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Imposition of emergency: CM seeks apology from Cong

GUWAHATI, June 25: The Congress should extend an unconditional apology to the people of India for imposing Emergency and dictatorship on a nation, the history and civilisation of which are rooted in democracy, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said on Wednesday.

Emergency was one of the darkest periods in India's history and the youth today should learn about how the nation was plunged into darkness and freedom was suppressed, he asserted.

The Emergency declared on June 25, 1975, by then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi lasted until March 21, 1977. It was marked by widespread press censorship, arrests without trial and the stifling of dissent in academia, politics and civil society. 'The Congress Party must give an open declaration that they will not bring back Emergency to our country', the chief minister told reporters after attending a 'Mock Parliament' to mark the 50th year of the imposition of emergency.

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi always 'talks about the Constitution but he must remember that it is his family and party that "murdered the spirit and soul of the Constitution"', Sarma said.

'Today we are observing 'Black Day' because on this day 50 years ago, the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi had clamped the emergency illegally and even went to the extent of suspending the Fundamental Rights of the people,' he said. There was a resistance movement led by Lok Nayak Jay Prakash Narayan and lakhs of people came out to the street and protested against the imposition of Emergency, Sarma added.



'If every youth of India remembers Samvidhan Hatya Diwas (Day of the Constitution's murder), then in future no one thinking like Indira Gandhi will be encouraged nor will the darkness of Emergency cover India again,' he said at the Mock Parliament.

Sarma said that one should not forget two facts - the Congress subverted the Constitution to latch on to power, and even 50 years later, the mindset behind Emergency is still thriving in the party.

Earlier in the day, the chief minister of the BJP-ruled state had also lashed out at the Congress, stating that those who had "strangled the Constitution are today trying to become its protector".

"As we mark 50 years of this brutal episode, India pays tribute to the brave men and women who stood firm to uphold the Constitution during those dark times," he said in a post on X. (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Tension runs high on Assam-Meghalaya border over plantation drive ● One hurt in stone pelting incident

Police resort to aerial firing to restore order

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, June 25: A plantation drive on a disputed stretch of the Assam-Meghalaya border escalated into a violent confrontation on Wednesday, leading to the injury of one person and heightened tensions between residents of the two neighbouring states.

The incident occurred near Lapang village, which lies in a contested area between Meghalaya's West Jaintia Hills district and Assam's West Karbi Anglong.

According to an official statement, the Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council (KAAC) of Assam had carried out a sapling plantation drive in the area earlier this week.

However, around 10-11 am on Wednesday, a crowd of approximately 400 people from Lapang and surrounding villages, supported by members of several Meghalaya-based social organisations, arrived at the plantation site and began uprooting saplings and dismantling wooden protective



structures. They claimed that Assam authorities were attempting to encroach into Meghalaya territory, a charge strongly contested by local officials in Assam.

Tensions quickly escalated into a physical confrontation when local residents from Assam objected to the uprooting of saplings.

During the clash, one local resident, Chandra Terang of Tapat, sustained a head injury, allegedly after being hit by a stone thrown from the Meghalaya side.

Assam Police had to resort to aerial firing and tear gas shelling to disperse the crowd and restore order. Meghalaya Police also

reached the site soon after to assist in calming tensions.

West Jaintia Hills Deputy Commissioner Abhinav Kumar Singh told PTI that the plantation drive had taken place without prior notice to Meghalaya's district administration.

He added that the administration had been aware of the drive for a week and had advised local residents to refrain from escalating matters, as a peace meeting had been scheduled for the day.

However, the meeting at Tahpat village failed to take place due to low participation.

Singh confirmed that police personnel and three border magistrates have been deployed at the site for coordination with Assam officials, and that the situation is now under control. Meetings have been held at the DC and SP levels, and officials are planning village-level peace dialogues involving headmen and local councils from both states. On the Assam side, sources from (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Assam govt changes nomenclature of officers to act against child marriage

GUWAHATI, June 25: The Assam government has rechristened all the District Child Protection Officers as Child Marriage Prohibition Officers (CMPOs), according to an official notification.

Women and Child Development Department Principal Secretary Mukesh Chandra Sahu issued a notification on Monday, which was made available to media on Wednesday, to effect the change in the nomenclature of the officers in all the districts.

"...the Governor of Assam is pleased to notify the District Child Protection Officers of all Districts of Assam as Child Marriage Prohibition Officers (CMPOs) at the district level with immediate effect," it added.

Sahu explained that the CMPOs will perform all the functions and duties specified under the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 (PCMA 2006).

"In addition to these functions and duties as specified in PCMA 2006, the CMPOs will also perform the functions and duties as specified under...the Assam Prohibition of Child Marriage Rules, 2015," he added.

The CMPOs will lodge FIRs under The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012 (as amended in 2019) or under The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006, as the case may be, the notification stated.

"The CMPOs notified above are in addition to the Gram Panchayat Secretaries notified in general areas and the Lot Mandals (Patwaris in Dima Hasao) in Sixth Schedule areas for the same purpose. All CMPOs in the districts shall maintain close coordination with each other," Sahu said. (PTI)

88 undocumented immigrants deported from Cachar district Himanta talks tough on illegal influx issue

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, June 25: Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Wednesday reaffirmed his government's hard-line stance on illegal immigration, announcing the identification and deportation of 88 undocumented immigrants from Cachar district over the past month. The Chief Minister shared the update through a post on social media platform X, declaring "Uncompromising Action against Illegal Immigration."

According to the statement, the operation, which began on May 24 resulted in the pushback of 59 Bangladeshi nationals and 29 Rohingyas. The individuals were identified through special intelligence-based operations and subsequently deported to Bangladesh via Sribhumi district, which lies along the international border.

"This is part of our continued fight for Jati, Mati, Bheti — identity, land, and homeland," Sarma said, reiterating his government's long-held position that illegal infiltration poses a threat to Assam's demographic balance and cultural fabric.

The crackdown aligns with Assam's broader campaign against undocumented immigrants, a politically sensitive issue that has seen heightened action in recent years. Police sources confirm that surveillance and border patrolling have been intensified in key districts such as Cachar, Karimganj, and Dhubri, with more deportations expected as operations continue.

In the latest phase of Assam's intensified crackdown on illegal immigration, 15 suspected Bangladeshi nationals, including women and children, were detained on Sunday night in Cachar district. Authorities confirmed that ten individuals were apprehended from Hilara in Katigorah, while five others were intercepted by vigilant local residents in Bishambarpur and later handed over to the police.

A senior police official revealed that many of those detained originally hailed from Khulna, Bangladesh, and had been living and working in Surat, Gujarat, for several years. With mounting pressure from law enforcement in Gujarat targeting undocumented migrants, the group is believed to have attempted a return to Bangladesh by crossing through Assam's border districts.

"They informed us they were trying to go back home out of fear of arrest in Gujarat," the officer said, crediting the Village Defence Party (VDP) and local villagers for assisting in their interception.

The latest detentions come just a week after a separate group of nine Bangladeshis, also believed to be returning from Gujarat, were stopped in Hilara area in the Cachar district while (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

APCB issues show cause notice to ONGC over unauthorised rig operation

HT Correspondent

SIVASAGAR, June 25: The Assam Pollution Control Board (APCB) has issued a show cause notice to the Chief General Manager (Drilling), ONGC Assam Asset, directing the company to explain why Environmental Compensation should not be imposed for operating rig number RDS 147A at Barichuk Bhatiaapur without obtaining the mandatory Consent to Establish (CTE) and Consent to Operate (CTO).

The rig has been spewing gas since June 12, posing environmental and public health concerns.

The APCB has cited violations under various provisions of the Water and Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Acts and the Environment (Protection) Act.

According to the notice issued by Jayanta Dutta, Regional Head of APCB, Sivasagar, the board is



empowered under an order of the National Green Tribunal (NGT) dated February 19, 2019, in OA No. 593/2017, to levy Environmental Compensation for such violations.

The APCB stated that ONGC had "nonchalantly violated the provisions of law," causing pollution and endangering public safety.

Exercising powers under Section 33(A) of the Water Act, 1974, and Section 5 of the Environment Protection Act, 1986, the board directed ONGC to respond within 15 days from the date of issue of the notice. The gas leak from the RDS 147A well led to the evacuation of nearby residents and raised fears of a blowout. (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Union Cabinet resolves to honour sacrifices of victims of Emergency

NEW DELHI, June 25: The Union Cabinet on Wednesday resolved to commemorate and honour the sacrifices of countless individuals who resisted the Emergency and observed a brief silence as a mark of tribute to them.

At its meeting under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Union Cabinet observed a two-minute silence as a tribute to those whose constitutionally guaranteed democratic rights were taken away and who were then subjected to unimaginable horrors.

"The Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, resolved to commemorate and honour the sacrifices of countless individuals who valiantly resisted the Emergency and its attempt at subversion of the spirit of Indian Constitution, a subversion which began in 1974 with a heavy-handed attempt at crushing the Navnir-



man Andolan and Sampooran Kranti Abhiyan," said the resolution passed at the Cabinet.

"The Union Cabinet paid tributes to their exemplary courage and valiant resistance to the Emergency's excesses," Information and

Broadcasting Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said at the Cabinet briefing.

The resolution further said the year 2025 marks 50 years of the 'Samvidhan Hatya Diwas' — an unforgettable chapter in the history of India where the Constitution was subverted, the Republic and democratic spirit of India were attacked, federalism was undermined, and fundamental rights, human liberty and dignity were suspended.

"The Union Cabinet reaffirmed that the people of India continue to repose unflinching faith in the Indian Constitution and the resilience of the country's democratic ethos," Vaishnaw said.

"It is as important for the young as it is for the old to draw inspiration from those who resisted dictatorial tendencies and stood firm to defend our Constitution (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Restoration work underway in Lumding-Badarpur section

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, June 25: The Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) has launched a massive restoration effort to reinstate rail connectivity in the Lumding-Badarpur Hill section, which was severely disrupted following a major landslide.

According to an official statement, nearly 100 metres of railway track were affected after continuous heavy rainfall triggered a slope failure near a road situated just 15 metres from the railway line. A high-level emergency meeting was held on June 24, 2025, involving the Chief Secretary of Assam, the General Manager of NFR, and senior officials from the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI), among others.

During the meeting, a coordinated restoration plan was finalised and a joint operation is currently underway. Over 25 units of heavy machinery, including excavators, JCBs, and dumpers, along with approximately 200 labourers, have been mobilised to carry out the work at the site.

Senior railway officials, including the Divisional Railway Manager (DRM) of Lumding, are monitoring the operation on the ground to ensure round-the-clock progress. (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

City erupts in pride as CMS alumnus becomes India's second man in space Bhangra and tears in Lucknow as city-boy Shukla lift off to space

LUCKNOW, June 25: Chants of "Hip Hip Hurray", spontaneous bhangra and quiet tears. It was a morning to remember at the City Montessori School as Lucknow boy Shubhanshu Shukla lifted off into space -- and history -- on board the SpaceX Falcon 9-rocket from the Kennedy Space Centre (KSC) in Florida on Wednesday.

As the rocket pierced through Florida skies, Group Captain Shukla became only the second Indian in history to travel to space after Rakesh Sharma in 1994 and the first Indian astronaut to travel to the International Space Station (ISS).

"It's a great moment not just for us but for our country. What can we say at this moment, I am struggling for words now. My blessings are always there with my son," his father Shambhu Shukla told PTI.

"I have nothing more to say at this moment. I am delighted," Shubhanshu's mother told PTI. "These are tears of joy. The lift off was an emotional moment for us."

ward for him to return after a successful mission, I also know that even after returning back on earth, it will take a while before he actually gets back among us. We are all overwhelmed with pride -- our son has made history," she told PTI.

The proud parents were there with many others at CMS Kanpur Road's World Unity Convention Centre (WUCC) auditorium to witness the launch live.

Among those gathered were his sisters, senior defence personnel, CMS faculty, the city's who's who and wide-eyed students.

There were thunderous applause, cheers and impromptu bhangra as the rocket lifted off. Some students were also heard chanting 'Bharat Mata ki Jai'.

As the Falcon 9 rocket soared into the skies, the family grew emotional watching the live launch, with their eyes full.

Asked about the tears, Shubhanshu's mother told PTI. "These are tears of joy. The lift off was an emotional moment for us."



Shubhanshu's sister Suchi Shukla told PTI Videos, "My parents started the day with prayers. We also spoke to Shubhanshu in the morning -- he sounded confident, calm, and happy that the moment he had prepared for so long had finally arrived. He must have been nervous, but he didn't show

"historic achievement".

Taking to X, the chief minister said, "A proud moment for India! Heartiest congratulations to Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla, the Mission Pilot of Axiom 4 Mission, on this historic achievement. Under the visionary leadership of Hon PM Shri @narendramodi Ji, India's participation in this international space mission showcases our unwavering commitment to scientific advancement and global collaboration. Warm wishes for a successful mission ahead. Jai Hind!" Posters congratulating Shubhanshu on his historic space voyage have come up all over the state capital.

His alma mater City Montessori School (CMS) hosted Vyomotsav, an immersive watch-party that transformed the campus into a vibrant "mini space centre", paying tribute to its illustrious alumnus.

CMS also arranged a live Axiom mission broadcast, a replica of the ISS Cupola module, a "Defy Gravity" photo booth, telescope view-

ings, and a simulated Mission Control Centre.

Born in Lucknow in 1985 and educated from montessori through Class 12 at CMS Aliganj, Shukla went on to graduate from the National Defence Academy and was commissioned into the Indian Air Force in 2006.

With over 2,000 hours of flight experience on elite combat aircraft, he was selected in 2019 for India's Gaganyaan human spaceflight programme and later chosen as the pilot for Ax-4.

Sharing the capsule with NASA senior Dr Peggy Whitson (mission commander) and astronauts from Hungary and Poland, the 39-year-old's 14-day mission as part of a commercial mission by Axiom Space will contribute to micro-gravity research in areas including human physiology, nutrition, and seed germination in space.

CMS founder-director Bharti Gandhi said, "Many CMS students have brought us laurels, but Shubhanshu's (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Three policemen injured in grenade attack in Assam

GUWAHATI, June 25: Three Assam Police personnel were injured when two motorcycle-borne persons lobbed a grenade at a CRPF camp, where they were staying, at Bokakhat in Golaghat district, police said on Wednesday.

The grenade was lobbed at the camp in Sarguri area on Tuesday night and the injured were admitted to Swahid Kamala Miri Civil Hospital in Bokakhat where they were undergoing treatment, a police officer said.

The injured were stated to be out of danger. The police rushed to the spot and recovered splinters from the spot, the officer said.

Investigations were underway to ascertain the identity of the persons involved in the incident.

"We are investigating from all angles, including whether it was the handiwork of extremists, poachers or miscreants," the officer added. Agriculture Minister Atul Bora, representing Bokakhat constituency, (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Markets log gains for 2nd day; Sensex, Nifty surge nearly 1 pc on global rally

MUMBAI, June 25: Benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty surged nearly 1 per cent on Wednesday, powered by widespread buying and a positive trend in global equities amid easing tensions in the Middle East following a ceasefire between Iran and Israel. Besides, intense buying market heavyweights HDFC Bank, Infosys and Reliance Industries supported domestic equities, traders said.

Extending its previous day's rally, the 30-share Sensex jumped 700.40 points or 0.85 per cent to settle at 82,755.51. During the day, it surged 760.8 points or 0.92 per cent to 82,815.91.

As many as 2,821 stocks advanced while 1,207 declined and 134 remained unchanged on the BSE.

Similarly, the wider gauge NSE Nifty climbed 200.40 points or 0.80 per cent to 25,244.75.

"Benchmark indices extended their winning streak for a second consecutive session on Wednesday, closing decisively in the green as investor sentiment got a boost from the Israel-Iran ceasefire, which alleviated geopolitical overhang. The Nifty kicked off trade on a buoyant note, subsequently oscillated in a narrow band with a positive undertone..." according to Bajaj Broking market commentary.

From the Sensex pack, Titan, Mahindra & Mahindra, Infosys, Power Grid, Tata Consultancy



Services and Bharti Airtel were among the major gainers.

On the other hand, Bharat Electronics, Kotak Mahindra Bank and Axis Bank were the laggards.

"Markets maintained their positive tone and gained nearly a per cent, supported by favourable global cues. A strong handover from the US markets triggered a gap-up start, which was further fuelled by buying interest in select heavyweight stocks," Ajit Mishra - SVP, Research, Religare Broking Ltd, said.

Meanwhile, Mukesh Ambani and Gautam Adani have partnered to sell automotive fuels by leveraging each other's fuel retail networks -- marking the second business collaboration between the two billionaire industrialists.

Ambani's fuel venture with UK's BP, Jio-bp, will set up petrol and diesel dispensers at CNG retail outlets of Adani Total Gas Ltd (ATGL).

Alongside, ATGL -- the equal city gas joint venture of Adani Group and TotalEnergies of France -- will put up CNG dispensing units at Jio-bp's fuel pumps, according to a joint statement on Wednesday.

The BSE smallcap gauge jumped 1.59 per cent, and the mid-cap index surged 0.63 per cent.

Among BSE sectoral indices, tech surged 1.69 per cent, BSE Focused IT (1.69 per cent), IT (1.68 per cent), telecommunication (1.42 per cent), consumer discretionary (1.26 per cent), consumer durables (1.26 per cent) and healthcare

(1.11 per cent).

In contrast, Capital Goods and oil & gas were the laggards.

"Indian equity markets have staged a recovery, supported by easing geopolitical tensions in the Middle East and a moderation in crude oil prices. While FIIs continue to withdraw capital, positive global cues are helping sustain domestic market momentum. Domestically, a favourable monsoon forecast, and moderating inflation are further underpinning the optimism," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Investments Limited, said.

In Asian markets, South Korea's Kospi, Japan's Nikkei 225 index, Shanghai's SSE Composite index and Hong Kong's Hang Seng settled higher.

European markets were trading on a mixed note in mid-session trade. US markets ended significantly higher on Tuesday.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude climbed 1.21 per cent to USD 67.95 a barrel.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth ₹ 5,266.01 crore on Tuesday, according to exchange data. Domestic Institutional Investors (DII) bought stocks worth ₹ 5,209.60 crore.

On Tuesday, the Sensex settled in the green, climbing 158.32 points or 0.19 per cent to 82,055.11. On similar lines, the Nifty rose by 72.45 points or 0.29 per cent to end at 25,044.35. (PTI)

Rupee falls 3 paise to close at 86.08 against US dollar

MUMBAI, June 25: The rupee gave up its gains and settled for the day lower by 3 paise at 86.08 against the US dollar on Wednesday, weighed down by the recovery in the US Dollar index and selling pressure from foreign funds. Forex traders said the ceasefire between Israel and Iran has led to a rise in risk appetite. Moreover, a strong show in the domestic equity market prevented steep losses in the local unit, they said.

At the interbank foreign exchange, the rupee opened at 86.00 against the US dollar and traded in the range of 85.79-86.14 before settling at 86.08, down 3 paise from its previous close.

The Indian rupee closed almost flat amid quiet regional price action. "Traders are now focused on upcoming trade-related updates for short-term direction. Near-term, USD/INR has support at 85.10 and resistance at 85.90," said Dilip Parmar, Research Analyst, HDFC Securities. The local unit had logged its steepest single-day gain in nearly five years on Tuesday to end 73 paise higher at 86.05 against the greenback. "The rupee made a high of 85.79 before oil companies stepped in and took it lower to 86.13 with the market still sceptical of the Iran-Israel ceasefire," Anil Kumar Bhansali, Head of Treasury and Executive Director, Finrex Treasury Advisors LLP, said. (PTI)

NAME CORRECTION

My name wrongly recorded in Aadhaar Card as Hatchong instead of Hatchong Miriam Singson, that is my correct name. Through the Court Notary, I made clear that Hatchong and Hatchong Miriam Singson is a single person. My Correct name is Hatchong Miriam Singson.

SURNAME CHANGE

I, Dipali Roy, W/O. Sri Debashish Roy, D/O. Anil Chandra Das, R/O. Vill. Pub Kandulimari, P.O. Jugijan Bazar, P.S. Hojai, Dist. Hojai, (Assam) solemnly affirm and declare via a notarial affidavit at Sankardev Nagar Hojai Court, Hojai that Dipali Das and Dipali Roy are the names of one and same person i.e. of mine. I have renounced my parental surname 'Das' and adopted my husband's surname 'Roy'. Henceforth I shall be known as Dipali Roy for all purposes.

AFFIDAVIT

I, Sri Lokharam Gorth son of Sri Chunilal Gorth an earlier resident of Old Mohong-II, P.O. New Mohong, P.S. Madhavpur of Namsai district in Arunachal Pradesh do hereby declare the Notary Public/Magistrate Margherita dated 25th June 2025, that I have changed my permanent and residential address as Madhavpur NC, P.O. Purani Pukhuri in Tinsukia district Assam. Any future correspondence and necessary communication whatsoever henceforth may be executed in my new address as above.

ONGC well blowout in Assam: Gas leakage continues for 14 days

SIVASAGAR, June 25: Leakage of gas continued for 14 days from a crude oil well of ONGC in Assam's Sivasagar district although the energy major on Wednesday claimed to have achieved a "critical milestone" in its effort to control the blowout.

In its daily bulletin on the blowout incident, ONGC said it has achieved a "critical milestone" in its ongoing well control operations in the local unit, they said.

"With precision and coordination, the extra-long boom crane and a 40-ton crane successfully worked together to remove the 42 tubing stands from the derrick of the rig, clearing the path for the safe removal of the rig base from the wellhead," it added.

The blowout took place on June 12 at Well No RDS 147A of Rig No SKP 135 of Rudrasagar oil field of Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) at Barichuk of Bhatiapur. A private firm, SK Petro Services, was operating the well on behalf of the state-run Maharatna company.

The statement said that following the removal of the rig base, the next phase of operations involves dismantling the existing Blowout Preventer (BOP), followed by the installation of the capping stack.

"During this sequence, a temporary increase in gas discharge is anticipated. ONGC assures that the gas is nontoxic and the volume is significantly reduced, presenting no risk to inhabitants residing beyond a 500-metre radius," it added.

The company also said that it continues to make concerted efforts to control the unabated gas discharge from the well.

"Water blanketing operations continue as part of ONGC's layered safety strategy, while both ONGC and its technical partner CUDD remain fully focused on executing the well control operations in a carefully calibrated and safe manner," it added.

Water is being pumped continuously at high pressure from the Dikhow river, which is flowing near the rig. However, the rising waters in the river have introduced additional logistical challenges.

"In response, the teams are proactively relocating high-capacity pumps to maintain uninterrupted support to ongoing safety systems," ONGC said.

It further said that ambient air quality continues to be rigorously monitored with all key parameters well within permissible limits, while medical and relief camps also remain operational to ensure the well-being of personnel and nearby communities.

"ONGC reiterates its commitment to operational excellence, environmental responsibility and community safety, and continues to work with determination to bring this complex operation to a safe and successful conclusion," the statement said.

Three blowout experts from the US reached the site on June 20 and

are actively engaged in the massive exercise to control the well.

Last week, Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma had urged Union Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister Hardeep Puri to ask the energy major to ramp up their effort to control the blowout in a 'mission mode'.

Sarma had also written to Puri, saying that locals believe there has been "inadequate urgency and seriousness in ONGC's response" while trying to control the well.

The prolonged nature of the incident is causing considerable distress in the surrounding villages as already more than 330 families have been evacuated from their homes and are being supported with basic relief and safety measures at a camp set up in nearby Bongaon.

The Assam government has announced financial aid of Rs 25,000 each to about 350 families affected by the blowout.

An official of ONGC had earlier said that it was an old crude well without production and a perforation job was going on for zone transfer at the time of the blowout.

"It is a kind of servicing of the well. The production was supposed to start from a new zone after the perforation job. At the time of the incident, the logging perforation operation was going on. Suddenly gas started coming out in an uncontrolled manner immediately after the perforation, leading to the blowout," he had added. (PTI)

Key indicators point at economic resilience despite global tensions: RBI Bulletin

MUMBAI, June 25: Key economic indicators point towards resilient economic activity in India across industrial and services sectors amid twin shocks of global trade policy uncertainties and heightened geopolitical tensions, the Reserve Bank's Bulletin said on Wednesday.

An article published in the RBI's June Bulletin said the global economy is in a state of flux.

"In this state of elevated global uncertainty, various high-frequency indicators for May 2025 point towards resilient economic activity in India across the industrial and services sectors," it said.

Agriculture showed a broad-based increase in production across most major crops during 2024-25.

Also, the domestic prices situation remains benign,

with headline inflation staying below the target for the fourth consecutive month in May. Financial conditions remained conducive to facilitating an efficient transmission of rate cuts to the credit market, the article on 'State of the Economy' said.

"In this state of elevated global uncertainty, various high-frequency indicators for May 2025 point towards resilient economic activity in India across the industrial and services sectors," the bulletin said.

According to the article, gross inward foreign direct investment (FDI) amounted to USD 8.8 billion in April 2025, higher than USD 5.9 billion in March 2025 and USD 7.2 billion in April 2024. Manufacturing and business services accounted for nearly half of the gross FDI inflows in April 2025. (PTI)

INTERVIEW NOTICE

A walk-in interview will be held at PMSHRIKENDRIYA VIDYALAYADiphu, Dist- Karbi Anglong, Assam on 05.07.2025 (Saturday) to prepare a panel of contractual teachers for the posts PGT(Chemistry) and ATL Instructor on purely contract basis for the session 2025-26. An interested candidate(s) must have ensured his/her eligibility before applying for the said post(s). For eligibility criteria visit the school website <https://diphu.kvs.ac.in/>. The candidates must report at the venue by 8:00 AM on the day of the interview along with original as well as attested copies of their testimonials of qualification and experience. The remuneration of the said posts will be as per KVS norms. No TA/DA will be paid by the Vidyalaya for attending this walk-in interview.

Note: For more detailed information regarding this advertisement, please refer the Vidyalaya website <https://diphu.kvs.ac.in>

(Dr. Surender Singh)
Principal

Ambani, Adani join hands for fuel marketing in second business partnership

NEW DELHI, June 25: Mukesh Ambani and Gautam Adani have partnered to sell automotive fuels by leveraging each other's fuel retail networks -- marking the second business collaboration between the two billionaire industrialists.

Ambani's fuel venture with UK's BP, Jio-bp, will set up petrol and diesel dispensers at CNG retail outlets of Adani Total Gas Ltd (ATGL). Alongside, ATGL -- the equal city gas joint venture of Adani Group and TotalEnergies of France -- will put up CNG dispensing units at Jio-bp's fuel pumps, according to a joint statement on Wednesday.

The partnership will cover both group's existing as well as future outlets.

Jio-bp owns 1,972 petrol pumps across the country while ATGL operates a network of 650 CNG stations in 34 geographical areas.

"Adani Total Gas Ltd (ATGL) and Jio-bp (operating brand of Reliance BP Mobility Ltd) today (Wednesday) announced signing of an agreement to redefine the auto fuel retail experience for Indian consumers."

"Under this partnership, select ATGL fuel outlets will offer Jio-bp's high-performance liquid fuels (petrol and diesel), while select Jio-bp's fuel outlets will integrate ATGL's CNG dispensing units, within ATGL's authorised geographical areas (GA), thus enhancing the supply of high-quality fuels to transport consumers," the statement said.

This is the second time in recent months that the rival billionaires have come together. In March last year, the two had signed the pact for their first-ever collaboration for a power project in Madhya Pradesh.

Ambani's firm Reliance had picked up a 26 per cent stake in Adani Power's project in MP and signed to use the plants' 500 MW of electricity for captive use.

Adani and Ambani, both hailing from Gujarat, have often been pitted against each other in business. The two have also been jostling for the title of Asia's richest person for the last few years.

With Ambani's interests spanning oil and gas to retail and telecom, and Adani's focus on infrastructure spanning sea ports to airports, coal and mining, they rarely crossed each other's path except in the clean energy business where the two have announced multi-billion investments.

Adani is building mega renewable energy parks and has also ventured into solar modules and wind turbine manufacturing. Ambani's Reliance, too, is building four gigafactories at Jamnagar in Gujarat -- one each for solar panels, batteries, green hydrogen, and fuel cells.

Reliance is also eyeing setting up renewable electricity capacity at Gujarat's Kavada, the arid land bordering Pakistan where Adani is also building the world's largest solar park with 30 gigawatts capacity.

The two had come face-to-face during an auction of the 5G spec-

trum airwaves. While Ambani bid for airwaves to sustain his telecom business, Adani's entry had surprised many. Adani, however, ended up buying a small quantum of spectrum which he later traded with Bharti Airtel.

While Ambani has been in the media space since 2014 with news channels such as CNBC-TV18, CNN-News18, and entertainment channels like Colors, Adani only recently followed in his footsteps. Adani's entry was facilitated when a close associate of Ambani sold out a firm to give him controlling stake in NDTV.

Ambani and Adani are coming together to challenge the dominance of state-owned retailers in the fuel retailing space. State-owned Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL) and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd (HPCL) control over 90 per cent of 97,366 petrol pumps in the country. PSUs are also a dominant player in city gas.

The joint statement issued on Wednesday said ATGL is India's leading city gas distribution (CGD) player, serving natural gas to households, industries, commercial customers, and motorists.

ATGL also offers compressed biogas (CBG), EV charging, and LNG for the transportation segment. Jio-bp, on the other hand, is a leading mobility solutions provider in India, with a strong presence in fuel retailing, low-carbon alternatives, and modern convenience stores. (PTI)

Contd. from Page 1...

Imposition of emergency

"It was solely due to their courageous efforts and valiant sacrifices that the Congress party was brought to its knees -- marking the end of a shameful chapter in our history," he added. Sarma said those who had "strangled the Constitution are today becoming its protectors". "25 June reminds us of the darkest chapter of Indian democracy. Never forget the dark days of the #Emergency," he added.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah had last year announced that the Narendra Modi government would observe June 25 as the 'Samvidhaan Hatya Diwas' to commemorate the "massive contributions" of those who endured "inhuman pain" during the period. (PTI)

Police resort to aerial firing

Karbi Anglong noted that the plantation was conducted within territory they believe to fall under KAAC jurisdiction. The hill in question, where the drive occurred, is claimed by residents of both states, adding to the complexity of the dispute.

Members of the Khasi Students' Union (KSU), who were present at the site, alleged that the KAAC violated a prior agreement by planting saplings in the area.

KSU general secretary Neelke Mukhim confirmed the group's support for the Lapangap residents, stating, "We dismantled all structures and uprooted the saplings. Assam Police fired tear gas shells, but we will continue to defend our land." The disputed area is part of the second phase of ongoing border settlement talks between Assam and Meghalaya.

The two states, which share an 884.9 km-long border, have 12 areas of dispute. In March 2022, both governments signed a pact resolving six areas during the first phase, dividing 36.79 sq km of land nearly equally. However, the remaining six areas--where the current conflict zone falls--are still under negotiation. In light of Wednesday's events, officials from both states have stressed the need to maintain status quo until a permanent solution is reached through ongoing dialogue. A fresh peace meeting is scheduled for Thursday, with hopes that local leaders from both sides can come to a mutual understanding to avoid any recurrence of such incidents.

Police presence has been reinforced, and both administrations have called for calm among residents. (With inputs from PTI)

Himanta talks tough on illegal

travelling in autorickshaws. Officials say surveillance efforts remain heightened across border areas, with more such attempts anticipated.

APCB issues show cause notice

Experts have indicated possible procedural lapses by private contractor SK Petro in handling the well. A three-member expert team from the United States is currently working to cap the well, though torrential rains and rising water levels of the Dikhow River have hampered operations.

The Crisis Management Team (CMT) has kept the RCMT (Reliability-Centred Maintenance Turbine) pump running to maintain a water blanket over the gas outflow, helping to suppress pollutant dispersion. Jayanta Dutta confirmed that noise pollution remains high within a 500-metre radius due to the continuous gas discharge and pump operations.

The water blanket has helped bring down natural gas particles to the ground, mitigating some environmental impact. ONGC has set up two medical camps in the affected area. Residents have reported symptoms such as eye irritation, dizziness, and sleeplessness, allegedly due to the ongoing gas outburst.

Union Cabinet resolves to honour

and its democratic fabric," the minister said while reading out the resolution. "India, as the Mother of Democracy, stands as an example of preserving, protecting and safeguarding constitutional values. Let us, as a nation, renew our resolve to uphold our Constitution and its democratic and federal spirit," the resolution further said. (PTI)

Restoration work underway

Despite these efforts, the restoration team faces significant challenges due to the continuous movement of loose soil and ongoing rainfall in the area. The primary objective at present is to stabilise the hill slope. Following this, nearly 25,000 cubic metres of debris must be cleared from the railway line and adjoining slopes. Protection works will then be implemented to ensure long-term safety and slope stability.

Given the scale of the disruption, train services through the affected section have been cancelled or partially cancelled as a precautionary measure. Among the trains fully cancelled are the Rangiya-Silchar-Rangiya Express (15611/15612), Guwahati-Silchar Express (15615), Silchar-Guwahati Express (15616), Guwahati-Dulabcherra Express (15617), Silchar-Secunderabad Express (12514), and the Anand Vihar Terminal-Agartala Tejas Rajdhani Express (20502) for journeys commencing on June 25 and 26. Additionally, the Dulabcherra-Guwahati Express (15618), Agartala-Guwahati Special (05628), and Silchar-Kolkata Express (05639) commencing on June 26 have also been cancelled. The Guwahati-Agartala Special (05627) and Kolkata-Silchar Special (05640), scheduled for June 27, are included in the cancellations as well.

Several trains will be partially cancelled or short-terminated due to the disruption. These include the Sealdah-Silchar Kaziranga Express (13175), Sabroom-Sealdah Kanchanjan Express (13174), SMVT Bengaluru-Agartala Express (12503), Silchar-Thiruvananthapuram Express (12508), Charlapalli-Agartala Special (07030), Agartala-Charlapalli Special (07029), Agartala-Lokmanya Tilak Terminus Express (12520), and Agartala-Firozpur Express (14619), which will either start or terminate at Guwahati, Lumding, Kamakhya or other intermediate stations.

Train operations in the affected hill section will remain suspended until full restoration is completed. However, the NFR has assured that all-out efforts are being made to reopen the route within a week, subject to favourable weather conditions. Passengers have been urged to stay informed via official railway communication platforms for further updates on train movements and service resumption.

Bhangra and tears in Lucknow

journey to space will forever shine as a beacon of possibility for every Indian child." Added the school president and manager Geeta Gandhi Kingdon, "We are all overjoyed. Though their rocket is yet to reach the space, we are already over the moon."

"From a curious young learner in our classrooms to a pioneering astronaut, Shux's story beautifully encapsulates our school's mission of 'Education for World Unity and Peace'." (PTI)

Three policemen injured in grenade

visited the hospital and inquired about the health of the injured police personnel. "I strongly condemn this cowardly act of violence. Such incidents have no place in a civilised society and will not deter our collective resolve to maintain peace and harmony in the region," Bora posted on X. (PTI)

Rangiya division achieves 100% electrification

HT Bureau
GUWAHATI, June 25: In a significant boost to green and efficient rail connectivity in the Northeast, the Rangiya Division of Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) has achieved 100% electrification, becoming the second fully electrified division in the zone after Alipurduar.

The milestone marks a major stride towards Indian Railways' vision of sustainable, energy-efficient, and environmentally responsible operations.

According to an official state-



ment, the Principal Chief Electrical Engineer (PCEE) of NFR, Sandeep Kumar, recently carried out statutory inspections of the Gauripur-Abhayapuri section in the Rangiya Division. The inspection, essential for obtaining the sanction to commence commercial electric train services, covered a route length of 84.577 kilometres and 110.41 track kilometres.

Following the inspection, a successful electric locomotive trial run was conducted at a maximum sectional speed of 90 kmph.

The trial confirmed the operational readiness and safety of the infrastructure for 25 kV AC electric traction.

The achievement is expected to improve the speed and reliability of train services, reduce operational costs, and cut down carbon emissions in the region.

Electrification of the Gauripur-Abhayapuri section completes the transition of Rangiya Division to electric traction, significantly enhancing its capacity to offer sustainable rail services across Assam and neighbouring states.

The electrification is part of NFR's broader goal for the 2025-26 financial year, which includes electrifying approximately 640 route kilometres across its network.

This initiative will help reduce dependency on fossil fuels and is aimed at enabling the introduction of high-speed, eco-friendly rail services in the Northeast.

Officials noted that the development is a critical component of Indian Railways' long-term strategy to achieve net-zero carbon emissions.

With continuous investments in green infrastructure, the Northeast is poised to become a model region for sustainable rail transport in India.

Sarma urges youth to learn from 'darkest hour' of Indian democracy CM joins mock parliament to mark Emergency anniversary

HT Bureau
GUWAHATI, June 25: Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Wednesday took part in a Mock Parliament organised by the Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha and BJP Mahila Morcha at the Bhogeswari Phukanani Indoor Stadium in Guwahati, to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the imposition of the Emergency in India.

The event, held in remembrance of one of the most controversial chapters in India's democratic history, was attended by prominent party leaders and a large number of youth participants.

According to an official statement, the Chief Minister addressed the gathering, emphasising the importance of remembering and understanding the Emergency period—not just as a historical event but as a crucial lesson for the future.

"It is imperative for the new generation of India to commemorate the Emergency every year to ensure that such events are never repeated," Sarma said.

He noted that the youth have a responsibility to study and reflect upon the widespread atrocities committed during the 21-month period from 1975 to 1977.

Sarma recounted that the Emergency was declared on June 25, 1975, by then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, without prior cabinet approval, which he described as a direct assault on the nation's democratic fabric.

Highlighting the legal and constitutional violations during that time, he pointed to the Supreme Court's infamous judgement that permitted the suspension of Article 21 of the Constitution—effectively nullifying the right to life and personal liberty.

"This enabled the government to arrest and detain individuals without judicial over-



sight, and the state was not held accountable even in cases of custodial deaths," he said.

Citing the Shah Commission Report and other declassified historical documents, the Chief Minister urged the youth to educate themselves about the Emergency and its long-lasting implications on civil liberties, press freedom, and institutional independence.

He recalled that in response to the crack-down, protest movements like the Navnirman Andolan in Gujarat gained momentum

and later merged with a nationwide call for democratic restoration under the leadership of Jayaprakash Narayan.

Sarma paid tribute to leaders who resisted the Emergency and endured imprisonment for the cause of democracy.

"Leaders such as Morarji Desai, Bharat Ratna Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Lal Krishna Advani, George Fernandes, and Nanaji Deshmukh were instrumental in mobilising public opinion and forcing Indira Gandhi to withdraw the Emergency," he noted.

The chief minister also expressed hope that the participants of the Mock Parliament would use the occasion to reflect on the illegitimacy—both legal and moral—of the Emergency.

He credited the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) and the Jan Sangh for their role in organising resistance against what he described as authoritarianism under Indira Gandhi's regime.

Taking a critical view of the Congress party's continued silence over its role during the Emergency, Sarma drew parallels with global precedents of historical accountability.

"Whether it was the British expressing regret for the Jallianwala Bagh massacre or American Presidents visiting Hiroshima, history shows that those responsible for injustice have expressed remorse. Yet the Congress party has never apologised for the Emergency," he said.

He asserted that the party responsible should formally apologise to the nation for undermining its democratic values and pledge that such a chapter would never repeat itself.

Also present at the event were Assam BJP President and MP Dilip Saikia, State BJP

Yuva Morcha President Rakesh Das, BJP Mahila Morcha State President Swapna Bania, and several other party leaders and dignitaries.

The Mock Parliament event saw enthusiastic participation from students, youth activists, and political workers, with segments reenacting the parliamentary procedures and events that unfolded during the Emergency.

The programme concluded with calls for preserving constitutional values and resisting any future threats to democratic institutions.

Suspect nabbed from jungle in Bokajan

BOKAJAN, June 25: Ranjit Basumaty, the prime suspect in the death of six-year-old Ayushi Purti, was apprehended by police from a jungle near Bheta Gaon around 5 pm on Tuesday.

The child's body was discovered earlier that day by her parents in a pond within the compound of their rented accommodation in Amarajan. Following the incident, police launched a search operation for Basumaty, who was reported to be absconding.

Acting on leads and through sustained efforts, police located and arrested the suspect from a jungle in Sarihajan under Bokajan subdivision.

'Learn Karbi Language' book launched in Diphu



HT Bureau
DIPHU, June 24: The book Learn Karbi Language, authored by Chandrasing Rongpi, was formally launched on Tuesday at the official

bungalow of the Chief Executive Member (CEM) in Diphu, Karbi Anglong.

The event was attended by Chief Executive Member of the Karbi

Anglong Autonomous Council (KAAC) Dr Tuliram Ronghang, Diphu MLA Bidyasing Englang, Padma Shri awardee Dhaneswar Ingti, language activist and writer Sikari Tisso, and Karbi Lammet Amei president Kamsing Hanse, among others.

The book, aimed at preserving and promoting the Karbi language and culture, offers a comprehensive learning tool with focus on correct pronunciation, along with simple Karbi-to-English translations and Assamese meanings.

The presence of notable dignitaries underscored the significance of the initiative in safeguarding the region's linguistic heritage.

Rongpi's work is expected to serve as a vital resource for language learners and cultural enthusiasts alike.

Broad daylight burglary reported at Nagaon irrigation colony

NAGAON, June 25: A daring burglary in broad daylight rocked the Nagaon Irrigation Colony near Teliagaon on Wednesday, with cash and gold jewellery stolen from the residence of a departmental employee.

According to sources, the incident took place while the house owner, Nirmali Bora, and her husband were away—she had gone to pick up their child from school, while her husband was attending to work in the Raidangia area.

Taking advantage of their absence, miscreants broke into the house through the back door and ransacked the premises. They reportedly made off with approximately ₹20,000 in cash and an undisclosed quantity of gold ornaments.

The burglary came to light when Bora returned home and discovered the break-in, leaving her visibly distraught. The incident quickly spread panic among residents of the colony. Police have been informed and an investigation is underway. However, no arrests had been made at the time of filing this report.

Dharti Aaba Abhiyan underway in Hojai to boost tribal welfare

HT Correspondent

HOJAI, June 25: The Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan is currently being implemented across Hojai district to enhance tribal welfare outreach, according to an official statement by Hojai Deputy Commissioner Bidyut Bikash Bhagwati.

Speaking at Srimanta Sankardev Nagar, the Deputy Commissioner said the campaign, launched by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, is being held in the district from June 15 and will continue till June 30.

It aims to ensure saturation of individual entitlements at the grassroots level and raise awareness about various government welfare schemes.

The district administration has prepared a detailed roadmap for timely and efficient delivery of services in 130 tribal villages, home to an estimated 30,000 tribal residents—most of whom have already been covered under different schemes.

So far, 10 awareness and benefit saturation camps have been held across the district this year to enrol previously left-out beneficiaries.

All relevant departments are conducting village- and cluster-level campaigns to extend doorstep delivery of services such as Aadhaar, ration and Ayushman Bharat cards, caste and domicile certificates, Kisan Credit Cards (KCC), PM-KISAN benefits, Jan Dhan accounts, insurance coverage under PMJJBY and PMSBY, social security pensions, MGNREGA, Mudra loans, and women and child welfare schemes including PMMVY and ICDS benefits.

The camps have seen enthusiastic participation from the tribal population, with many expressing gratitude for the government's initiative.

In response to community demand, the Hojai District Administration has scheduled additional camps to ensure maximum coverage and saturation of benefits.

District-level meeting held in Kokrajhar to tackle rise in malaria cases

HT Correspondent

KOKRAJHAR, June 25: A district-level meeting to address the recent surge in malaria cases in parts of Kokrajhar was held on Wednesday at the conference hall of the Joint Director of Health Services (Jt DHS), Kokrajhar, with participation from student bodies including the All Bodo Students Union (ABSU), the Santali Students' Union, and the All Assam Santali Women's Association.

The meeting was chaired by Sikha Barthakur, who delivered the keynote address, stressing the importance of coordinated community efforts and the active role of youth in public health initiatives.

Representatives from the National Health Mission (NHM) and the student unions engaged in a constructive discussion on preventive strategies and awareness cam-

paigns. Deliberations focused on community mobilization, campus-based health initiatives, and multi-stakeholder collaboration to contain the rise in malaria cases, particularly in areas showing signs of endemic-like spread.



The Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR) government and the Health & Family Welfare Department have jointly undertaken efforts to curb the disease, including awareness programmes across the district.

The student bodies assured full cooperation and support in assisting the authorities to prevent further spread of malaria.

BJP observes 'Kala Diwas' in West Karbi Anglong

HT Correspondent

DONGKAMUKAM, June 25: The ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) observed 'Kala Diwas' at its district head office—Atal Bihari Vajpayee Bhawan, Ghilani—in West Karbi Anglong on Wednesday, in protest against the imposition of Emergency in India by the then Congress government exactly 50 years ago.

The observance marked the anniversary of the declaration of Emergency on June 25, 1975, by former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, citing internal and external threats.

Addressing the gathering as the main speaker, former MP Horensing Bey termed the day a nationwide protest against what he described as the "murder of democracy" during the 21-month Emergency period.

He said civil liberties were suspended, elections cancelled, over one lakh political opponents jailed, and press freedom curbed during the time.

Bey added that Emergency provisions are generally invoked only during wartime, but in this instance, it was imposed to suppress a democratic movement.

He also criticised Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, alleging that while he speaks of protecting the Constitution today, his grandmother had once acted against it.

The event was presided over by BJP WKADC president Radip Ronghang and attended by various KAAC board chairmen and party supporters.

Blood donation camp held at 37th Battalion SSB camp in Mangaldai

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, June 25: A blood donation camp was organised on Wednesday at the 37th Battalion premises of the Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) in Mangaldai, in a collaborative effort between Sector Headquarters SSB Bezpara, 37th Battalion SSB Mangaldai, and the District Hospital, Mangaldai.

According to an official statement, the event began with a ceremonial ribbon-cutting by Amit Tiwari, Second-in-Command (Officiating Commandant) of the 37th Battalion SSB Mangaldai, alongside Dr Utpal Barua, Medical Superintendent of District Hospital Mangaldai, and Dr Dawood Ali, In-charge of the Blood Centre at the hospital.

The dignitaries were welcomed with traditional Assamese phulam gamusas, symbolising honour and respect. The event saw active participation from 21 jawans of Sector Headquarters SSB Bezpara and the 37th Battalion SSB Mangaldai, including senior officers such as Parag Chaturvedi, Officiating Deputy Inspector General and Commandant of Sector Headquarters SSB Bezpara.

The medical team from the 37th Battalion, comprising Dr. Himanshu Dabas, Deputy Commandant (Medical), and Dr Savita, Assistant Commandant (Medical Officer), also played a key role in supporting the camp.

The blood donation drive aimed at promoting voluntary blood dona-

tion among security personnel while strengthening cooperation between the paramilitary force and the district health department.

The organisers emphasised that such initiatives not only help address blood shortages in local hospitals but also foster a spirit of service among the personnel.

Officials noted that the camp reflected SSB's commitment to humanitarian service beyond its mandated duties, contributing to public welfare and emergency preparedness through voluntary efforts. The event concluded with words of appreciation from both the SSB leadership and hospital authorities, who commended the jawans for their contribution to the noble cause of saving lives.

Indus Towers builds sanitation units in govt schools

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, June 25: Indus Towers Limited has inaugurated seven new sanitation facilities in government schools across Kamrup, Mankachar, Goalpara, Barpeta, Darrang, and Jorhat districts as part of its hygiene and health initiative for schoolgirls in Northeast India.

The initiative was formally launched at a function held at Satgaon High School in Guwahati.

According to an official statement, the facilities were inaugurated by Assam Education Minister Ranaj Pegu and Rajender Gurung, Circle CEO (NESA), Indus Towers Ltd.

The initiative, implemented under the company's flagship Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programme 'Pragati', is aligned with the Government of India's Swachh Bharat Abhiyan and aims to bridge critical infrastructure gaps in schools while promoting menstrual health awareness among adolescent girls.

Speaking at the event, education minister Ranaj Pegu said, "Access to proper sanitation plays a crucial role in promoting health and safety, especially for young girls. I appreciate the efforts of

Indus Towers Limited and NEAID in improving school infrastructure in Assam. This initiative is well aligned with the objectives of the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, and I look forward to seeing its positive impact on students' well-being and attendance."

Alongside the construction of hygienic washrooms, the initiative also includes menstrual hygiene workshops aimed at dispelling social taboos and equipping students with essential health knowledge.

Rajender Gurung of Indus Towers said, "Through our flagship CSR program Pragati, we aim to address critical infrastructure gaps and empower the education of young girls in Assam. By providing safe and accessible sanitation facilities, we hope to foster a supportive environment for better learning outcomes."

Indus Towers has so far built 23 sanitation facilities in government schools across Northeast India under this initiative, which is being implemented in collaboration with the Northeast Centre for Equity Action on Integrated Development (NEAID).

আৰক্ষী অধীক্ষকৰ কাৰ্যালয় :: কাৰ্বি আংলং :: ডিফু
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF POLICE ::
KARBI ANGLONG :: DIPHU



The above is a photograph of missing women in connection with Manja PS GDE No.19 Dtd.18/06/2025 (MMR No.14/25). Please make an all out effort to trace out the missing women, if found intimate to Police control Room (PCR), Karbi Anglong either at 60269-00775 & 93659-72436 for follow up action.

Description:

Name - Smti Pompi Debnath (22 Years)
Height - 5 feet 5 inch
Hair - Long
Complexion - Fair
Wearing - Churidar

Sd/
Dy. Superintendent of Police (HQ)
Karbi Anglong, Diphu

DIPR /D/HLT/45/26-Jun-25

QUOTE OF THE DAY

Education is the movement from darkness to light
- Allan Bloom

Iran's bid to become N-armed country

It may be wrong to believe that Israel and the United States of America are the only two countries strongly against Iran's bid to become a nuclear-armed country. The entire world is concerned about nuclear proliferation and nuclear smuggling and its falling into the wrong hands. The nature of the Iranian regime has added to the concern. It is probably the only major country in the world run directly under a spiritual leader. This may be the cause of worries for many. The Vatican City state of Rome, a Papal Kingdom, retains only a small ceremonial unit of the Swiss Guard as its defence force, which also serves as the Pope's personal body guard. The Pope generally preaches love, compassion and world peace. Iran is ruled by the supreme Shia spiritual cleric, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, championing the cause of Shia supremacy. Shiite Iran is believed to be aspiring to build a nuclear arsenal ever since Sunni Islamic faction led Pakistan became a nuclear-armed state. Iran is an Islamic republic with a strong theocratic system and a great influencer of Shiite states and Shiites across the world. In contrast, the present Grand Imam of Al-Azhar, Ahmed el-Tayeb, considered to be the highest authority in Sunni Islamic thought and jurisprudence, is not known to be a political person.

Although only three countries across the Muslim world, comprising 57 states (members of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation), have a majority Shia population, the community has significant presence in several other Muslim countries mostly led by the rival Sunni faction. The Shia-Sunni rivalry makes Iran's ambition to emerge as a nuclear-armed state a major geopolitical concern. Sunni community-led Pakistan's nuclear arsenal has always been a major concern of western democracies as well as India. The late Abdul Qadeer Khan, the "father of Pakistan's nuclear bomb," was known for his involvement in smuggling of nuclear technology. He had officially admitted that he was running a nuclear proliferation network.

The nature of Iran's government headed by the supreme Shia spiritual leader and its ambition to emerge as a major nuclear power are what the non-Islamic world are mostly concerned about. The tiny Jewish state of Israel is highly worried as 'annihilation' of Israel is said to be the primary agenda of the supreme Iranian clergy. The western world is concerned as Iran's devastating weapons such as long-range missiles and drones are in the hands of a spiritual cleric. Iran is believed to have the largest and most diverse ballistic missile stockpile in West Asia. Iran is displaying its military strike capabilities as the country's spiritual head and supreme leader vowed to open "the gates of hell". Under Iran's supreme spiritual leader, the country has been developing sophisticated long-range missiles for decades. From the very beginning, the oil-rich "spiritual fiefdom" wanted to be a strong military power and be seen as the biggest strength of the global Shia community, constituting nearly 15 percent of the global Muslim population of 2.047 billion as estimated by TimesPrayer.com.

The western nations are concerned about a Shia nuke



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Iran is ruled by the supreme Shia spiritual cleric, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, championing the cause of Shia supremacy. Shiite Iran is believed to be aspiring to build a nuclear arsenal ever since Sunni Islamic faction led Pakistan became a nuclear-armed state. Iran is an Islamic republic with a strong theocratic system and a great influencer of Shiite states and Shiites across the world. In contrast, the present Grand Imam of Al-Azhar, Ahmed el-Tayeb, considered to be the highest authority in Sunni Islamic thought and jurisprudence, is not known to be a political person.

Although only three countries across the Muslim world, comprising 57 states (members of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation), have a majority Shia population, the community has significant presence in several other Muslim countries mostly led by the rival Sunni faction. The Shia-Sunni rivalry makes Iran's ambition to emerge as a nuclear-armed state a major geopolitical concern, especially in West and Central Asia as also in South and South-East Asia and European countries with a good Muslim population. The three Shia majority countries are: Iran, Iraq and Azerbaijan. Significant Shia communities also live in Bahrain, Lebanon, Kuwait, Turkey, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Afghanistan and the Indian subcontinent.

Sunni community-led Pakistan's nuclear arsenal has always been a major concern of western democracies as well as India. The

late Abdul Qadeer Khan, the "father of Pakistan's nuclear bomb," was known for his involvement in smuggling of nuclear technology. He had officially admitted that he was running a nuclear proliferation network. He was initially placed under house arrest in 2004 after admitting to selling nuclear technology to Iran, Libya, and North Korea. A Q Khan was subsequently released in 2009. Most of the existing nuclear states fear that Iran might share nuclear weapons and technology with other countries or non-state actors, including terrorist groups, leading to wider proliferation.

The nature of Iran's government headed by the supreme Shia spiritual leader and its ambition to emerge as a major nuclear power are what the non-Islamic world are mostly concerned about. The tiny Jewish state of Israel is highly worried as 'annihilation' of Israel is said to be the primary agenda of the supreme Iranian clergy. The western world is concerned as Iran's devastating weapons such as long-range missiles and drones are in the hands of a spiritual cleric. Iran is believed to have the largest and most diverse ballistic missile stockpile in West Asia. Iran is displaying its military strike capabilities as the country's spiritual head and supreme leader vowed to open "the gates of hell". Through the best part of last week, waves of Iranian missile and drone barrages had been lighting up the skies across the tiny Jewish state

of Israel which is only 1.33 percent geographical size of Iran. Israel's total population is around 9.8 million as against Iran's 87 million.

Under Iran's supreme spiritual leader, the country has been developing sophisticated long-range missiles for decades. From the very beginning, the oil-rich "spiritual fiefdom" wanted to be a strong military power and be seen as the biggest strength of the global Shia community, constituting nearly 15 percent of the global Muslim population of 2.047 billion as estimated by TimesPrayer.com. Islam is the world's second-largest religion in terms of adherents. The Muslim population has been growing faster than the overall world population, with a 21 percent increase

in the number of Muslims between 2010 and 2020, compared to a 10 percent increase for the rest of the world.

Today, Iran possesses a very large number of short-range rockets and potential hypersonic weapons, most of which are locally produced with the blessings of the Ayatollah. Estimates from the US Office of the Director of National Intelligence suggest that Iran possesses around 3,000 ballistic missiles, a figure that surpasses any other regional power, according to the Australian Broadcasting Corporation. They include missiles of various ranges and types, contributing to Iran's significant military might in the region.

Iran has also emerged as a major manufacturer-exporter of highly sophisticated drones. Last year, the Ukraine government claimed that Russia launched over 8,000 Iran-developed drones during the war. Iran is recognized for its advancements in drone technology, particularly in areas like combat drones and loitering munitions (suicide drones). Iran has been exporting drone technology to various countries, including Sudan, Syria, and Ukraine, and has supplied drones to regional allies and militias.

To the credit of the country's spiritual leadership, Iran has developed a massive drone industry. It has been relying on indigenous production helped by international sanctions. Iran's drone industry has focused on local engineering and manufacturing. It has been producing drones like the Ababil, Mohajer, and Shahed series, including the Shahed-136 (also known as Geran-2 in Russia) and the newer Shahed 238. Iran's Kaman-22 drone resembles the US MQ-9 Reaper. Iranian drones are reshaping the dynamics of conflicts, particularly in West Asia and in the Russia-Ukraine war context.

With Pakistan boasting the Sunni nuke, Iran's development of Shia nuke arsenal could be only a matter of time. The US-led western world and the Jewish state of Israel are most unlikely to be able to halt the process. In a normal situation, the western world and even Israel, the world's eighth largest nuclear power, would not have been so hyper about Iran's nuclear ambition if its purpose were purely in self-defence.

However, under the supreme spiritual leader Ayatollah, Iran is often seen as a "rogue state" by many Western countries, particularly the US, largely due to Iran's challenging of the US-led world order and its support for groups that oppose American interests in the West Asian region. Iran is known to actively support groups like Hezbollah and Hamas, which are considered terrorist organizations by the US and its allies. Oil-rich Iran turning to be a major nuclear armed state is seen as a major threat to the existing balance of power. The control of the state machinery in the hands of a supreme spiritual leader adds to the cause of worry. (IPA Service)

Trump says that the Nobel Peace Prize is not for him since it is only for Liberals



By: Sushil Kutty

President Donald Trump botched up. He had Pakistan by the scruff of its neck and Pakistan recommended his name for the Nobel Peace Prize 2026. Pakistan, the land of wisdom and Islamic valour. But Trump turned against himself and screwed up – he went to war with Iran!

Pakistan has officially named President Trump for the coveted Nobel Peace Prize. Barack Obama won the Nobel Peace Prize and Trump wants all that Barack Obama got! Pakistan Army Chief Gen. Asim Munir spoke in favour of Trump. People believed Pakistan could actually swing the prize Trump's way.

Such is Pakistan's sway over the Nobel committee. Trump says Pakistan has some of the best diplomats on the planet and India's "propaganda," as one Pakistani put it, needed to be busted.

So, in a split second of idiocy, Trump lost it. Vice President JD Vance said Trump had the option to abort the 'B-2 Mission' till the last minute, but Trump issued the bunker-buster order on three Iranian nuclear sites, and it turned out to be three mistakes in three seconds.

Now, Iran's top cleric Ayatollah Khamenei isn't traceable and rumours are he fled to Russia leaving behind a message targeting Israel but studiously ignoring Trump's United States. The destruction of the three "nuclear sites" is irreparable and Iran has broadened the front. President Trump has warned Iran not to retaliate if it doesn't want more death to rain from the sky. So much for Pakistan's "Trump for the Nobel Peace Prize" recommendation!

Trump's "role" in the India-Pak conflict was cited as the reason for Pakistan naming Trump for the Nobel Peace Prize. Trump keeps parroting "I stopped the India-Pakistan conflict" and Trump doesn't even bat an eyelid.

There are people who actually believe Trump's "I stopped..." nonsense. Pak-

istan Army Chief Gen Asim Munir took advantage. Trump is easy to fool with words of praise but the uniformed Hindu-hater is another reason why Trump lapsed into believing he could win a Nobel Peace Prize, him and him alone.

President Trump hosted a lunch for Gen. Munir and the wily general vouched for Trump's peaceful credentials and intentions. An example of two devils quoting from the scripture. It was Trump's word against Modi's word. "Stop claiming credit for the ceasefire", Modi told Trump.

India has been saying it all along that it wasn't a ceasefire, but an "understanding" worked out by the DGMOs of India and Pakistan. As it turned out, President Trump is like a repeater rifle. His ratatat "I stopped the war" didn't stop and Vice President JD Vance says Trump had the option to abort the strikes on Fodrow, Nantanz and Isfahan up to the last second.

Then, Prime Minister Narendra Modi came out of his characteristic "lapses into silence" and silenced Trump when the United States President rang up Modi to invite him to the White House for a stop-over. The last time Modi stopped-over was when he flew into Pakistan for a tete-a-tete with Nawaz Sharif.

President Trump did not "stop" India-Pakistan hostilities but this did not register in Trump's brainstem and Trump continued to parrot "I stopped the India-Pakistan war" much to Modi's chagrin.

UPA chairperson Sonia Gandhi has questioned Trump's credentials for the Nobel Peace Prize. Trump doesn't seem to agree that India's "fierce counter-attack" brought Pakistan to its knees. To add insult to injury, Pakistan had endorsed Trump's patently false claim that he brokered peace between "two nuclear-powered neighbours."

It is as if India's armed forces did not have a hand in forcing Pakistan to plead for an end to hostilities. The DGMOs

took care of the rest. Pakistan's recommendation for the Nobel Peace Prize for Trump came a couple of days after President Trump hosted a lunch for Pakistan's COAS Gen. Asim Munir at the White House.

Trump is infatuated and he buffeted the lunch with a range of goodies for Gen Asim Munir and for Pakistan. There are murmurs that Trump's core interests are his family's affairs and Gen. Asim Munir has impressed President Trump. A UK newspaper said "President Trump has a thing for strongmen".

Both Trump and Munir believe in "unilateralism" though it is hard to believe Gen. Munir wasn't arm-twisted into recommending President Trump for the Nobel Peace Prize.

If Obama could get the Nobel Peace Prize, why can't and why shouldn't President Donald Trump get the 2026 Nobel Peace Prize? Gen. Munir's recommendation shines through like a beacon of peace and sends a powerful message: Carpe diem!

This was the first time a Pakistani general was treated like royalty in the White House and that, too, behind "closed doors" with only the President's close coterie breaking bread with a man who could become a military dictator!

But overnight, Pakistan's strong recommendation has come to naught. Where and for how long this pact between devils will land India is not hard to guess. Suffice to say that India can't get lax. The April 22 Pahalgaon terror attack perpetrators haven't yet been accounted for despite the destruction of terror hubs and air-bases.

It was India's fierce attack that forced Pakistan to plead for ending the hostilities. But Pakistan government's post on 'X' says this: "At a moment of heightened regional turbulence", President Trump "demonstrated great strategic foresight and stellar statesmanship through robust diplomatic engagement with both Islamabad and New Delhi."

Pakistan praised Trump's intervention and said, "This intervention stands as a testament to his [Trump's] role as a genuine peacemaker and his commitment to conflict resolution through dialogue. Trump's 'sincere offers' to help resolve the issue of Jammu and Kashmir also 'manifestly showcases the continuation of his legacy of pragmatic diplomacy and effective peace-building'."

Pakistan continues to hope that Trump's "earnest efforts" will bear fruit except that heart-of-hearts Trump is a difficult man to trust.

Yet President Trump is always whining and wheeling-dealing. "I won't get the Nobel, I won't get the Nobel" is his latest refrain. Fact is, President Trump botched up. How can somebody be a paragon of peace and expect to win the Nobel Peace Prize after going to war?

President Trump refused to even believe his spy chief Tulsi Gabbard and went ahead and bombed Fodrow, Nantanz and Isfahan -- three reasons why President Trump doesn't qualify for the Nobel Peace Prize. (IPA Service)

The illicit trade: How drugs fuel crime and corruption

By: Vinod Chandrashekhar Dixit

26th June is observed as the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking (International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking), often referred to as the International Day against Drug Abuse. It is to strengthen global action and cooperation to achieve the goal of an international society free of drug abuse. Observance of this day aims to raise awareness to fight against the substance abuse as well as the unlawful trade of drugs. Drugs are initially taken out of choice, but it becomes hard to resist them sooner than you realize. It is difficult to recover from this problem and even those who are at high risk of developing it again.

It is a fact that drug racket operates internationally, but some countries are transshipment points for drug circulation. India possibly because of its strategic location is more prone to drug activities including drug trafficking and local consumption. The influence of westernization, changing family structure and peer pressure are some of the reasons behind drug abuse.

Our society should change its attitude. He should be provided with all the support and care. He should be properly rehabilitated. Moral education should be made a part of our curriculum. Society should be made aware from the early stage. In order to tame and trample the monster of drug abuse, we must go back to the root of the problem and make the user of drugs more human, tolerant, understanding, appreciative, sympathetic and helpful. Social workers, teachers, and above all parents, especially mothers can play a vital role in this direction. Many counselling and de-addiction centres have contributed greatly to create a national awakening. More such efforts are required from all walks of society.

It is a fact that drug racket operates internationally, but some countries are transshipment points for drug circulation. India possibly because of its strategic location is more prone to drug activities including drug trafficking and local consumption

Drugs are primarily chemicals that affect the communication system of the human brain. They disturb the ways in which nerve cells send, process and receive information. There are a couple of ways in which drugs achieve this – they copy the natural chemical messengers of the human brain and they overstimulate the brain's reward circuit. Drugs such as heroin and marijuana are structured in the same way as chemical messengers known as neurotransmitters. The drug addiction can develop at any age but those who begin taking drugs at an early age have the highest risk of getting addicted. This is because the areas of the brain that are responsible for self-control, judgment and decision making are still in development stage. This is the reason why teenagers are more prone to drug abuse. Governments have a responsibility to counteract both drug trafficking and drug abuse, but communities can also make a major contribution. Families, schools, civil society and religious organizations can do their part to rid their communities of drugs.

According to National Survey, hardly a third of drug dependents reported having taken treatment. In the findings of other

agency it was found as low as two per cent. It is largely because people do not see drug abuse as a medical problem. Besides, lack of rehabilitation and access to treatment facilities are various other causes for not seeking treatment. The disintegration of the old joint family system, absence of parental love and care in modern families where both parents are working, decline of old religious and moral values etc lead to a rise in the number of drug addicts who take drugs to escape hard realities of life. Drug trafficking is one of the major crime. Killing someone or helping someone to kill himself is equal to a crime. This is what common sense and human sense says. The ones who are trafficking and helping such drugs reach each and every corner of the country are committing a big crime. Drugs and drug dealing is a scourge that can bring down a mature and intelligent society to intolerable levels of depravity. It is better to nip this crime in bud so that our country doesn't follow the horrible western malady. Creating awareness of dangers of the substance abuse in society and effecting behavioural change are integral parts of the National Drug Master Plan. There should be no leniency when talking about peddlers and pushers who destroy the victim and his kith and kin and put the victim into unalterable habit which will make the individual take to all crimes including murder and rape. If we need to stop this menace from spreading we need harsh steps and stringent punishments. Only love and affection can help the youth from falling into clutches of drugs. Societal control is a necessary along with legal skeleton. Let us develop our Lives, our Communities, and our Identities...Without Drugs." (The writer is a freelance journalist & cartoonist holding Limca Book of Record (7 Times). He can be reached at dixitpatrakar@yahoo.in)

POST BAG

Commodity called religion

Sir/Ma'am

Earlier, dharma was something you lived by, quietly helping an old man cross the road, or feeding the poor without taking a selfie. Today, religion has become a market. There are godmen with brand names, temples with VIP tickets, and rituals that come with rate charts. One puja for passing exams, one for buying cars, one for curing back pain. Is this devotion, or a catalogue? In our childhood, naam prasanga was for peace. Now, it's for publicity. If someone donates to a temple, a big photo comes out in the paper.

If someone feeds cows, they put it on Instagram. If the camera is off, the compassion disappears. Even religious events have sponsors now — one side "sponsored by a cement company", the other side "in collaboration with a soft drink brand." Even the Lord must be wondering whether to give blessings or brand deals.

Religion was supposed to unite. But today, it is used to divide people more than anything else. Turn on the TV, and you'll see people shouting in the name of God. In every corner, some "breaking news" about this community or that ritual, as if faith is a boxing match.

Dharma should have been in our hearts, but now it's on billboards. Simplicity is gone. Competition has arrived. "Who is the bigger devotee?" has become the new question.

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Why textbooks are not yet provided in schools?

Sir/Ma'am

There are currently dramatic changes in the education system across the country. According to the Performance Grade Index of the Union Ministry of Education, Assam ranks second from the bottom list in the country in terms of education. Thousands of educational institutions have been closed and there are no enough teachers. Many schools including infrastructure, building are in poor condition due to the river erosion. Therefore, the education department is not able to provide textbooks to the students within three months of the start of teaching. My nephew is in class 6 and also has not received a single book yet. Old books are no longer useful due to some changes in the syllabus. Government supply free textbooks are even available for purchase in the market.

Meanwhile, examination are currently underway. This shows how degraded the public sector education system is. It is mysterious why no one has spoken about the movement of the student organizations of Assam over various issues. The question is, why the textbooks are not provided yet? Why not enroll my nephew in private schools if I don't get the textbooks?

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7 Israeli troops killed in Gaza bombing as Palestinian officials say 79 killed in Israeli attacks

JERUSALEM, June 25: The Israeli military says seven Israeli soldiers have been killed in the southern Gaza Strip when a Palestinian attacker attached a bomb to their armoured vehicle while Palestinians health officials in the battered enclave reported that 79 people were killed in Israeli attacks across the strip Wednesday.

The attack on the Israeli troops, which occurred on Tuesday, was one of the deadliest for the army in Gaza in months, and quickly drew the nation's attention back to the grinding conflict with the Hamas militant group after nearly two weeks of war between Israel and Iran.

Among the 79 reported killed in Gaza were 33 people who died while trying to access aid.

Israel returns its attention to Gaza

Israel has been fighting in Gaza since the Hamas-led attack on Israel on October 7, 2023. US-led ceasefire efforts have repeatedly stalled in the conflict.

Brig. Gen. Effie Defrin, the army's chief spokesman, said the soldiers were attacked in the southern Gaza city of Khan Younis,

where the army has operated on and off throughout much of the war. Helicopters and rescue forces were sent to the spot. They made attempts to rescue the fighters, but without success, he said.

The army said another soldier was seriously wounded in a separate incident in Khan Younis. It gave no further details, but Hamas claimed on its Telegram channel it had ambushed Israeli soldiers taking cover inside a residential building in the area.

Over 860 Israeli soldiers have been killed since the war began with the October 7, 2023, Hamas attack, including more than 400 during the fighting in Gaza.

The initial Hamas attack killed some 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and took 251 others hostage. Some 50 hostages remain in captivity, at least 20 of whom are believed to still be alive.

Palestinians eager for a ceasefire of their own

Some Palestinians in Gaza City expressed frustration Wednesday that the war in the territory has dragged on for nearly two years, while the conflict between Israel and Iran lasted 12 days before a



fragile ceasefire was reached.

I live in a tent and now my tent is gone too and we're living in suffering here. The war between Israel and Iran ended in less than two weeks and we've been dying for two years, said Um Zidan, a woman displaced from northern Gaza.

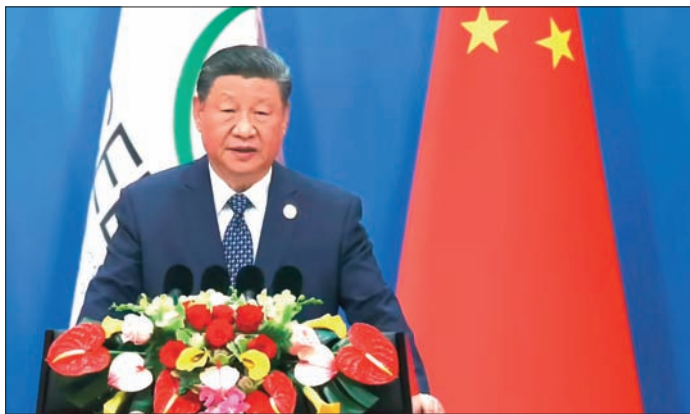
Gaza health authorities had announced on Tuesday that the number of Palestinians killed in the war has risen above 56,000. Israel's blockade and military campaign have driven the population to the brink of famine. Mazen al-Jomla, a displaced resident of Shati camp,

questioned why war in the coastal enclave has stretched on, noting that Israel's assault on Iran was based on accusations of possessing nuclear weapons.

We have been suffering for two years; from horrors, destruction, martyrs and injured people," he said. "What do they (Israel) have left here? There are no houses, trees, or rocks, or humans left. Everything was destroyed.

Deadliest round of fighting The latest reported death toll of 56,156 is higher than in any previous Israeli-Palestinian fighting.

Chinese President Xi Jinping to skip BRICS Summit in Brazil: Report



BEIJING, June 25: Chinese President Xi Jinping plans to skip the BRICS Summit in Brazil next month, which, if confirmed, will be his first-ever absence from the meeting of the grouping of emerging economies since taking office 12 years ago, according to a media report.

Xi will not attend the BRICS Summit in Rio de Janeiro, the Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post reported on Wednesday, quoting multiple sources.

Instead, Chinese Premier and Xi's confidant Li Qiang will take part in the summit to be held on July 6-7 in which Prime Minister Narendra Modi was expected to take part.

The BRICS comprises Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa. The bloc has been expanded with five additional members Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia and the UAE.

The BRICS Summit in Russia's Kazan last year became significant as both Modi and Xi met there, breaking the four-year deadlock over the frozen bilateral ties due to the standoff at eastern Ladakh.

After their meeting, both sides agreed to revive various bilateral dialogue mechanisms.

Following the Modi-Xi talks, the two sides held a series of meetings in the last few months aimed at normalising the bilateral relations.

If Xi misses the summit at Rio de Janeiro, the next opportunity for the Xi-Modi meeting could be the SCO summit to be held in China if the Prime Minister attends it.

China, the current chair of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), plans to hold its summit in the next few months.

The news of Xi's plans to opt out of the Rio Summit reportedly came from Brazil where officials told the media that Beijing informed the

Brazilian government that Xi had a scheduling conflict.

During the media briefing on Wednesday, Foreign Ministry spokesman Guo Jiakun declined to comment on the reports about Xi's decision, saying that information on China's attendance at the BRICS summit would be released in due course.

China supports Brazil's presidency of the BRICS, Guo said.

While it is unclear why the Chinese President has decided to opt out of the BRICS Summit in Rio, there is a sense of unease in Beijing over Brazil's decision not to endorse the multi-billion-dollar Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which is also Xi's pet initiative.

Brazil is the second country in the BRICS after India which refrained from joining the BRI.

Outlining the reasons for Xi's reported decision, The Post report quoted Chinese officials that Xi met Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva twice in less than a year first at the G20 summit and a state visit to Brasilia last November, and again in May during the China-Celac forum in Beijing as a reason for his absence.

Since he came to power, Xi, who is currently in power for an unprecedented third five-year term, has never missed a BRICS summit, highlighting the importance he attaches to the grouping.

Even during the coronavirus pandemic, he took part in the BRICS virtual summit in 2020.

In Brasilia, officials made no secret of their frustration over Xi's absence, according to the Post report.

Lula had travelled to Beijing in May as a gesture of goodwill and with the expectation that the Chinese president would reciprocate by attending the Rio summit, the report said, quoting a Brazilian source. (PTI)

Pakistan Army officer, who captured IAF pilot Abhinandan in 2019, killed

ISLAMABAD, June 25: An officer of the Pakistan Army's Special Services Group, who had claimed to have captured Indian Air Force pilot Abhinandan Varthaman after his jet was shot down in a dogfight in 2019, was killed in a clash with the Taliban militants, according to the army.

Major Syed Moiz Abbas Shah, 37, was killed on Tuesday in a clash with the Taliban militants in the Sararogha area of South Waziristan near the Afghan border, according to a statement by the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the media wing of the army. Lance Naik Jibran Ullah, 27, was also killed in the same battle, it said. The army troops killed 11 terrorists belonging to the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and wounded seven others in the same operation, the statement said.

Moiz's funeral prayer was offered at Chaklala Garrison, Rawalpindi, and army chief Field Marshal Asim Munir attended it.

Major Syed Moiz Abbas fought bravely in the face of resistance and ultimately laid down his life in the line of duty, upholding the highest traditions of bravery, sacri-

fice, and patriotism, the ISPR statement quoted Munir as saying.

His body was flown to his native home town of Chakwal in Punjab where he was laid to rest with full military honours. He was commissioned into the Pakistani Army in 2011. However, he later became part of the Special Services Group (SSG) and was currently serving in the volatile Waziristan region.

After his death, it turned out that he was the same officer who had captured Abhinandan and saved him from mob violence, local media reported. An old clip of his interview with Geo TV on social media shows Moiz, who was captain then, giving details of capturing Abhinandan.

The TTP, also known as the Pakistan Taliban, was set up as an umbrella group of several militant outfits in 2007. Its main aim is to impose its strict brand of Islam across Pakistan. The group, believed to be close to al-Qaeda, has been blamed for several deadly attacks across Pakistan, including an attack on army headquarters in 2009, assaults on military bases, and the 2008 bombing of the Marriott Hotel in Islamabad. (PTI)

UK to buy 12 F-35A jets capable of carrying nuclear warheads after review warns of 'wartime scenario'

LONDON, June 25: Prime Minister Keir Starmer on Wednesday announced that the UK will purchase 12 new F-35A fighter jets capable of carrying nuclear warheads after a government defence review warned that Britain must "actively prepare" for a direct attack on the country in a "wartime scenario".

Starmer informed the ongoing North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) summit in The Hague of the UK's plans to acquire the dual-capable aircraft, which can carry both nuclear and conventional weapons.

The UK said it will deploy the jets as part of NATO's nuclear "Dual Capable Aircraft" mission in support of the alliance's nuclear deterrence posture. "In an era of radical uncertainty we can no longer take peace for granted, which is why my government is investing in our national security, ensuring our Armed Forces have the equipment they need and communities up and down the country reap the benefits from our defence dividend," said Starmer.

"Supporting 100 businesses across the country and more than 20,000 jobs, these F35 dual-cap-

able aircraft will herald a new era for our world-leading Royal Air Force (RAF) and deter hostile threats that threaten the UK and our Allies," he said.

The Prime Minister reiterated that his commitment to NATO is "unquestionable... but we must all step up to protect the Euro-Atlantic area for generations to come".

UK-based firms such as BAE Systems, Cobham, GE Aviation, Honeywell, Martin Baker, MBDA, QinetiQ, Rolls Royce, Leonardo UK, Ultra Electronics and EDM Limited all play a vital role in the supply of stealth fighter jets.

The new fast jets will be based at RAF Marham, with the government expected to procure 138 F35s over the lifetime of the programme. The procurement of 12 F-35A rather than 12 F-35B as part of the next procurement package will deliver a saving of up to 25 per cent per aircraft for the taxpayer, Downing Street said.

The announcement came as Britain's newly published national security strategy warned of the "growing" threat to the UK from nuclear weapons, adding that the

"proliferation of nuclear and disruptive technology" meant the UK needed to adapt its approach to national security. "The Strategic Defence Review recognised that the UK is confronting a new era of threat, including rising nuclear risks. It recommended that the UK further strengthen our commitment to effective deterrence and our partnership with our NATO Allies, building on our unique role as the only European power to pledge our nuclear deterrent to defend our NATO allies," the Downing Street statement said.

The purchase of a new fleet marks the first time since the retirement of the Tornado fleet in 1998 that the UK will have a plane capable of dropping tactical nuclear weapons on the enemy.

UK Defence Secretary John Healey MP said: "The Strategic Defence Review confirmed we face new nuclear risks, with other states increasing, modernising and diversifying their nuclear arsenals. And it recommended a new UK role in our collective defence and deterrence through a NATO-first approach. (PTI)

Trump faces alliance shaped to his liking as he attends NATO summit

THE HAGUE (Netherlands), June 25: US President Donald Trump huddled on Wednesday with members of a NATO alliance that he has worked to bend to his will over the years and whose members are rattled by his latest comments casting doubt on the US commitment to its mutual defence guarantees.

Trump's comments en route to the Netherlands that his fidelity to Article 5 "depends on your definition" drew attention at the NATO summit, as will the new and fragile Iran-Israel ceasefire that the Republican president helped broker after the US unloaded airstrikes on Iran's nuclear facilities.

At the same time, the alliance is poised to enact one of Trump's chief priorities: a pledge by NATO member countries to increase, sometimes significantly, how much they spend on their defence.

"I've been asking them to go up to 5 per cent for a number of years," Trump said Wednesday as he met with Mark Rutte, the alliance's secretary-general. "I think that's going to be very big news."

The boost in spending follows years of Trump's complaints that other countries weren't paying their fair share for membership in an alliance created as a bulwark against threats from the former Soviet Union. Most NATO countries, with the key exception of Spain, are preparing to endorse the 5 per cent pledge, motivated to bolster their own defences not just by Russian President Vladimir Putin's invasion of Ukraine but also, perhaps, to placate Trump. As a candidate in 2016, Trump suggested that as president he would not necessarily heed the alliance's mutual defence guarantees outlined in Article 5 of the NATO treaty. In March of this year, he expressed uncertainty that NATO would come to the United States' defence if needed, though the alliance did just that after the September 11, 2001 attacks. On Tuesday, he told reporters aboard Air Force One on his way to The Hague for the summit that whether he is committed to Article 5 "depends on your definition." (AP)

Early US intelligence report suggests US strikes only set back Iran's nuclear program by months

WASHINGTON, June 25: A US intelligence report suggests that Iran's nuclear programme has been set back only a few months after US strikes and was not "completely and fully obliterated" as President Donald Trump has said, according to two people familiar with the early assessment.

The report issued by the Defence Intelligence Agency (DIA) on Monday contradicts statements from Trump and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu about the status of Iran's nuclear facilities.

According to the people, the report found that while the Sunday strikes at the Fordo, Natanz and Isfahan nuclear sites did significant damage, the facilities were not totally destroyed. The people were not authorised to address the matter publicly and spoke on condition of anonymity.

The US has held out hope of restarting negotiations with Iran to convince it to give up its nuclear programme entirely, but some experts fear that the US strikes — and the potential of Iran retaining some of its capabilities — could push Tehran toward developing a functioning weapon.

The assessment also suggests that at

least some of Iran's highly enriched uranium, necessary for creating a nuclear weapon, was moved out of multiple sites before the US strikes and survived, and it found that Iran's centrifuges, which are required to further enrich uranium to weapons-grade levels, are largely intact, according to the people.

At the deeply buried Fordo uranium enrichment plant, where US B-2 stealth bombers dropped several 30,000-pound bunker-buster bombs, the entrance collapsed and infrastructure was damaged, but the underground infrastructure was not destroyed, the assessment found.

The people said that intelligence officials had warned of such an outcome in previous assessments ahead of the strike on Fordo.

The White House pushes back The White House rejected the DIA assessment, calling it "flat-out wrong," and Trump defended his characterisation of the strike's impact.

"It was obliteration, and you'll see that," Trump told reporters while attending the NATO summit in the Netherlands. He said the intelligence was "very inconclusive" and described media outlets as "scum" for reporting on it.

Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth, who

was also at the NATO summit, said there would be an investigation into how the intelligence assessment leaked and dismissed it as "preliminary" and "low confidence."

Secretary of State Marco Rubio said "these leakers are professional stabbers."

The CIA and the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI) declined to comment on the DIA assessment. ODNI coordinates the work of the nation's 18 intelligence agencies, including the DIA, which is the intelligence arm of the Defence Department, responsible for producing intelligence on foreign militaries and the capabilities of adversaries. The Israeli government also has not released any official assessments of the US strikes.

Trump special envoy Steve Witkoff, who said he has read damage assessment reports from US intelligence and other nations, reiterated Tuesday night that the strikes had deprived Iran of the ability to develop a weapon and called it outrageous that the US assessment was shared with reporters.

"It's treasonous so it ought to be investigated," Witkoff said on Fox News Channel. (AP)

Court order stops former Zambian president's burial in South Africa on day of his funeral

JOHANNESBURG, June 25: The Zambian government succeeded in getting a court order to stop the private burial of former President Edgar Lungu in South Africa on Wednesday after it filed a last-minute case that was heard on the day of the funeral.

The case forced members of Lungu's family to delay their appearance at a burial service and instead attend a courtroom hearing in the South African capital dressed in black funeral attire.

The Pretoria High Court ruled that both parties had agreed after consultations that Lungu would not be buried until the case over where his funeral would be

held was decided. The judge set an August 4 date for another hearing.

The legal challenge by the Zambian government against Lungu's burial in South Africa was the latest development in a nearly month-long dispute with Lungu's family over the details of his funeral and final resting place. The Zambian government wants Lungu to have a state funeral at home something Lungu's family have refused to allow because of his bitter political feud with current Zambian President Hakainde Hichilema.

Lungu, who was Zambia's leader from 2015 to 2021, died of an undisclosed illness in a South African hospital

on June 5 at the age of 68.

A state funeral for him in Zambia was cancelled twice because of disagreements over the details. His family and lawyers said he left specific instructions that Hichilema should not attend his funeral, while the Zambian government said Hichilema was due to preside over the state funeral.

Zambia's Attorney General Mulilo Kabesha filed papers in the South African court Tuesday seeking an urgent injunction to stop Wednesday's funeral, according to Zambia's national broadcaster ZNBC.

The court papers demanded that the former president be buried in Zambia

with full military honours, as mandated by Zambian law and in keeping with the public interest, ZNBC reported.

Zambia's government said it had already prepared a grave for Lungu at a cemetery where all presidents are traditionally buried. It added that any personal wishes must give way to the national interest. Lungu's family had decided against repatriating his body and arranged their own funeral service and a private burial. Top members of Lungu's political party travelled to South Africa for the funeral.

The hearing in Pretoria began around an hour before Lungu's funeral service was due to begin. (AP)

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ADVERTISEMENT FOR PRE-MATRIC, POST MATRIC AND TOP CLASS SCHOLARSHIP FOR DIFFERENTLY ABLED STUDENTS FOR THE YEAR 2025-26

The Department of persons with Disabilities (DEPWD), Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, Govt. of India is implementing three scholarships for students with disabilities through the National Scholarship Portal (NSP): (www.scholarships.gov.in).

- a) Pre-matric scholarships for Class IX and X
- b) Post-matric scholarships for Class XI to Post-graduation and
- c) Scholarship for Top Class Education (For Graduate and Post-Graduate Degree/Diploma in notified institutes of excellence in education)

Eligibility Criteria:

- All the 3 components of scholarships are open to students with benchmark disability i.e., 40% or more disability and having a valid certificate of disability issued by the competent authority / UDID card with 40% or above disability.
- Annual parental income:
 - a. For Pre-Matric & Post -Matric- Scholarship will be granted to the differently abled students whose parental/Guardian's Income from all sources does not exceed Rs. 2.5 lakhs per annum. The income certificate should be obtained only from the Circle Officer of respective of respective Revenue Circle.
 - b. For Top Class- Scholarship will be granted to the differently abled students whose parental/Guardian's Income from all sources does not exceed Rs. 8 lakhs per annum. The income certificate should be obtained only from the Circle Officer of respective of respective Revenue Circle.
- Applicants or their parents must link their bank account with AADHAAR number. (Account number is not required for scholarship disbursement through National Scholarship Portal. Scholarship will be disbursed directly into the AADHAAR seeded bank account of the beneficiary).

For Applicants:

- All the fresh/ renewal applicants who are eligible to apply for National scholarship have to do a One Time Registration (OTR) and also face authentication before applying for the Scholarship in the National Scholarship Portal through the mobile application "NSPOTR" which is available in the Play Store.
 - The students who applied for the scholarship last year have already received a reference id through registered Mobile No. to generate One Time Registration (OTR).
 - AADHAAR is mandatory for all the applicants. However for minor applicants who apply without AADHAAR, parents or legal guardian's AADHAAR is mandatory.
- The timelines for submission of applications and verification at institute level are mentioned below:

Sl. No.	Components of National Scholarship for Students with Disabilities	Application open date	Last date of Submission of application	Last date of verification by Institute Nodal Officers
1.	Pre-matric scholarships for Class IX and X	25 th June, 2025	31 st August, 2025	15 th September, 2025
2.	Post-matric scholarships for Class XI to Post-graduation	25 th June, 2025	31 st October, 2025	15 th November, 2025
3.	Top Class scholarship (For Graduate and Post-Graduate Degree/Diploma in notified institutes of excellence in education)	25 th June, 2025	31 st October, 2025	15 th November, 2025

s/d

Director

Social Justice & Empowerment, Assam
Beltola, Guwahati-28

DIPR /D/HLT/46/26-Jun-25

Event recalls darkest chapter in Indian democracy; Mein urges youth to defend constitutional values

Deputy CM Chowna Mein, Governor Parnaik lead observance of 'Samvidhan Hatya Diwas' in Arunachal

HT Correspondent

ITANAGAR, June 25: Marking the 50th anniversary of the imposition of the Emergency in India, a solemn event was held at DK Convention Hall in Itanagar to observe Samvidhan Hatya Diwas, or Constitution Killing Day.

The event was led by Arunachal Pradesh Governor Lt General K T Parnaik (Retd), PVSM, UYSM, YSM, and deputy chief minister Chowna Mein, and was attended by a host of dignitaries, government officials, and members of the public.

According to an official statement, the observance served as a poignant reminder of the 21-month-long Emergency declared on June 25, 1975—widely regarded as one of the darkest periods in India's democratic history.

The gathering aimed to educate the public, especially the youth, about the grave constitutional and civil liberties violations during that time, and to reinforce the collective responsibility of safeguarding democratic values.

In his address, deputy chief minister Chowna Mein described the Emergency as a critical lesson in the fragility of democratic institutions when unchecked power overrides constitutional norms.

"June 25, 1975, is not just a date—it is a stark reminder that silence in the face of injustice equates to complicity," Mein said. He stressed that while the Constitution



of India remains a robust document, its ideals only endure when actively defended by citizens, institutions, and leaders alike.

Quoting Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Deputy CM reiterated that the Emergency stands as an "indelible blot on India's democracy," arising from the misuse of power.

He noted that while the Emergency was imposed in Delhi, its consequences rippled across the entire country—including the Northeast.

"Even distant regions like Arunachal Pradesh and Assam were not spared. Leaders were imprisoned, voices were stifled, and civil rights were suspended," he said. Highlighting the widespread impact of

the Emergency, Mein pointed out that over 1.1 lakh people were detained across India under arbitrary charges, many without trial.

"It is important to remember that fundamental rights are not privileges handed down by any government—they are inalienable and non-negotiable. The Emergency was a blatant assault on those rights," he said.

The Deputy CM also lauded the historic resolution passed by the Lok Sabha in June 2024, which formally condemned the Emergency and designated June 25 as Samvidhan Hatya Diwas.

He noted that this official recognition underscores the need to preserve demo-

cratic memory and ensure that future generations are never allowed to forget the cost of constitutional subversion.

Governor Parnaik, in his remarks, also stressed the importance of eternal vigilance in a democracy.

He called on institutions and citizens to stay informed and actively participate in the preservation of constitutional integrity.

"The Emergency period is a crucial chapter that must be studied and remembered—not to dwell on the past, but to protect the future," the Governor said.

The event was attended by minister Dasanglu Pul, speaker Tesam Pongte, deputy speaker Kardo Nyigyor, MLAs, chief secretary Manish Kumar Gupta, mayor Tame Phassang, secretary of cultural affairs Mamata Riba, senior officials, students, and members of civil society.

The commemoration included documentary screenings and discussions on constitutional values, with a special focus on the role of the judiciary, media, and citizen movements during the Emergency.

A moment of silence was also observed to honour those who endured imprisonment or made sacrifices in the fight to restore democracy.

The programme concluded with a collective pledge to uphold the values of the Constitution, protect democratic institutions, and remain vigilant against any threats to India's democratic fabric.

CBSE sub-regional office to be established in Arunachal Pradesh, agreement signed

New office in Itanagar to streamline services for CBSE-affiliated schools across the state



ITANAGAR, June 25: In a major boost to the education sector of Arunachal Pradesh, the State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT) signed an agreement with the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), Regional Office, Guwahati, to facilitate the establishment of a CBSE Sub-Regional Office in Itanagar.

This development aims to bring CBSE services closer to schools, administrators, and students in the state, enhancing efficiency and accessibility.

According to an official statement issued on Wednesday, the temporary CBSE Sub-Regional Office will be set up within the premises of SCERT at Gohpur Tinali, Chimpu, in the state capital. A dedicated space measuring 1,720 square feet in the old SCERT building has been allotted by the Government of Arunachal Pradesh for this purpose.

The Sub-Regional Office will begin operations from the academic session 2025-26 and will cater exclusively to all CBSE-related matters for schools within the state.

With this move, Arunachal Pradesh will no longer have to depend on CBSE's Guwahati office for routine educational administration, exam processing, school affiliation, training programmes, and grievance redressal.

The new office will be headed by J Pankaj Bage, who has been appointed as the CBSE Sub-Regional Officer, Itanagar.

His role will include overseeing all operations related to CBSE school governance in Arunachal Pradesh and ensuring the smooth execution of board policies in the region.

Education officials said that the establishment of the Sub-Regional Office is expected to strengthen in-

stitutional coordination and improve responsiveness to the needs of CBSE-affiliated schools across the state's remote and hilly terrain.

"The presence of this office will not only ensure faster administrative support but will also help in timely redressal of school and student issues," the official statement said. "It is a vital step towards decentralising CBSE's outreach and adapting to the unique challenges of the Northeast."

Arunachal Pradesh currently has a growing number of CBSE-affiliated schools, and stakeholders have long demanded a dedicated administrative setup in the state to bridge logistical and communication gaps.

The signing of this agreement is seen as a response to these demands and a proactive move by both the state and central education authorities.

The collaboration also reflects the Government of Arunachal Pradesh's commitment to educational reforms, capacity building, and aligning with national education goals.

Officials added that further support and infrastructure may be developed around the Sub-Regional Office in the future, based on the needs and response of the schools.

The office is expected to become a hub for CBSE-related services such as affiliation processes, teacher training programmes, examination coordination, digital initiatives, and other academic and administrative functions.

The establishment of the CBSE Sub-Regional Office at Itanagar is thus poised to significantly enhance the efficiency, accessibility, and quality of educational governance in the state, providing timely assistance to thousands of students and teachers under the CBSE system.

East Siang observes Samvidhan Hatya Diwas

HT Correspondent

PASIGHAT, June 25: The East Siang district administration, in collaboration with the Department of Art and Culture, on Wednesday commemorated Samvidhan Hatya Diwas (Constitution Killing Day) with a solemn call to uphold and protect the democratic values enshrined in the Indian Constitution. The programme, held at the IGT Government Higher Secondary School (IGJGHS) Auditorium in Pasighat, was organised under the aegis of the Ministry of Culture, Government of India.

According to an official statement, the event marked the 50th anniversary of the imposition of the Emergency in 1975, a period widely regarded as one of the darkest chapters in India's democratic history.

The objective of the commemoration was to sensitise citizens, particularly the youth, about the importance of constitutional values and the need to remain vigilant against any threats to democracy. Addressing the gathering, Deputy Commissioner Sonalika Jiwani urged the public to draw inspiration from the ideals enshrined in the Preamble to the Constitution.

"It is imperative for our young generation to not only understand the values of democracy but also live by them, guided by the spirit of justice, liberty, equality, and fraternity," she said.

Superintendent of Police Pankaj Lamba, who attended the event as the special guest, echoed similar sentiments and highlighted the role of every citizen in safeguarding the democratic framework of the country.

Both the DC and SP flagged off the day's programme with a Prabhat Pheri (morning march) through Pasighat township, accompanied by heads of departments (HoDs), Panchayati Raj Institution (PRI) members, community-based organisations (CBOs), students, and members of the public. Participants marched with placards and slogans, calling for the preservation of constitutional rights and democratic accountability.

The enthusiastic turnout reflected the community's awareness and interest in understanding the historical lessons of the Emergency era.

As part of the event, prizes were distributed to winners of an essay writing competition held earlier on the theme of democracy and constitutional values. In the senior category, Rupa Bhagat from DEMGHSS secured the first prize, followed by Munne Borang in second place.

In the junior section, Raj Orang from GUPS, Balwadi won the first prize, while Anu Padun from KGBV received the second prize.

The awards were handed over by the DC and SP in a brief felicitation ceremony. A documentary film reflecting on the imposition and consequences of the Emergency was also screened, offering a visual narration of the events between 1975 and 1977. The film sought to create awareness about the suspension of civil liberties, press censorship, and the widespread arrests of political opponents during the period.

Officials stated that the commemoration aimed to not only pay homage to the democratic spirit of India but also remind citizens that the Constitution is a living document whose principles must be upheld through active civic participation. The event concluded with a collective resolve to safeguard the country's democratic institutions and ensure that such a period of constitutional subversion is never repeated.

Arunachal BJP observes 'Samvidhan Hatya Diwas'

HT Correspondent

ITANAGAR, June 25: The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Arunachal Pradesh, observed Samvidhan Hatya Diwas (Constitution Murder Day) on Wednesday, marking the 50th anniversary of the declaration of Emergency in India on June 25, 1975.

The party commemorated the day by wearing black badges and hosting a series of awareness programmes, reflecting on what it described as a direct assault on democratic values during the 21-month Emergency.

According to an official statement, the state-level programme was organised at the BJP headquarters in Vivek Vihar, Itanagar.

The event was attended by several prominent leaders, including Minister for Environment and Forest Wangki Lowang, Rajya Sabha MP Nabam Rebia, Minister for Agriculture, Horticulture and Dairy Development Gabriel D Wangsu, Pasighat MLA and former Union Minister Ninong Ering, Tali MLA Jikke Tako, and corporators of the Itanagar Municipal Corporation (IMC), among others.

The event began with a two-minute silence observed in memory of those who lost their lives or suffered during the Emergency period.

Party leaders described the Emergency as one of the darkest episodes in India's post-independence history, wherein civil liberties, press freedom, and judicial independence were severely curtailed.

An exhibition was also inaugurated at the BJP state headquarters on the occasion, showcasing rare photographs, newspaper clippings, and documents that highlighted the suppression of rights and democratic institutions during the Emergency.

The exhibition, open to the general public, aimed to educate the younger generation about the consequences of authoritarian rule and the importance of constitutional safeguards.

Addressing the gathering, party leaders condemned the events that unfolded during the Emergency, including mass arrests of opposition leaders, censorship of the press, and suspension of fundamental rights.

"The day is a grim reminder of what happens when power is misused and democratic norms are dismantled," said Minister Wangki Lowang.

Rajya Sabha MP Nabam Rebia urged people to remain vigilant in preserving the ideals enshrined in the Constitution.

BJP organises 'Viksit Bharat Ka Amrit Kaal' chaupal at Taliha

HT Correspondent

TALIHA, June 25: In a bid to connect with grassroots citizens and highlight the achievements of the last 11 years under the BJP-led central government, the 23-Taliha Mandal unit of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) organised a Shakti Kendra Mauhalla/Panchayat Chaupal at the Government Secondary School Auditorium in Taliha, Arunachal Pradesh.

According to an official statement, the event was part of the nationwide campaign titled "Viksit Bharat Ka Amrit Kaal - 11 Years of Seva, Sushasan aur Gareeb Kalyan", which commemorates over a decade of service delivery, good governance, and pro-poor policies under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The Chaupal was attended by a host of senior leaders and grassroots party workers, with Nyato Dukam, Minister of Commerce and Industry of Arunachal Pradesh, gracing the occasion as the chief guest.

Addressing the gathering, Dukam spoke at length about the transformative impact of central and state government schemes in the region, particularly in the sectors of infrastructure, healthcare, women's welfare, and tribal upliftment.

Also present at the event were Upper Subansiri BJP District President Tama Nirin, 23-Taliha Mandal President Taju Jami, and Si-Yomi District Incharge Taring Rai.

Zilla Parishad Members (ZPMs), booth-level party workers, and members of the general public participated in large numbers, reflecting the growing public engagement with the party's outreach initiatives.

The Chaupal served as a platform for leaders to outline key flagship programmes such as PM Awas Yojana, Jal Jeevan Mission, Ayushman Bharat, Ujjwala Yojana, and PM Kisan Samman Nidhi, which were credited with significantly improving living standards in rural and remote areas of the Northeast.

Speakers at the event emphasised that Arunachal Pradesh has witnessed unprecedented develop-

ment in recent years, thanks to a coordinated push for connectivity, digital inclusion, and empowerment of marginalised communities.

They also reiterated the BJP's commitment to inclusive growth and promised to carry forward the momentum in the coming years under the vision of a "Developed India" (Viksit Bharat).

The Mandal leadership used the opportunity to interact with local residents, address grievances, and encourage further involvement in government schemes.

A Q&A session was also held, allowing citizens to directly engage with elected representatives and party officials.

Party workers reaffirmed their resolve to take the message of Seva, Sushasan aur Gareeb Kalyan to every household in the region as part of the ongoing outreach campaign.

The programme concluded with a pledge to work towards strengthening grassroots democracy and realising the vision of a self-reliant and empowered Arunachal Pradesh.

Two-day training on incident response system and civil defence drills begins in Yingkiong

Initiative aims to enhance disaster preparedness at the district level



HT Correspondent

YINGKIONG, June 25: A two-day district-level training programme on the Incident Response System (IRS) and Civil Defence Security Drills commenced on Wednesday at the Conference Hall of the Deputy Commissioner's office in Yingkiong, Upper Siang district.

The training, organised under the aegis of the District Disaster Management Authority (DDMA), is part of a broader capacity-building initiative in line with the National Disaster Management Guidelines.

According to an official statement issued by the District Administration, the programme is designed to enhance the preparedness and coordination capabilities of district-level response teams during natural or man-made emergencies.

The event is being attended by members of the Incident Response System Team (IRST), Upper Siang, and is chaired by Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) and Incident Commander N Nonang.

During the inaugural session, Anie Yangfo, District Disaster Management Officer (DDMO), delivered a detailed orientation to the participants, briefing them on

their designated roles and responsibilities within the IRS framework.

Her presentation was aimed at familiarising team members with the operational structure of disaster response and encouraging proactive involvement.

The training included the use of case study scenarios drawn from real-life emergency situations to simulate crisis response and encourage critical thinking.

Participants engaged in group discussions and role-based exercises to understand how different wings of the administration—from police and fire serv-

ices to health and public works—can collaborate efficiently under the IRS model.

The IRS, developed by the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), provides a standardised approach for command, control, and coordination of emergency response, ensuring that efforts during disaster situations are not fragmented but synchronised.

Speaking at the event, ADC N Nonang emphasised the importance of readiness and unified action.

"Disaster can strike at any moment, and our response must be swift, structured, and coordinated. This training is a step forward in equipping our district administration with the tools needed to manage such challenges effectively," he said.

Officials from various departments including police, fire & emergency services, health, public works, forest, and education are participating in the workshop.

The training also focuses on inter-agency coordination, communication protocols, safety assessment, evacuation procedures, and first response actions.

The programme is scheduled to continue on June 26 with mock drills and team-based simulations that will assess the preparedness of each department in the face of hypothetical emergency situations.

The DDMA noted that similar capacity-building programmes will be conducted in other administrative blocks of the district in the coming months to ensure grassroots-level readiness in disaster risk reduction and management.

The training programme has been welcomed by the local administration as a timely and strategic initiative to strengthen resilience against the increasing threats of floods, landslides, forest fires, and other hazards prevalent in the hilly terrain of Arunachal Pradesh.

EC has become govt's puppet: Kharge

NEW DELHI, June 25: The Election Commission has become a "puppet" in the hands of the government, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge alleged on Wednesday and claimed that his party is raising the issue of "irregularities" in elections but the poll watchdog is not ready to listen.

Kharge said Congress leader Rahul Gandhi has stated the facts, citing figures, to lay bare the "irregularities" in the 2024 Maharashtra polls and others have also done so, but the Election Commission is not ready to accept that.

"The EC has become a puppet in the hands of the government...like we have puppets that are made to do things to entertain. You have a puppet and you (Prime Minister Narendra Modi) claim that you are winning elections. You are not winning elections your machine is winning," Kharge said, addressing a press conference at the Congress' Indira Bhawan headquarters.

"You let it go where you want to and get a hold where you want to," he said, referring to elections in various states.

"We won election in Maharashtra and in the same place five months later there is massive difference in number of voters. In five years, voters' list goes up by 2-3 per cent. But how come in five months, there is an increase of 8 per cent," the Congress president said. "I have fought 13 elections and also been part of many elections, but I have not seen such a thing," he said.

Kharge said the Congress has been constantly raising the issue of poll irregularities but the Election Commission is not ready to listen to anything because the government has "control everywhere". (PTI)

Despotic ruler imposed Emergency to preserve her dynastic rule: Amit Shah



NEW DELHI, June 25: The Emergency, imposed 50 years ago, by a despotic ruler, whose sole aim was to preserve her dynastic rule, was one of the darkest chapters in India's history, Union Home Minister Amit Shah said on Wednesday.

Shah said the Emergency was not a national necessity but a reflection of the anti-democratic mentality of the Congress and just "one person", a reference to then prime minister Indira Gandhi.

The Indira Gandhi government imposed the Emergency on June 25, 1975. The Modi government observes this day as 'Samvidhan Hatya Diwas'.

"Emergency, imposed 50 years ago, by a despotic ruler, whose sole aim was to preserve her dynastic rule, was one of the darkest chapters in India's history," the home minister posted on X.

Shah, who was just 11 years old in 1975, said he was a 'Bal Swayamsevak' of the RSS then and heard firsthand the excesses and injustices during the dark days of the Emergency.

He said the memories of that time, though blurry, as he was very young then, the suppression, the torture, the blatant assault on democratic values were still vivid in his memories. "I take immense pride in having been associated with a movement that stood up against this tyranny, and with a leader who fearlessly raised his voice to protect Bharat's democracy and its Constitution," he said.

Paying tributes to those who suffered after the imposition of Emergency by the Indira Gandhi government, Shah said the day reminds everyone that when those in power become dictatorial, the people have the power to overthrow

them. The home minister said the Emergency was the "Age of Injustice of Congress's hunger for power".

"This day tells us that when power becomes dictatorial, the people have the power to overthrow it," he said in another post on 'X' in Hindi.

"The Emergency was not a national necessity, but a reflection of the 'anti-democratic mentality' of the Congress and one person," the minister said. He said freedom of the press was crushed, the hands of the judiciary were tied and social workers were put in jail.

"The countrymen raised the slogan of 'sinhasan khali karo' (vacate the throne) and uprooted the dictatorial Congress. A heartfelt tribute to all the heroes who sacrificed their lives in this struggle," he said.

Last year, Shah had announced that the Modi government would observe June 25 as the 'Samvidhaan Hatya Diwas' to commemorate the "massive contributions" of those who endured "inhuman pain" during the period.

He had also said the observance of 'Samvidhaan Hatya Diwas' will help keep the eternal flame of individual freedom and the defence of democracy alive in every Indian, thus preventing "dictatorial forces" like the Congress from "repeating those horrors".

A gazette notification to this effect noted that the Emergency was declared on June 25, 1975, following which there was "gross abuse of power by the government of the day and people of India were subjected to excesses and atrocities". (PTI)

'Undeclared Emergency@11': Congress says democracy under 'five-fold assault' under Modi govt

NEW DELHI, June 25: In a scathing attack on the Modi government, the Congress on Wednesday alleged that over the past eleven years, Indian democracy has been under a "systematic and dangerous" five-fold assault that can be best described as "Undeclared Emergency@11".

With the BJP in an all-out attack mode on the Congress on the 50th anniversary of the imposition of the Emergency by the then Indira Gandhi government, the Congress launched a counter-offensive and alleged that the government was weakening Parliament and eroding the autonomy of Constitutional bodies.

The opposition party also claimed that there has been "unbridled hate speech and crackdown on civil liberties".

In a statement, Congress general secretary in-charge communications Jairam Ramesh alleged that government critics have been routinely vilified, hate and bigotry is deliberately spread by the ruling establishment, protesting farmers were labelled "Khalistanis", and advocates of caste census were dismissed as "urban Naxals".

"The killers of Mahatma Gandhi are glorified. Minorities live in fear of their lives and property. Dalits and other marginalised groups have been disproportionately targeted, and ministers making hate speeches have been rewarded with promotions," he claimed.

His remarks came on a day when the government is marking 'Samvidhaan Hatya Diwas' on the anniversary of imposition of Emergency.

In his statement, Ramesh said, "Over the past eleven years and thirty days, Indian democracy has been under a systematic and dangerous five-fold assault that can be best described as Undeclared Emergency@11."

Besides "unbridled hate speech and crackdown on civil liberties", he also cited alleged "attacks on the Constitution, tax terrorism and intimidation of businesses and institutions, control over the media and misuse of investigative agencies", to claim that an "undeclared emergency" was in place.

Claiming that attacks were being launched on the Constitution, Ramesh claimed that during the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, the prime minister sought a '400 Paar' mandate for a new Constitution and to betray Babasaheb Ambedkar's legacy.

"The people of India denied him that mandate. They

voted for preserving, protecting, and further promoting economic, social, and political justice enshrined in the existing Constitution," the Congress general secretary said.

He also alleged that the Modi government was "weakening Parliament" and has consistently shredded parliamentary norms.

MPs have been arbitrarily suspended merely for raising issues of public concern, and the government has refused to discuss critical national issues, he said.

"Key legislations are bulldozed through. Parliamentary committees have been by-passed," he added.

Ramesh also accused the government of "eroding autonomy of Constitutional bodies".

"The CAG has become irrelevant. The Election Commission's integrity has been severely compromised. Serious questions about the integrity of the assembly elections in some states have been ignored. Poll timings and phases are tailored to benefit the ruling party. The Commission has remained silent in the face of divisive rhetoric from the Prime Minister and senior BJP leaders," he alleged.

The Congress leader further alleged that Centre-state relations have been destroyed and the BJP has used money power to engineer the fall of Opposition-led state governments, frequently buying over legislators. "The office of the Governor has been misused to block bills in opposition-ruled states and to interfere in university appointments. The Centre has bypassed constitutional fiscal arrangements by overusing cesses to deprive states of their rightful revenue share," he said.

Ramesh also accused the government of "damaging judiciary" and said there has been a definite policy of quiet threats to the judiciary, primarily through delayed elevations, punitive transfers, post-retirement sinecures for pliant judges, and selective implementation of collegium recommendations.

Alleging tax terrorism and intimidation of businesses and institutions, Ramesh said the fear of regulatory retaliation has had a chilling effect on previously outspoken business leaders.

"Investigative agencies have been weaponised to patronise a favourite business group. Major assets, including airports, ports, cement plants, and even media houses, have been handed over to this group," Ramesh alleged. (PTI)

For some it's 'Modi first, country later': Kharge's swipe at Tharoor

NEW DELHI, June 25: In a jibe at Congress leader Shashi Tharoor, party chief Mallikarjun Kharge on Wednesday said his party believes in "country first" mantra but for some it is "Modi first and country later".

"I can't read English well. His (Tharoor's) language is very good, that's why we have made him a Congress Working Committee member," Kharge said when asked about Tharoor's article on Operation Sindoor outreach in which he praised Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

"But I want to say the people of the opposition together said they are with the Army that is fighting (during Operation Sindoor). We (the Congress) said the country is biggest and we will work together (with the government). We said 'country first, party later'. Some people say 'Modi first, country later'. What can we do in that," he said.

Soon after Kharge's remarks, Tharoor put out a cryptic post on X in which there was an image of a bird with the caption - "Don't ask permission to fly. The wings are yours. And the sky belongs to no one..."

Tharoor, in an article published in The Hindu on Monday, said Modi's energy, dynamism and willingness to engage remained a "prime asset" for India on the global stage but deserved greater backing.

His remarks were seen as likely to irk his Congress party and widen cracks in his ties with its leadership.

In the article, Tharoor said the diplomatic outreach following Operation Sindoor was a moment of national resolve and effective communication. The Prime Minister's Office had shared Tharoor's article on X.

Speaking at an event in Moscow, Tharoor on Tuesday said his article on Operation Sindoor's global outreach was not a sign of his "leaving to join" Prime Minister Modi's party but a statement of national unity, interest and standing up for India.

Also on Tuesday, the Congress distanced itself from party MP Tharoor's remarks in the article.

Asked about Tharoor's comments in the article, Congress spokesperson Supriya Shrinete had said, "It may be his own opinion, it is not the opinion of the Congress party. It is not the Congress' view since we have presented our views with evidence and proof."

Tharoor's praise for the prime minister comes at a time when the Congress has been consistently attacking the Modi government over its foreign policy, alleging that Indian diplomacy is being "shattered" and the country stands "isolated" globally. Following the Pahalgam terror attack, Tharoor has been making comments on the India-Pakistan conflict and the diplomatic outreach that are at variance with the stand of the Congress.(PTI)

Allowing probe agencies, police to summon lawyers threatens justice administration: SC

NEW DELHI, June 25: The Supreme Court on Wednesday said allowing police or probe agencies to directly summon lawyers for advising clients would seriously undermine the autonomy of legal profession and was a "direct threat" to the independence of justice administration.

A bench of Justices K V Viswanathan and N Kotiswar Singh observed the legal profession was an integral component of the process of administration of justice.

"Permitting the investigating agencies/police to directly summon defense counsel or advocates who advise parties in a given case would seriously undermine the autonomy of legal profession and would even constitute a direct threat to the independence of the administration of justice," the apex court said.

The bench also framed a couple of questions in the matter. "Some of the questions which arise for consideration are: (1) when an individual has a association with a case only as a lawyer advising the party, could the investigating agency/prosecuting agency/police directly summon the lawyer for questioning?" the bench asked.

The other question read, "Assuming that the investigating agency or prosecuting agency or police have a case that role of the individual is not merely as a lawyer but something more, even then, should they be directly permitted to summon or should a judicial oversight be prescribed for those exceptional criteria?"

Both points aside from other issues, the bench said, could arise and require addressal on a comprehensive basis for "what is at stake is the efficacy of the administration of justice and the capacity of the lawyers to conscientiously, and more importantly, fearlessly discharge their professional duties".

The bench said since it was a matter directly impinging on the administration of justice, "to subject a professional... when he is a counsel in the matter... prima facie appears to be untenable, subject to further consideration by the court".

The order came when the top court was hearing a plea of a Gujarat-based advocate, challenging an order of the high court passed on June 12.

The high court on March 2025 refused to quash a notice summoning the lawyer before the police in a case against his client. The top court, however, directed the state not to summon him till further orders and stayed the operation of the police's notice issued to him.

The bench also issued notice to Gujarat government, asking for its response.

The top court noted an agreement was executed in June last year between two persons in a loan transaction.

In February, one of them got an FIR registered against the other following which the accused was arrested.

The top court noted the petitioner before it was engaged as a lawyer by the accused and he moved a bail application on behalf of his client before a sessions court in Ahmedabad. The court granted bail to the

accused. However, a police notice in March summoned the lawyer to appear before police within three days.

The issue assumes significance as the Enforcement Directorate (ED) on June 20 directed its investigating officers not to issue summons to any advocate in a money laundering investigation being carried out against their client, adding that exception to this rule could only be made after "approval" by the agency's director. The probe agency's statement came in the wake of the lawyer-client privilege linked controversy stemming from ED's summons to senior Supreme Court lawyers Arvind Datar and Pratap Venugopal. The counsel had offered legal advice to Care Health Insurance Limited (CHIL) on the employee stock ownership plan (ESOP) given to Rashmi Saluja, former chairperson of Religare Enterprises.

The summons were condemned by the Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) and the Supreme Court Advocates-on-Record Association (SCAORA), calling it a "disturbing trend" that struck at the very foundations of the legal profession.

The bar bodies urged the chief justice of India to take suo motu cognisance of the matter. On Wednesday, the top court said lawyers engaged in legal practice, apart from their fundamental right under Article 19 (1)(g) of the Constitution, had certain rights and privileges guaranteed being legal professionals and further as a result of statutory provisions. (PTI)

India on track to become USD 5 trillion economy by 2027 despite global turbulence: Piyush Goyal

KOLKATA, June 25: Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said India is firmly on track to become a USD 5 trillion economy by 2027 despite global turbulence, driven by a collective national effort and strong leadership under Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Speaking at a virtual session organised by the Merchants' Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI), Goyal also hailed the government's decade-long economic reforms as transformational rather than incremental.

"We are well on track to achieve the USD 5 trillion economy goal in the next three years. This will be the first milestone on our journey to 'Viksit Bharat' by 2047," Goyal said on Tuesday.

Taking note of the global economic volatility and geopolitical headwinds, the minister said India must navigate turbulent waters with unity and determination. "Great economies aren't built in calm waters. This is India's time. We must seize the moment and work together to claim our rightful place among the world's leading nations," he said.

Goyal described the government's development model as one focused on inclusive, sustainable, and honest growth,



emphasising service, good governance, and innovation.

"The last 11 years have not been about incremental change. We have aimed for quantum leaps," he said.

Citing economic indicators, Goyal said India has moved from being part of the 'Fragile Five' to becoming one of the top five global economies.

He highlighted the country's foreign exchange reserves, which recently touched USD 698 billion, robust banking sector health, and inflation levels averaging among the lowest in post-independence history.

He also praised Prime Minister Modi's personal commitment to citizen welfare, referencing the government's swift evacuation efforts in global conflict zones, like

Iran and Ukraine.

Referring to the Emergency imposed in 1975, the minister drew a contrast with present-day India, calling it an "oasis of stability" in a globally unstable ecosystem.

He also pointed to the government's aggressive free trade agreements (FTAs) with developed economies such as the UK, Australia, and the EU, which he said are designed to benefit Indian exporters and MSMEs.

"The FTAs we are signing are not with weak or competing economies but with advanced markets. These are complementary relationships, offering immense opportunities for our industry," he said, urging exporters and startups to take advantage of these deals.

Touching on the potential of AI and emerging technologies, Goyal said India is ready to lead in sectors like artificial intelligence, quantum computing, and 3D printing.

"Rather than fearing job losses, we should focus on the opportunities to create new employment. Our youth are aspirational, and the government is working with industry bodies like NASSCOM to build AI skills," he added. (PTI)

No.ACE/CHDI/10/TM-24/2025

Date 23/06/2025

SHORT TENDER NOTICE

Sealed tenders in prescribed form (Eventually to be drawn in APWD. "F2" Form) affixing non-refundable court fee stamp of Rs. 8.25 (Rupees Eight and paise twenty-five) only for each group separately are hereby invited from the eligible class-I (A, B, C) and Class-II registered contractors of Irrigation Department for the following works under Suklai Serfang Goreswar Division, Irrigation, Goreswar and will be received up to 2 PM on 08/07/2025 in the office of the undersigned which will be opened on the same date and place at 3.00 PM in presence of the intending tenderers or their authorized agents, who may like to be present.

However, in the event of closure of office on the opening/receiving of tender due to some unavoidable reason the next office working day of office will be considered for the purpose.

NAME OF SCHEME :-

Different works of "Extension, Renovation and Modernization of (ERM), Sukla Irrigation Project under PMKSY-AIBP for the year 2021-22".

APPROX. VALUE:- Rs. 3,94,51,725.00 in 24 (Twenty-Four) groups as per group allocation.

TIME FOR COMPLETION:- 4 (Four) months from the date of issue of Work Order.

EARNEST MONEY:- 2% of tendered value (1% in case of ST/SC/OBC/UG).

Detail tender papers with terms and conditions may be obtained on request from the office of the undersigned on payment of Rs. 200/- (Rupees two hundred) only to the C.H.D (Irrigation), BTC, Kokrajhar up to 12.00 Noon from 07/07/2025

Sd/-

Additional Chief Engineer cum CHD, Irrigation, BTC, Kokrajhar

IPR(BTC)/C/2025-26/1155

No.ACE/CHDI/10/TM-24/2025/2048

Date 24/06/2025

SHORT TENDER NOTICE

Sealed tenders in prescribed form (Eventually to be drawn in APWD. "F2" Form) affixing non-refundable court fee stamp of Rs. 8.25 (Rupees Eight and paise twenty-five) only for each group separately are hereby invited from the eligible class-I (A, B, C) and Class-II registered contractors of Irrigation Department for the following works under Suklai Serfang Goreswar Division, Irrigation, Goreswar and will be received up to 2 PM on 09/07/2025 in the office of the undersigned which will be opened on the same date and place at 3.00 PM in presence of the intending tenderers or their authorized agents, who may like to be present.

However, in the event of closure of office on the opening/receiving of tender due to some unavoidable reason the next office working day of office will be considered for the purpose.

NAME OF SCHEME :-

Different works of "Extension, Renovation and Modernization of (ERM), Sukla Irrigation Project under PMKSY-AIBP for the year 2021-22".

APPROX. VALUE:- Rs. 3,64,84,836.00 in 26 (Twenty-Six) groups as per group allocation.

TIME FOR COMPLETION:- 4 (Four) months from the date of issue of Work Order.

EARNEST MONEY:- 2% of tendered value (1% in case of ST/SC/OBC/UG).

Detail tender papers with terms and conditions may be obtained on request from the office of the undersigned on payment of Rs. 200/- (Rupees two hundred) only to the C.H.D (Irrigation), BTC, Kokrajhar up to 12.00 Noon from 08/07/2025

Sd/-

Additional Chief Engineer cum CHD, Irrigation, BTC, Kokrajhar

IPR(BTC)/C/2025-26/1158

অসম পাবলিক সেৱা আয়োগ

ASSAM PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

Jawaharnagar, Khanapara, Guwahati-781022.

No 136PSC/DR-20/2/2024-25

NOTIFICATION

It is for information to all concerned that the Assam Public Service Commission will hold interview/viva-voce for the post of Fisheries Development Officer (FDO) under Fishery Department (Advt. No. 08/2025 Dated Guwahati, the 18th February, 2025) as per programme given below at its office at Jawaharnagar, Khanapara, Guwahati-22.

Sl No.	Name of the post and Department	Date of interview/viva-voce	Reporting Time
1	Fisheries Development Officer (FDO) under Fishery Department	21 st and 22 nd July, 2025	09:00 A.M

Kindly note that the candidates appearing for interview/viva-voce must bring the following testimonials in ORIGINAL along with self attested photocopies in chronological order, thereof for verification/scrutiny on the day of interview:

- H.S.L.C./H.S. Admit Card/ Mark sheet/Pass Certificate as proof of age.
- H.S.L.C. Mark sheet and Pass Certificate.
- H.S.S.L.C. Mark sheet and Pass Certificate.
- Bachelor of Fisheries Science (B.F.Sc) degree Mark sheet and Pass Certificate.
- CGPA Conversion Formula of the respective universities.
- ICAR recognition Certificate of respective Institute / universities.
- Permanent Resident Certificate/Employment Exchange Registration Certificate.
- State Government Employee of Assam must submit No Objection Certificate from their respective employer or Permanent Resident Certificate/Employment Exchange Registration Certificate.
- Caste/ Updated PwBD certificate (if applicable).
- BPL candidates must submit BPL card reflecting the name of candidate (if applicable).
- Declaration Form A. ("May be downloaded from" APSC's website)
- Any other documents relevant as per advt.

The Accepted and Rejected list of candidates is uploaded in the Commission's official website. No intimation letter to the eligible candidates shall be sent separately by post. The intimation letters shall be uploaded on 16-07-2025 in the APSC's website (www.ansc.nic.in). The candidates shall have to download their own intimation letter from the aforesaid website.

Sd/-

Secretary,

Assam Public Service Commission

Jawaharnagar, Khanapara, Guwahati-22

DIPR /D/HLT/43/26-Jun-25

Tripura CM warns of strict action against drug traffickers

BJP Janajati Morcha holds demonstration in front of Congress MLA's residence



HT Correspondent

AGARTALA, June 25: Tripura Chief Minister Manik Saha on Wednesday said that drug traffickers will not be tolerated under any circumstances and that strict action is being taken against them under a zero-tolerance policy.

Saha said that the central and state governments are taking a firm stance against drugs, and people from all sections of society must unite and fight against the menace.

The Chief Minister made these remarks at a motorcycle rally held at Umakanta Maidan in Agartala

today on the occasion of the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking. A blood donation camp was also organized as part of the Drug-Free India campaign. On the occasion, Saha, who also holds the Home portfolio, said that the United Nations declared this day as the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking in 1987 to prevent drug abuse and raise awareness about illegal drugs.

"This issue is very relevant today. Tripura is geographically surrounded by international borders on three sides and shares bound-

aries with Assam and Mizoram. In such a situation, Tripura's children are being targeted, and the state is being used as a corridor to traffic drugs into Bangladesh. Today's slogan—'Say No to Drugs'—is extremely important. Drug traffickers are smuggling drugs for money, and our children are falling prey to it. But it is not their fault. When it comes to Tripura, they become victims. These victims are in dire need of treatment," he said.

He added that, for this purpose, the state government decided in the last budget to open drug de-addiction centers in all eight districts.

About ₹ 20 crore has been allocated for each center, and an additional ₹ 198 crore has been sanctioned by the Ministry of DoNER to set up a larger drug de-addiction center in Tripura. The foundation stone for the facility has already been laid at Bishramganj.

The Chief Minister further informed that currently, there are two drug de-addiction centers operating in the state, in addition to several others managed by private initiatives.

"It has been observed that those who use injectable drugs are mostly affected by HIV/AIDS. We try to provide treatment to such individuals if detected early. The AIDS Control Society in the state has been carrying out various initiatives to prevent HIV/AIDS. OST (Opioid Substitution Therapy) arrangements have also been made. The state government is firmly committed to a zero-tolerance policy against drugs. Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah have made it clear that drug peddlers will not be spared under any circumstances," Saha added.

He said that drug seizures in Tripura have increased by 104% from 2023-24 to 2024-25, while drug destruction has seen a rise of 132%. Police, security forces, and other concerned agencies are actively working against drug trafficking.

AGARTALA, June 25: The BJP's Janajati (indigenous) Morcha on Wednesday staged a demonstration in front of the official residence of Congress MLA Sudip Roy Barman here demanding an unconditional apology from him for making derogatory remarks at indigenous people.

While addressing an Adivasi Congress programme in Dhalai district's Ambassa on Tuesday, the senior Congress lawmaker alleged that BJP leaders urinated at indigenous people reflecting the party (BJP)'s hatred towards the adivasi community.

To protest the statement of Congress MLA at Ambassa, hundreds of BJP Janajati Morcha leaders and workers on Wednesday gathered in front of his official residence at Radhanagar and staged a protest demonstration. BJP state general secretary Bipin Debbarna told reporters.

He claimed that the senior Congress MLA had made "unparliamentary, derogatory and objectionable remarks" targeting the indigenous people.

"We want Roy Barman to seek unconditional apology to the indigenous people or quit as an MLA. If he declines, we will launch a massive stir across the state," he said.

Responding to the Janajati



Morcha's agitation, Roy Barman claimed he did not target or defame the indigenous people at all.

"What I said was the BJP's hatred towards the communities belonging to ST, SC and OBC. The entire nation had witnessed a party leader urinating at an adivasi labourer in Madhya Pradesh (in July 2023). They have a perverted mindset towards these communities. The BJP leaders who are from the upper class hate the people of ST, SC and OBC," he said.

Roy Barman said, "I did say

what the truth is. I have no anger for those BJP leaders and workers who have stormed into MLA's hostel, a protected area by breaking open the lock of the gate. They broke some chairs and hurled stones at windows of the hostel but the police remained as silent spectators and created a ruckus for around one hour."

Superintendent of Police (SP), West Tripura, Kiran Kumar and Officer in Charge of West Agartala police station, Paritosh Das were unavailable for comment on the agitation. (PTI)

Mizoram Child Rights Commission demands stringent punishment against man for sexual abuse

AIZAWL, June 25: Mizoram State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (MSCPCR) has demanded stringent punishment against a man, who was arrested recently in a case involving sexual assault of a minor and possession and circulation of child sexual abuse material (CSAM).

Speaking to reporters in Aizawl, MSCPCR chairperson Jimmy Laltnamawia on Tuesday said that Lalrampana was arrested by CBI on June 9 for allegedly sexually assaulting a minor and uploading a video of the act online.

"MSCPCR expresses deep regret over the incident and demands stringent punishment against the accused," he said.

Jimmy said that the POCSO Act strictly prohibits sexual assault against children and possession or sharing online of child sexual-related video or picture.

Any violator can be convicted with an imprisonment of 5 years and a fine of up to ₹ 10 lakh and another 7 years imprisonment and ₹ 10 lakh fine for repeated offence, he said.

Expressing regret over incidents of child sexual abuse in Mizoram, Jimmy said that the commission want that such incidents do not occur any more in the state.

He said that there are currently 194 under-trial cases under the POCSO Act in various district courts across the state.

The CBI had tracked the activities of Lalrampana using cyber intelligence, forensic tools and international co-operation mechanisms. After registering the case on May 30, the CBI pin-pointed his location and raided his premises in Aizawl on June 4 during which incriminated digital devices were seized. The agency alleged that the accused was creating, collecting, storing and uploading child sexual abuse material (CSAM), in violation of laws.

Subsequent forensic examination revealed a substantial cache of child abuse content, including graphic images and videos, a CBI spokesperson had said earlier.

These materials were corroborated with data from Interpol's International Child Sexual Exploitation (ICSE) database as well as Cyber Tipline Reports (CTRs) generated by Google and shared with the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (4C), Ministry of Home Affairs, he had said.

The analysis further uncovered that a minor had been threatened and sexually assaulted by the accused.

The case was detected suo motu by the CBI, as neither the victim nor the family had complained about the incident to any law enforcement agency prior to CBI's intervention, the CBI had said in a statement. (PTI)

Raja Raghuvanshi murder case Meghalaya police recover items from drain

INDORE, June 25: A Meghalaya police team probing the Raja Raghuvanshi murder case on Wednesday found some items in a drain in the city on the basis of information provided by one of the accused.

The police officials got down into the drain in Palasia area along with real estate businessman Shilom James who has been arrested in the case, said an eyewitness.

After a brief search, items packed in a plastic bag were recovered, he said.

While the police team made no official statement about the recovery, an Indore police official said the bag could contain a country-made pistol.

This weapon was suspected to have disappeared along with other items from a flat in Indore city where Sonam Raghuvanshi, Raja Raghuvanshi's wife and the prime accused, had stayed for several days after fleeing from Meghalaya following the murder.

Earlier, on the basis of information provided by James, the investigators had recovered burnt pieces of a bag from an empty plot on June 22.

Besides James, flat owner Lokendra Singh Tomar and security guard Balbir Ahirwar have been arrested on the charges of hiding or destroying important evidence. (PTI)

Akashvani, Kohima dist admin to enhance public awareness through radio

HT Correspondent

DIMAPUR, June 25: Akashvani Kohima and the Kohima district administration signed an MoU at Akashvani Kohima office on Wednesday, aimed at improving public communication and outreach through radio.

The MoU was signed by Kohima DC B Henok Buchem, additional SP (Traffic) Z Tshurhosie Kajiri and assistant director (P), Akashvani Kohima, Abino Lasuh.

The partnership plans to collaborate on radio programming and awareness campaigns, focusing on governance, public welfare, health, education, real-time traffic updates, disaster management, and other vital issues.

As part of the agreement, Akashvani Kohima will produce and broadcast radio programmes, in consultation with the district administration, ensuring that the content is informative, timely, and relevant.

The district administration will contribute by providing officials, experts, and resource persons for participation in these programmes.

The MoU also emphasizes the crucial role of radio in emergency communication.

In accordance with Section 30 of the Disaster Management Act, 2005, Akashvani Kohima will broadcast official announcements and advisories during natural disasters, pandemics, or other emergencies.

The two parties will work together to promote community training and disaster preparedness.

Also, special programmes and jingles will be jointly developed for national and state events, elections, and other important public interest themes.

The collaboration seeks to leverage Akashvani Kohima's broadcasting expertise and the district administration's governance resources to deliver impactful messages to the public.

FM Tragopan will broadcast real-time traffic updates every half hour to help commuters nav-



igate Kohima city more efficiently.

Updates will be aired from 10 am to noon and again from 3 pm to 5 pm, providing timely information on congestion and alternate routes.

The initiative is expected to boost the visibility of government schemes and policies, making them more accessible to citizens across Kohima district.

Kohima DC Buchem said the idea of real-time traffic updates through radio broadcasting had been on his mind since he assumed office,

inspired by similar updates he used to hear on the radio during his college days in Delhi.

The concept was further developed through discussions with the Akashvani Kohima team and followed by a long process of working out the details.

He highlighted that radio continues to have a strong impact, especially in rural areas. He urged all stakeholders, particularly the traffic police, to institutionalise this initiative and work together to make it a grand success.

Manipur Police arrests four members of inter-state gang of arms dealers

IMPHAL, June 25: Manipur Police arrested four members of an inter-state gang of arms dealers and seized arms and ammunition from their possession, an officer said on Wednesday.

Police cracked down on an inter-state organised gang of arms smugglers and middlemen who were smuggling unauthorised arms across different states, operating clandestinely in greater Imphal area and arrested four persons including a member of UNLF (Pambei) on Tuesday, the officer said.

Two 9 mm Smith & Wesson pistols, one 9 mm Sig Sauer pistol, one Glock 19 pistol with 2 magazines, one 7.65 mm JD Taurus pistol with magazine, one Falcon Cal 7.62 mm along with magazine, one M-20 Falcon

pistol, one Keltec pistol .32 mm with 2 magazines, one Beretta pistol, one ?Glock pistol .32, 159 number of .32 mm live ammunition and four wireless sets were seized from their possession, he said.

Meanwhile, in a separate operation, the police on Tuesday arrested three active cadres of UNLF (Pambei) from Babupara in Imphal West district. They were involved

in extortion and threatening government employees to gain contract work.

Two 9 mm pistols along with magazines, one .32 pistol along with magazine and ammunition were seized from their possession.

Security forces also arrested one active cadre of UNLF (Ningolmacha) involved in extortion in Thoubal district. (PTI)

Mizoram introduces e-office system to enhance digital governance

AIZAWL, June 25: The Mizoram government has joined other states in launching e-office system to enhance digital governance and streamline official functioning, a minister said on Wednesday.

Speaking to reporters at a press conference here, state Information and Communication Technology (ICT) minister Dr Vanlalhlana said that e-offices have been rolled out at the state secretariat on April 18.

Initially, it was introduced as a pilot in four departments, including the school education department and PWD in the secretariat, it has now been adopted in all the 41 departments in the secretariat and the Chief Minister's Office, he said.

After the secretariat, such offices will be introduced in directorates and district offices, he said.

According to Vanlalhlana, initiatives have been taken since January 2024 to introduce e-office system in the state.

He said the Centre's Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances sanctioned Rs 1.99 crore under the State Collaborative Initiative



scheme for opening e-offices.

At least 6,492 files have been created so far

using the system, he said.

He said that it has enhanced governance as office files can now move at a faster pace and there are no more reports of missing files.

The minister said that the system has been effectively used by the chief minister, ministers, chief secretary, secretaries and senior officials as they can work outside offices through the virtual private network.

He said that the digital system will reduce the government's expenses as it will do away with paper works.

Vanlalhlana also said that the ICT Department currently is upgrading the domains and hosting of more than 300 government websites.

He expressed regret that many government websites could not be accessed due to the transfer of websites from the existing server host Ctrl-S Data Centre to a more secure Google Virtual Private Server (VPS).

He said that 23 department websites have so far been re-activated. (PTI)

ASSOCIATE SIGNALLING WORKS IN LUMDING DIVISION

E-Tender No. : SNT-04-LMG-2025-26-RT; Dated: 20-06-2025; E-Tender are invited by the undersigned for the following work: **Name of work :** Associate signalling works in connection with TTR (FS+TWS+WCMS)-17 sets (1:12) & TTR (TWS+WCMS)-18 sets (1:12) Guwahati-Chaparmukh section and TTR (TWS+WCMS)-14 sets (1:12) & TTR (FS+TWS+WCMS)-31 sets (1:12) Chaparmukh-Lumding section. **Tender Value:** ₹ 1,76,96,745.52; **Bid Security:** ₹ 2,38,500/-; **Date & time of closing of tender at 15:00 hours and opening at 15:30 hrs. on 14-07-2025.** For complete information with the tender document of above e-tender will be available in the website www.irops.gov.in

STRENGTHENING OF S&T MAINTENANCE ACTIVITIES IN LUMDING DIVISION

E-Tender No. : SNT-12-LMG-2025-26; Dated: 20-06-2025; E-Tender are invited by the undersigned for the following work: **Name of work :** Strengthening of S&T maintenance activities by assisting in maintenance and execution of non-safety critical activities by deployment of technical teams along with supply of required materials for S&T deptt. of Lumding Division for 02 years. **Tender Value:** ₹ 22,58,47,866.46/-; **Bid Security:** ₹ 12,79,200/-; **Date & time of closing of tender at 15:00 hours and opening at 15:30 hrs. on 09-07-2025.** For complete information with the tender document of above e-tender will be available in the website www.irops.gov.in

STRENGTHENING OF S&T MAINTENANCE ACTIVITIES IN LUMDING DIVISION

E-Tender No. : SNT-12-LMG-2025-26; Dated: 20-06-2025; E-Tender are invited by the undersigned for the following work: **Name of work :** Strengthening of S&T maintenance activities by assisting in maintenance and execution of non-safety critical activities by deployment of technical teams along with supply of required materials for S&T deptt. of Lumding Division for 02 years. **Tender Value:** ₹ 22,58,47,866.46/-; **Bid Security:** ₹ 12,79,200/-; **Date & time of closing of tender at 15:00 hours and opening at 15:30 hrs. on 09-07-2025.** For complete information with the tender document of above e-tender will be available in the website www.irops.gov.in

আবক্ষী অধীক্ষকৰ কাৰ্যালয় :: কাৰ্বি আংলং :: ডিফু OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF POLICE :: KARBI ANGLONG :: DIPHU



The above is a photograph of missing women in connection with Manja PS GDE No.13 Dtd.20/06/2025 (MMR No.16/25). Please make an all out effort to trace out the missing women, if found intimate to Police control Room (PCR), Karbi Anglong either at 60269-00775 & 93659-72436 for follow up action.

Description:

Name - Smti Riya Sil (20 Years)
Height - 5 feet ½ inch
Hair - Long
Complexion - Fair
Wearing - Mekhala and Red colour sporting

Sd/
Dy. Superintendent of Police (HQ)
Karbi Anglong, Diphu

DIPR /D/HLT/44/26-Jun-25

IDEA OF EQUALITY IN LOVE EXISTS ONLY IN FILMS: FATIMA SANA SHAIKH

MUMBAI, June 25: Actor Fatima Sana Shaikh on Wednesday said true equality in love means mutual respect and understanding, which she believes exists only in films.

The actor is coming out with her new film "Aap Jaisa Koi", a heartwarming romantic drama that delves into the lives of two unique individuals, Shirenu Tripathi (Madhavan) and Madhu Bose (Shaikh).

The movie, directed by Vivek Soni of "Meenakshi Sundareswar" fame, explores the theme of equality in love and relationships.

"The idea of equality of love is where two people respect each other, and they will listen to each other and won't deny it. I think that is an equal relationship now and compromises need to be done by both."

"When you come into a partnership, you work towards the relationship without losing yourself. I think that is the way to have a successful relationship," Shaikh told reporters here at the film's trailer launch event.

When asked whether she has found such love in life, the actor said, "No one is there. No good guys. They exist only in films."

About working with Madhavan, Shaikh said she didn't want to let go off the opportunity to collaborate with the "Rehnaa Hai Terre Dil Mein" star.

"I liked the story of the film, it's an honest story. I've never played a layered character like this in a love story. Who wouldn't want to work with Madhavan? I was so excited about working with Madhavan," the actor said.

"Aap Jaisa Koi" is produced by Karan Johar's Dharmatic Entertainment, the digital arm of Dharma Productions. It is set to release on Netflix on July 11. (PTI)



'SEE YOUR PRIME MINISTER ON SCREEN': WHAT LED TO A BAN ON GULZAR'S 'AANDHI' DURING EMERGENCY



NEW DELHI, June 25: "Aandhi" was running in theatres in 1975 when lyricist-filmmaker Gulzar, who was in Moscow to present it at a film festival, received the news about the movie being banned in India.

Set against the backdrop of elections, "Aandhi" is a love story between a hotel manager (Sanjeev Kumar) and his estranged wife, played by Suchitra Sen, who reconnects years later after she becomes a politician.

Author Saba Mahmood Bashir's 2019 "Gulzar's Aandhi: Insights into the Film" sheds light on the controversy around the movie and the political climate in the country during its release.

Many had noted the similarities between prime minister Indira Gandhi and Sen's characters, including the white streak of hair, the attire and the walk but the then I&B ministry, headed by I.K. Gujral, found nothing objectionable in it and the movie was released in theatres in February.

Then on June 25, 1975, Gandhi declared Emergency.

In July the same year, Gulzar was in Moscow to present the movie at a film festival and that's when he got to know that. It had been in theatres for over 20 weeks at the time.

"He learnt that he would have to pull out of the show as the film had been banned in India. To be sure, it was a film magazine that had published a feature on 'Aandhi', with the headline, 'See your Prime Minister on screen'," Bashir writes in the book.

The book also featured an interview with Gulzar, who spoke about how he rushed back to India after the ban.

"Sanjeev was also there with me. After we got back, J Om Prakashji (film's producer) tried very hard to have the ban lifted. We were already in the twenty-fourth week, so we decided to modify two scenes," the cinema veteran recalled.

One of the new scenes that were incorporated featured Aarti Devi looking at a portrait of Indira Gandhi and calling her a "role model".

"They made us add that bit. They insisted. By then the movie was run-

ning in its twenty-third or twenty-fourth week," he said.

Gulzar insisted that there was no similarity between the lead character and Indira Gandhi but he did borrow references from the late prime minister for Aarti Devi's personality traits and mannerisms.

"At the time, it was not Indira Gandhi's life story. But even today, there is no one like her, so she was the best persona to keep in mind. Accordingly, that was the reference one could offer to any actor - the way she used to walk, the way she used to descend a flight of stairs, the way she would come out of a helicopter.

"We used her traits in good taste - not because the character was based on her or her life. But then things happened - the opposition parties remarked that Aarti Devi's character is shown to consume alcohol, and some decided to connect the two unrelated personalities," Gulzar said.

According to Gulzar, what added fuel to the fire were the advertisements and posters for the film.

In the book, Bashir wrote that it was baseless to debate whether "Aandhi" has been modelled on the life of Indira Gandhi but the similarities between the real and reel characters were quite striking.

"Both Aarti Devi and Mrs Gandhi had an estranged marriage. If stones were pelted at Aarti Devi at a rally, they were also pelted at Mrs Gandhi in 1967 at a rally near Bhubaneswar, Orissa. "It is this coincidence about the estranged marriage, and the fact that Feroze Gandhi too ran a hotel in Allahabad that led the critics and viewers to connect the dots and begin to believe that 'Aandhi' was the story of Indira Gandhi," she wrote.

Gulzar recalled that he went to Moscow at a later time where he met Gujral, who was serving as the Indian ambassador to the Soviet Union.

"Gujral sahib told me that it was Sanjay (Gandhi) who had not taken the controversy well. Otherwise, there was no objection from the others. I remember my reply too, that it was just one of those things which happens in a democracy." (PTI)

PRIME VIDEO ANNOUNCES SECOND SEASON OF REALITY SERIES 'THE TRAITORS'



NEW DELHI, June 25: Streaming service Prime Video on Wednesday renewed its original unscripted show "The Traitors", hosted by filmmaker Karan Johar, for a second season.

"The Traitors", adapted from IDTV's BAFTA and Emmy award-winning global format, premiered on the streamer's platform on June 12. It is a collaboration with All3Media International and produced by BBC Studios India Productions.

The show features 20 celebrities from various spheres, who come together in this ultimate test of trust and betrayal, as they compete to win a significant cash prize and the coveted title.

Since its premiere, the first season of "The Traitors" has captivated audiences across the country with its high-stakes gameplay, unpredictable twists, and edge-of-the-seat cliffhangers, Prime Video said in a statement.

"The show has sparked a wave of fan reactions and theories across social media, quickly becoming a pop culture phenomenon. Strengthening Prime Video's unscripted slate, 'The Traitors' has been watched by viewers across 88% of India's pin codes," it added.

Nikhil Madhok, Director and Head of Originals, Prime Video, India, said it has been incredibly rewarding to see "The Traitors" strike a chord with audiences across India.

"With its distinctive mix of tension, strategy and emotional honesty, brought to life by our versatile host, Karan Johar and a stellar line up of players who have brought their A-game to the show, the series has emerged as a true breakout.

"As we continue to shape a bold and diverse unscripted slate at Prime Video, 'The Traitors' stands out as a marquee title that pushes the boundaries of the reality genre. Buoyed by the overwhelming response, we're thrilled to begin work on Season Two and take the experience to the next level," he added.

Season one of "The Traitors" features Anshula Kapoor, Apoorva, Ashish Vidyarthi, Elnaaz Nourouzi, Harsh Gujral, Jannat Zubair, Janvi Gaur, Jasmin Bhasin, Karan Kundra, Lakshmi Manchur, Maheep Kapoor, Mukesh Chhabra, Nikita Luther, Purav Jha, Raftaar, Raj Kundra, Sahil Salathia, Sudhanshu Pandey, Sufi Motiwala, and Uorfi Javed. (PTI)

My conscience revolted at this dictatorial act: Dev Anand on Emergency crackdown, floating his own political party

NEW DELHI, June 25: After he "vehemently and vociferously" opposed to speak in favour of Youth Congress and its leader Sanjay Gandhi, Dev Anand said his movies were banned from being screened on television and mention of his name forbidden on official media.

The actor described the period of Emergency, which marks 50 years today, and the months after that in great detail in his 2007 memoir "Romancing with Life".

The matinee idol, known for movies such as "Baazi", "Taxi Driver", "Guide" and "Jewel Thief", said his troubles began after "a very charming young lady of the youth wing of the party" charmed him into attending a youth rally, led by Sanjay Gandhi.

While in Delhi, the actor found his colleague Dilip

Kumar also there besides all the bigwigs of the party. "It clearly seemed a planned strategy to have Sanjay accepted by the masses at a time when the rule of law and all norms of fair-play and democratic functioning were stifled..." "The Emergency had been declared for the sole purpose of keeping the ruling party in power and strengthening its hold on the country which had once boasted of being the largest democracy in the entire world," Dev Anand, who died at the age of 88 in 2011, wrote in the book.

After the meeting, the actors were asked to say a few words about the Youth Congress and its leader on television.

"While Dilip also hesitated to go to the TV centre to participate in any propaganda in favour of the Emergency, I vehemently and vociferously opposed the suggestion, with the

result that not only were all my pictures banned from being screened on television, but also any mention of or reference to my name on an official media was forbidden, along with Kishore Kumar's, who had also refused to go and sing in one of their programmes.

"My conscience revolted at this dictatorial act, and I called the information and broadcasting minister in Delhi and sought an appointment with him."

V C Shukla, the then information and broadcasting minister, asked why Dev Anand was not cooperating in praising the government but the actor had his own set of questions for the minister, chief among them was: "Are we living in a democracy or in a police state?"

When Shukla said they were living in a democracy, then Dev Anand asked him why actors

were being called to appear on TV to propagate the Emergency.

Shukla tried to convince Dev Anand but the actor was adamant and asked, "How can the government pressurize one's 'will' into 'sweetening', if the 'will' thinks to the contrary?"

After their meeting, which ended on a polite note, the actor said he knew he had become a "marked man" for refusing to toe the line.

Around this time, Dev Anand was approached to participate in a rally for Janata Party by Ram Jethmalani. The actor admitted that he spent a worried night strolling in his garden as he kept thinking about the what if scenarios in case Indira Gandhi won the election.

"...there was a possibility of all my artistic activity being throttled to the point of annihilation by the vengeful forces

represented by Sanjay Gandhi, which would doubtless start to work overtime against me and my interests," he recalled in the book. But Dev Anand's mind was made up and in his own words, he "rose to the occasion".

"...and the ovation I got at the rally for my presence in it and the short humble speech that I made reaching out to the masses at that historic moment, in the biggest gathering I have ever faced, was one of the most touching and exhilarating experiences I have ever had."

But when the Janata government fell within a few years, Dev Anand said many in the industry who had supported the party were disillusioned and that's how the idea to form a new party was floated during a meeting.

"Why not, for a change, and for the sake of the country we

loved, form a political party that would transform the ugly slushy shape of things and give it a new shape as magnificent and glittering as a grand film? The assembled gathering picked me to lead the proposed party.

"If MGR could spell magic in Tamil Nadu, why not me in Bombay, leading a movement not only at the state level but through the whole country?"

Dev Anand said he accepted the challenge and was elected the president of the party, which was named the National Party of India.

"...The determined motto of which was to help elect only those people to the Lok Sabha who were the most qualified in their respective fields, and therefore the most deserving. We had our first rally at Shivaji Park. It was packed to capacity with a very responsive crowd,

ready to vote for our ideology," he recalled.

On Dev Anand's agenda was "a fusion of the ancient with the modern", eradication of illiteracy, gender equality and compulsory English and Hindi with local dialect for everyone. He also wanted a ban on "careless attire like dhoti" during official functions.

Dev Anand wanted farmers and labourers, coolies and aristocrats, "all move around in cars, waving at each other in a spirit of bonhomie".

"And the intellectual elite would be in charge of running the country, showcasing the strengths of a new nation that would dazzle with prosperity and overflow with joy," he wrote.

But the initial enthusiasm of party members fizzled out to the great disappointment of the actor. (PTI)

BRING BACK KULDEEP, DROP SHARDUL FOR SECOND TEST: MANJREKAR

NEW DELHI, June 25: India must bring in left-arm wrist spinner Kuldeep Yadav and drop Shardul Thakur to address a bowling attack that looked woefully inadequate during the first Test against England, feels former India cricketer Sanjay Manjrekar.

While ace speedster Jasprit Bumrah picked up a five-wicket haul in the first innings at Headingley, the rest of the Indian pace unit -- comprising Mohammed Siraj, Prasidh Krishna and Thakur -- failed to provide meaningful support.

England chased down a steep fourth-innings target of 371 with five wickets in hand, exposing the lack of potency in India's bowling line-up. "Kuldeep Yadav has to come back. I'm sorry to say, but Shardul Thakur has to go out," Manjrekar said on 'Match Centre Live'. "That is one change India will have to make. As for Nitish Kumar Reddy -- I backed him for the first Test purely based on what he did in Australia.

"It's an unpopular choice, because when he comes in, the balance does get affected a bit. He won't quite bowl like a fourth seamer, so India need to take a



hard call: even in English conditions, they must go with quality bowlers."

"If that means playing two spinners, so be it. Pick your best bowlers, irrespective of the conditions. You don't have the luxury of someone like Mohammed Shami available, or the full-strength pace battery, so I'd go one seamer short and bring Kuldeep into the XI. He has to play."

Manjrekar also pointed out that English conditions aren't as seamer-friendly as they once were, making a case for India to consider playing two frontline spinners. "Let's also acknowledge that English summers these days are largely dry -- thanks to global warming, perhaps -- and that does open the door for spin."

"In a way, it's time to reintroduce the idea of India playing spin in England. Ben Stokes has already changed the narrative with common-sense, aggressive cricket. India need to embrace the same clarity."

"There was a time when India would play three spinners no matter what -- whether in New Zealand or England. If Kuldeep is in your squad, play him. Don't go

with seamers just because you're playing in England. I'd drop one seamer and bring in Kuldeep Yadav," Manjrekar added.

Manjrekar felt left-arm spinner Ravindra Jadeja missed an opportunity to exploit the rough.

"It's not fair to be overly critical of younger players like Prasidh Krishna -- there are obvious areas for improvement. But I am going to be critical of Ravindra Jadeja."

"This was a final-day pitch with rough patches for him to exploit. And while there were a couple of chances, we have to expect more from someone of his experience. I felt he didn't use the rough nearly enough -- especially against Ben Duckett. Against Ben Stokes, yes, he did make an effort. But it was only much later in Duckett's innings that Jadeja started using the rough properly."

"When you're dealing with experienced bowlers and seasoned batters, you expect a higher level of tactical awareness. Somewhere, I felt Jadeja was disappointing. The seamers had no help from the surface -- but Jadeja at least had something in the pitch working in his favour," said the former India batter. (PTI)

Two Americans fail doping tests in top Chinese basketball league

BEIJING, June 25: The Chinese Anti-Doping Agency has released the names of two American basketball players who failed in-competition tests in April during the domestic league.

In a statement released on Tuesday, the Chinese Basketball Association said it had been notified by the agency of doping violations involving Montrezl Dashaun Harrell and Troy Akeem Gillenwater.

It said both players tested positive for Carboxy-THC and that both have given up the right to have their "B" samples tested. The CBA said it will impose penalties on the players once the anti-doping agency makes a final decision on the case.

Carboxy-THC is found in cannabis. The World Anti-Doping Agency bans all forms of psychoactive cannabinoids during in-competition periods.

Harrell, who was playing for the Xinjiang Flying Tigers at the time of the doping test on April 15, has been associated with four NBA teams. He played college basketball for the Louisville Cardinals, winning the Karl Malone Award in 2015 as a junior for being the top power forward in the US.

Gillenwater, who was playing for the Guangdong Southern Tigers when his test was conducted on April 16, graduated from New Mexico State in 2011. "The CBA firmly opposes any form of doping violations and maintains a zero tolerance stance on anti-doping efforts," a CBA statement said. "We are committed to safeguarding the integrity and fairness of basketball and will not tolerate any breaches of anti-doping rules." (AP)

Germany soccer federation fined for tax evasion

BERLIN, June 25: The German soccer federation has been convicted of tax evasion related to the awarding of the World Cup hosted by the country in 2006.

A regional court in Frankfurt fined the federation, known by its German acronym DFB, 110,000 euros (\$128,000) at the culmination of the nearly 16-month trial on Wednesday.

Prosecutors had been pushing for a larger fine after accusing the DFB of failing to pay approximately 2.7 million euros (now \$3.1 million) in taxes related to its payment of 6.7 million euros (\$7.8 million) to FIFA, world soccer's governing body, in April 2005.

That payment settled a loan that Germany's great Franz Beckenbauer, the head of the World Cup organizing committee, had accepted three years earlier from Robert Louis-Dreyfus, a former Adidas executive and then part-owner of the Infront marketing agency.

The money was channeled through a Swiss law firm to a Qatari company belonging to Mohammed Bin Hammam, then a member of FIFA's Executive Committee.

The exact purpose of the money remained unclear. (AP)

Anish, Sift and Umamahesh win in national selection trials



DEHRADUN, June 25: Olympians Anish Bhanwala, Sift Kaur Samra and junior world champion medalist Umamahesh Maddineni won the national selection trials (T3) for Group 'A' athletes in the men's 25m rapid fire, women's 50m 3 positions and 10m air rifle events respectively, here on Wednesday.

The trials are being held at the Trishul Shooting Range in Maharana Pratap Sports College.

Anish shot 33 in the finals, four better than his statemate Adarsh Singh, who finished in second place while Navy's Pradeep Singh Shekhawat took the third place with a score of 23.

Earlier, Anish added 289 in Stage 2 of qualification after he had shot 293 in Stage 1 on Tuesday to qualify for the final in first place with a total of 582. Pradeep Singh finished in second with a score of 581 (290, 291) while Gurmeet Singh finished third with a score of 579 (289, 290).

Harsimar Singh Rattha (577), Neeraj Kumar (576) and Adarsh Singh (574) completed the top six.

Sift Kaur Samra, who recently won bronze at the ISSF World Cup in Munich, showed her class in the women's 50m 3 positions finals by finishing on top with a score of 467.3, which was 10.4 better than Aakriti Dahiya who finished sec-

ond with 456.9.

Ashi Chouksey took the third spot with a score of 443.9 after she had finished on top in qualification with 592 ahead of Sift who shot 591.

Aakriti shot 588 to finish third while Mehuli Ghosh (588), Ayushi Podder (587), Vidarsa K Vinod (586), Vanshika Shah (585) and Nischal Singh (585) completed the top eight.

In the men's 10m air rifle finals, Umamahesh Maddineni, who shot 252.2, edged Buenos Aires World Cup gold medalist Rudranksh Patil who finished with a score of 251.5 to secure the top spot.

Divyansh Panwar took third spot with a score of 230.1.

Earlier in the qualification round, local boy Shourya Saini and Divyansh Panwar both shot 632.9 but the former finished on top after hitting more inner 10s.

Seventeen-year-old Parth Rakesh Mane finished third with a score of 632.5 while Rudranksh (631.9), Paarth Makhija (631.6), Umamahesh (630.9), Sandeep Singh (630.9) and Vishal Singh (630.7) completed the top eight. The action will continue on Thursday with the qualification and finals of men's 10m air rifle T4, women's 25m pistol T3 and women's 50m rifle 3P T4 along with the men's 25m rapid fire pistol T4 Stage 1. (PTI)

India should play Kuldeep in second Test: Monty Panesar

NEW DELHI, June 25: Former England spinner Monty Panesar believes it's time for India to unleash Kuldeep Yadav at the expense of seam-bowling all-rounder Shardul Thakur in the second Test in Birmingham where spin is likely to play a bigger role.

India lost the first Test on Tuesday at Leeds as the hosts chased down a stiff 371 on the final day courtesy a brilliant 149 by opener Ben Duckett.

"At Edgbaston, India could probably play (Ravindra) Jadeja and could actually go for the X-factor spinner in Kuldeep Yadav...we know that the Edgbaston wicket does turn a little bit. So you have that bit of an X-factor, which I think would be a better option. There's something about him," Panesar told PTI Videos.

Panesar, who played a pivotal role in England's last Test series win in India (2012), feels the numbers are strongly in Kuldeep's favour. The left-arm wrist-spinner has taken 56 wickets in just 13 Tests at an average of 22.16. Thakur, in comparison, has 33 wickets in 12 Tests at a costlier average of 29.36 and a strike rate of 46.8.

"He doesn't need turning tracks. This IPL showed that even without exaggerated turn, he can bowl tough lines that make life difficult for batters," he added.

Thakur bowled just 16 overs and took two wickets giving away 89 runs in the first Test at Leeds and failed to make a meaningful impact with the bat, raising questions about his all-round value on English pitches that are no longer seaming as much.

"If Shardul Thakur is only going to bowl six to eight

overs and not give you 15 overs in the day, there's no point in playing him," Panesar pointed out.

Pressed on whether India should pick Kuldeep instead of Jadeja, Panesar didn't hesitate.

"I think they need to play Kuldeep because he has more of an X factor. There's something about him. Jadeja can then use Kuldeep only attacks. So if he goes the distance, then they're in deep trouble," he said. "So I think they will probably play two spinners. Jadeja can then be the defensive guy. And then Kuldeep will be the attacking guy," added Panesar who represented England in 50 Tests, 26 ODIs and 1 T20I. (PTI)



There're three more centuries: Gambhir when asked about Pant's twin hundreds

LEEDS, June 25: India head coach Gautam Gambhir seemed in no mood to laud individual brilliance like the twin hundreds by Rishabh Pant when asked about the positives from the opening Test loss to England, saying that everything boils down to results which his team could not achieve.

Hardly the one to mince his words or hide his disappointments, Gambhir offered a rather combative response to a question on how it felt watching vice captain Pant's sensational knocks that ultimately could not tilt the game for India.

"There are three more centuries as well. Those are big positives as well. Thank you," was his one-line answer to a pointed question



on Pant. When pressed further on the overall positives, Gambhir said, "I would have liked if you said there was a hundred from Yashasvi (Jaiswal), hundred from Shubman (Gill) on debut as cap-



tain. "(There was a) hundred from KL (Rahul) and two centuries from Rishabh, so five centuries in a Test match is a great start to be honest. And hopefully the question could have been better," he

added. However, the coach said individual performances count for little if the end result is a loss. India went down by five wickets despite setting England a stiff target of 371.

"But again these are great positives, we had a fiver from Jasprit Bumrah as well. Eventually everything boils down to the fact that...we go out there to get the results," he said.

"Yes, individual performances are good, we want those big runs from our top six, seven which we got in this Test match. But at the end of the day you go out there to win a Test match."

"Unfortunately that wasn't the result. So we take it on the chin and move forward," he added. (PTI)

Players and fans at the Club World Cup are coping with high temperatures as a heat wave hits US

WASHINGTON, June 25: Substitutes who watch from the locker room, abandoned practice sessions and sweat-soaked jerseys. A heat wave hitting a wide swath of the country is taking a toll on players at the FIFA Club World Cup.

The grueling conditions could also be a preview of what's to come next summer when the United States, Canada and Mexico host soccer's premier event, the 2026 World Cup.

"It's impossible, it's terribly hot. My toes were sore, even my toenails were hurting, I couldn't stop or start. In the end, it's incredible, but since it's the same for everyone, there's no excuse," Atlético's Marcos Llorente said following a match against Paris Saint-Germain. A "heat dome" of high pressure has settled in over the central and eastern United States, sending temperatures soaring into the 90s in Fahrenheit and above in many

areas.

That's rough on both Club World Cup players and fans, who can potentially experience dehydration and cramps, or more serious conditions like heat exhaustion and heat stroke.

"In Europe it's more of a dry heat and this is more of a humid heat. I think it's going to hit them twice as hard," fan Tyler Fernando said before Bayern Munich's match against Benfica on Tuesday in Charlotte, North Carolina, where the temperature was 97 degrees Fahrenheit (36 Celsius) at game time.

Those at the Auckland City match against Boca Juniors in Nashville on Tuesday braved temperatures in the upper 90s. Male spectators went shirtless and fans sought sections where there was shade.

Heat is of particular concern during big tournaments like the Club World Cup because the players

don't have much time off to recover between games. And in the group stages, matches are usually staggered each day, meaning some teams play in the midday sun.

Chelsea cut short a practice session in Philadelphia, where temperatures reached the 90s.

"I always try to avoid excuse, I always try to be honest. It's not about excuses, it's about reality. It's an excuse when it's not hot, and we say it's hot. That's an excuse. But if it's hot, it's hot. But we are here, and we're trying to do our best," Chelsea coach Enzo Maresca said.

During a match between Borussia Dortmund and the Mamelodi Sundowns, Dortmund posted on social media: "Our subs watched the first half from inside the locker room to avoid the blazing sun at TQL Stadium -- never seen that before, but in this heat, it absolutely makes sense."

"We always think about how we



can help the team, how we can minimize a negative influence. And it was just very, very hot. We had cooling sticks in order to cool the players down. We had them waiting in the dressing room with the air conditioning," Dortmund coach Niko Kovac said through an interpreter. "This was very important for all of us. It's not only about tactics,

but it's also about minimizing the load, minimizing the stress. The stress is already high enough."

FIFA guidelines mandate breaks when the Wet Bulb Globe Temperature -- a composite of factors including temperature and humidity -- reaches 89.6 degrees. The breaks usually occur around the 30th and 75th minutes.

Cooling breaks were initially used at the 2008 Olympic final between Lionel Messi's Argentina and Nigeria at Beijing's National Stadium, where the on-field temperature reached 107 degrees.

But at the time, such breaks were rare. They became more commonplace following the 2014 World Cup in Brazil, where a Brazilian labor court ordered hydration breaks when the Wet Bulb Globe Temperature reached 89.6 degrees.

Miami-Dade Fire Rescue went to social media to urge Club World Cup fans to exercise caution in the heat before Inter Miami's match against Palmeiras on Monday night, and Chelsea posted "heat mitigation" guidelines on its official website before the Blues' match against Esperance on Tuesday. It's not just high temperatures that can impact summer tournaments: Five Club World Cup matches have been delayed by thunderstorms.

The climate is going to be an increasing issue for FIFA as global temperatures rise. Sixteen cities will host World Cup games next year. Five of the stadiums that will be used have roofs to provide some sun protection.

At Mexico's venues, Mexico City and Guadalajara could be impacted by the summer's hurricane season, and in Monterrey, summer temperatures average in the 90s.

After the 2026 World Cup, the 2030 edition will be held in Morocco, Spain, and Portugal. And the problem isn't just on the men's side: The 2027 Women's World Cup is set to be played in Brazil.

Peter Crisp from Fossil Free Football said: "Scheduling matches in no-shade stadiums in the middle of the day and promoting oil-dependent sponsors shows FIFA is dangerously out of touch with the threat extreme heat poses to its major summer tournaments." (AP)

Kuldeep for Shardul could be the only change at Edgbaston as India eye parity

NEW DELHI, June 25: India head coach Gautam Gambhir defended captain Shubman Gill's decision to under bowl Shardul Thakur in the series opener against England but it would be tough to justify his selection in the second Test beginning on July 2.

In his first Test since December 2023, Shardul was under-utilised in the pace department and was rather underwhelming with the bat, totalling five off 20 balls across two innings.

Questions were raised about his presence in the playing eleven ahead of a specialist bowler when he rolled his arm over for six overs in the first innings before bowling 10 in the second.

Like he often does, Shardul did pick a couple of wickets out of nowhere to raise hopes of an Indian comeback on day five but the bite in his bowling was missing. He alongside the likes of Prasidh Krishna offered too many loose balls, lacking consistency to test the opposition batters.

With India losing the game having controlled for a major part of five days, there is no need to ring the alarm bells but a few changes are certain in the playing eleven for the Edgbaston Test.



Experts cried out for Kuldeep Yadav's inclusion in the series opener and now he is most likely to replace Shardul with the surface expected to aid the spinners in Birmingham. "Kuldeep needs to be there. There is no point playing with four pacers. Either of Shardul or Prasidh can make way for him," former India captain Dilip Vengsarkar told PTI.

There is a tendency to play with four pace options in England but with dry conditions expected for the majority of the English summer, there is a case of playing Kuldeep and Ravindra Jadeja in the same eleven.

Having said that, Jadeja too will under the scanner having not got

ten a lot out of the rough on day five at Headingley.

"Kuldeep Yadav has to come back. I'm sorry to say, but Shardul Thakur has to go out," former India batter Sanjay Manjrekar said on JioStar. "That is one change India will have to make. As for Nitish Kumar Reddy -- I backed him for the first Test purely based on what he did in Australia.

"It's an unpopular choice, because when he comes in, the balance does get affected a bit. He won't quite bowl like a fourth seamer, so India need to take a hard call: even in English conditions, they must go with quality bowlers. If that means playing two spinners, so be it."

Following England's record chase of 371 at Headingley, Gambhir was asked about Shardul's under-utilisation and he understandably came in support of the captain. "Sometimes captain goes with his instincts and Ravindra Jadeja gave us control in the first innings, that was important and we could rotate our three pacers at the other end.

"We know what is Shardul's quality and that is why he is playing for India and is in the dressing room. Just because he is the fourth seamer does not necessarily mean that he has to be brought ahead of his instinct and depending on surface, we were playing," said Gambhir.

Other changes in the bowling line-up are unlikely with pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah expected to play with a long enough gap between the first and the second Test.

Uncapped Arshdeep Singh is likely to warm the bench again with the management expected to persist with Prasidh, who bowled much better and fuller in the second essay and Mohammed Siraj, who is not able to extract a lot out of his stock wobbled seam delivery of late. (PTI)

ATPA Shield Football Tournament Football for Change, Manipur clinch title



JORHAT, June 25: Football for Change, Manipur, clinched the champion title in the 59th ATPA Shield Football Tournament. In the final match held at Jorhat Stadium on Tuesday, Manipur defeated Jorhat Town Club with a score of 3-1. Houlong scored two goals, while Selientheng netted one for Manipur.

Played under floodlights in fair weather, both teams offered a thrilling and exciting game to the audience.

The lone goal for Jorhat Town Club was scored by Kelvin Houlong of Manipur was awarded the Best Player in the final match, while Selientheng won both the Best Player of the Tournament and Highest Scorer titles.

Earlier in the function, Jul Khound, general secretary of the Jorhat District Sports Association (JDSA), delivered the keynote address, while Santanu Puzari, president of JDSA, delivered the welcome speech.

Gill didn't quite have that on-field aura of Rohit and Virat: Naseer Hussain



LEEDS, June 25: India's new captain Shubman Gill's tactics in the first Test against England have drawn flak after the visiting side's five-wicket loss with former skipper Nasser Hussain stating that he "didn't quite have the on-field aura of Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli".

India lost the opening Test despite five of their batters scoring centuries, as England chased down 371 in the fourth innings to take a 1-0 lead in the five-match series.

It was baptism of fire for Gill in his first Test as skipper since succeeding the now-retired Rohit Sharma, and Hussain said the youngster was "reactive rather than proactive" as a leader.

"I saw someone finding his way. He (Gill) didn't quite have that on-field aura of Rohit and (Virat Kohli). I thought he followed the ball a lot and was reactive rather than proactive," Hussain said on Sky Sports.

"When Rohit and Kohli captained, you looked down and you immediately knew who was in charge but when I looked down in this game I saw two or three captains, captaincy by committee," Hussain said, alluding to Gill not taking complete control of the team.

Hussain, however, said India lost the match because of two things Gill couldn't control -- drop catches and batting collapses.

"The collapses concern me. In India they have had spin-bowling all-rounders that are magnificent -- Ravi Ashwin, Ravindra Jadeja, Axar Patel -- but in England they are still looking for a seam-bowling all-rounder who can bat.

"If they keep going 6-31 and 7-41 this could be a quick series," said the 57-year-old who played 96 Tests between 1990 and 2004.

Former India coach Ravi Shastri, however, feels that Gill has done "more than can be asked of him."

"There is a big role for the coaching staff to take the positives. As a captain, Gill has done more than can be asked of him.

"He got a hundred in his first Test in charge and the dropped catches (and collapses) are not in his control."

Gill scored 147 in India's first innings total of 471 and 8 in the second essay.

"This will be a tough pill for India to swallow. You don't get in positions like this very often and blow it from there. They had a chance to take England out of the contest and dictate terms.

"They have to learn and they need more bottle from the tail, for them to be stubborn and put a price tag on their wicket," added Shastri.

The former India all-rounder also said that strike bowler Jasprit Bumrah should play in the second Test starting on July 2 in Birmingham.

"If he was looking at a rest you may have to think twice. If you don't have him and then go 2-0 down it could be an uphill task."

Bumrah, who took five wickets in England's first innings, only plans to play three of the five Tests in order to manage his workload after a recent back injury.

Former England fast bowler Stuart Broad also felt that India had opportunities to win the Test but wasted them.

"It's a wonderful feeling when you win a Test match like that, when in reality India had so many opportunities to put this game to bed.

"But England just scrapped and fought hard ... It was a sensational run chase. Duckett was absolutely outstanding. It's just incredible how this team keeps doing this." (PTI)

We need to give them time: Gambhir on India's mis-firing pace attack

LEEDS, June 25: The lack of depth in India's bowling resources was exposed during the opening Test defeat to England but head coach Gautam Gambhir has urged critics to give the inexperienced pace attack more time in its "early days".

Barring Jasprit Bumrah, who got five wickets in England's first innings, none of the other bowlers looked penetrative as the hosts chased down a target of 371 with minimum fuss on the fifth and final day of the match on Tuesday.

The pace trio of Prasidh Krishna, Mohammed Siraj and Shardul Thakur was not consistent enough with the line and length.

"We will have to give them time. Earlier, we used to have four fast bowlers in the squad with an experience of more than 40 Tests. It doesn't make such a big impact in one-day or T20 matches, but when you go to Australia, England, or South Africa for Tests, experience matters," said Gambhir following the loss.

"These are early days. If we start judging our bowlers after every Test, how will we develop a bowling attack? Outside Bumrah and Siraj, we don't have that much experience, but they (the others) have quality, which is why they are in this dressing room.

"But we have got to keep backing them because it's not about one tour. It's about building a fast-bowler battery that can serve India for a long time in Test cricket."

Also part of the squad, Arshdeep Singh is yet to a play a Test while Harshit Rana has featured in only two games.

He felt that Prasidh, who got five wickets in the match despite going for plenty of runs, has "all the ingredients of becoming a very good Test match bowler".

He also defended Shardul Thakur, who just bowled 16 overs in the entire match with only six overs in the first innings.

"Sometimes captain goes with his instincts and

Ravindra Jadeja gave us control in the first innings, that was important and we could rotate our three pacers at the other end," he said.

"We know what is Shardul's quality and that is why he is playing for India and is in the dressing room. Just because he is the fourth seamer does not necessarily mean that he has to be brought ahead of a spinner. A captain went by his instinct and depending on surface, we were playing."

Two late batting collapses in as many innings cost India dearly in the series opener.

They were on course to amass 600 in their first innings but ended up with 471, losing seven wickets for 41 runs. In the second innings, the visitors lost six for 31 to allow England to come back in the game once again.

"First of all, I'll tell you it's not that they were not applying themselves," Gambhir said of the tail.

"Sometimes people fail, and that's okay. I know it is disappointing and more importantly, I think they are more disappointed than anyone. Because they knew that we had the opportunity. If we had got up to 570, 580 in the first innings, we could have dominated from there.

"It's not that they're not working hard in the nets as well. Sometimes these things happen, even the pure batters fail as well. So hopefully they got to learn and hopefully we can have better performances from our tail, and that is not the only reason why we lost the Test match, to be honest."

Shubman Gill scored a century on his captaincy debut. On leadership front, Gambhir said Gill is only going to get better.

"Look, first Test match, obviously, there are nerves. Not many people get that opportunity, and he was phenomenal. More importantly, I think the way he batted in the first innings. I'm sure he would have had his own nerves being the captain for the first time and then getting the hundred..."

"He has everything that it takes for him to be a successful captain, but we have got to just give him time. It's still very early days," Gambhir added. (PTI)

Knocking Indian tail quickly twice was among the pivotal moments: Ben Stokes

LEEDS, June 25: Notwithstanding the top-order heroics, England captain Ben Stokes has credited his bowlers' ruthless dismantling of India's lower-order, twice in the match, as a "pivotal factor" in their five-wicket win at Headingley.

While openers Ben Duckett and Zak Crawley earned praise for their 188-run stand in a record fourth-innings chase of 371, Stokes stressed that the match had swung much earlier when England's bowlers prevented India from posting a total that might have been unchaseable. "It was obviously a very good wicket for batting on, the high scores have shown that," Stokes said at the post-match media interaction.

"But some other pivotal moments in the game, obviously there will be people who get the headlines here, but the way in which we were able to knock the Indian tail over very quickly on two occasions was also a massive reason to why we were able to restrict them to a score that we definitely felt comfortable to be able to chase..."

"...we didn't allow it to get above 450-500, which India could easily have done." I think as well as skill, there's been a huge contribution of our attitude and commitment to what we needed to do every single day and every single session," he said.

India appeared in complete control through large passages of the match, headlined by five individual centuries across both innings.

But a sudden collapse saw them lose their last six wickets for 41 runs, folding for 471 in the first innings. The pattern repeated itself in the second innings with the last six



wickets falling for 34 runs.

"Chasing 370 (371) like we were, you always want to get off to a good start. The least amount of wickets that you lose early on is obviously crucial, but the way he (Duckett) went about it with Zak and then played the game at the top of that order for us was huge in particular," said Stokes.

"The way that Zak played as well was huge. They complement each other so, so well. Left hand, right hand, one's a giant, one's not. So it's very hard for the bowlers to settle in when they both get going. I'm sure you can ask the opposition. It can be a nightmare when they're in for a long period of time. Ducky's got the 149, but I think that 70 (65) as well was so, so important."

Duckett's dominance against Ravindra

Jadeja on the final day, especially his fearless reverse sweeps from the rough, caught the eye of many including Stokes.

"I actually spoke to him when we came off for that tea break, or rain break, whichever one it was. He's one of the best in the world at doing reverse sweeps and he's a fantastic player of spin, in particular on really tricky surfaces," said the skipper.

Stokes said he sought Duckett's advice to see his options against spin.

"I just had a little word with him about what he thought I could potentially look at to give myself a better chance. When you're in there, you feel like you're either getting forward or getting back and trying to manipulate on the leg side. Just going in with a clear game and reverse sweeps was some-

thing I went out there with. Yeah, it's a difficult condition, but again, just going back to being clear and confident in what I needed to do to try and knock those men (close-in fielders) off."

This chase marked the sixth time under the Stokes-Brendon McCullum leadership that England had hauled in targets of 250 or more in the fourth innings.

Stokes attributed the team's consistency in such high-pressure pursuits to a shared philosophy of keeping things "simple and calm." "When you're chasing down totals like that, how you are in the dressing room is actually very important. Keeping the sort of calm, relaxed vibe as much as we can throughout the dressing room is so important to sort of the mindset of how someone is to go out there when you're out there in the middle with the pressures of that situation in particular.

"It was pretty simple yesterday. It was if we bat the overs that is left in this game, we will win this game just because of how quick this ground is at scoring.

"I don't know what I've read, but it's probably been over four an over (scoring rate) anyway without any team really doing anything... barring Rishabh (Pant). It's just a very, very quick scoring ground."

On the debatable decision to bowl first, he added: "The wicket here on day one looked like there was a bit of grass on top of it. There was a bit of moisture underneath it."

"We backed ourselves to win that toss and bowl first, and try and strike a couple of early poles. But the opposition is allowed to play well." (PTI)