further during visit of Deputy PM Ishaq Dar

By Nitya Chakraborty

**T**he four day visit of the Pakistan Deputy Prime Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar to China ended on Wednesday May 21 with top Chinese leaders assuring Dar that 'as an ironclad friend, China, as always, firmly support Pakistan in safeguarding its national sovereignty and territorial integrity, support Pakistan in exploring a development path suited to its national conditions, support Pakistan in resolutely combating terrorism and support Pakistan in playing a greater role in international and regional affairs'.

There can not be any unequivocal statement more than this ten days after the India-Pakistan limited war beginning early hours of May 7 ended on May 10 at 5 PM what was termed as only pause by the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi as against full fledged ceasefire claimed by the U.S. President Donald Trump who also boasted in his social media that at his instance, the U.S. officials organized the ceasefire by talking to the heads of both the governments.

The outcome of the Pakistan Deputy PM's talks in Beijing should cause worry to the Indian officials of PMO and the foreign ministry as the Chinese tone is combative and it is a sort of carte blanche to Pakistan to pursue its policy of dealing with its current adversary India. China is a permanent member of the Security Council and its backing of Pakistan against India in regional affairs, means that India will confront a big wall when its outreach delegation visits United Nations and talks to the five permanent members of the Security Council, ten non permanent members and some other members who have substantial voices on global issues.

Only on May 20, the Indian foreign ministry briefed three outreach delegations. As per media reports, the official briefing mentioned that China's attitude was found to be positive on the current India-Pak conflict. The foreign ministry is living in their own world of make believe rather than hard ground reality. The same day, the foreign ministry briefing on outreach was taking place in New Delhi, the Chinese foreign minister Wang assured the Pakistani foreign minister and Deputy PM Ishaq Dar in Beijing that China would support Pakistan in safeguarding its national sovereignty and territorial integrity. How can the foreign ministry mention that Chinese attitude was found to be positive?

The Indian outreach delegations numbering seven are visiting 33 countries apart from Brussels, the headquarter of European Union. The first Indian delegation left on May 21 for visit to Japan, Indonesia, South Korea, Malaysia and Singapore. Prime Minister Narendra Modi may have full confidence in his new doctrine, but his position on no dialogue with Pakistan at the moment



may not elicit favourable response from most of the countries. The nations in general strongly supported India in its call for terror camps destruction in Pakistan to root out terrorism, but they strongly disfavour any further India-Pakistan confrontation again. They want dialogue at the highest level of the two governments to lessen the ongoing tensions.

For instance, the outreach delegation led by the controversial Shashi Tharoor will be visiting UN, USA and the adjoining countries soon. The U.S. has formally made its position clear that they consider the May 10 decision as a sort of full-fledged ceasefire and as a follow up, they want early India-Pakistan meeting to start the process of negotiations for lessening tensions. The region has a complex history and any negotiation will be time consuming. But the process has to start. Can Shashi Tharoor and his team members succeed through their meetings in changing this approach of the U.S., especially where the President Donald Trump is personally involved?

The hard fact is that Prime Minister Narendra Modi through his "new normal" doctrine has limited the range of Indian flexibility in global diplomacy. Pakistan has strong allies in China and OIC members. China's support is a big win for Pakistan. Who are with India now? With USA now putting India and Pakistan at same level and Trump fully positioned against his good friend Narendra Modi's new doctrine, there are a very few nations on whom India can depend for support on the basis of the PM's doctrine. The QUAD members will extend all support to their member India for fighting terrorism but that does not mean supporting the policy of confrontation with its neighbour and avoiding any dialogue.

The present BJP government has messed up its relations with its long trusted friend Russia. Still Russia is supporting India to a

great extent but President Putin is also in favour of dialogue between the two governments to avoid any future military conflict. In South Asia and South East Asia, every country is in favour of a dialogue between the two governments to improve India-Pakistan relations. India foreign minister Dr. S Jaishankar may give his erudite elaboration of Modi doctrine in global diplomatic arena, but it is not getting the due response. Anti-terror part is okay but nobody opts for the policy of another confrontation after ceasefire.

China has currently a strong economic and business reason to back Pakistan. Pakistan has been a milestone on China's Belt-and-Road Initiative (BRI) since 2015. China has invested more than \$46 billion in the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), via Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (POK). CPEC is opposed by India but Pakistan is working for it with full gusto.

CPEC connects the Gwadar Port in Pakistan's Baluchistan and Karachi in Sindh by overland routes with China's Xinjiang province. Gwadar is a little over 100 miles from the strategically important Iranian port of Chabahar. Both China and Pakistan are aware of its strategic importance. Chinese funds have helped in improving Pak infrastructure in a big way. India is monitoring the progress but it can not play any role.

China has already upgraded the CPEC 2. The work is already in progress covering new infra projects along wide areas of Pakistan. China has its national interest in protecting its huge investment in Pakistan. It can not allow its friendly country to be devastated by India. China means business just as Trump does. Pakistan will continue to get China's economic and political support against India in an increased manner in the coming days. There are doubts whether India can mobilise that kind of support from USA and its QUAD members in case of another India-Pak confrontation. *(IPA Service)*



accept India's retaliatory action calmly.

As a result of this attack on terrorist camps, a war-like situation emerged between India and Pakistan. To address the details of the attack and counterattack, a press briefing was held, where Foreign Secretary Vikram Mishra represented the government, and Colonel Sophia Qureshi and Wing Commander Byomika Singh represented the Indian Army. Colonel Sophia Qureshi is a senior officer in the Indian Army, while Wing Commander Byomika Singh is a female officer in the Indian Air Force.

Instead of assigning a senior male military officer to address the press conference, the decision to have two female officers represent the Indian armed forces and speak before the world created a historic precedent. Through this act, India sent several powerful messages to the world:

- India does not tolerate terrorism under any circumstances.
- India will not wait for any third-party approval to respond to terrorist activities against it.
- India possesses the capability to respond to terrorists in their own language.
- India made it clear to both Pakistan and the world that it is a secular nation.
- No one in India receives privileges based on religion or caste; everyone earns their place based

# Why Arunachal Pradesh matters to China

By: Satyabrata Borah

China's interest in Arunachal Pradesh, a northeastern state of India, is a complex and multifaceted issue rooted in historical disputes, geopolitical strategies, cultural claims, and economic interests. The region, which India administers as a state but China claims as part of its territory, has been a persistent flashpoint in Sino-Indian relations for decades. Understanding why China maintains such a keen interest in Arunachal Pradesh requires delving into the historical context of the border dispute, the strategic importance of the region, its cultural and ethnic significance, and the broader implications for regional power dynamics. This article explores these dimensions to provide a comprehensive view of China's motivations and the broader implications of the dispute.

The origins of the Sino-Indian border dispute, including China's claim over Arunachal Pradesh, can be traced back to the early 20th century, particularly to the colonial era when the British ruled India. In 1914, the British convened the Simla Conference, involving representatives from British India, Tibet, and China, to delineate the border between India and Tibet. The result was the McMahon Line, named after Sir Henry McMahon, the British negotiator, which was intended to serve as the boundary between India and Tibet. The McMahon Line placed what is now Arunachal Pradesh within British India. Tibet accepted the agreement, but China, which considered Tibet a part of its territory, rejected it, arguing that Tibet lacked the authority to sign such an agreement independently. This disagreement laid the foundation for China's claim that the McMahon Line is invalid and that Arunachal Pradesh, or what China calls "South Tibet" (Zangnan), is historically part of its territory.

China's rejection of the McMahon Line is not merely a legalistic stance but is deeply tied to its perception of historical sovereignty. From Beijing's perspective, the Qing Dynasty and earlier Chinese administrations exercised influence over Tibet, and by extension, areas like Arunachal Pradesh, which were culturally and ethnically linked to Tibetan populations. Chinese historians often argue that these regions were under the loose suzerainty of Chinese empires, even if direct administrative control was limited. This historical narrative is central to China's claim, as it seeks to assert continuity of territorial integrity dating back centuries. However, India counters this by emphasizing that Arunachal Pradesh has been an integral part of its territory since independence, with its people integrated into the Indian political and cultural fabric. The differing interpretations of history create an intractable dispute, as both nations anchor their claims in competing narratives of the past.

Arunachal Pradesh's strategic location

amplifies China's interest. The state shares a 1,080-kilometer border with China, adjacent to the Tibet Autonomous Region, and is proximate to Myanmar and Bhutan, making it a critical geopolitical hotspot. For China, control over Arunachal Pradesh would provide several strategic advantages. First, it would give China a stronger foothold in the eastern Himalayas, a region critical for controlling access to the Tibetan Plateau, which is vital for China's security calculus. The Tibetan Plateau, often referred to as the "roof of the world," is a strategic buffer for China, and any perceived vulnerability in this region is a significant concern for Beijing. Arunachal Pradesh's proximity to Tibet makes it a potential staging ground for military operations or intelligence activities, should it fall outside China's control.

Arunachal Pradesh is strategically located near the Siliguri Corridor, a narrow strip of land connecting India's northeastern states to the rest of the country. Often called the "Chicken's Neck," this corridor is a critical vulnerability for India, as its disruption could isolate the northeast. By exerting pressure on Arunachal Pradesh, China could indirectly threaten the Siliguri Corridor, thereby enhancing its leverage over India in any potential conflict. This strategic calculus was evident during the 1962 Sino-Indian War, when Chinese forces briefly occupied parts of Arunachal Pradesh before withdrawing. The war underscored the region's importance and China's willingness to use military means to assert its claims, a pattern that continues to shape bilateral tensions.

The military dimension of China's interest is further highlighted by its infrastructure development along the Line of Actual Control (LAC), the de facto border between India and China. In recent years, China has built roads, airstrips, and villages near the LAC, particularly in areas close to Arunachal Pradesh. These developments enhance China's ability to mobilize troops and sustain operations in the region, signaling its intent to maintain a robust presence. For instance, reports from 2025 indicate that China has constructed new settlements and military outposts in disputed areas, raising concerns in India about creeping encroachment. Such actions are not merely defensive but are part of a broader strategy to assert dominance and create faits accomplis that complicate India's ability to maintain control over Arunachal Pradesh.

Arunachal Pradesh holds significant economic potential, which further fuels China's interest. The state is rich in natural resources, including hydropower potential, minerals, and forests. Arunachal Pradesh's rivers, particularly the Brahmaputra (known as the Yarlung Tsangpo in Tibet), are a vital resource for both countries. The Brahmaputra originates in Tibet and flows through Arunachal Pradesh into India and Bangladesh, making it a critical lifeline



for millions. China's upstream dam-building activities on the Yarlung Tsangpo, including the massive hydropower projects announced in recent years, have raised concerns in India about water security. Control over Arunachal Pradesh would give China greater influence over the Brahmaputra's flow, potentially allowing it to manipulate water resources to India's detriment. This is particularly significant given the region's susceptibility to floods and droughts, which could be exacerbated by upstream interventions.

The economic dimension extends beyond water resources. Arunachal Pradesh's untapped mineral wealth, including coal, limestone, and possibly rare earth elements, aligns with China's voracious appetite for raw materials to fuel its industrial and technological ambitions. While exploration in the region remains limited due to the border dispute and environmental concerns, the potential for resource extraction adds another layer to China's interest. Furthermore, the state's forests and biodiversity are of interest for ecological and tourism purposes, though these are secondary to the strategic and resource-driven motivations.

Arunachal Pradesh's significance to China is tied to its Tibetan Buddhist heritage. The state is home to several ethnic groups, including the Monpa and other communities with linguistic and cultural ties to Tibet. The presence of these groups strengthens China's claim that Arunachal Pradesh is part of "South Tibet." One of the most contentious aspects of this cultural dimension is the Tawang region, home to the Tawang Monastery, one of the largest and most significant Tibetan Buddhist monasteries outside Tibet. Tawang holds immense spiritual importance, as it is associated with the Dalai Lama, who fled to India through Tawang in 1959 after the Chi-

nese annexation of Tibet. China views Tawang as a symbol of Tibetan resistance and a potential source of instability, given its cultural and religious links to the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan exile community in India.

China's sensitivity to Tawang is not merely cultural but also political. The Dalai Lama's presence in India and his influence over Tibetan Buddhist communities, including those in Arunachal Pradesh, is a persistent irritant for Beijing. China fears that India could leverage Tawang and other parts of Arunachal Pradesh to support Tibetan separatism or to challenge China's control over Tibet. This fear is compounded by the succession issue surrounding the Dalai Lama, who is now elderly. China has asserted that it will appoint the next Dalai Lama, while the Tibetan exile community and India reject this claim. Tawang's role as a potential site for the Dalai Lama's reincarnation process makes it a focal point of China's interest, as control over the region could bolster Beijing's ability to influence this process and suppress Tibetan dissent.

The broader geopolitical context also shapes China's interest in Arunachal Pradesh. The Sino-Indian rivalry is part of a larger struggle for regional dominance in Asia, where both countries aspire to be preeminent powers. China's assertive foreign policy, particularly under President Xi Jinping, seeks to expand its influence and secure its periphery, including contested border regions. Arunachal Pradesh is a testing ground for this strategy, as China uses diplomatic, military, and economic tools to pressure India and assert its claims. For instance, China frequently objects to Indian leaders visiting Arunachal Pradesh, issues stapled visas to residents of the state, and raises the issue in international forums to challenge India's sovereignty.

This assertiveness is also linked to China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and its broader ambitions in South Asia. While Arunachal Pradesh is not directly part of the BRI, its proximity to China's infrastructure projects in Tibet and neighboring countries like Myanmar and Bhutan makes it relevant. A stable and controlled border in Arunachal Pradesh would facilitate China's regional connectivity plans, while a contested border complicates its efforts to project power. Moreover, China's growing influence in India's neighborhood, through partnerships with Pakistan, Nepal, and Bangladesh, is part of a strategy to encircle India and limit its regional influence. By maintaining pressure on Arunachal Pradesh, China keeps India preoccupied with border security, diverting resources and attention from broader regional ambitions.

India's response to China's interest in Arunachal Pradesh has been multifaceted, combining diplomacy, military preparedness, and development initiatives. Diplomatically, India has consistently rejected China's claims, asserting that Arunachal Pradesh is an inalienable part of its territory. The two countries have engaged in multiple rounds of talks through mechanisms like the Special Representatives dialogue, but progress has been limited due to entrenched positions. Militarily, India has bolstered its presence along the LAC, deploying additional troops, upgrading infrastructure, and acquiring advanced weaponry to counter Chinese build-up. The 2017 Doklam standoff, though not in Arunachal Pradesh, highlighted India's willingness to confront Chinese incursions, a stance that applies to the eastern sector as well.

India has prioritized infrastructure and connectivity projects in Arunachal Pradesh to integrate the state more closely with the rest of the country.

Roads, bridges, and airports have been constructed to improve access and economic opportunities, countering China's narrative that the region is neglected or disconnected from India. Initiatives like the Arunachal Frontier Highway, announced in recent years, aim to enhance connectivity along the border, serving both civilian and military purposes. These efforts are also aimed at winning the loyalty of Arunachal's diverse ethnic communities, who are caught in the crossfire of the Sino-Indian rivalry.

The implications of China's interest in Arunachal Pradesh extend beyond bilateral relations. The dispute has the potential to destabilize the region, particularly if it escalates into a larger conflict. Smaller neighboring countries like Bhutan and Nepal, which are navigating their own relationships with China and India, are affected by the tensions. The dispute also draws the attention of global powers, particularly the United States, which has deepened its strategic partnership with India to counter China's rise. The Quad, comprising the US, India, Japan, and Australia, indirectly addresses concerns about Chinese assertiveness, including in border regions like Arunachal Pradesh. For China, the dispute is a means to assert its dominance and test the resilience of its adversaries, but it also risks alienating India and pushing it closer to the West.

Public sentiment in Arunachal Pradesh itself is a critical factor. The state's residents, who identify as Indian and participate in India's democratic processes, largely reject China's claims. Ethnic and cultural diversity, while a strength, also poses challenges, as China occasionally attempts to exploit these differences to undermine India's control. However, India's efforts to promote development and cultural integration have strengthened local support for Indian sovereignty. The voices of Arunachal's people, often overlooked in high-level geopolitical discussions, are essential to understanding the human dimension of the dispute.

China's great interest in Arunachal Pradesh is driven by a confluence of historical, strategic, economic, and cultural factors. The region's contested status reflects deeper tensions in Sino-Indian relations, rooted in competing visions of sovereignty and regional influence. For China, Arunachal Pradesh is not just a piece of territory but a symbol of its historical grievances, a strategic asset, and a means to assert dominance over a rising India. The dispute's resolution remains elusive, as both nations are unlikely to compromise on their core positions. Yet, the ongoing tensions underscore the need for dialogue, confidence-building measures, and a recognition of the human and regional stakes involved. As China and India navigate their complex relationship, Arunachal Pradesh will remain a critical barometer of their ability to coexist as major powers in a rapidly changing world.

## The role of Gaon Panchayats in rural development

By: Himangshu Ranjan Bhuyan

Gaon Panchayats, or village councils, play an essential role in the framework of rural development in India. These grassroots institutions are pivotal in bridging the gap between the government and rural communities, ensuring that developmental policies reach the remotest parts of the country. As the backbone of India's decentralised governance system, the Gaon Panchayats have a unique position in shaping rural development across the country. With a direct connection to the community, they are empowered to address local concerns and implement policies tailored to the needs of the rural population.

In the context of rural development, the responsibilities of Gaon Panchayats extend beyond administrative tasks to encompass a wide range of functions that contribute to improving the overall quality of life in rural areas. They serve as a forum for local governance, a medium for the implementation of government schemes, and a facilitator of social and economic transformation. Their influence has grown considerably in recent years, especially with the introduction of constitutional amendments that have empowered local governments to take a more active role in the development process.

One of the most significant contributions of Gaon Panchayats is their role in ensuring the equitable distribution of resources. Rural development involves addressing multiple dimensions, including infrastructure, health, education, sanitation, and employment. The Gaon Panchayat is uniquely positioned to identify the specific needs of its constituency. By understanding the local context, these institutions can prioritize projects that have a direct impact on the livelihoods of the people. This proximity to the community allows the Panchayats to address issues more effectively than distant governmental bodies.

In terms of infrastructure development, Gaon Panchayats play a critical role in implementing projects related to roads, water supply, sanitation, and electricity. For instance, rural roads and drainage systems are

typically maintained by the Panchayat, ensuring better connectivity and reducing the risks posed by monsoon flooding. In some areas, Panchayats have also been instrumental in initiating the construction of community halls, schools, and health centres, providing vital facilities to rural populations. These developments contribute to the growth of rural economies by creating a more conducive environment for agriculture and local businesses.

Education is another area where Gaon Panchayats contribute significantly. By coordinating with government agencies, Panchayats ensure that children in rural areas have access to quality education. They help in the construction and maintenance of school buildings and often take part in community initiatives that encourage parents to send their children to school. In many places, Gaon Panchayats also facilitate adult education programs and vocational training sessions aimed at empowering adults with new skills and improving their employability.

Health is perhaps one of the most critical sectors for rural development, and the Gaon Panchayat has a direct role in improving the health infrastructure in villages. The Panchayats are involved in the construction of health centres and the provision of basic healthcare services, including immunisation drives, sanitation campaigns, and the distribution of essential medicines. Furthermore, Panchayats act as a conduit for central and state government health schemes, ensuring that the benefits reach the intended beneficiaries.

Sanitation and cleanliness are also high on the agenda for most Gaon Panchayats. Under the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, for example, rural sanitation has seen significant improvement due to the active participation of Gaon Panchayats. They work to raise awareness about the importance of hygiene, provide access to toilets, and ensure the proper disposal of waste. Such initiatives not only improve the health of the rural populace but also contribute to the overall well-being of the environment.

In addition to infrastructure and

social services, Gaon Panchayats play an essential role in promoting local economic development. They facilitate rural entrepreneurship by promoting self-help groups (SHGs) and micro-financing schemes. These initiatives empower women and marginalized communities, allowing them to start small businesses, improve their livelihoods, and contribute to the local economy. Furthermore, Panchayats are actively involved in the implementation of government schemes like the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), which guarantees employment to rural households. By overseeing these programs, Gaon Panchayats help to create a steady income for rural families, lifting them out of poverty.

The role of women in rural development is another area where Gaon Panchayats have made substantial contributions. The 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act, passed in 1992, mandated that one-third of the seats in Panchayats be reserved for women, thereby ensuring their participation in governance. This has had a transformative impact on rural development. Women in Gaon Panchayats have actively advocated for issues such as maternal health, education, sanitation, and women's empowerment. Their participation in decision-making processes has led to a more inclusive approach to development that benefits the entire community.

While Gaon Panchayats have made significant strides in rural development, they still face challenges. One of the primary issues is the lack of adequate financial resources. Though Panchayats are responsible for the implementation of various schemes, they often lack the necessary funds to carry out these tasks effectively. This financial constraint is further exacerbated by the inadequate devolution of powers from higher levels of government. Without a steady stream of financial support, Gaon Panchayats struggle to maintain and expand the services they provide.

Another challenge is the lack of capacity and training within Panchayat bodies. While some Panchayats have made impressive strides in

development, others struggle with the technical and administrative complexities of their roles. The absence of proper training programs for Panchayat members can result in inefficient administration and the misallocation of resources. Addressing these gaps in capacity is essential for ensuring that Panchayats can deliver on their mandate of rural development.

Moreover, political interference and corruption at the local level can undermine the effectiveness of Panchayats. In some areas, local political leaders may exert undue influence over Panchayat decisions, leading to the mismanagement of resources and the implementation of development projects that are not aligned with the needs of the community. Strengthening the autonomy of Gaon Panchayats and ensuring transparency and accountability in their operations is essential to mitigating these challenges.

Despite these obstacles, Gaon Panchayats remain a vital part of India's rural development framework. Over the years, they have evolved into key players in the pursuit of economic growth, social equity, and environmental sustainability in rural areas. As decentralised bodies of governance, Panchayats embody the idea of people-centric development. They represent the collective aspirations of rural communities and have the potential to drive lasting change by addressing local issues with local solutions.

In conclusion, Gaon Panchayats have a fundamental role to play in the development of rural India. They are not just administrative units; they are the lifeblood of rural governance and development. With the right resources, training, and political support, Gaon Panchayats can continue to lead the charge in the transformation of rural India, making it an integral part of the country's larger development agenda. As India strives to achieve inclusive and sustainable growth, the role of Gaon Panchayats in rural development will remain as crucial as ever, ensuring that the benefits of progress reach even the most remote corners of the country. (The author can be reached at himangshur1989@gmail.com or 8486400157, 9864539966)

## The Turkish challenge for New Delhi

By: Harsh V. Pant

One of the most striking features of the India-Pakistan crisis post the dastardly terror attacks in Pahalgalam has been Turkey's open support for Pakistan. If China played its hand rather subtly, Turkey decided to come out explicitly. While Turkey's ties with Pakistan have indeed been growing in the last few years, it is only in matters of war and peace that nations reveal their real intent.

While key players in the Islamic world have been reorienting their South Asia policy in favour of India, Turkey has continued to build its strategic ties with Pakistan. Under the leadership of Recep Tayyip Erdogan, New Delhi-Ankara ties have witnessed a significant decline despite a growing trade relationship. Turkey has been consistently supporting Pakistan's position on Kashmir even as Islamabad has reciprocated by backing Ankara's claims on Cyprus. As recently as February this year, Erdogan had asserted that "Turkey, as in the past, stands in solidarity with our Kashmiri brothers today." And he had sought to use global platforms like the UNGA to raise the pitch on this issue.

After underlining that achieving a "just and lasting peace in Kashmir through dialogue and cooperation between India and Pakistan" would pave the way for regional peace, stability, and prosperity in South Asia in his UNGA address in 2023, Erdogan decided to eschew this in his 2024 address, partly because he was trying to get Turkey into the BRICS grouping then.

But more serious for Indian security interests has been the burgeoning defence ties between Turkey and Pakistan. The two nations signed the 'Deepening, Diversifying, and Institutionalizing the Strategic Partnership' declaration in February 2025 which posits building a security partnership between the two nations. Marked by collaborative military projects, joint exercises, and strategic dialogues, Turkey and Pakistan have significantly strengthened their defence ties in recent years.

Turkey is now Pakistan's second-largest arms supplier after China since the signing of joint arms production pact in 2021 with reports suggesting around 10 per cent of Turkey's total arms exports between 2020 and 2024 going to Pakistan. From MILGEM-class stealth corvettes and F-16 Fighting Falcon jets to Bayraktar TB2 armed UAVs and Kamanke cruise missiles, the list of Turkish defence supplies to Pakistan has continued to grow. As

India was calibrating its response against Pakistan after the Pahalgalam massacre, Turkish C-130 Hercules transport planes carrying military cargo reportedly landed in Pakistan which was followed by the docking of Turkish naval vessel in Karachi.

After India struck the terror camps of Pakistan and PoK on May 7, Erdogan called Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif in a show of solidarity, supporting what he called Pakistan's "calm and restrained policies" in the crisis and the Turkish Foreign Ministry suggested that India created the risk of an "all-out war." During Operation Sindoor, Pakistan deployed Turkish-manufactured Songar armed drone systems, which were neutralised by India's air defense systems.

Turkey's explicit diplomatic and military positioning against India in the recent crisis has brought Ankara's behaviour in limelight with a public view that India's policy towards Turkey needs a reconsideration. But a re-evaluation has already been in place for some time as New Delhi has sought to deepen its ties with nations like Greece, Cyprus and Armenia. India's proactive policy posture in the Middle East by seeking to build robust strategic ties with key players in the GCC such as Saudi Arabia and the UAE as well as part of emerging platforms like I2U2 and IMEC is also aimed at challenging Turkish expansionism.

Ultimately, for Erdogan it is imperative that Turkey be seen as a leader in the Islamic world, at times challenging Saudi Arabia's traditional leadership role. This also sustains his leadership at home where he has gradually reversed Turkey's strict secularist legacy, promoting Islamic values in culture and governance. He has taken a strong public stance against Israel's operations in Gaza, positioning Turkey as a voice for Palestinian rights, as well as condemned Myanmar's persecution of Rohingya Muslims and offered humanitarian aid to refugees in Bangladesh.

As a consequence, it is unlikely that Turkish policies towards India will change anytime soon and in fact, if anything, the Turkish-Pakistan partnership is only likely to get stronger in the future. New Delhi's offer of friendship, as was reflected in India providing humanitarian assistance to Turkey after the devastating earthquake in February 2023, is not likely to yield any long term dividend. The challenge for India is real and serious when it comes to the growing Turkey-Pakistan entanglement. (Courtesy: ORF)

# Indian 'chai' at special event hosted by India at UN to mark International Tea Day

UNITED NATIONS, May 22: The aromas and flavors of popular Indian teas permeated the halls of the United Nations headquarters as India hosted a special event to commemorate International Tea Day to highlight the beverage's contribution in empowering communities and fostering inclusive economic growth.

The Permanent Mission of India to the UN hosted the high-level event Wednesday on the theme 'Tea for Livelihoods, Tea for SDGs' to mark the International Tea Day, a celebration of the world's most consumed drink, after water.

The event concluded with a special curated tea tasting experience where guests enjoyed a variety of Indian teas, including the famous Darjeeling tea, Masala chai, Assam and Nilgiri teas.

India's Permanent Representative to the UN Ambassador Parvathani Harish, Director of the FAO UN Liaison Office in New York Angelica Jacome, and representatives of Kenya, Sri Lanka and China, the other major tea producing countries, spoke on the occasion and highlighted the challenges faced by the tea growers, especially the small tea farmers.

"The story of tea in India is not merely one of trade and taste but

also one of transformation. What began in the early 19th century from the misty hills of Assam to the slopes of Darjeeling and Nilgiris, India's tea industry has grown to become a cornerstone of rural employment, women's empowerment and export-led development," Harish said at the houseful event attended by UN envoys, senior UN personnel and community members.

The UN General Assembly had in 2019 proclaimed May 21 as International Tea Day following a proposal moved by India at the Food and Agriculture Organisation's (FAO) Intergovernmental Group (IGG) on Tea in October 2015.

The UNGA resolution recognised the long history and the cultural and economic significance of tea around the world, as well as the significant role it plays in rural development, poverty reduction and food security in developing countries. India is one of the largest producers and consumers of tea globally and the sector directly employs over 1.5 million workers, the majority of whom are women. It supports over 10 million livelihoods, including small landholder farmers and those engaged in allied industries.

"For many of these communi-



ties, tea is not merely a crop. It's a way of life, a source of dignity, opportunity and hope," Harish said.

He also pointed out the complex challenges faced by the tea industry. "Climate change is disrupting growing conditions and then, there are rising input costs," Harish said, adding that market volatility and structural inequities threaten the economic viability of small producers who are responsible for over 60 per cent of global tea production.

"There's also an urgent need to improve working conditions and secure equitable returns, both for labourers and growers. Addressing these challenges requires not only policy action, but innovation and ability to think out of the box," he

said. Harish told the audience that the 1911-founded Tocklai Tea Research Institute in India has introduced the Tocklai good agricultural practices, good manufacturing practices standard in 2022, the first ever sustainability certification crafted and adopted in India to usher in a climate resilient tea industry.

"It integrates good economic, agricultural practices and manufacturing practices and aligns the process with UN sustainable development goals (SDGs) for transformational change in the Indian tea industry," he said.

Harish added that in India, technology — from AI-driven climate forecasting to drone-based crop management to blockchain — is

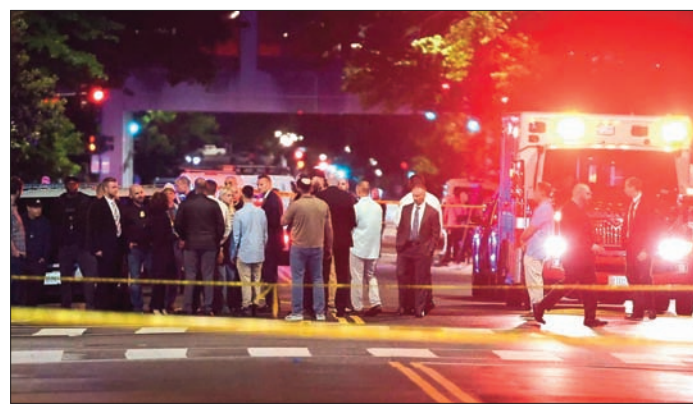
also being harnessed increasingly to modernise the tea sector and the entire value chain.

FAO's Jacome noted that despite tea's vital role in socioeconomic development, there are pressing challenges that must be addressed. These include climate change, limited market access and poor access to credit and technology, she said.

"Smallholder farmers are the backbone of the industry, and they're particularly vulnerable. Urgent actions are needed to strengthen their business models while also taking into account environmental and social factors," she said. Vietnam's Permanent Representative to the UN Ambassador Hoang Giang Dang said that in order to truly harness tea's potential for sustainable development, "we must invest in smallholder resilience, promote inclusive business models, create favorable conditions for labour and ensure environmental sustainability across value chains."

Vithanage Chaturajeevaka Perera, Charge d'Affaires of Sri Lanka, said it is imperative to acknowledge women's contribution in Sri Lanka's tea industry as it "could be identified as one of Sri Lanka's prominent production segments, with a higher percentage of women being employed." (PTI)

## 2 staff members of Israeli Embassy killed in shooting near Jewish museum in DC



WASHINGTON, May 22: Two staff members of the Israeli Embassy in Washington were shot and killed Wednesday evening while leaving an event at a Jewish museum, and the suspect yelled, "Free, free Palestine" after he was arrested, police said.

Israeli Foreign Minister Gideon Saar identified the victims as Yaron Lischinsky and Sarah Milgrim. Lischinsky was a research assistant, and Milgrim organised visits and missions to Israel.

They were leaving an event at the Capital Jewish Museum when the suspect approached a group of four people and opened fire, Metropolitan Police Chief Pamela Smith said at a news conference.

The suspect, identified as Elias Rodriguez, 30, of Chicago, was observed pacing outside the museum before the shooting, walked into the museum after the shooting and was detained by event security, Smith said. When he was taken into custody, the suspect began chanting, "Free, free Palestine," Smith said. She said law enforcement did not believe there was an ongoing threat to the community.

The stunning attack prompted Israeli missions to beef up their security. The shooting comes as Israel has launched another major offensive in the Gaza Strip in a war with Hamas that has heightened tensions across the Middle East and internationally.

"These horrible DC killings, based obviously on antisemitism, must end, NOW!" President Donald Trump posted on social media early Thursday. "Hatred and Radicalism have no place in the USA."

**Israel's reaction**  
Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin

Netanyahu's office said Thursday that he was "shocked" by the "horrific, antisemitic" shooting.

"We are witnessing the terrible price of antisemitism and wild incitement against Israel," he said in a statement. Israeli Ambassador to the US Yechiel Leiter said the two people killed were a young couple about to be engaged, saying the man had purchased a ring this week with the intent to propose next week in Jerusalem.

Former Israeli Ambassador to the US Mike Herzog told Israeli Army Radio that the woman killed was an American employee of the embassy and the man was Israeli.

Attorney General Pam Bondi said she was at the scene with former judge Jeanine Pirro, who serves as the US attorney in Washington and whose office would prosecute the case.

The statement from Netanyahu's office said he spoke to Bondi, who told him Trump was "involved in managing the incident" and the US would bring the perpetrator to justice. It was not immediately clear whether Rodriguez had an attorney who could comment on his behalf. A telephone number listed in public records rang unanswered.

**Israel's campaign in Gaza**  
The influential pan-Arab satellite channel Al Jazeera aired on a loop what appeared to be mobile phone footage of the alleged gunman, wearing a suit jacket and slacks, being pulled away after the shooting, his hands behind his back. The war in the Gaza Strip began with the Palestinian militant group Hamas claiming out of Gaza on October 7, 2023 to kill 1,200 people and take some 250 hostages back to the coastal enclave. (PTI)

## BRICS bank NDB admits Algeria as new member

BELJING, May 22: The New Development Bank (NDB), established by BRICS nations, has admitted Algeria as a new member, further expanding its global membership base, it said on Thursday.

Algeria has deposited its instrument of accession, in line with the provisions of the Articles of Agreement of the NDB on May 19, the Shanghai-headquartered bank said in a press release.

Welcoming Algeria, NDB President Dilma Rousseff said, "Algeria plays an important role not only in the economy of Northern Africa, but also at a global scale, and will definitely contribute to enhancing NDB's position in the global financial arena." Rich in natural resources, with a dynamic economy and strategic geographic position, Algeria has immense potential for growth and development. NDB is fully committed to becoming a reliable and trustworthy partner for Algeria, supporting its sustainable development agenda, she said.

"The New Development Bank is a financial institution mobilising resources for infrastructure and sustainable development projects. It is a platform for collaboration and knowledge sharing among its member countries. Together with Algeria, we will work to finance impactful projects that drive progress, improve lives, and contribute to development," Rousseff, who is from Brazil, said.

Both the presidency and vice-presidency of the NDB are rotated among BRICS founding members: Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa. NDB was established in 2015 for financing development projects in the group's member countries.

Since its establishment, NDB has approved over 120 investment projects totalling USD 40 billion and spanning several key areas, including clean energy and energy efficiency, transport infrastructure, environmental protection, water supply and sanitation, social and digital infrastructure, according to the press release. (PTI)

## International rights watchdog slams Bangladesh interim govt for banning Hasina's Awami League

NEW DELHI, May 22: Human Rights Watch (HRW) has slammed Bangladesh's interim government led by Muhammad Yunus for imposing a ban on former prime minister Sheikh Hasina's Awami League, saying the "arbitrary targeting" "fails accountability" and is suppressing the rights of the supporters of the deposed leader and her party.

The interim government on May 12 officially disbanded the Awami League under an overnight revised anti-terrorism law, two days after it slapped a ban on its "activities" under the previous version of the law. "The interim government's arbitrary targeting of former ruling party (Awami League) supporters fails accountability," the New York-based international rights watchdog said in a press release shared on its website on Wednesday.

Instead of pursuing its pledge to reform the criminal justice system and bring accountability for serious abuses, the government led by Yunus is "attempting to suppress the rights of support-

ers" of Hasina and the Awami League, it said. "Recent legislative initiatives by Bangladesh's interim government risk undermining fundamental freedoms," the HRW said.

It said on May 12, the interim government ordered a "temporary" ban on the Awami League, using newly introduced powers under a "draconian amendment" to the Anti-Terrorism Act.

The original Anti-Terrorism Act of 2009 did not have the provision of banning the party. "The ban includes, among other actions, meetings, publications, and online speech supporting the party... Meanwhile, draft legislation to address enforced disappearances, which were widespread under the previous government, does not meet international standards and scarcely addresses accountability for past crimes," the rights watchdog said.

The interim government has pledged to restore democratic principles and respect for human rights before holding a free and fair general election and has also taken several positive

steps, but "these recent measures are disappointing", it said.

Following the ban, the Election Commission scrapped the Awami League's registration, disqualifying the party from contesting polls. The Awami League leaders were charged with committing crimes against humanity over the deaths of hundreds of people during last year's anti-government protests by a student platform. The protests resulted in the ouster of Hasina's 16-year-long regime on August 5 last year.

According to the government order, Awami League will remain disbanded until a special tribunal completes a trial of the party and its leaders over the deaths of people during the anti-government protests.

Hasina and most of her senior colleagues in the party and past regime were accused of committing "crimes against humanity" to gouge protestors during last year's student-led movement through mass killing or previous crimes like enforced disappearances. (PTI)

## North Korea's second naval destroyer damaged in failed launch attended by Kim

SEOUL, May 22: North Korea's second naval destroyer was damaged in a failed launch this week, state media reported on Thursday, sparking fury from leader Kim Jong Un, who wants bigger warships to deal with what he calls escalating US-led threats against his country.

It's not common for North Korea to acknowledge military-related setbacks, but observers say the disclosure of the failed ship launch suggests that Kim is serious about his naval advancement programme and confident of ultimately achieving that objective.

During a launching event at the northeastern port of Chongjin on Wednesday, the newly built 5,000-ton-class destroyer became unbalanced and was punctured in its bottom sections after a transport cradle on the stern section slid off first and became stuck, according to the Korean Central News Agency. KCNA didn't provide details on what caused the problem, the severity of the damage or whether anyone was injured.



According to KCNA, Kim, who was present at the ceremony, blamed military officials, scientists and shipyard operators for a serious accident and criminal act caused by absolute carelessness, irresponsibility and unscientific empiricism". Kim called for a ruling Workers' Party meeting slated for late June to address their irresponsible errors".

**The destroyers could carry nuclear-capable missiles**

It's a shameful thing. But the reason why North Korea disclosed the incident is it wants to show it's speeding up the modernisation of its navy forces and expresses its confidence that it can eventually build "a greater navy," said Moon

Keun-sik, a navy expert who teaches at Seoul's Hanyang University.

Moon suspected the incident likely happened because North Korean workers aren't yet familiar with such a large warship and were rushed to put it in the water.

The damaged vessel was likely the same class as the country's first destroyer unveiled last month, which experts assessed as North Korea's largest and most advanced warship to date.

Kim called the first vessel, named Choe Hyon — a famed Korean guerrilla fighter during the Japanese colonial period — a significant asset for advancing his goal of expanding the military's operational range and nuclear strike capabilities.

State media described that ship as designed to carry weapons systems including nuclear-capable ballistic and cruise missiles. Kim said the ship was expected to enter active duty early next year and later supervised test firings of missiles from the warship. (AP)

## Japan expresses solidarity with India, world in fight against terrorism

TOKYO, May 22: Japan on Thursday said terrorism cannot be justified in any form and expressed solidarity with India and with the world in the fight against terrorism.

Japan's Foreign Minister Takeshi Iwaya was speaking with an Indian Parliamentary delegation when its leader JD(U) MP Sanjay Jha requested Tokyo's support in the fight against terrorism.

The delegation that Jha led is one of the seven multi-party delegations to 33 global capitals to reach out to the international community on Pakistan's designs and India's response to terror, especially in view of the April 22 Pahalgam terror attack that killed 26 people. Takeshi Iwaya expressed heartfelt condolences to the victims of Pahalgam Terror attack and extended his sympathies to those injured in the attack.

"He emphasised that terrorism cannot be justified in any form and expressed solidarity of Japan with India and with the world in the fight against terrorism," said a statement from the Embassy of India here.

Jha conveyed that the terrorist attack in Pahalgam was a nefarious attempt to disturb development and peace in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, it added. Through Operation Sindoor, India responded to the attack in a precise, targeted, proportionate and non-escalatory manner. Jha said and added that India has zero tolerance for terrorism and that it does not differentiate between terrorists and those supporting them.

Jha requested Japan's support in the fight against terrorism and, in this context, called for giving effect

to the UN Security Council Press Statement of April 25, 2025 that underlined the need to hold perpetrators, organisers, financiers and sponsors of this reprehensible act of terrorism accountable and to bring them to justice, the statement said. The Japanese Foreign Minister reiterated Japan's support to India's fight against terrorism and expressed appreciation for the restraint shown by Indian side, it added.

The delegation later met Yoshihide Suga, former prime minister of Japan, currently Vice President of Liberal Democratic Party and chairman of Japan-India Association. The MPs also met Takashi Endo, chairman of the House of Representatives Committee on National Security, Japan. Both Yoshihide Suga and Takashi Endo reiterated Japan's commitment to support India in its fight against terrorism.

Further, the delegation interacted with leading Japanese think tanks and briefed them on India's zero tolerance policy on terrorism, the Embassy said and added, the participants at the interaction expressed strong support for India's efforts to combat terrorism.

The delegation also offered floral tributes at the statue of Mahatma Gandhi in Edogawa, Tokyo.

Tensions between India and Pakistan escalated after the Pahalgam attack, which claimed 26 lives.

India carried out precision strikes on terror infrastructure in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir in the early hours of May 7, following which Pakistan attempted to attack Indian military bases on May 8, 9 and 10. (PTI)

## House Republicans pass Trump's big bill of tax breaks, programme cuts after all-night session

WASHINGTON, May 22: House Republicans stayed up all night to pass their multitrillion-dollar tax breaks package, with Speaker Mike Johnson defying the sceptics and unifying his ranks to muscle President Donald Trump's priority bill to approval on Thursday.

With last-minute concessions and stark warnings from Trump, the Republican holdouts largely dropped their opposition to salvage the "One Big Beautiful Bill" that's central to the GOP agenda.

The House launched debate before midnight and by sunrise the vote was called, 215-214, with Democrats staunchly opposed. It next goes to the Senate.

"To put it simply, this bill gets Americans back to winning again," said Johnson, R-La., just before the vote.

The outcome caps an intense time on Capitol Hill, with days of private negotiations and public committee hearings, many happening back-to-back, around-the-clock.

Republicans insisted their

sprawling 1,000-page-plus package was what voters sent them to Congress — and Trump to the White House — to accomplish. They believe it will be "rocket fuel", as one put it during debate, for the uneasy US economy.

Trump himself demanded action, visiting House Republicans at Tuesday's conference meeting and hosting GOP leaders and the holdouts for a lengthy session on Wednesday at the White House.

Before the vote, the administration warned in a pointed statement that "failure to pass this bill would be the ultimate betrayal".

Central to the package is the GOP's commitment to extending some USD 4.5 trillion in tax breaks they engineered during Trump's first term in 2017, while adding new ones he campaigned on during his 2024 campaign, including no taxes on tips, overtime pay, car loan interest and others.

To make up for some of the lost tax revenue, the Republicans focused on changes to Medicaid and the food stamps programme, largely by imposing work require-

ments on many of those receiving benefits. There's also a massive rollback of green energy tax breaks from the Biden-era Inflation Reduction Act.

Additionally, the package tacks on USD 350 billion in new spending, with about USD 150 billion going to the Pentagon, including for the president's new "Golden Dome" defence shield, and the rest for Trump's mass deportation and border security agenda.

All told, the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office estimates 8.6 million fewer people would have health care coverage and 3 million less people a month would have SNAP food stamps benefits with the proposed changes.

The CBO said the tax provisions would increase federal deficits by USD 3.8 trillion over the decade, while the changes to Medicaid, food stamps and other services would tally USD 1 trillion in reduced spending.

The lowest-income households in the US would see their resources drop, while the highest ones would see a boost, it said.



House Democratic leader Hakeem Jeffries of New York read letters from Americans describing the way the program cuts would hurt them. "This is one big ugly bill," he said.

As the minority, without the votes to stop Trump's package, Democrats instead offered up impassioned speeches and procedural moves to stall its advance. As soon as the House floor reopened for debate, the Democrats forced a vote to adjourn. It failed.

In "the dark of night they want

to pass this GOP tax scam", said Rep. Pete Aguilar, D-Calif.

Other Democrats called it a "big, bad bill" or a "big, broken promise".

Pulling the package together and pushing it to passage has been an enormous political lift for Johnson, with few votes to spare from his slim GOP majority whose rank-and-file Republicans have conflicting priorities of their own.

Conservatives, particularly from the Freedom Caucus, held out for steeper spending cuts to defray

costs piling onto the nation's USD 36 trillion debt.

At the same time, more moderate and centrist GOP lawmakers were wary of the changes to Medicaid that could result in lost health care for their constituents. And some worried the phaseout of the renewable energy tax breaks will impede businesses using them to invest in green energy projects in many states.

One big problem had been the costly deal with GOP lawmakers from New York and other high-tax states to quadruple the USD 10,000 deduction for state and local taxes, called SALT, to USD 40,000 for incomes up to USD 500,000, which was included in the final product.

For every faction Johnson tried to satisfy, another would roar in opposition.

Late in the night, GOP leaders unveiled a 42-page amendment with a number of revisions.

The changes included speedier implementation of the Medicaid work requirements, which will begin in December 2026, rather

than January 2029, and a faster roll back of the production tax credits for clean electricity projects, both sought by the conservatives.

Also tucked into the final version were some unexpected additions — including a USD 12 billion fund for the Department of Homeland Security to reimburse states that help federal officials with deportations and border security. And in a nod to Trump's influence, the Republicans renamed a proposed new children's savings programme after the president, changing it from MAGA accounts — money account for growth and advancement — to simply "Trump" accounts.

Rep. Erin Houchin, R-Ind., said Americans shouldn't believe the dire predictions from Democrats about the impact of the bill. "We can unlock the Golden Age of America," she said, echoing the president's own words.

By early morning hours, the chief holdouts appeared to be falling in line. Rep. Ralph Norman, R-SC, said they "got some improvements". (AP)

## DIPR to convene crucial meeting

# FTI students boycott classes over infrastructure issues

HT Bureau

**NAMSAL, May 22:** According to an official statement, the first batch of students at the nationally reputed Film & Television Institute (FTI), located at Julang, Jote in Sangdipota circle of Papum Pare district, have been boycotting classes for over a week, demanding immediate resolution of their grievances related to inadequate infrastructure and poor campus facilities.

The 45 students of the 2025 batch have raised concerns over the state of the institute since the start of academic sessions.

They allege that the infrastructure remains incomplete and the educational facilities are being provided on a makeshift basis, causing significant disruptions to their learning experience.

"We were not informed about the state of affairs of the infrastructure and campus, but since arriving here, we have been raising our issues and grievances. We feel our precious time is being wasted and hence we are on an indefinite boycott of classes until these matters are resolved," the students stated.

The students demanded "education with dignity, not promises with deadlines," emphasising that the boycott, which began on May 15, 2025, is the result of months of administrative neglect and unfulfilled assurances.

They pointed out that despite a prior academic halt in March 2025, which led to a meeting and a written list of promises from the administration, no visible progress has been made on critical issues.

Among the problems cited are lack of clean drinking water, uninterrupted elec-



tricity and power backup, campus security, functioning classrooms, and digital infrastructure.

Promised academic infrastructure, including the Classroom Theatre (CRT) and post-production blocks, remains incomplete and under construction.

The students expressed feelings of betrayal given FTI's status as the third such national institute in the country.

The students also highlighted administrative deficiencies, noting the absence

of a formal institute name, logo, website, student ID cards, and a full-time director.

They described basic administrative functions as non-operational due to understaffing and mismanagement, rendering the campus environment unsafe, emotionally taxing, and academically untenable.

"We demand the immediate completion of essential academic spaces, safe drinking water, uninterrupted power

supply, and formal accountability from the administration. We will not resume classes until our basic rights as students of a national institution are fulfilled," the students added.

Addressing the issue, PHED Section Officer Ngurang Karu acknowledged delays in water pipeline installations, explaining that despite multiple unsuccessful attempts to lay an 18 km pipeline, about 6 km was installed from Julang river but faced obstructions.

Currently, water supply is being sourced from the Tarasso river, approximately 3.5 km away, though it remains untreated raw water.

Filtration tanks are under construction and in use. Karu also noted plans to build a lift water system with a jack well after the monsoon season, expected to be completed in about four months.

Project Manager Tarh Siki, representing the construction agency, admitted to significant delays due to several factors,

including late payment of bills and the commencement of academic activities before project handover.

He assured that over 100 workers are currently deployed and working to expedite completion. He also stated that important buildings such as the library, girls' hostel, and theatre are nearing completion, expressing hope that the project will soon provide better facilities for students from across the country.

Meanwhile, Director of Information & Public Relations (DIPR) Gijum Tali expressed concern over the student boycott.

He confirmed that since FTI is a central government institution under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, the matter is being taken seriously.

A video conference has been held with the Ministry, and the Secretary of Information & Broadcasting has directed the Central Public Works Department (CPWD) to accelerate work on a war footing.

DIPR Director Tali further announced that a special meeting is scheduled for the following day, involving key stakeholders including the Deputy Commissioner, CPWD officers, FTI administrative officials, and representatives from various departments such as PHED and Power.

He expressed optimism that the meeting would lead to concrete resolutions and urge students to resume classes in a conducive environment soon.

"I am hopeful that all issues will be discussed, resolved, and sorted out immediately, allowing students to continue their education under proper conditions," the DIPR Director added.

## One dead, one rescued in tragic ring well incident at Tapik Colony

HT Bureau

**NAMSAL, May 22:** A tragic accident unfolded at Tapik Colony in Karsingsa on Thursday afternoon when two young men became trapped inside a ring well, resulting in the death of one while the other was rescued and is currently in stable condition.

According to an official statement issued by the Banderdewa Police Station, the incident occurred at approximately 1:54 PM, when the station received an urgent distress call reporting that two individuals were stuck inside a well and immediate assistance was needed.

A police team was swiftly dispatched to the scene, where they discovered two unconscious youths inside a ring well.

The victims were identified as Riya Tago (23), son of Riya Kano, and Sosar John (23), son of Poli Kaha, both residents of Tapik Colony.

The well is located on the premises of Shri Riya Kano, father of the deceased.

With the help of local residents, the police undertook a rescue operation using ropes and oxygen supplies. Both individuals were successfully retrieved from the well and were immediately transported to Tomo Riba Institute of Health and Medical Sciences (TRIHM), Naharlagun, for urgent medical treatment.

While Sosar John responded to the emergency care and is reported to be in stable condition, Riya Tago unfortunately succumbed, despite all efforts made by rescuers and medical personnel.

Preliminary investigation indicates that Riya Tago had initially entered the well to

clean it, but was soon overcome by a lack of oxygen, causing him to lose consciousness.

In a courageous attempt to save his friend, Sosar John descended into the well and also lost consciousness due to the same conditions.

In connection with the incident, an Unnatural Death (UD) case has been registered at



Banderdewa Police Station.

Authorities have confirmed that a further enquiry is underway to ascertain all facts and circumstances related to the tragic episode.

The incident has sent a wave of shock and grief through the local community of Tapik Colony, where both individuals were well known.

Police have urged residents to exercise caution and proper safety measures while engaging in such potentially hazardous activities, especially in confined or poorly ventilated spaces.

## Arunachal legislators attend BJP's orientation programme in Guwahati

HT Bureau

**NAMSAL, May 22:** In a move aimed at enhancing legislative effectiveness and deepening the spirit of public service, legislators from Arunachal Pradesh recently took part in a three-day Legislators' Orientation and Training Programme held in Guwahati.

The initiative was organized by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and brought together elected representatives for a structured and immersive learning experience on governance and service delivery.

According to an official statement, the programme was attended by several prominent leaders from Arunachal Pradesh, including Chief Minister Pema Khandu.

The event focused on equipping legislators with the tools, knowledge, and perspective necessary to strengthen their roles as public representatives.

Speaking about the programme, Chief Minister Khandu described the experience as a deeply transformative one.

"It was a moment of deep learning, dialogue, and direction. Rooted in BJP's core philosophy of Jan Sewa, the sessions allowed us to reflect on the true essence of public service," he stated.

The orientation featured a series of interactive sessions led by distinguished speakers, mentors, and policy experts who shared insights on various aspects of governance, legislative responsibilities, inclusive policy-making, and the efficient delivery of public



services.

The programme aimed to foster a deeper understanding of democratic processes and responsive leadership among the participants.

Guided by the vision and leadership of BJP National General Secretary B L Santhosh, the event underscored the party's commitment to nurturing capable and committed public leaders.

His presence was acknowledged by participants as a source of inspiration and clarity.

The statement highlighted Santhosh's pivotal role in shaping the programme's focus on principled governance and accountability.

Chief Minister Khandu noted that the training sessions had a profound impact on the participants, not only by enhancing their knowledge but also by renewing their resolve to serve with honesty and dedication.

"We walk away not just more equipped, but more committed—to perform, to include, and to deliver, while staying true to the ideals that brought us into public life," he affirmed. The programme forms part of the BJP's broader strategy to develop leadership that is responsive, inclusive, and rooted in the ethos of service.

According to the statement, such

initiatives are designed to prepare lawmakers to meet the evolving expectations of citizens and uphold the responsibilities entrusted to them with competence and humility.

By bringing legislators together in a shared learning environment, the event also fostered greater camaraderie and dialogue among the participants, encouraging cross-learning and exchange of experiences.

The training concluded with a reaffirmation of the party's core values and a shared commitment among the attendees to apply their learnings to their respective constituencies and governance roles.

## Himalayan university, NSS conduct literacy campaign

HT Bureau

**NAMSAL, May 22:** In a significant outreach initiative aimed at fostering education in rural areas, Himalayan University's Department of Education, in collaboration with the National Service Scheme (NSS), organised a Literacy Awareness Campaign at Jollang Village on Thursday.

The event was part of the university's broader mission to promote basic literacy, raise awareness about the importance of education, and encourage lifelong learning, especially among underprivileged communities.

The campaign focused on developing essential reading, writing, and numeracy skills among illiterate individuals, with special emphasis on those from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds.

Through interactive sessions and hands-on learning activities, volunteers engaged villagers in understanding the foundational value of education in daily life and personal empowerment.

The campaign was formally inaugurated by Dr Prakash Divakaran, Vice Chancellor of Himalayan University.

In his inaugural speech, Dr Divakaran applauded the efforts of the Department of Education and the NSS volunteers for undertaking such a meaningful initiative.

He underscored the crucial role of NSS in nation-building and the development of civic consciousness among students, noting that such community-driven programmes serve as practical platforms for



youth to contribute to social transformation.

Spearheading the campaign were Dr Sahidul Ala, Head of the Department of Education, and faculty member Dr Aktar Ali, who guided the team of 60 student volunteers.

The students conducted a variety of learning sessions, including informal classes, awareness talks, and demonstrations, tailored to the needs of the local population.

Dr Ala emphasised that education is not only a tool for personal development but also a powerful driver of societal progress.

He called upon the youth to take proactive roles in bridging educational gaps in rural and remote regions.

The campaign was met with an overwhelmingly positive response from the residents of Jollang Village, many of

whom expressed gratitude for the university's efforts.

Community members actively participated in the learning sessions, reflecting a keen interest in educational advancement and skill development.

Encouraged by the impact and engagement observed during the campaign, Himalayan University officials indicated plans to organise similar literacy and awareness programmes in other rural areas of Arunachal Pradesh.

The initiative stands as a strong testament to the transformative potential of education when supported by dedicated institutions and empowered youth.

The event concluded with a pledge by both faculty and students to continue working towards inclusive and accessible education for all, in line with the university's vision of social responsibility and academic excellence.

## Ward No 11 leaders meet Itanagar MLA to discuss development priorities

HT Bureau

**NAMSAL, May 22:** According to an official statement, a delegation of local and party leaders from Ward No. 11 of the Itanagar Municipal Corporation (IMC) recently held a productive meeting with Itanagar Capital Complex MLA and Urban Affairs & Land Management Minister's Advisor, Techi Kaso.

The meeting was led by BJP Itanagar District (Capital City) former President Tarh Soping along with several senior active members from the ward.

During the discussion, the delegation brought forth key developmental issues affecting Ward No. 11, focusing primarily on road infrastructure, electricity supply, and other essential civic amenities. The MLA

responded positively to the concerns raised and assured the delegation that the development of Ward No. 11 will remain a top priority during his tenure. Tarh Soping expressed gratitude towards the visionary leadership of Chief Minister Pema Khandu and MLA Techi Kaso, highlighting that Ward No. 11 has witnessed remarkable progress in recent years.

NO.MMB/MARKET TENDER-3/2025-26/46

Dated Mushalpur, the 22<sup>nd</sup> May, 2025

### TENDER NOTICE

Sealed tender affixing court fee stamp of Rs 8.25 (Rupees eight and twenty five paise) only are invited from intending individuals, co-operative societies, companies etc. for lease settlement of the following Markets under Mushalpur Municipal Board for a period of 12(Twelve)months only for the year 2025-26 w.e.f .01-07-2025 to 30-06-2026. The details are as follows:-

SL NO	NAME OF MARKET	SCHEDULE RATE (2025-2026)	EARNEST MONEY TO BE DEPOSITED
1	MUSHALPUR BI-WEEKLY MARKET	Rs. 2,24,025.00 (Rupees Two lakh twenty four thousand twenty five only.)	2% FOR GENERAL CATEGORY AND 1% FOR SC/ST CATEGORY OF SCHEDULE RATE
2	MUSHALPUR DAILY MARKET	Rs. 28,097.00 (Rupees twenty eight thousand ninety seven only)	2% FOR GENERAL CATEGORY AND 1% FOR SC/ST CATEGORY OF SCHEDULE RATE
3	BATHOUPHURI WEEKLY MARKET	Rs. 21,060.00 (Rupees twenty one thousand sixty only)	2% FOR GENERAL CATEGORY AND 1% FOR SC/ST CATEGORY OF SCHEDULE RATE
4	BATHOUPHURI DAILY MARKET	Rs. 24,840.00 (Rupees twenty four thousand eight hundred forty only)	2% FOR GENERAL CATEGORY AND 1% FOR SC/ST CATEGORY OF SCHEDULE RATE

Bidders should enclose Rs: 2000/- (Rupees Two Thousand only) money payment receipt as non-refundable tender form fee along with tender form and terms and conditions. Willing bidders may submit their tenders in the tender box between 11:00 A.M. to 1:00 p.m. on 17-06-2025 at office of the Mushalpur Municipal Board, Mushalpur. No tenders will be received after 1:30 p.m. on that day under any circumstances. Tenders will be opened at 2:00 p.m. on 17-06-2025, in presence of the tenderers or their representative/authorized agents. It is further informed that the defaulters of the lease markets for the financial year, 2024-25 or before will not be allowed to take part in the 2025-2026 Tender. Even if they submit the tender the same will be rejected without scrutiny. The detailed information in this regard may be collected from office of the Mushalpur Municipal Board during office hours between 22-05-2025 to 17-06-2025.

Sd/-Chairperson,  
Mushalpur Municipal Board,  
Mushalpur

IPR(BTC)/C/2025-26/449

Sd/-Executive Officer,  
Mushalpur Municipal Board  
Mushalpur

# Huge effort is underway to build modern infrastructure for developed India: PM Modi

**BIKANER, May 22:** Emphasizing the nation's commitment to modernization, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday said that a huge effort is underway to build modern infrastructure for a developed India.

He said that unprecedented work has been done in the last 11 years to modernise the railway stations and airports in the country.

The prime minister said the nation is spending multiple times more money than before on development projects.

"India is modernising its train network and infrastructure. This reflects the new speed and progress of the country," he said at a programme in Bikaner in which he virtually inaugurated 103 Amrit Stations in different parts of the country. Modi said the Vande Bharat train is running on nearly 70 routes in the country.

"This has brought trains to far-flung areas. Hundreds of road overbridges and underbridges have been constructed in the last 11 years. New tracks have been laid. Work is underway on the country's first bullet train project," he added.

The prime minister said the government is also modernising railway stations. "These modernised railway stations have been named as Amrit Bharat Stations. Out of



these, more than 100 Amrit Bharat Stations have been completed. People are seeing on social media what was the situation earlier and how the picture has changed now," said Modi.

"The mantra of development and heritage is clearly visible at these Amrit Bharat stations. They are also symbols of local art and culture. At every Amrit Bharat station, you will also get to see India's thousands of years old heritage," he added. Modi said these stations will be the means of promoting tourism and will provide new employment opportunities.

The prime minister said the money that the government spends to build infrastructure also creates

employment and business.

"This money is going into the pockets of labourers, it is being given to shopkeepers. It is being given to factory workers. The people, who transport stones, gravel, cement etc. and those who drive trucks and tempos also benefit from it," he added. Modi said there are many benefits when the infrastructure is ready.

"The farmer's agriculture produce reaches the market at a low price and wastage is reduced. New industries are set up, tourism increases," he added.

Highlighting the substantial benefits Rajasthan is gaining from on-going infrastructure development, the prime minister noted that high-

quality roads are being constructed across villages and even in border areas. "Over the past 11 years, approximately ₹ 70,000 crore has been invested in Rajasthan's road infrastructure alone," he said.

Modi said the Central government is set to spend nearly ₹ 10,000 crore on railway development in the state this year, marking a 15-fold increase compared to pre-2014 levels. The prime minister further said that Rajasthan's refinery project is in its final stages, positioning the state as a key hub for petroleum-based industries.

Highlighting the rapid progress of the PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana in Rajasthan, Modi noted that over 40,000 people in the state have already benefited from this initiative, which has eliminated their electricity bills and provided them an opportunity to generate income through solar power.

The prime minister underscored that the increasing power generation in the state is playing a crucial role in accelerating industrial growth. Modi highlighted the critical importance of water for the region and its role in advancing the development of areas such as Bikaner, Shri Ganganagar, Hanumangar and western Rajasthan.

He said the government is actively working on completing irri-

gation projects while simultaneously implementing river-linking initiatives.

The prime minister underscored the impact of the Parvati-Kalisindh-Chambal Link Project, which will benefit multiple districts across Rajasthan ensuring better agricultural prospects for farmers and enhancing the region's sustainability.

During the programme, Modi inaugurated, laid the foundation stone and dedicated development projects worth ₹ 26,000 crore to the nation. The prime minister inaugurated 103 redeveloped Amrit Stations in 86 districts across 18 states and Union Territories developed at a cost of over ₹ 1,100 crore.

Over 1,300 stations are being redeveloped with modern facilities, designed to reflect regional architecture and enhance passenger amenities under the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme. Bikaner's Deshnook railway station was also inaugurated during the programme.

Modi, who earlier offered prayers at the Karni Mata temple, also flagged-off the Bikaner-Mumbai Express from Deshnook station.

Inspired by temple architecture, the revamped Deshnook station located near the Karni Mata temple will cater to thousands of pilgrims visiting the shrine each year. (PTI)

## Grand sounding but hollow filmy dialogues: Congress slams PM



**NEW DELHI, May 22:** The Congress on Thursday alleged that the diplomatic delegations being sent abroad were part of the government's "WMD -- weapons of mass distraction" exercise and demanded Prime Minister Narendra Modi call a special session of Parliament and clarify US President Donald Trump's India-Pakistan ceasefire claims.

Congress general secretary in-charge communications Jairam Ramesh also said that instead of throwing out grand sounding but hollow filmy dialogues in public rallies, as he did in Bikaner on Thursday, the prime minister should answer the serious questions being asked of him.

"Why are the brutal killers of Pahalgal still free -- according to some reports, they had been responsible for three earlier terror attacks in Poonch, Gagangir and Gulmarg over the past 18 months. Why have you not chaired any all-party meeting and taken the opposition parties into confidence?" Ramesh said in a post on X.

He also questioned why the prime minister had not called a special session of Parliament to reiterate the unanimously-passed resolution of February 22, 1994, and update it, given the deep China-Pakistan nexus evident during Operation Sindoor.

"Why have you stubbornly remained silent on the repeated claims being made by President Trump and US Secretary of State Rubio on the US role over the past two weeks especially?" Ramesh asked.

Speaking with PTI, the Congress general secretary cited news reports that the terrorists responsible for the Pahalgal massacre were also involved in three earlier terror attacks in Jammu and Kashmir and said there should be a clarification from the government if this was true as it would make their being at large even more serious.

"The continued refusal of the prime minister to call a session of Parliament and meanwhile send a delegation of 50 MPs to different countries is all domestic optics and meaningless," Ramesh said.

These delegations are "meaningless optical exercises", he added.

"India and Pakistan have WMDs (weapons of mass destruction). India has one more class of WMD that Pakistan does not have -- weapon of mass distraction. The sending of these delegations is part of the WMD exercise," Ramesh said in a swipe at Modi.

"He (Modi) has unleashed three WMDs -- 'weapons of mass defamation' are unleashed from the BJP headquarters and 'weapons of mass diversion' and 'weapons of mass distraction' are these MPs being sent as part of delegations," he said.

With Trump repeating his claim that he settled the military conflict between India and Pakistan through the promise of trade, the Congress also said Modi had not rejected these statements even once and asked the reason behind this "thundering silence".

"The prime minister is quiet on this (Trump's claims). There was 'Howdy Modi', 'Namaste Trump', all that but the prime minister is quiet on this. The EAM (External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar) has not said anything on what (US Secretary of State (Marco) Rubio has claimed. Rubio, in fact, has gone one step further and claimed that talks between the two countries would take place at a 'neutral site'," Ramesh said.

In a post on X, Ramesh said that for the eighth time in 11 days, Trump had claimed full credit for the ceasefire between India and Pakistan, praised the prime ministers of India and Pakistan equally and put them on a par in every way, and also reiterated that trade with the US was the instrument he used to get the two countries to declare a ceasefire.

"Yet our Prime minister -- Donald bhai's great buddy -- is completely silent on what the US president is repeatedly saying. The external affairs minister also continues to maintain complete quiet on what his pal, the US secretary of state, has said in support of the US president's claims and about the 'neutral site' for talks between India and Pakistan," Ramesh said in a post on X. "Why this thundering silence?" he asked.

Speaking with PTI, Ramesh said there were serious questions being raised on not only why Operation Sindoor was suddenly and unexpectedly stopped but on its full impact. (PTI)

## SC reserves interim orders in waqf case

**NEW DELHI, May 22:** The Supreme Court on Thursday reserved its interim orders on three issues, including the power to deny properties declared as "waqf by courts, waqf-by-user or waqf by deed" after hearing a clutch of pleas challenging the validity of the Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025.

Before reserving the interim orders, a bench comprising Chief Justice B R Gavai and Justice Augustine George Masih heard senior advocates Kapil Sibal, Rajeev Dhavan and Abhishek Singhvi on behalf of those opposed to the amended waqf law and Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, representing the Centre, for about three consecutive days.

The Centre strongly defended the Act, saying waqf by its very nature is a "secular concept" and can't be stayed given the "presumption of constitutionality" in its favour.

Sibal, leading the petitioners, described the law as a "complete departure from historical legal and constitutional principles" and a means to "capture waqf through a non-judicial process".

"This is a case about the systematic capture of waqf properties. The government cannot dictate what issues can be raised," Sibal said.

The petitioners at the present stage sought interim orders on three key issues.

One of the issues related to the power to deny properties declared as waqf by courts, waqf-by-user or waqf by deed.

The second issue was over the composition of state waqf boards and the Central Waqf Council, where they contend only Muslims should operate except ex-officio members whereas the last one is over the provision stipulating a waqf property won't be treated as a waqf when the collector conducts an inquiry to ascertain if the property is government land.

On April 25, the Union Ministry of Minority Affairs filed a preliminary 1,332-page affidavit defending the amended Waqf Act of 2025 and opposed any "blanket stay" by the court on a "law having presumption of constitutionality passed by Parliament". The Centre notified the Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025 last month after it got President Droupadi Murmu's assent on April 5. (PTI)

## Raut alleges attempt to bribe Maharashtra legislature panel, CM orders SIT probe

**MUMBAI, May 22:** Shiv Sena (UBT) MP Sanjay Raut has alleged that his party's workers foiled an attempt to 'bribe' the state legislature's Estimates Committee during their visit to Dhule district, prompting Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis to order probe by a special team.

Committee chairman Arjun Khotkar rubbished allegations linking the episode to his personal assistant (PA). Khotkar is an MLA of the Shiv Sena led by deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde.

In a post on X on Wednesday night, Raut alleged that more than Rs 5 crore in cash was found in a room at the government rest house in Dhule city.

## India-Pak understanding on cessation of hostilities reached bilaterally: Jaishankar

**NEW DELHI, May 22:** The India-Pakistan understanding on cessation of hostilities was arrived at following direct negotiations between the two sides, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar has said against the backdrop of US President Donald Trump's claim that Washington played a role in brokering the truce.

Jaishankar also said that India will again hit terrorists in Pakistan in response to any future terror strikes like the one in Pahalgal, suggesting that it was the reason why Operation Sindoor has not been concluded.

In an interview to Dutch broadcaster NOS, he said that the government was very clear that "if there is such an attack, there will be a response".

Jaishankar was in The Hague as part of his three-nation tour of the Netherlands, Denmark and Germany.

"The operation continues because there is a clear message in that operation -- that if there are acts of the kind we saw on April 22, there will be a response, that we will hit the terrorists," he said.

"If the terrorists are in Pakistan, we will hit them where they are. So, there is a message in continuing the operation but continuing the operation is not the same as firing on each other," he said.

Under Operation Sindoor, India carried out precision strikes on nine terror infrastructures early on May 7 in response to the April 22 Pa-



halgal terror attack.

Following the Indian action, Pakistan attempted to attack Indian military bases on May 8, 9 and 10. The Pakistani attempts were strongly responded to by the Indian side. Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri on May 10 announced that India and Pakistan reached an understanding to stop all firings and military actions on land, air and sea, with immediate effect.

In his remarks, Jaishankar said the arrangement on cessation of hostilities was firmed up by the Indian and the Pakistani sides.

"When two countries are engaged in a conflict, it is natural that countries in the world call up and try to sort of indicate their concern," he said. Jaishankar added: "But the cessation of firing and military action was something which was negotiated directly between India and Pak-

istan." "We made one thing very clear to everybody who spoke to us, not just the US but to everybody, saying if the Pakistanis want to stop fighting, they need to tell us. We need to hear it from them. Their general has to call up our general and say this. And that is what happened."

Following the cessation of hostilities between India and Pakistan, Trump repeatedly claimed credit for it saying that he played a role in brokering the "ceasefire" between the two sides.

In his comments, Jaishankar described the April 22 Pahalgal attack as "barbaric" and said the terrorists "murdered" the innocent civilians in front of their families after ascertaining their "faith" with an aim to create "religious discord". "It was imperative that we have a response because the lack of response...was impossible in such a situation," he said.

Jaishankar said India is willing to hold talks with Pakistan on return of the illegally occupied part of Kashmir by that country to New Delhi, and on terrorism.

Asked about security concerns emanating from frontiers along China and Pakistan on India's economic growth, Jaishankar indicated that economic growth and security are part of the same coin. "Our security challenges were far more threatening than yours (Europe's). So we had to prioritise security. You don't choose between security and economic prosperity. Today, you are realising that they are part of the same coin." (PTI)

## Forces alert as reports indicate infiltration attempts via open India-Nepal border

**BAHRAICH (UP), May 22:** Security forces are on high alert after intelligence reports indicated that over two dozen Pakistani and Bangladeshi nationals are attempting to infiltrate the India-Nepal International Border, officials said.

The suspected infiltrators are believed to have reached Nepal amid a pause in India-Pakistan hostilities triggered by the April 22 Pahalgal terror attack. Commandant Ganga Singh Udavat of the 42nd Battalion of Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB), the paramilitary force tasked with guarding the India-Nepal border, confirmed the reports on Wednesday evening.

"According to specific inputs received from the SSB Force Headquarters, about 35-37 Bangladeshi and Pakistani citizens have crossed over from their respective countries to Nepal. They will try to infiltrate through the open India-Nepal border," Commandant Udavat said. Commandant Udavat emphasised the SSB's readiness to prevent such attempts. "We are alert 24x7 to counter any attempt by undesirable people to enter India by taking advantage of the open border," he said. With the intelligence inputs, the SSB has intensified patrolling. Commandant Udavat said the border force is carrying out a continuous checking campaign, with soldiers constantly patrolling on foot and in vehicles along roads, through forests, and in villages adjacent to the border. Checkpoints have been increased to verify the identity of individuals crossing the border. Currently, only Indian and Nepali citizens are permitted to cross the border. The India-Nepal border spans approximately 1,750 kilometres, touching five Indian states including Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Bihar, Sikkim and West Bengal. Uttar Pradesh alone shares a 579-kilometre border with Nepal, encompassing districts such as Pilibhit, Lakhimpur Kheri, Bahraich, Shravasti, Balrampur, Siddharthnagar and Maharajganj. (PTI)

"When the legislature estimates committee visited Dhule district today (Wednesday), about five and a half crore rupees were kept in room number 102 at the Dhule government rest house Gulmohar for giving bribe to the committee," the Rajya Sabha member claimed.

Former Shiv Sena MLA Anil Anna Gote and local Sena (UBT) leaders locked the room and stood guard outside, Raut said.

"Despite informing the district collector, superintendent of police and Anti-Corruption Bureau, no one has come even after four to five hours...There is no cooperation from the administration. The bribe was meant to suppress corruption in development works and

officials' involvement in it," he alleged.

The estimates committee is empowered to scrutinise the utilisation of funds allocated to a particular area in the state budget.

Dhule superintendent of police Shrikant Dhivare told reporters that the matter was being probed. Talking to reporters, Anil Gote claimed that Room 102 was booked in the name of Khotkar's PA Kishore Patil.

Khotkar, however, denied this, and said the money found in the rest house had nothing to do with the committee. "I spoke to my PA. He said he hadn't booked that room. He had booked the one next to it," he said. (PTI)

## SC says ED crossing all limits, stays probe against TASMAL in liquor shop licences row

**NEW DELHI, May 22:** The Enforcement Directorate is crossing "all the limits" and violating the federal concept of governance, the Supreme Court on Thursday said and stayed the money laundering probe against Tamil Nadu liquor retailer TASMAL over alleged corruption in grant of wine shop licences.

Issuing notice to the ED on the plea filed by the Tamil Nadu government and Tamil Nadu State Marketing Corporation (TASMAL), a bench comprising Chief Justice B R Gavai and Justice Augustine George Masih told Additional Solicitor General S V Raju, appearing for the anti-money laundering probe agency, that "Your

ED is crossing all the limits."

The anti-money laundering probe agency has been rapped by several benches of the top court for allegedly misusing the rigors of Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA). Opposition parties too have protested against the alleged abuse of PMLA provisions by the ED against the government's political opponents.

Questioning the ED raids over TASMAL, a state government body, CJI Gavai said, "The Enforcement Directorate is violating the federal concept (of governance)."

The CJI-led bench took note of the submissions of senior advocates Kapil Sibal and Amit

Anand Tiwari, appearing for the state government and the TASMAL, and stayed ED's probe against TASMAL in the meantime. Raju opposed the order, saying the issue involved corruption over Rs 1,000 crore and the ED is not crossing the limits "at least in this case."

Sibal said that it is the state and the TASMAL, which have launched criminal prosecution into alleged illegalities in granting liquor shop licences. He said as many as 41 FIRs were lodged against purported wrongdoers in cases related to the allotment of liquor shop licences from 2014 and now the ED jumps in the picture and raids the TASMAL. (PTI)

## Consider Maha's Zudpi Jungle as forest lands: SC

**NEW DELHI, May 22:** The Supreme Court on Thursday declared Zudpi Jungle lands in Maharashtra's eastern Vidarbha region as forests in line with its 1996 verdict but protected the structures existing on it for decades.

The apex court 1996 verdict defined the term "forest".

A bench of Chief Justice B R Gavai and Justice Augustine George Masih noted that "zudpi" was a Marathi word, literally translating to bushes or shrubs and "zudpi" lands meant an inferior type of unoccupied lands with bushy growth.

The top court was dealing with the issue over the status of such lands in the districts of Nagpur, Wardha, Bhandara, Gondia, Chandrapur and Gadchiroli in Maharashtra's eastern Vidarbha region.

The bench directed such lands would not be permitted to be used for compensatory afforestation unless there was a certificate of the state chief secretary regarding non-availability of non-forest land for afforestation.

In such cases, compensatory afforestation must be carried out to double the area of "Zudpi Jungle" lands, according to the existing guidelines of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate



Change, it added. "Zudpi jungle lands shall be considered as forest lands in line with the order of this court dated December 12, 1996 in the present proceedings," the verdict penned by the CJI said.

The top court underlined maintaining a balance between environmental protection and the need for sustainable development. Various developmental activities, it said, were already undertaken on "Zudpi Jungle" lands like construction of irrigation dams, roads, schools, public health centres and other utilities facilities. The bench annexed a list of institutions, buildings, residential areas, public utilities which would be affected in the city of Nagpur alone.

It said even the buildings in

which the high court, high court judges' residences, state governments' secretariat, central government's buildings, defence buildings, Air Force buildings and graveyards were situated, would be impacted.

"... we direct that as an exception, and without the same being treated as a precedent whatsoever for any matter, the Zudpi jungle lands allotted by the competent authority up to December 12, 1996 and for which land classification has not been changed, the State of Maharashtra shall seek approval under Section 2 of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 for their deletion from the 'List of Forest Areas'," the bench said.

The top court was called upon to

consider whether the "shelter from the heads of lakhs of people living in houses" for decades should be allowed to be removed or not.

The bench said for over half a century, various public amenities such as schools, government offices, public health centres, graveyards, cemeteries existed on such lands for providing services to citizens residing in "Zudpi" areas.

"The question that we will also have to answer is whether the citizens should be deprived of all these facilities on account of some bureaucratic mess caused by the negligence of the officials of the state government at the time of reorganisation of the states," it said.

"The answers to all these questions will have to be in the negative," it added.

The bench said the state filed applications seeking directions that 86,409 hectare "Zudpi" land, unfit for forestry management, did not come under the purview of Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980. Maharashtra's counsel argued such lands were never forest lands and on account of reorganisation of states and inaction of certain bureaucrats, the revenue records were not corrected and the lands continued to be recorded as "Zudpi" forest lands erroneously. (PTI)

# Manipur: 48-hour bandh affects normal life in Imphal Valley

Security tightened across Imphal to prevent any untoward incident



**GUWAHATI, May 22:** The 48-hour state-wide bandh called by Meitei organisation Coordinating Committee on Manipur Integrity (COCOMI) in protest against the removal of the state's name from a government bus affected normal life across the five districts of Imphal Valley on Thursday. All business establishments, educational institutions, and government and private offices were closed and public transport remained off the roads.

At Wangkhei, Khurai, Kongba in Imphal East district and Kwakeithel, Naoremthong in Imphal West district, bandh supporters came out on the streets to enforce the shutdown and asked any individual outside their homes to return back. The bandh started on Wednesday midnight.

Bandh supporters also burned tyres on the roads at Naoremthong, Kwakeithel, Khurai and

Wangkhei in state capital Imphal.

Security has been tightened across Imphal to prevent any untoward incident.

Central forces personnel have been deployed at strategic places across all points leading to the Raj Bhavan.

The Manipur government on Wednesday ordered a probe into the allegations that security personnel forced to cover the state's name on a bus taking journalists to the Shirui Lily festival.

It was alleged that security forces had stopped the state-run bus, on which journalists were being taken by the government to cover the tourism festival in Ukhrul district on Tuesday, and forced the Directorate of Information and Public Relations (DIPR) staffers to cover the state's name written on the windshield with a white paper.

The government formed a two-member in-

quiry committee, and said that it will "examine facts and circumstances involving security personnel and Manipur State Road Transport Bus carrying media persons to cover the Manipur Shirui festival on May 20 near Gwalabi checkpoint", according to an order issued by the Home Department.

"The committee shall look into lapses, if any and suggest measures to prevent recurrence of such a situation in future," it said.

The committee, comprising Commissioner (Home) N Ashok Kumar and Secretary Th Kirankumar Singh, has been asked to submit its report within 15 days, it added.

Amid outrage over the incident, COCOMI called a 48-hour general strike from Wednesday midnight, and demanded an apology from Governor Ajay Kumar Bhalla, and the resignation of Security Advisor Kuldeep Singh, DGP Rajiv Singh and Chief Secretary Prashant Kumar Singh.

"The decision to have Manipur removed from a state bus itself is anti-Manipur, absolutely challenges the idea of Manipur and its historical and cultural identity," COCOMI convenor Khurajam Athouba said.

"The people of Manipur demand to know under whose authority the decision was taken. It should be clarified to the public within 48 hours," he added.

The Shirui Lily festival is being held after a gap of two years as the state, ravaged by ethnic clashes between Meiteis and Kuki-Zo community, limps back to normalcy amid the President's Rule, which was imposed in February following the resignation of N Biren Singh as the chief minister. (PTI)

# IAS officer in Nagaland suspended as probe into sexual harassment against him initiated

**KOHIKA, May 22:** The Nagaland government has placed IAS officer Reny Wilfred under suspension as a criminal investigation into several allegations of sexual and mental harassment by women employees has been initiated against him, an official said on Thursday.

The suspension order was issued by Chief Secretary Dr J. Alam, invoking provisions of the All India Services (Discipline and Appeal) Rules, 1969 on Wednesday, he said.

Wilfred, a 2015-batch officer of the Nagaland cadre, has been serving as the joint secretary at the Investment and Development Authority of Nagaland (IDAN) and the Finance Department.

"The suspension follows a formal complaint filed by the Nagaland State Commission for Women (NSCW) on March 17, 2025, after receiving accounts from several women employees who accused Wilfred of demanding sexual



favours in exchange for salary hikes and employment opportunities," the official said.

In response to the suspension, the bureaucrat has denied all the allegations. The Naga Students' Federation (NSF) has also demanded Wilfred's suspension, amid the serious allegations.

The federation emphasised that retaining him in office "undermines public trust and sends a dangerous message that institutional

protection takes precedence over accountability".

The Nagaland Police had on April 12 said that an FIR had been registered against Wilfred and a Special Investigation Team (SIT) was constituted to probe the matter. The order issued on Wednesday stated that Wilfred's headquarters during the suspension period will be the Personnel and Administrative Reforms (P&AR) Department at the Nagaland Civil Secretariat, Kohima.

He has been prohibited from leaving headquarters without prior permission from the competent authority.

Wilfred was facing trial in another case related to the alleged molestation of two domestic workers at his official residence, the official claimed.

The officer was booked in connection with the case in 2021 when he was serving as the deputy commissioner of Noklak district, he added. (PTI)

## Woman gives birth to baby boy aboard train in Tripura

HT Correspondent

**AGARTALA, May 22:** In a heartwarming display of humanity and prompt action, a baby boy was born aboard the Kanchanjunga Express on Thursday as it journeyed through the Ambassa-Kumarghat section of Tripura. Officials of Government Railway Police said that the incident took place in coach S/9 of the train, which was en route to Pakur in Jharkhand. The young mother, identified as 23-year-old Ketki Nagesiya — wife of Ketka Nagesiya — hails from Barpani under Kisko Police Station in Lohardaga district of Jharkhand. A labourer who had been working in Agartala, Ketki went into sudden labour mid-journey.

He said that due to the timely coordination of the Government Railway Police (GRP), Railway Protection Force (RPF), and Commercial Management Personnel (CMP), help arrived swiftly upon the train's arrival at Dharmanagar station in North Tripura district.

"A railway doctor immediately attended to the mother and newborn, confirming that both were in stable condition. For enhanced medical care, they were promptly referred to the Civil Hospital. The RPF arranged for an ambulance and personally escorted the family to ensure their safety and comfort," said the official. Officials have since confirmed that both mother and baby are doing well and are receiving proper medical attention.

## NSCPCR calls for closer coordination between police and child rights authorities

**KOHIKA, May 22:** Nagaland State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NSCPCR) chief Alun Hangsing on Thursday said that strengthening the partnership between law enforcement and child protection authorities is key to safeguarding the rights of vulnerable children.

Hangsing was addressing a one-day sensitisation programme for police officers jointly organised by the District Executive Force (DEF) Kohima and NSCPCR at SP office Conference Hall here, an official statement said. Delivering the keynote address, Hangsing underscored the evolving challenges in crimes against women and children, calling for a more empathetic and informed approach from police.

"Public awareness and legal frameworks have evolved significantly, and this demands more specialised knowledge and child-sensitive handling from our police force," he said. Hangsing said while NSCPCR has historically played an investigative role, the programme marked a step forward in institutional collaboration. "Policing is a noble yet demanding profession. The peace and well-being of society often depend on the professionalism and integrity of our police," he added. (PTI)

## Safe corridor for wild elephants along NH-08 soon: Tripura Forest Minister

HT Correspondent

**AGARTALA, May 22:** Tripura Forest Minister Animesh Debbarma on Thursday announced that a dedicated safe corridor for wild elephants along National Highway 08 at Teliamura in Khowai District is expected to be completed by next winter.

The corridor, located on the Assam-Agartala national highway, aims to reduce human-elephant conflict in the state, which has a wild elephant population of approximately 40. The elephants are primarily found in the Khowai, Dhalai, and Gomati districts. To mitigate encounters between humans and wildlife, the forest de-

partment is adopting a blend of traditional methods, modern surveillance, and community participation.

"The safe corridor along NH-08 is currently under development. We have informed the National Highways and Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited (NHIDCL), and they have agreed to collaborate. The project is likely to be completed by next winter," said Minister Debbarma.

In addition to this initiative, the minister shared plans to upgrade Sepahijala Zoo to world-class standards. He noted recent positive developments, including the successful birth of tiger cubs, as

evidence of improved infrastructure and environment at the zoo.

"This proves that Sepahijala Zoo has significantly enhanced its standards and created a conducive habitat for wildlife. More developmental works are in the pipeline to further improve the zoo," he added.

Addressing the broader issue of biodiversity, Debbarma underscored the importance of ecological balance. "Without trees, there is no life. If our ecological and biological diversity is disturbed, survival becomes impossible. We must undertake large-scale tree plantation drives to secure oxygen and water resources."

## Sikkim officials review preparations

**GANGTOK, May 22:** Sikkim Chief Administrator and Cabinet Secretary VB Pathak along with senior officials on Thursday reviewed preparations for Prime Minister Narendra Modi's scheduled visit on May 29 to participate in the state's golden jubilee celebrations.

The meeting focused on key aspects such as power supply, logistics and security arrangements.

It was attended by Chief Secretary R Telang and heads of various state government departments.

Chief Minister Prem Singh Tamang met PM Modi in New Delhi two days ago and formally invited him to visit the state.

The PM accepted the invitation, Tamang confirmed in a social media post. (PTI)

## Justice Kempaiah Somashekar sworn in as CJ of High Court of Manipur

**IMPHAL, May 22:** Justice Kempaiah Somashekar was on Thursday sworn in as the ninth Chief Justice of High Court of Manipur, a Raj Bhavan statement said.

Governor Ajay Kumar Bhalla administered the oath of office to Justice Somashekar in the swearing-in ceremony held at the Darbar Hall of Raj Bhavan, Imphal, it said.

Justice Kempaiah Somashekar of Karnataka High Court was appointed as the Chief Justice of High Court of Manipur by the President of India on May 20.

Judges of the High Court of Manipur, Chief Secretary, Security Advisor to the Government of Manipur, Director General of Police, top civil, police, military, judicial officers and representatives of Bar Associations attended the swearing-in ceremony, the statement added. (PTI)

## Nagaland prepares for monsoon

**KOHIKA, MAY 22:** Nagaland chief minister Neiphiu Rio has asked all concerned departments to make an assessment of essential commodities across the districts before the monsoon season sets in. Rio pointed out that if there are any complaints from any village or towns on shortage of essential commodities, the matter has to be reported. He also instructed the concerned departments to monitor the fair price shop and see that consumer's rights are protected.

Monsoon preparedness meetings were held on May 20 and 21 in Kohima convened by the Nagaland government.

On May 20, under the chairmanship of Nagaland Chief Minister and Chairman NSDMA, Dr. Neiphiu Rio at Chief Minister conference hall Nagaland Civil Secretariat, Kohima. Similar meeting under the chairmanship of the Chief Secretary and Chairman SEC, NSDMA, Dr. J Alam was held at the Chief Secretary's Conference Hall, Nagaland Civil Secretariat, Kohima today. The meeting with DCs and districts heads of departments was held to assess the availability of essential commodities, roads and alternative routes, healthcare services and mass social work to combat the unforeseen disaster that may occur in the upcoming monsoon in the district.

Rio also raised concern on traffic advisory and directed the PWD department to check on how many tons can be carried by trucks on national highways; tons have to be specified and monitored during the monsoon season. He also advised the administration and the Police department to send teams of officers for routine road checks so that there is smooth flow of traffic in towns and also on national highways during the monsoon season. Rio



also shared his views and concerns on restoring the State Quality Control Board in Nagaland at the earliest.

Meanwhile, Chief Secretary Dr. J Alam, in the meeting today, has mentioned that in the anticipated monsoon seasons some districts will be witnessing deficient rainfall and excess rainfall which may be challenging, and urged all deputy commissioners and the line departments to stay vigilant and be prepared to deal with any emergencies throughout.

Alam also raised concern over proper maintenance of road between Kohima and Dimapur, stressing mainly on old KMC dumping site which causes major challenges every year due to landslides and blockage of road by overloaded trucks. He therefore urged the administration, Police and line departments to monitor traffic regulations and also to identify alternative routes to ensure smooth traffic flow at all times.

He further instructed the PWD department to arrange and place the machinery strategically in disaster or landslide prone areas to ensure proactive measures, and

also stressed on the need to keep sufficient stock of essential commodities available, specifically identifying vulnerable areas for the monsoon season.

Alam also instructed the Health & Family Welfare department to specifically look into vulnerable areas and take appropriate precautionary measures for any monsoon related eventualities and outbreaks.

He called on the DCs to judiciously utilise all their resources at their disposal whenever there is any emergency and also to ensure that all the roads are open always and even during landslides, blockades etc, taking minimum possible time to restore and repair the damaged roads. He also directed the DCs to convene regular preparatory meetings adding that specific directions and guidelines are to be given to the departments and organisations.

Alam further requested all departments to give instructions to their respective heads of offices in all the districts to provide necessary support and coordination to the district magistrates and the DCs in the districts for any monsoon related issues. (NNV)

# Meghalaya launches German Language Training Programme for overseas nursing placements

HT Bureau

**GUWAHATI, May 22:** In a significant step towards enhancing global employment opportunities for youth, the Meghalaya government has launched a German Language Training Programme for overseas placement, according to an official statement.

The initiative, launched by the Meghalaya State Skill Development Society (MSSDS) in collaboration with Indie Talent and 2Coms Group, was formally inaugurated at the Shillong Technology Park, Umsawi.

The programme is aimed at equipping young nursing professionals from the state with German language skills and cultural awareness to enable them to take up jobs in Germany's healthcare sector, which is currently facing a shortage of skilled workers.

Addressing the event, Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma underscored the importance of such initiatives in paving the way for international careers.

"Our young population is the greatest asset we have. It is crucial to channel their energy in the right direction," he said.

Terming the programme as "super important" not only for the state but for the country, the Chief Minister emphasised the need to connect Meghalaya's talent with the global market due to the growing demand for skilled professionals abroad.

He extended his gratitude to the German Embassy, Government of India, MSSDS, and all part-

nering organisations for their role in bringing the initiative to life.

He urged the selected candidates to embrace the opportunity and not be discouraged by challenges, adding, "This is a great achievement. Opportunities like these can truly transform lives. The government will continue to support such efforts."

The six-month training programme is designed to provide comprehensive language instruction up to the B2 proficiency level, which is required for working as a recognised nurse in Germany.

In addition to language skills, the training also focuses on developing cultural competencies to ease the transition and integration into German society.

The curriculum includes intercultural communication, workplace etiquette, and an introduction to Germany's healthcare system.

A total of 30 nursing candidates from Meghalaya have been selected to undergo the programme.

Upon successful completion, they are expected to be placed in healthcare facilities across Germany.

Andrea Jeske, Deputy Consul General of Germany in Kolkata, highlighted the larger context of the initiative.

She pointed out that Germany faces a projected shortfall of seven million skilled workers by 2035 due to its ageing population and declining birth rates.

"This initiative marks the beginning of life-



changing journeys for these nurses. They have been chosen for their dedication and potential, and will now receive advanced training to become part of Germany's healthcare workforce," she said.

Jeske praised India—and Meghalaya in particular—as a valued partner, stating that the programme is a testament to shared ambitions in education, global skill exchange, and employment.

"Germany welcomes you. We admire your compassion, skills, and cultural insight, and we

wish you every success on this transformative journey," she told the participants.

Jan Ebben, Country Director General, People2Help, Germany, lauded India's demographic dividend and the aspirations of its young population.

He described the selected nursing candidates as not only materially motivated but also deeply service-oriented.

"We will work alongside them—whether in language training or visa processes—making this an experience of a lifetime," he said.

He encouraged the candidates to use the opportunity to build a better life and support their families and communities back home.

Holger Lange, Founder and CEO of People2Help, echoed these sentiments.

He emphasised that the goal of the initiative is not only to provide professional and linguistic training but also to ensure that the candidates feel safe, supported, and welcomed in their new environment.

"Language is the key to success. It gives you the power to express yourselves, integrate into your workplaces, and build confidence and independence," he stated.

Lange expressed pride in launching the Shillong centre for training future nursing professionals and reiterated his team's commitment to supporting the candidates every step of the way.

"Thank you for placing your trust in us," he added, while acknowledging the efforts of his col-

leagues.

The launch of the German Language Training Programme follows the earlier success of overseas placements facilitated by MSSDS under the 'Skills Meghalaya' scheme.

A total of 45 nurses from Meghalaya have already embarked on placements in Japan and Singapore, including 27 nurses who were sent to Japan in 2024 after completing a Japanese language training programme.

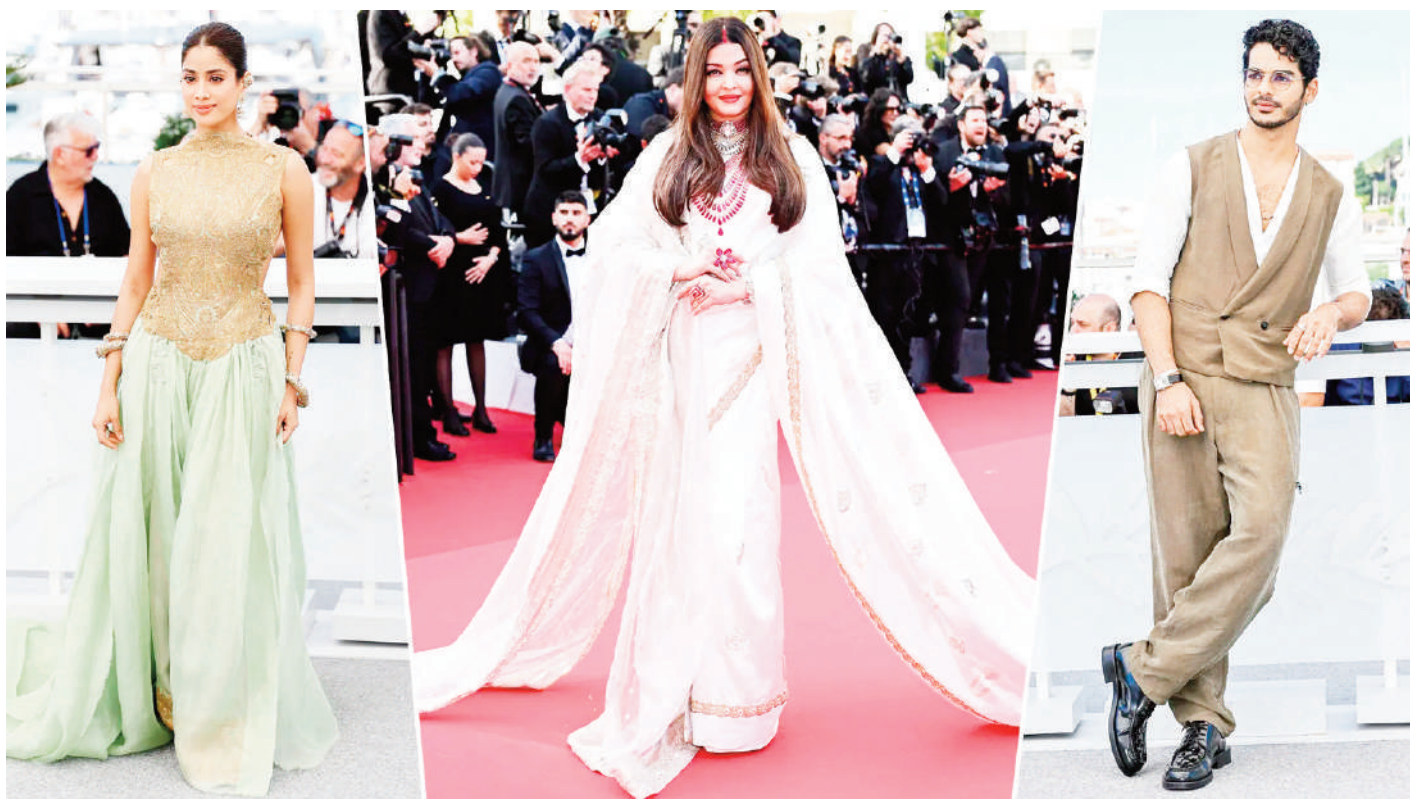
According to MSSDS, these initiatives demonstrate the importance of language training in enabling young people from Meghalaya to access employment opportunities outside the state and country.

The focus remains on building capacities through skill-based education and international partnerships.

The launch event was attended by several dignitaries including Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma; Jagdish Chelani, IAS, Executive Director, MSSDS; Challenkhum Songate, IRS, Principal Secretary, Labour Department; Andrea Jeske, Deputy Consul General, German Consulate, Kolkata; Jan Ebben, Country Director General, People2Help, Germany; Holger Lange, Founder & CEO, People2Help; and Payal Bhattacharya, Business Head, Indie Talent, 2Coms Group, among others.

Representatives from the collaborating organisations, officials of MSSDS, and the selected nursing candidates were also present at the event.

# CANNES 2025: AISHWARYA RAI BACHCHAN WALKS RED CARPET IN IVORY BANARASI SAREE



**NEW DELHI, May 22:** Bollywood star Aishwarya Rai Bachchan opted for a traditional look for her 2025 Cannes Film Festival debut, gracing the red carpet in an elegant ivory handloom Banarasi saree.

The actor, who has been a regular at Cannes for the past 20 years, made an appearance at the film gala ahead of the premiere of filmmaker Oliver Hermanus' historical drama "The History of Sound", starring Paul Mescal and Josh O'Connor.

Aishwarya looked resplendent in the embroidered ivory saree with a long 'pallu' and a flowing lace train, which was designed by ace couturier Manish Malhotra.

She completed her look with a layered ruby necklace, also by Malhotra's label, and vermilion in her hair parting.

"The OG Indian Queen of Cannes @aishwaryarai Bachchan\_arb embraces Classic White Handloom in a handwoven kadwa ivory Handloom Banarasi saree with a handwoven tissue drape and imperial heirloom of rubies from @manishmalhotrajewellery," the designer wrote on his Instagram page.

Videos circulating on social media showed the 51-year-old actor smiling warmly and waving as she greeted fans on the red carpet.

The 78th Cannes Film Festival is witnessing a significant Indian presence this year with filmmaker Payal Kapadia being part of the main competition jury.

Bollywood icons Sharmila Tagore and Simi Garewal attended the world premiere of the newly restored version of Satyajit Ray's 1970 classic "Araney Din Ratri".

On Wednesday, director Neeraj Ghaywan presented his film "Homebound" at the film gala under the Un Certain Regard segment. He was accompanied by actors Janhvi Kapoor, Ishaan Khatter and Vishal Jethwa as well as producer Karan Johar. (PTI)

## FOOD, CAR CHASES AND MORE: INDIA ON BUCKET LIST FOR 'MISSION: IMPOSSIBLE' STARS



**NEW DELHI, May 22:** A car chase in Mumbai, maybe a motorcycle one or just a scooter caper through jammed streets. And a visit hopefully soon. For the "Mission: Impossible" cast, an India trip ranks high on the checklist of things to do.

So, if Isai Morales, the villain in the just released "Mission: Impossible - The Final Reckoning", hopes to come to India this summer itself, co-star Simon Pegg says he would love to visit them all, the cities and its beaches, and Hayley Atwell speaks of her love for Indian food.

"I was really disappointed when we did 'Ghost Protocol' in 2011 because there was a section of the movie which was set in India. And I know Tom (Cruise) went out there and he had some amazing pictures taken next to the Taj Mahal," Pegg, who plays tech whiz Benji Dunn in the spy movie series, told PTI in a virtual interview.

"Mission: Impossible - The Final Reckoning" is the eighth and possibly the final instalment of the franchise which started with 1996's "Mission: Impossible". The lead star in all eight has been Cruise, whose role as spy agent Ethan Hunt has worldwide fan following.

Where would Pegg like to film a future instalment of the franchise, known for its many high-octane action sequences often shot in exotic locations?

Keen to visit India and thinking of ways to get here, the British actor responded, "Maybe a car chase through Mumbai. Is it possible to have a car chase in Mumbai or would it just be like a traffic jam?"

His co-star Greg Tarzan Davis chimed in, saying a car chase in Mumbai would be "insane".

Actor Pom Klementieff added, "It would have to be a motorcycle chase. They have a lot of motorcycles there."

To this, Pegg said, "Maybe a scooter chase then." Atwell and Morales echoed them.

"I've never been to India. I would love the opportunity to work there. I love Indian food. We have some incredible Indian restaurants in London," Atwell, who plays the role of thief-turned-spy Grace, told PTI in a separate interview.

"I may go there soon. I may go there this summer if the stars aligned," added Morales. "The Final Reckoning" sees Hunt racing against time to stop a rogue AI known as 'The Entity' from gaining total control over the world's digital infrastructure and starting a nuclear war among the nations. It is a sequel to 2023's "Dead Reckoning".

Cruise, who has headlined all the "Mission: Impossible" films since the first chapter in 1996, also recalled visiting India for "Ghost Protocol" promotions.

"I feel so much love for India. India is an amazing country, people, and culture. I have to say the whole experience has been etched in my memory. Every single moment. From the moment I landed, going to the Taj Mahal, and spending time in Mumbai, I remember each moment quite vividly," the Hollywood superstar said in a promotional clip released by Paramount Pictures India last week.

Cruise also expressed his wish to make a Bollywood-style film, especially one with song and dance sequences.

"I love it when in a scene someone suddenly breaks into a song. I love it. It's something that I have grown up watching - musicals from different countries. I love Bollywood movies. You can just break out into a song, it's so beautiful. I love dancing, singing, and the actors. That is such a unique experience and craftsmanship of the actors to be able to sing, dance, and act," he said.

"Mission: Impossible The Final Reckoning" also stars Angela Bassett, Ving Rhames and Henry Czerny. The film, directed by Christopher McQuarrie and co-produced by Cruise, released in India on May 17 in English, Hindi, Tamil and Telugu. (PTI)

## Dhanush to play APJ Abdul Kalam in biopic directed by Om Raut

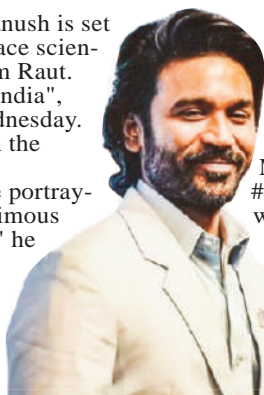
**NEW DELHI, May 22:** Tamil cinema star Dhanush is set to essay the role of former president and aerospace scientist APJ Abdul Kalam in a biopic directed by Om Raut.

The film, titled "Kalam: The Missile Man of India", was unveiled at the Cannes Film Market on Wednesday.

Dhanush shared the announcement along with the film's first poster on his Instagram account.

"I feel truly blessed and deeply humbled to be portraying the life of such an inspirational and magnanimous leader - our very own Dr APJ Abdul Kalam sir," he wrote.

"Kalam" is produced by Bhushan Kumar and Krishan Kumar of T-Series and Abhishek Agarwal and Anil Sunkara of Abhishek Agarwal Arts.



Raut, known for "Tanhaji: The Unsung Warrior" and "Adipurush", also posted the film update on his official X page.

"From Rameswaram to Rashtrapati Bhavan, the journey of a legend begins... India's Missile Man is coming to the silver screen. Dream big. Rise higher. #KALAM - The Missile Man of India @dhanushk Raja @omraut #BhushanKumar @AbhishekOfficial @AAArtsOfficial," he wrote.

In a previous post, the director said he was representing India at the "iconic" Cannes Film Festival.

"Grateful to be part of this celebration of cinema on the global stage," he said.

The 78th Cannes Film Festival will conclude on Saturday. (PTI)

## 'Prastawana - The Preamble' gearing up for its release

**HT Bureau**

**GUWAHATI, May 22:** 'Prastawana - The Preamble' is a forthcoming Assamese film that takes its inspiration from the well-known literary work 'Yatra' written by the esteemed Dilip Borah, known for his acclaimed novels, short stories, essays and columns. Borah's fervent storytelling and engaging narratives have enthralled readers from many backgrounds, garnering him extensive acclaim and respect, as well as a loyal following throughout time.

'Prastawana - The Preamble' attempts to illustrate how India's prevailing social and political circumstances influence students' entrapment within the nation's intricate political framework. It strives to provide an honest and straightforward portrayal of the harmful impacts of political influences on the educational system, highlighting the underlying atrocities that emerge as a result. The film functions as a pertinent call to action for contemporary youth, highlighting the essential necessity of vigilance in safeguarding democratic principles. Additionally, it aims to educate this demographic about the fundamental principles of justice, equality, freedom, and brotherhood, which constitute the foundational pillars of our Constitution and have established our status as the largest democracy globally. 'Prastawana - The Preamble' is co-directed by Dilip Borah and Manik Roy, with Borah also serving as the producer. A much-recognised figure in Assam's amateur theatre community, Manik Roy founded the Guwahati Shishu Natya Vidyalay in 1998 and has directed many acclaimed and lauded productions for festivals at both state and national levels. 'Yatra's intricate narrative and well-developed characters served as a solid foundation for the filmmakers to build upon and create a compelling cinematic experience.

The film is anticipated to provide viewers with an engaging cinematic experience that remains faithful to the essence of the original material. The story and screenplay for the movie were written by Dilip Borah himself. Cinematographed by Bitul Das, the film's assistant directors are Raj Saikia and Bhaskar Dutta. Renowned film editor A. Sreekar Prasad edited the movie. Arnab Bora serves as the film's sound designer, while Gulok Saha handles the art direction and Sunom Phukan oversees the costumes. Uttam Deka is the film's production controller. Two songs in the film were crafted by Satya Ranjan Bhuyan and Hiteswar Ray, who are also responsible for the arrangement and composition of the music. The film stars the versatile actor Tapan Das in the leading role. Paarvee Baruah, Hillol Kumar Pathak, Debajit Mazumdar, Aswini Kumar Bhuyan, Abatosh Bhuyan, Kaushik Nath, RK, Simanta Raj Sarma Kon-doli, and Antara GG Choudhury are among the other actors who portray various roles. The recently censored film will further contribute to the ongoing discourse surrounding the intersection of literature and cinema in contemporary culture.

## Hat-tip to Op Sindoor or just fashion statement? Aishwarya's Cannes look sets internet abuzz

**NEW DELHI, May 22:** Former Miss World, actor and Cannes regular for over 20 years, Aishwarya Rai Bachchan once again owned the red carpet of the film festival gala in a Manish Malhotra ivory saree. But what got everyone talking, both online and elsewhere, was the vivid 'sindoor' in her hair parting.

Was it a subtle homage to Operation Sindoor, sindoor a key word at the centre of impassioned discourse across drawing rooms, offices and social media platforms? Was it her way of silencing long circling rumours of a rift with husband Abhishek Bachchan? Or just part of the carefully curated ivory and red look, complemented by Malhotra's custom ruby jewellery?

The questions burst forth back home almost as soon as Aishwarya descended on the Croisette steps on Wednesday evening in Cannes and her photographs and videos went into rapid circulation.

It is perhaps the first time that Aishwarya - who served on the Cannes jury panel in 2003 and has been a regular on the red carpet since 2002 - has sported sindoor, a vermilion line that signifies the married status of a Hindu woman in the festival.

For her appearance at the film festival ahead of the premiere of filmmaker Oliver Hermanus' historical drama "The History of Sound", she opted for a classic white handloom in a handwoven kadwa ivory Banarasi saree with a handwoven tissue drape and imperial heirloom of rubies.

That her Cannes appearance came on the eve of one month of the Pahalgam terror attack (April 22) didn't go unnoticed.

On Thursday, Malhotra shared a post on his Instagram Story which linked Aishwarya's look to Operation Sindoor.

"Aishwarya has been doing Cannes for years.

Many of her choices in that time have been questionable. However in this @manishmalhotra05 sari (the look is being dubbed 'Operation Sindoor') she has a clear message. And that's fashion's superpower to say something with just one look. One of the most memorable looks," the post read. Journalist Barkha Dutt was one of the many netizens who linked Aishwarya's sari-sindoor look to Indian armed forces missile strikes on May 7 in Pakistan in retaliation for the barbaric terror attack in Pahalgam that killed 26 civilians.

"This now viral image of Aishwarya Rai at Cannes seen by many to be a silent hat tip to Operation Sindoor," Dutt captioned her post on X.

A user on X called Aishwarya "a true patriot and Bhartiya Nari".

"Her putting sindoor at #Cannes is a clear tribute to the success of #OperationSindoor... #Aishwar-

yaRaiBachchan," the post stated.

That sindoor touch is "so refreshing", wrote another.

"Shame on the silence of the Khans—not a word on #OperationSindoor. While Bollywood's biggest names stay quiet, Aishwarya stands tall—fearless, dignified, bold. True courage. That's what India deserves." "I'm so proud of Aishwarya Rai. Regardless of all the hate, she showed up as strong and as beautiful as ever. That too wearing sindoor in the midst of Operation Sindoor," read another post.

Then there were some who called it a celebration of Sanatan culture.

"The Queen of Cannes! Aishwarya owns it like no one. Wearing Sindoor at the international platform empowers all the women who still love to wear it, celebrating Sanatan culture. A big thank you for representing us! #Cannes2025 #AishwaryaRaiBachchan (sic)" read a post on X.

"And she gave a big slap to some aunties & newly married women from Kolkata who refuses to wear Sindoor, sankha & choose western culture over Indian culture. This for them. She is a Miss World & Global icon representing Indian culture in front of the World. #AishwaryaRaiBachchan. (sic)" One post left the debate open.

"What's your take- Aishwarya Rai flaunting sindoor is : A) a nod to Operation Sindoor B) a gesture to stop separation rumours C) just a fashion statement." This is also one of Aishwarya's most talked about looks at the Cannes red carpet.

She got the media abuzz with her Venus Sculpture look by Gaurav Gupta (2022), her icy blue Michael Cinco gown in 2017, her dark blue Elie Saab dress in 2006, and her Neeta Lulla yellow saree for the premiere of her film "Devdas" in 2002, her first appearance at the festival. (PTI)

# ANTONIO CONTE ON THE BRINK OF HISTORY WITH SERIE A TITLE-CHASING NAPOLI

**MILAN, May 22:** Antonio Conte is on the verge of making history. He would become the first coach to win Serie A with three different teams if Napoli clinches the trophy.

Napoli heads into its final match of the season, at home to Cagliari on Friday, with a point advantage over defending champion Inter Milan, which visits Como.

"We have our teeth into it and we mustn't let go," Conte said.

Conte has already won four Italian leagues. He led Juventus to the first three of its nine successive Serie A titles in each of his three seasons in charge from 2011-14, and won it with Inter in 2021. In between them, he bagged a Premier League title with Chelsea in 2017.

While a handful of coaches have won Serie A with two teams, no one has ever done it with three. Although there is a significant asterisk.



Fabio Cappello lifted league trophies with AC Milan (four times) and Roma before steering Juventus to back-to-back triumphs in 2005 and 2006, but the Bianconeri were stripped of both of those titles because of the Calciopoli refereeing scandal.

That also saw Juventus demoted to the second division and its glory days were long behind it when Conte took over and immediately renewed its dominance of Italian soccer.

Conte also ended an 11-year title drought at Inter.

Napoli has not had as long a wait having won Serie A in 2023, but reclaiming it would be arguably one of Conte's biggest achievements.

The 55-year-old Conte inherited a team that was coming off a horrible season, having put up one of the worst title defenses in history, finishing 10th and churning through three coaches.

Key players departed including

Victor Osimhen, Khvicha Kvaratskhelia and Kim Min-jae.

But Conte has worked his scudetto-winning magic and has transformed Napoli from Serie A has-been back to potential title winner.

"I sincerely hope to be able to celebrate this championship because it would be something beautiful, also because of the energy I have spent," Conte said.

"It would repay me for everything I have put into it this year. I went beyond my limits. I'm very tired, I'm only just managing to get to the end."

The city of Naples is fizzing with excitement at the prospect of a second title in three years. That's a shorter span than the two championships in four seasons with Diego Maradona in 1987 and 1990.

Conte said after Napoli's penultimate match that he just had one thing to tell his players: "Let's go get this scudetto!" (AP)

*Patidar, Salt fit to play: RCB head coach Andy Flower*



**LUCKNOW, May 22:** Head coach Andy Flower said the extended break has not disturbed Royal Challengers Bengaluru's rhythm and it has only helped some players, including skipper Rajat Patidar, to get back to top shape ahead of playoffs.

Patidar had suffered a finger injury during the home game against Chennai Super Kings before IPL was disbanded for a week due to the Indo-Pak military conflict.

"We are not too concerned about that (break). I think the boys have worked really well over the entire season and they have played some superb cricket throughout the season. Yes, a little break now, but for a couple of our players that has actually been a healthy thing," said.

Flower on the eve of the match against Sunrisers Hyderabad here.

Patidar was wearing a splint to protect his injured finger, but he got another few days to recover as RCB's match against Kolkata Knight Riders was abandoned due to rain in Bengaluru on May 17.

"Rajat Patidar for one has given his right hand a little bit of time to settle after getting quite a bad knock. So, he is fit to bat, which is great," said Flower.

"(Opener Phil) Salt was sick for a while, so it (the break) has given him a little chance to get home. He has recharged his batteries and he is back at full force. "Of course, everyone in the competition and all our fans would have wanted the competition to play out as planned, but bigger things were at hand and we have had to roll with that," he added.

The Royal Challengers will now play all their matches, including the knockouts, away from home and Flower said the team has prepared well for the challenge while leaning on its excellent away record.

The RCB were originally scheduled to play SRH at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium but the match was shifted to Lucknow owing to the inclement weather forecast in Bengaluru.

"We are obviously disappointed not to be playing tomorrow's game in Bengaluru. As you know, we struggled in our home conditions initially, and we took a little while to adjust our game plan according to the pitch and we did adjust it and won a couple of important games at home.

"We have got a good record away. We have been able to flex for the away conditions really well, so I am backing our players to do that again tomorrow. So, we are okay playing here in Lucknow," he added.

"The Royal Challengers have an all-win record in this season's IPL in the six matches that played away from home." (PTI)

*Was preparing for NC Classic, would have qualified for World C'ships there: Sachin Yadav*



**NEW DELHI, May 22:** Rising javelin thrower Sachin Yadav is a bit disappointed at the postponement of the inaugural NC Classic earlier scheduled for Friday as he was hoping to better his personal best by taking advantage of the tough competition with the best in the business.

Yadav was pencilled in as one of the five Indians for the inaugural event, including superstar and host Neeraj Chopra, before it was postponed due to the military confrontation between India and Pakistan. The new date of the event to be held in Bengaluru is yet to be announced.

The 25-year-old Yadav, who won gold in the Uttarakhand National Games and in the Federation Cup National Championships in Kochi, said he was looking to qualify for the World Championships later this year with a strong show at the NC Classic.

"I was preparing for the NC Classic. It was world-class field and you do better when you compete with the best in the world. I was hoping to breach the World Championships' automatic qualifying distance during the NC Classic, so I am a bit disappointed," Yadav said before leaving the country for the Asian Championships in South Korea. The automatic qualifying distance for the World Championships to be held in Tokyo from September 13 to 21 is 85.50m. Only double Olympic-medallist Chopra

has qualified for the World Championships javelin event.

Two-time world champion Anderson Peters (PB: 93.07m) of Grenada, 2016 Olympics gold winner Thomas Rohler (PB: 93.90m) of Germany, 2015 world champion Julius Yego (92.72m) of Kenya, American Curtis Thompson (current season leader with 87.76m) and Asian Games bronze medallist Genki Dean (PB: 84.28m) of Japan are also taking part in the 12-man field NC Classic.

Hailing from a farmer's family at Khekra village near Baghat in Uttar Pradesh, Yadav will be competing in his first international competition in the Asian Championships. He is considered the next big thing in men's javelin after Chopra.

Yadav, who has a personal best of 84.39m, is one of the strong medal prospects for the country in the continental championships to be held in Gumi from May 27 to 31.

"Had I gone to South Korea after competing in the NC Classic, it would have been much easier. Now I have to qualify for the World Championships in South Korea. That is my target," Yadav was introduced to javelin by his neighbour Sandeep Yadav who later recommended him to train under noted javelin coach Naval Singh in New Delhi (at the NCoE at Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium). He joined UP Police in 2023 under the sports quota. Sandeep is also in UP Police. (PTI)

## Boxing: 19-member squad named for Thailand Open

**NEW DELHI, May 22:** A 19-member squad will represent India at the 4th Thailand Open International Boxing Tournament, scheduled in Bangkok from May 24 to June 1. Held under the aegis of Asian Boxing, the Thailand Open will see top national teams from across the continent compete, including powerhouses like China, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Japan, Korea, and host nation Thailand.

The squad comprises 10 men and 9 women.

The Boxing Federation of India, being run by an interim committee, followed its selection criterion, providing opportunities to silver medallists from this year's men's and women's National Championships. "With the team set to leave for the Thailand Open, we're entering a very exciting phase for Indian boxing," interim committee chairman Ajay Singh said.

"This marks the beginning of a packed international calendar, with



the World Cup stage tournament in Kazakhstan, the World Championship in Liverpool, the World Cup Finals in New Delhi, and several key tournaments, including the Asian Championship, lined up towards the end of the year."

The national camp, currently underway at NIS Patiala, initially brought together 60 male and 60

female boxers, shortlisted after standout performers at the Nationals and gold and silver medallists from the 2024 REC Combined National Talent Hunt in Rohtak and Chief of Army Staff Cup in Pune.

Following a round of internal assessments, the pool was pruned to 40 in each category. This refined core group will continue training

through June, with additional athletes from an upcoming elite women's competition joining in July. The Thailand Open marks an important international outing in India's boxing calendar, providing a platform to elite boxers to test themselves against Asia's best, with momentum building toward the World Boxing Cup later this year.

**Squad:**  
Men: Naotoi Singh Kongkham (47-50kg), Pawan Bartwal (50-55kg), Nikhil (55-60kg), Amit Kumar (60-65kg), Hemant Yadav (65-70kg), Deepak (70-75kg), Dhruv Singh (75-80kg), Jugnoo (80-85kg), Naman Tanwar (85-90kg), and Anshul Gill (90kg+).

Women: Yasika Rai (45-48kg), Tamanna (48-51kg), Abha Singh (51-54kg), Priya (54-57kg), Sanju (57-60kg), Saneh (65-70kg), Anjali (70-75kg), Lalfakmawii Ralte (75-80kg), and Kiran (80kg+). (PTI)

## Next IOC president Kirsty Coventry hands over the baton in planning for Brisbane 2032 Olympics

**BRISBANE May 22:** Kirsty Coventry has completed a ceremonial baton change before she takes over as International Olympic Committee president next month, handing off oversight of preparations for the Brisbane 2032 Games during a three-day inspection visit to southeast Queensland state.

Mikaela Cojuangco Jaworski replaced Coventry as head of the IOC's coordination commission for the 2032 Summer Games after the Olympic swimming champion from Zimbabwe was elected to take over from Thomas Bach in the sporting organization's top job.

All three were part of the IOC team that met in Brisbane and the Gold Coast for their first on-the-ground update on the planning overhaul from local organizers.

"I'm here to formally hand over the baton, or the Olympic flame... boomerang!" Coventry said as she introduced Jaworski at an IOC coordination commission news confer-

ence Thursday at Brisbane's SunCorp Stadium. "I hope that I'm leaving some good vibes."

Coventry made her Olympic competition debut at the Sydney 2000 Games and has family living in Australia. She said feels right at home after chairing the coordination commission since soon after the IOC awarded the 2032 Games to Brisbane in 2021.

"I'm very excited about what Brisbane 2032 is going to do," she said. "Not just for the region, but for Australia and for the world."

It took more than 1,000 days and at least three major concept changes before a newly elected Queensland state government settled on a comprehensive venue plan in March. That includes a new 60,000-seat stadium and an aquatics center to be built in parklands close to downtown Brisbane, as well as proposals to share events with regions outside the capital.

The surprising call to host rowing

in a crocodile-inhabited river in Rockhampton on the central Queensland coast has attracted concern and criticism from the public and sports administrators.

Veteran IOC Olympic Games executive director Christophe Dubi said there's time for local organizers and sports federations to consider all options and collaborate on specifics for venues, and there's absolutely no need to panic with seven years until the Brisbane Games. "No one else but the federation can say the field of play is ready," he said, noting who had the final sign-off on sports venues as the planning for the Olympics evolve. "The plan always changes, and generally they change for the better," he said. "The question is not so much whether the plan has changed — it has — but is it a better plan? The answer is yes."

Andrew Liveris, president of the local organizing committee, said venue construction is likely to begin later next year and he's confident the

main building program will be complete at least a year out from the Games. Dubi said anyone doubting those predictions should look at the stage Sydney's construction program was at seven years out from the 2000 Games, and what a landmark Olympic and Paralympic Games it turned out to be in Australia's biggest city.

He said the selection of the Victoria Park site for the main stadium and aquatic center in Brisbane "is an incredible location" and followed the good example set by Paris 2024 organizers in staging Olympic events in close to inner-city landmarks. "So if you ask me from an operational standpoint, it's absolutely doable," Dubi said of Brisbane staging a memorable Olympics. "You have also this opportunity to have this venue and this number of spectators, hence creating that precinct atmosphere downtown, and that will be something incredibly special." (AP)

## Bengal, Odisha eye next Khelo India Beach Games after Diu dazzles in debut edition

**DIU, May 22:** Buoyed by the success of the inaugural Khelo India Beach Games here, two eastern coastal states of West Bengal and Odisha have shown interest in hosting the next edition of the sports extravaganza.

The scenic Ghoghla Beach has been buzzing with over 2,100 athletes competing across eight disciplines in this six-day festival.

First held last year as a regional event, the Games have now been elevated under the Khelo India banner following a mention in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 'Mann Ki Baat'.

Bengal Olympic Association general secretary Jahar Das said the state is ready and willing to host the next edition.

"It's really nice, very beautifully developed. I'm proud of the Union Territory government. Kudos to all the participants — it's their credit," Das told PTI here.

He said Bengal's popular beaches like Digha, Mandarmani,

and Gangasagar offer ideal venues.

"The BOA will give full cooperation. We already have the infrastructure. With Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee promoting tourism and the new Jagannath Temple attracting lakhs, adding sports would be a double delight."

"In 2019, we hosted an invitational beach games, and the crowd was mindboggling. In the age of social media, it will get even more traction. Kolkata has perfect connectivity, so logistics won't be an issue," he added.

Das plans to meet BOA members after returning to Kolkata on Saturday to initiate the formal bid process. "We will write to SAI expressing our interest in hosting KIBG 2026." West Bengal, which sent a nine-member contingent to Diu, has won two silver medals so far. A third medal chance in 5km open water swimming was lost due to injury on Thursday.

"We will work to develop more beach sports athletes. With proper



use of the Rs 840.03 crore sports budget, Bengal can become a powerhouse," Das said, adding that the state has strong traditions in sepak takraw and beach football.

Neighbouring Odisha is also exploring the possibility of bidding. With a 480-km coastline and venues like Gopalpur, Puri, and

Chandipur, the state sees beach sports as a natural extension of its sporting and tourism ambitions.

"Our 46-member contingent has won one silver and three bronze medals in pencak silat. The Games have been a big success," said Dhiraj Pattanayak, Officer on Special Duty, Sports and Youth Affairs De-

partment.

"Hosting KIBG 2026 is something we will definitely consider. It could be the way forward," he added. The Union Territory of Dadra and Nagar Haveli & Daman and Diu has undergone a sports infrastructure transformation, led by Secretary of Sports Dr Arun T.

"The UT has a long coastline with wonderful beaches like Nagoa and Ghoghla. Last year's pilot event was a huge success and got mentioned in Mann Ki Baat, which led to KIBG 2025," he said.

Over Rs 300-crore has been spent on infrastructure in the past eight years. A world-class cricket stadium is coming up in Silvassa, alongside archery and athletics facilities. "In Silvassa, we've also built 24x7 sports complexes under flyovers with table tennis, chess, and basketball courts. In Diu, despite a population of just 50,000, we have two Olympic-sized swimming pools and two sports complexes," he said. (PTI)

## Visa issues sorted for 22 athletes bound for Asian C'ships in Korea: AFI

**NEW DELHI, May 22:** The visa issues faced by 22 athletes bound for the Asian Athletics Championships in South Korea beginning May 27 has been sorted and the contingent will reach the host country on time, a top official of the national federation said on Thursday.

The Athletics Federation of India (AFI) had named a 59-member team for the May 27-31 continental championships in Gumi, with most of the top stars, except for double Olympic medallist Neeraj Chopra, making the cut. Chopra missing the event was on expected lines as his focus this season will be the Diamond League Meetings and the World Championships in Tokyo in September. "We are getting the visas (of the concerned athletes) in the evening (Thursday) through the efforts of the Sports Ministry and (South Korean) Embassy. The matter is sorted out," AFI Secretary General Sandeep Mehta told reporters before the team departure here. It's learnt that the visas of 22 athletes were delayed due to various reasons. Out of the 59 athletes,

those based at Thiruvananthapuram training center will leave for Gumi Thursday night from the Kerala capital itself. Those whose training bases are in Bengaluru, Patiala and Mumbai will leave from Delhi, also Thursday night.

"The athletes will have two to three days of acclimatisation in Korea. We have picked the best team and we are expecting 25 to 30 medals this time," Mehta added.

In the 2023 edition of the biennial championships in Bangkok, India had won 27 medals (6 gold, 12 silver, 9 bronze) to finish third in the standings behind Japan (16 gold, 11 silver, 10 bronze) and China (8 gold, 8 silver, 6 bronze).

"We have also fielded teams in the men's and women's 4x100m and 4x400m relays, and we are hoping to qualify for the World Championships," the AFI secretary general said. The Indian men's 4x400m and 4x400m mixed teams have failed to qualify for the World Championships through the World Athletics Relays in Guangzhou, China, earlier this month. (PTI)

# RCB look to strengthen top two spot against SRH

**LUCKNOW, May 22:** Already through to the playoffs, Royal Challengers Bengaluru will aim to secure a top-two league stage finish for the first time in nine years when they take on Sunrisers Hyderabad in their Indian Premier League clash here on Friday.

RCB haven't finished inside the top two since the 2016 season when they signed off as runners-up eventually.

However, currently second on the table with 17 points from 12 games, victories in their remaining two matches could potentially lock a top-two spot.

Friday's fixture, originally a home game for the Bengaluru outfit, was shifted due to the onset of monsoon.

RCB was in red-hot form prior to the league's disruption due to the India-Pakistan military conflict and the side had strung together four consecutive wins.

But the momentum was halted by a washout in their first game after resumption. Following a 20-day break, it will be interesting to see whether they retain their rhythm and competitive edge.

Chasing an elusive IPL crown, RCB have managed one of their most consistent campaigns in recent memory.

The ever-reliable Virat Kohli has been in imperious form, scoring seven fifties in 11 innings and anchoring the top order with characteristic elegance.

Skipper Rajat Patidar, Tim David, and Romario Shepherd have complemented him well with timely bursts of power hitting.

That said, Patidar's form took a dip just before the break. After averaging 37.2 in his



first five games, he managed only 53 runs in the next five at an average of 10.6.

A finger injury, sustained during the home clash against Chennai Super Kings, forced him into a splint. However, he has been batting freely in the nets once again in a promising sign for RCB heading into the business end.

The spin duo of Krunal Pandya and

Suyash Sharma has been very effective while Josh Hazlewood and Yash Dayal have bowled the difficult overs with ease in the pace department.

However, Hazlewood will not be available for the game as he recovers from his shoulder injury.

In an added boost, most of RCB's foreign recruits are available for this match and beyond.

yond.

Last year's finalists, Sunrisers Hyderabad, are coming off a convincing six-wicket win over Lucknow Super Giants and will be eager to carry that momentum and finish this forgettable season on a high.

While SRH's campaign has had flashes of brilliance, particularly from explosive openers Abhishek Sharma and Travis Head, consistency has remained elusive, leading to their eighth position on the table.

Their bowling unit, despite featuring marquee names like skipper Pat Cummins and India pacer Mohammad Shami, has struggled to deliver collectively and assert control in key moments.

Teams (from):

Royal Challengers Bengaluru: Phil Salt, Virat Kohli, Rajat Patidar (c), Mayank Agarwal, Jitesh Sharma (wk), Tim David, Krunal Pandya, Romario Shepherd, Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Suyash Sharma, Josh Hazlewood, Yash Dayal, Rasikh Dar Salam, Manoj Bhandage, Jacob Bethell, Swapnil Singh, Liam Livingstone, Nuwan Thushara, Lungi Ngidi, Mohit Rathore, Swastik Chikara, Abhinandan Singh.

Sunrisers Hyderabad: Pat Cummins (c), Ishan Kishan (wk), Atharva Taide, Abhinav Manohar, Aniket Verma, Sachin Baby, Smaran Ravichandran, Heinrich Klaasen (wk), Travis Head, Harshal Patel, Kamindu Mendis, Wiaan Mulder, Abhishek Sharma, Nitish Kumar Reddy, Mohammed Shami, Rahul Chahar, Simarjeet Singh, Zeeshan Ansari, Jaydev Unadkat, Eshan Malunga.

Match starts 7:30pm IST. (PTI)

## Chopra up against Weber again in Poland after 90m duel in Doha

**CHORZOW (POLAND), May 22:** The coveted 90m frontier finally breached in Doha last week, Neeraj Chopra will be eying an even bigger throw in yet another top-class men's javelin field at the ORLEN Janusz Kusocinski Memorial meet here on Friday.

Chopra sent his spear to 90.23m at the Doha Diamond League though he had to settle for a second-place finish after German Julian Weber produced a 91.06m effort in his last attempt to upstage the Indian. It was also Weber's maiden 90m throw.

Weber, an European champion in 2022 and silver-medallist in 2024, will be there in Poland too along with two-time world champion Anderson Peters (PB: 93.07m) of Grenada, who finished third in Doha with a throw of 84m.

Polish national record holder Marcin Krukowski (PB: 89.55m) and compatriots

Cyprian Mrzyglod

(PB: 84.97m) and

Dawid Wegner

(PB: 82.21m),

Andrian Mar-

dare (86.66m)

of Moldova and

Ukraine's Artur

Felfner (PB:

84.32m) complete

the eight-

man field.

Since cross-

ing 88m in

2018, the 90m-

mark has been

on the 27-year-

old Chopra's radar.

Relieved that the monkey is finally off his back,

Chopra made it clear that "it was just the beginning" and he will be

gunning for farther distances in the long season ahead.

The climax of the season will be the World Championships in Sep-

tember in Tokyo where he will be defending his title.

He is no longer troubled by the groin niggle that affected his per-

formance in the last few years. He is also much more confident after

roping in the iconic Jan Zelezny, who holds the world record for longest

throw.

"I and my coach are still working on some aspects of my throw. I

am still learning things. We started working together only in February

this year," Chopra had said in Doha.

"So I believe I can have more 90m throws and I can throw farther

distances in the upcoming events this year till the World Champi-

onships.

"I was always feeling something in my groin in the last few years. I

did not give my best because of that. This year I feel much better."

Chopra was earlier slated to compete in the inaugural NC Classic

— an event to be hosted by him on May 24 in Bengaluru — alongside

several global and Indian stars. But the event was postponed in the

wake of military confrontation between India and Pakistan.

The event in Poland will be the third competition for Chopra this

season. He started in South Africa at the Potch Invitational Track event

-- a World Athletics Continental Tour Challenger competition -- in

Potchefstroom on April 16, emerging on top with a modest throw of

84.52m.

ORLEN Janusz Kusocinski Memorial is a World Athletics Conti-

ental Tour silver event. It is the oldest continuously held track and

field meeting in Poland and one of the oldest in Europe.

Since the first edition in 1954, organised on the initiative of friends

of the legendary Olympic champion runner Janusz Kusocinski, the

event has attracted the biggest names in the world of track and field.

After this event, Chopra is also set to compete at the Golden Spike

2025 athletics meet in Ostrava, Czech Republic on June 24, hoping to

be third time lucky after pulling out in the last two editions due to in-

juries. (PTI)



## Ayush Mhatre to lead India U19 in England tour, Suryavanshi also included



**NEW DELHI, May 22:** Mumbai's Ayush Mhatre was on Thursday appointed captain of the India U-19 team for next month's tour of England, while 14-year-old batting sensation Vaibhav Suryavanshi is also included in the squad.

The tour, scheduled to begin on June 24, will include a 50-over warm-up match, followed by a five-match Youth One-Day series and two Multi-Day matches against England U19.

Suryavanshi's selection comes on the back of a breakthrough IPL season with Rajasthan Royals.

The baby-faced big-hitter from Bihar's Samastipur had become the toast of the nation after becoming the youngest to smash an IPL hundred and his 35-ball century last month against Gujarat Titans was also the second fastest of the league.

He has played five first-class matches and six List A games for Bihar but is yet to score a hundred in any of those matches. However, Suryavanshi had made a hundred against the Australia U19 in the first Youth Test at Chennai last year.

Seventeen-year-old Mhatre, on the other hand, has played nine first-class matches and seven List A games, scoring 962 runs. The opener re-

placed Chennai Super Kings skipper Ruturaj Gaikwad midway this season after the latter was ruled out with an elbow injury. Mumbai's Wicket-keeper batter Abhigyan Kundu has been named Mhatre's deputy.

While another interesting selection is that of Kerala leg-spinner Mohammed Enaan, who was impressive against Australia U19 in December last year.

Enaan grabbed 16 wickets from two Youth Tests against the Aussies to emerge the top wicket-taker in that series. Punjab off-spinner Anmoljeet Singh, who was the second highest-wicket taker of that series with 9 scalps, too found a place in the squad.

**India U19 Squad**

Ayush Mhatre (Captain), Vaibhav Sooryavanshi, Vihaan Malhotra, Mauliyarajsinh Chavda, Rahul Kumar, Abhigyan Kundu (Vice-Captain & WK), Harvansh Singh (WK), R S Ambrish, Kanishk Chouhan, Khilan Patel, Henil Patel, Yudhajit Guha, Pranav Raghavendra, Mohammed Enaan, Aditya Rana, Anmoljeet Singh.

**Standby Players:** Naman Pushpak, D Deepesh, Vedant Trivedi, Vikalp Tiwari, Alankrith Rapole (WK). (PTI)

## Indian team announced for FIH Hockey Pro League 2024-25 European leg

**NEW DELHI, May 22:** Hockey India on Thursday announced a 24-member Indian men's team for the European leg of FIH Hockey Pro League to be played in Amstelveen, Netherlands and Antwerp, Belgium, from June 7.

India will begin their European leg with two matches each against the Netherlands on June 7 and 9, followed by a double header against Argentina on June 11 and 12 at the Wagner Stadium in Amstelveen. They will then travel to Antwerp to face Australia on June 14 and 15 before ending their campaign against hosts Belgium on June 21 and 22.

India played the home leg of the Pro League in Bhubaneswar earlier this year where they secured 15 points with five wins in eight games and now stand third in the points table.

"We wanted a bit more experience in the squad this time around and I am really happy with the selec-

tion," chief coach Craig Fulton said.

"The team has been training well as we're looking to try and push as hard as possible and win the Pro League. Since there's qualification for the World Cup on the line, we want to try and get as many points to put ourselves in a good position for that," he added.

India have pruned down their squad from 32 to 24 members since their Bhubaneswar leg.

Those missing out include defender Varun Kumar, midfielder Moirangthem Rabichandra Singh, and forwards Bobby Singh DHami, Arajjeet Singh Hundal, Uttam Singh, Angad Bir Singh and Arshdeep.

"We haven't drawn any games so far in the tournament and I believe we need to turn our losses into draws and then go for a shootout, so if we don't really get the desired results, we can still get points on the board," Fulton said.

"We also need to improve our penalty corner conversion rate so yes, we've got some good objectives to try and achieve this time around," he concluded.

With the highest-placed team of the league securing a spot in the 2026 Men's FIH World Cup, India will be hoping to improve upon their performance and win maximum points in the remaining eight matches of the tournament.

**Team:** Goalkeepers: Krishan Bahadur Pathak, Suraj Karkera.

**Defenders:** Sumit, Amit Rohidas, Jugraj Singh, Nilam Sanjeev Xess, Harmanpreet Singh, Jarmanpreet Singh, Sanjay and Yashdeep Siwach.

**Midfielders:** Raj Kumar Pal, Nilakanta Sharma, Hardik Singh, Rajinder Singh, Manpreet Singh, Vivek Sagar Prasad, Shamsher Singh.

**Forwards:** Gurjant Singh, Abhishek, Shilanand Lakra, Mandeep Singh, Lalit Kumar Upadhyay, Dilpreet Singh, Sukhjeet Singh. (PTI)

## Naushad Moosa names 29-member India U23 probables list

**NEW DELHI, May 22:** India U-23 men's national team head coach Naushad Moosa on Thursday named a 29-member probable squad for the friendly matches in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, next month. The India U23 side will face the Tajikistan U23 and Kyrgyz Republic U23 teams in two matches on June 18 and June 21 respectively, as part of the All India Football Federation's (AIFF) long-term plan to smoothen a pathway to the senior national team. The team will set camp in Kolkata on June 1, where they will train before setting off for Dushanbe, on June 16.

As part of the long-term plans for the India U23s, the AIFF has lined-up camps and exposure friendly matches for the Blue Colts during the FIFA international windows in order to prepare for AFC U23 Asian Cup Qualifiers, to be held later this year, and the Asian Games, to be staged

in Japan in 2026.

India U-23 men's national team probables list:

**Goalkeepers:** Sahil, Priyansh Dubey, Md Arbaz.

**Defenders:** Nikhil Barla, Dippendu Biswas, Bikash Yumnam, Pramveer, Clarence Fernandes, Sajad Hussain Parray, Muhammed Saheef, Subham Bhat-tacharya, Suman Dey.

**Midfielders:** Vibin Mohanan, Lalremthluanga Fana, Vinith Venkatesh, Harsh Patre, Rahul Raju, Lalriniiana Hnamte, Macaront Louis Nickson, Manglenhang Kipgen, Chingangbam Shiv-aldo Singh, Mohammed Aimen, Huidrom Thoi Singh.

**Forwards:** Parthib Sundar Gogoi, Md Suhail, Korou Singh Thingujam, Mohammed Sanan K, Alan Shaji, Joseph Sunny. (PTI)

## Seifert to replace Bethell for IPL play-offs

**NEW DELHI, May 22:** Royal Challengers Bengaluru on Thursday signed New Zealander Tim Seifert as a replacement for England batter Jacob Bethell, who will be unavailable for the IPL play-offs due to national commitments.

The replacement will be effective from May 24, the BCCI said in a statement.

Seifert, who has scored 1540 runs in 66 T20s for the Black-caps, has played only three games in the IPL previously and last featured in the tournament in 2022. He will join RCB for Rs two crore.

"Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) have signed Tim Seifert as Jacob Bethell is set to leave from TATA Indian Premier League (IPL) 2025 for England on May 24, 2025 - following RCB's league-stage game against Sunrisers Hyderabad on May 23, 2025 - to join the England team," the statement added.

Bethell's last game with RCB will be on Friday when they take on Sunrisers Hyderabad. Their final league game will be against Lucknow Super Giants on May 27. (PTI)

### M/S NANG PINKEY MANCHEY

We Deal in all Segments of Organic and In-Organic Agriculture Inputs

+91 70027 86249/94350 36104

pinkeymanchey64@gmail.com

Near Arunachal University, Namsai, Arunachal Pradesh

GSTIN : 12GLLP0352P1ZS

## Swastha Hospital

Comprehensive Heart Care for Better Health

# CARDIOLOGIST

## UPPER ASSAM'S ONLY AI CATHLAB

First to start a dedicated primary angioplasty programme in Upper Assam

Equipped with advanced technology and an experienced medical team.

### OUR EXPERTISE INCLUDES:

- Primary Angioplasties
- Complex Angioplasty
- CTO PCI
- Angiography and Angioplasty
- Temporary & Permanent Pacemaker Implantations
- Balloon Valvuloplasty
- Left main Coronary Artery Intervention
- Septal Pacing
- Physiological Pacing
- Peripheral Artery Disease Treatment
- Emergency Cardiac Interventions

### Interventional Cardiologist

## DR. REJA MD. WASIF BORA

MD (Medicine) DM (Cardiology)

## MON-FRI OPD

FULL-TIME CARDIOLOGIST AVAILABLE

FOR APPOINTMENT +91 60029-64445

ADDRESS: SWASTHA HOSPITAL, AMC ROAD, GRAHAM BAZAAR TINIALI, NEAR CIRCUIT HOUSE, DIBRUGARH

INFORMATION CENTER AT 'THE HILLS TIMES' OFFICE, 2<sup>ND</sup> MILE, NAMSAI, ARUNACHAL PRADESH.

PHONE NUMBER: 70027-86249, 96128-45442