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SP transferred, Leena Doley named successor

Communal tensions in Dhubri: 38 arrested • Night-time shoot-at-sight order issued

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, June 14: Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Saturday confirmed that 38 individuals were arrested in Dhubri following a flare-up of communal tensions, prompting authorities to impose night-time shoot-at-sight orders in the sensitive border district.

In a post on social media platform X, Sarma stated, "38 arrested overnight in the Dhubri beef head incident."

The controversy erupted after a cow's head was discovered outside a Hanuman temple in Dhubri town on Eid, June 7.

The situation escalated the following day when a similar act was repeated, leading to clashes.

Following the violence, the state government transferred Dhubri Superintendent of Police Navin Singh.



Hailakandi SP Leena Doley has been appointed as his replacement, according to an official notification issued Saturday.

Sarma, who visited the affected areas on Friday, said night-time shoot-at-sight orders were issued as a preventive measure against

further unrest.

He alleged that a radical group named 'Nabin Bangla' was behind attempts to destabilise the region, including putting up posters calling for Dhubri's merger with Bangladesh.

Prohibitory orders were en-

forced in the town on June 9 but were lifted the next day after a relative calm returned.

The Dhubri district, which borders Bangladesh, has seen a rise in communal sensitivities, with the state government asserting that strict measures will be taken to preserve peace and integrity in the region.

Earlier, on Friday, CM Sarma issued a "shoot at sight" order in the Dhubri district for those who try to disturb communal peace and harmony in the locality.

Sarma, who visited Dhubri on Friday, told reporters here, "I have instructed the police to take strict action against those who try to create any disturbance towards upholding communal peace and harmony in the Dhubri district. If required, police will carry out 'shoot at sight' order at night towards (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Death toll in AI plane crash touches 270 • Extended surveillance for the Tata-owned airline's Boeing 787 series planes ordered

Centre forms high-level panel for probe

AHMEDABAD/NEW DELHI, June 14: The death toll in the London-bound Air India plane crash in Ahmedabad rose to 270 on Saturday even as the Centre set up a high-level multi-disciplinary panel headed by the Union home secretary to examine the causes that led to the disaster.

As investigators pore over wreckage at the BJ Medical College hostel and canteen complex for clues after the crash of the Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner (AI171) on Thursday, Civil Aviation Minister K Ram Mohan Naidu said aviation regulator DGCA has ordered "extended surveillance" for the Tata-owned airline's Boeing 787 series planes.

In a post on X, Air India said it has done one-time safety checks on nine of its Boeing 787 Dreamliners and is on track to complete the checks on the remaining 24 such planes as directed by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA). The carrier now has 26 legacy Boeing 787-8s and seven Boeing 787-9s in its fleet.

All but one of the 242 passengers and crew on board AI171 and another 29 persons including five MBBS students on the ground were killed when the aircraft came down moments after taking off from the Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International Airport before falling inside the nearby campus of the state-run BJ Medical College in Meghanagar area and going up in flames.

"Around 270 bodies have been brought to the Ahmedabad Civil Hospital so far from the plane crash site," President of Junior Doctors association of BJ Medical College, Dr Dhaval Gameti, told



PTI. The death toll in the country's worst ever air disaster in three decades was earlier put by authorities at 265.

As investigators looked into all possible causes for the crash, including loss of thrust in both engines of the 11-year-old aircraft, multiple bird strikes, or a potential flap issue, Naidu told reporters in Delhi that decoding of the Black box is going to give "in-depth insight" into what happened moments before the tragedy. The Digital Flight Data Recorder (DFDR), commonly known as the Black box, was recovered from the "rooftop" of the hostel building at the crash site on Friday.

There was no word yet on recovery of another Black box -- the Cockpit Voice Recorder (CVR). This instrument records radio transmissions and other sounds in the cockpit, such as conversations between the pilots and engine noises. Naidu said India has very strict aviation safety standards and robust protocols, and everything will be done to further improve safety.

The central panel headed by the

Union home secretary will also suggest comprehensive guidelines to prevent incidents like the Ahmedabad crash in the future. It will have its first meeting on Monday. The panel will publish its report in three months, a statement by the Civil Aviation ministry said.

The panel will ascertain the root cause of the crash and assess the contributing factors, including mechanical failure, human error, weather conditions, regulatory compliances and other reasons, it said. It will also recommend necessary improvements and formulate suitable Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to prevent such incidents in the future. The SOPs would also include best international practices regarding preventing and handling such incidents, the statement said.

The ministry said the committee will not be a substitute to other enquiries being conducted by relevant organisations. Chaired by Union Home Secretary Govind Mohan, the panel has the civil aviation secretary and the additional secretary (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

NIA chargesheets ULEA (I) chief Paresh Baruah, 2 others

NEW DELHI, June 14: The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has chargesheeted three persons including Myanmar-based banned outfit ULEA (I) chief Paresh Baruah for being part of a conspiracy to carry out multiple IED blasts in Assam on Independence Day last year, officials said on Saturday.

Baruah, also known as Paresh Asom, Kamruj Zaman Khan, Nuruz-Zaman, Zaman Bhai, Pradip, Paban Baruah is the chairman and self styled Commander-in-Chief of the proscribed terrorist group United Liberation Front of Asom-Independent (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Congress committed 'historic blunder' by letting Pak become nuclear state: Himanta

GUWAHATI, June 14: Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Saturday alleged that the Congress had committed a "historic blunder" by letting Pakistan become a nuclear state instead of taking any action during the 1980s.

Pakistan has been using "nuclear blackmail" to deter international action, the chief minister claimed. "At a time when nations today act decisively to neutralise nuclear threats, India's tragic inaction during the 1980s remains a cautionary tale of what could have been—and what wasn't," the chief minister said in a long post on X.

He said that it was a "missed moment" though the Research and



Analysis Wing (RAW) had solid intelligence confirming Pakistan's uranium enrichment activities at

the Kahuta facility. In the post titled "Congress's Historic Blunder: How India (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

KA benefitted immensely, says Tuliram CEM highlights Modi govt 11-year achievements

HT Bureau

DIPHU, June 14: Chief Executive Member (CEM) of Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council (KAAC), Tuliram Ronghang, on Saturday briefed the media on the achievements of the BJP-led NDA govt at the Centre under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who has completed 11 years in office.

The briefing was held at the conference hall of Arboretum-cum-Craft Centre in Matipung.

CEM Ronghang began by comparing the economic progress under the previous UPA regime and the current NDA government.

"During former PM Manmohan Singh's tenure, India's economy was at the 11th position. Under Prime Minister Modi, it has now reached the 4th position and is expected to reach 3rd within two years," he said. He highlighted various developmental schemes implemented over the past 11



years, including the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY), under which 4 crore houses have been constructed for BPL families. The Ayushman Bharat scheme has provided ₹5 lakh annual health coverage

per family. The CEM noted that under the Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana, 81 crore beneficiaries have received free ration, unlike the previous Congress regime where a nominal charge (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Pradyut Bordoloi seconds Himanta's 'Shoot-at-Sight' order

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, June 14: In a rare show of cross-party support, Congress MP Pradyut Bordoloi has backed Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma's controversial "shoot-at-sight" order against those involved in recent communal violence in Dhubri.

Calling for stringent action, Bordoloi said any group attempting to incite unrest must be dealt with firmly and without hesitation.

Speaking on the escalating communal tensions in the state, Bordoloi stated on Saturday, "The Congress supports strict punitive measures in such cases," but simultaneously raised sharp questions about the (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

'DNA samples of six plane crash victims match, bodies to be handed over to kin'

AHMEDABAD, June 14: Authorities of the Ahmedabad Civil Hospital have so far identified six victims on the basis of the DNA samples and initiated the process to hand over the bodies to the relatives, officials said on Saturday.

Earlier, eight victims, who were identified by their relatives and did not need DNA profiling as their bodies were not damaged, had been handed over to their families by the hospital, they said.

Doctors on Saturday said around 270 bodies have been brought to the hospital from the air crash site so far. A London-bound Air India flight from Ahmedabad crashed into a medical college hostel complex in the Meghanagar area of the city moments after taking off from the Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International Airport on Thursday afternoon.

The victims included 241 of the 242 passengers and crew members on board the flight. One passenger miraculously escaped.

In order to expedite the DNA matching exercise, Gujarat Minister of State for Home Harsh Sanghavi held a meeting with the officials of the state Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) on Saturday. Talking to reporters, Additional Civil Superintendent of the civil hospital, Dr Rajnish Patel, said the results of six DNA samples have arrived and relatives of

those six victims have been informed over the phone to collect the mortal remains.

"DNA profiling is underway to ascertain the identity of other victims as their bodies were charred beyond recognition. Till now, results of six DNA samples have arrived after the matching process. We have informed the family members of these six persons to collect the bodies from the civil hospital," Patel said.

While the family of one victim will claim the body today, that of another one will reach the hospital on Sunday morning to collect the mortal remains, he said.

Minister Sanghavi said after holding a meeting at the FSL in Gandhinagar that it was the priority of the state government to finish the DNA matching exercise as early as possible.

"Apart from forensic experts from all over Gujarat, several experts sent by the Centre are working round the clock to match DNA samples. As soon as the results come, we send them to the civil hospital so that families can claim the bodies," he said.

DNA profiling is underway to ascertain the identities of those dead bodies which were charred beyond recognition. After the collection of DNA samples from the kin at the civil hospital, these samples are (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

U'khand CM directs DGP to conduct thorough investigation into Assam woman's death

GUWAHATI, June 14: Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami has directed the DGP to conduct a thorough and detailed investigation into the death of Assam woman in Rishikesh.

The woman Rosmita Hojai, hailing from Dima Hasao district of Assam, was reported to be missing in Rishikesh on June 6 and her body was found in river Ganga after five days.

Replying to Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma's letter urging his Uttarakhand counterpart to intervene and examine the death of the woman, Dhami said that his government shares his concern.

"We share your concern Hon'ble CM Shri @himantabiswa Ji. We are fully committed to ensuring a fair, transparent, and timely investigation. I have directed (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Modi's visit to Cyprus, G7 Summit, and Croatia signals strong global push PM Modi to take part in G7 Summit in Canada; visit Cyprus, Croatia

NEW DELHI, June 14: Prime Minister Narendra Modi will undertake a three-nation tour starting Sunday, during which he will take part in the G7 Summit in Canada, and visit Cyprus and Croatia to shore up India's bilateral cooperation with these two countries.

"This will be the first ever visit by an Indian prime minister to Croatia, marking an important milestone in the bilateral relationship," the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) announced on Saturday.

Modi will first visit Cyprus on June 15-16 at the invitation of the country's president, Nikos Christodoulides.

"This will be the first visit of an Indian prime minister to Cyprus in over two decades," the MEA said in a statement.

While in Cyprus capital Nicosia, the prime minister will hold talks with President Christodoulides and address business leaders at Limassol, it said.

"The visit will reaffirm the shared commitment of the two countries to deepen bilateral ties and strengthen India's engagement with the Mediterranean region and the European Union," the statement said.

In the second leg of his visit, Prime Minister Modi will travel to Kanakskis in Canada on June 16-17 to participate in the G7 Summit at the invitation of Canada Prime Minister Mark Carney.

This would be the prime minister's sixth consecutive participation in the G7 Summit.

"At the Summit, the prime minister will exchange views with the



leaders of G7 countries, other invited outreach countries and heads of international organisations on crucial global issues, including energy security, technology and innovation, particularly the AI-energy nexus and quantum-related is-

ues," the MEA said.

The prime minister will also hold several bilaterals on the sidelines of the Summit.

The Group of Seven (G7) consists of seven of the world's advanced economies -- Canada,

France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the US, and the UK -- and the European Union.

Carney, an economist and political newcomer, took charge as Canada's prime minister in March following the exit of Justin Trudeau from the top office.

Modi received a call from Carney earlier this month, during which the latter invited the prime minister to attend the G7 meeting. The call was also an occasion for the two prime ministers to reflect and talk about India-Canada relations and how they can be taken forward, MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal told reporters on June 12.

Describing India and Canada as "vibrant democracies", the external affairs ministry had also said that New Delhi (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Locals demand dissolution of newly formed bazar committee, cite mismanagement and lack of transparency Land encroachment row sparks tension at Hawaipur, West Karbi Anglong

HT Correspondent

KHERONI, June 14: A major controversy has erupted in Hawaipur Jirim Bazar, one of the oldest markets in West Karbi Anglong, following allegations of land encroachment and mismanagement by the newly formed Hawaipur Jirim Bazar Committee under the Donka Revenue Circle.

The development has triggered widespread resentment among local residents and threatens the communal harmony in the region, home to Gorkha, Bengali, Hindi-speaking, Karbi, Dimas, and other communities.

Yam Prasad Ghimire, a local resident and social worker, alleged that his father, Hari Prasad Ghimire, had donated 12 bigas of land for the establishment of the market before the formation of the Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council (KAAC). Expressing concern over the current situation, Ghimire stated, "This is the first time disharmony has been created in the bazar area. The committee's actions have disrupted the peace we've maintained for decades."

He appealed to KAAC Chief Executive Member (CEM) Tuliram Ronghang to dissolve the present committee and initiate a transparent investigation.

The centre of the dispute is Bronson Kramsa, President of the newly formed bazar committee and brother of Sarthe



Kramsa, Forest Board Chairman, KAAC. Former Secretary of the market committee, Ajit Das, accused Bronson of attempting to forcibly occupy land for the construction of a committee office with the support of non-local residents, without consulting local stakeholders.

He also pointed out that Arun Kanti Das had paid land revenue (khajana) for the disputed land until 1984, refuting Bronson's claim that current residents were illegal encroachers.

The formation of the new committee has been criticised for its lack of transparency. Though the KAAC approved the committee under the Karbi Anglong Market (Management and Control) Act, 1954, for the financial year 2025-26 (vide Memo No KAAC/TAX/Hawaipur Jirim Bazar Committee/21-22/7765(iii) dated 29/05/2025), locals allege it was formed unilaterally under Bronson's leadership.

The process reportedly excluded public input and elected members like Ajit Das and Ajay Das, (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Guv inaugurates 26th national conference of practising company secretaries in Guwahati

Call for active role of professionals in driving ethical governance and economic growth

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, June 14: Governor Lakshman Prasad Acharya inaugurated the 26th National Conference of Practising Company Secretaries in Guwahati on Saturday.

The two-day event — organised by the Institute of Company Secretaries of India (ICSI) — brought together professionals from across the country to discuss the evolving responsibilities of company secretaries in contemporary corporate governance.

According to an official statement, the Governor described the conference as a reaffirmation of ICSI's commitment to fostering a corporate culture rooted in transparency, fairness, and ethical integrity.

He said the event was more than a professional gathering—it marked a crucial moment in the journey of company secretaries towards nation-building.

The conference also coincided with Practising Company Secretaries Day on June 15, a date marking the 1988 statutory recognition of practising company secretaries to certify annual returns.

Governor Acharya termed it a "historic milestone" that signified both recognition and responsibility. Speaking on the evolution of



the profession, the Governor noted that company secretaries nowadays have grown beyond legal scrutiny roles to become strategic advisors, data protection custodians, and key figures in risk management.

He emphasised their increasing significance in India's transformation into a global economic power, stating, "Through your commitment to ethical governance, you enhance investors' confidence, institutional strength, and economic resilience."

Quoting Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Acharya said, "When governance is transparent, trust in-

creases. And when trust increases, the nation progresses."

The Governor also lauded digital initiatives such as e-Governance, MCA 21, and XBRL for enhancing transparency and efficiency in corporate compliance.

He highlighted Guwahati's strategic importance as the Gateway to ASEAN countries and called the Northeast the "Ashtalakshmi" of India, underlining the region's economic and cultural potential.

Commending Assam's development programs like Orunodoi, Swanirbhar, Nari-Atmanirbhar Assam, and Assam Start-Up, he

said these reflect the state's push for self-reliance and inclusive growth.

He urged ICSI to conduct awareness and training programs in the Northeast, particularly aimed at empowering women and youth.

Calling for preparedness in emerging domains such as Artificial Intelligence, Big Data, and Blockchain, Governor Acharya said, "Let us work together to make India a global leader in ESG governance, climate finance, cyber risk management, and responsible AI."

He concluded by emphasising the critical role of company secretaries in achieving India's vision of becoming a developed nation.

"They will be instrumental in making India a 'Vishwaguru' through good governance, transparency, and responsible leadership," he added.

The inaugural session was also attended by ICSI President CS Dhananjay Shukla, Vice President CS Pawan Chandak, Chairman of the PCS Committee CS Praveen Soni, Programme Director CS Sandeep Kumar Kejriwal, Guwahati Chapter Chairman CS Lohit Bagaria, and several other dignitaries.

Two days of mkt slump wipes out ₹ 8.35 lakh cr investors' wealth

NEW DELHI, June 14: Equity investors become poorer by Rs 8.35 lakh crore in two days of market fall, where the benchmark Sensex dropped nearly 2 per cent amid heightened Middle East tensions, which drove Brent crude oil prices to sky-high levels. Falling for the second day in a row on Friday, the 30-share BSE Sensex dived 573.38 points or 0.70 per cent to settle at 81,118.60. During the morning trade, it tanked 1,337.39 points or 1.63 per cent to 80,354.59.

In two days, the benchmark has lost 1,396.54 points or 1.69 per cent.

The market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms eroded by Rs 8,35,799.85 crore to Rs 4,47,21,343.34 crore (USD 5.19 trillion) in two days.

"Indian equities fell sharply, reacting to weak global cues and a surge in crude oil prices after Israel launched military strikes on Iran earlier today. The sharp rise in crude prices weighed on the Indian rupee and led to selling pressure in OMCs, paints, tyres and lubricant stocks," Siddhartha Khemka, Head - Research, Wealth Management at Motilal Oswal Financial Services Ltd, said.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude jumped 7.61 per cent to USD 74.64 a barrel.

"Indian equity markets endured a sharp sell-off on Friday, with the Nifty-50 and Sensex both off their intra-day lows but still closing with significant losses. The market faced pressure from geopolitical tensions in the Middle East, surging crude oil prices, and broad-based sectoral weakness," Sachin Chandra Aluri, Analyst at Lemonn Markets Desk, said.

Among the Sensex firms, Adani Ports, ITC, State Bank of India, IndusInd Bank, HDFC Bank, Titan, Kotak Mahindra Bank and UltraTech Cement were the major laggards.

On the other hand, Tech Mahindra, Tata Consultancy Services, Maruti and Sun Pharma were the gainers.

The BSE midcap gauge declined 0.32 per cent and smallcap index dipped 0.30 per cent.

Among BSE sectoral indices, services tumbled 2.06 per cent, bankex (1.01 per cent), FMCG (0.94 per cent), financial services (0.85 per cent), metal (0.81 per cent) and power (0.75 per cent).

Healthcare index and realty were the only winners.

As many as 2,469 stocks declined while 1,516 advanced and 137 remained unchanged on the BSE. (PTI)

AI plane crash IMA writes to Tata Sons seeking financial support for kin of med college victims

MUMBAI, June 14: The Indian Medical Association on Saturday said it has written to Tata Sons urging the company to extend financial support to the injured and deceased students of BJ Medical College affected by the Ahmedabad plane crash.

The letter addressed to Tata Sons Chairman N Chandrabosekar said, the loss of precious lives and the pain suffered by the families of the deceased and injured is truly beyond words.

"In the wake of the Air India tragedy, we humbly request you to consider extending similar compensation and assistance to the families of the deceased and the injured students and doctors of BJ Medical College. Such a gesture would go a long way in showing solidarity with the medical fraternity, especially at a time when they need compassion and reassurance," the letter added.

The Tata Group on Thursday announced that it will provide Rs 1 crore compensation to the families of each person who lost their lives including passengers, crew members and individuals on the premises.

"... Tata Group will provide Rs 1 crore to the families of each person who lost their lives including passengers, crew members and individuals on the premises. Medical expenses of all those injured will also be covered while ensuring necessary care and support," Tata Sons reiterated in a statement.

IMA lauded Tata Group's announcement of ₹ 1 crore compensation to the families of the passengers

who tragically lost their lives in the recent incident.

"We stand in solidarity with you and the Tata Group during this moment of national mourning. We also take this opportunity to appreciate your leadership in promptly announcing compensation for the victims and extending support to their families. Such humane actions uphold the compassionate values that the Tata name has always been associated with," said the letter.

Meanwhile, the Indian Medical Association, Gujarat State Branch, in a separate letter to the Tata Sons urged to extend financial support to the injured and deceased students of BJ Medical College affected by the Ahmedabad plane crash.

"These individuals were not only victims but also future pillars of our healthcare system, and their ... families deserve similar care and support. Accordingly we earnestly request you to immediately declare similar help to the medical students injured who had lost their life," the IMA letter added.

The death toll in the London-bound Air India plane crash in Ahmedabad rose to 270 on Saturday. All but one of the 242 passengers and crew on board AI171 and another 29 persons including five MBBS students on the ground were killed when the aircraft came down moments after taking off from the Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International Airport before falling inside the nearby campus of the state-run BJ Medical College in Meghanagar area and going up in flames. (PTI)

Twid aims to expand its merchant partner base to 2 lakh by FY26

NEW DELHI, June 14: Twid, a rewards-based payment network, plans to significantly expand its merchant partner base to two lakh by the end of the current financial year. Two merchant partners much in excess of 1 lakh include marquee names like Swiggy, redBus, boAt, Myntra, Makemytrip, Bookmyshow, Jiomart, Netmeds, Ixigo, Confirmtkt, and Vodafone Idea.

"The company had crossed 1 lakh merchant partners milestone in March 2024 and we hope to close this financial year with merchant partners number going up to 2 lakh," Twid co-founder and CEO Amit Koshal said in a statement on Saturday.

Twid is a platform that allows

users to pay with their accumulated reward points at various online and offline merchants. It acts as a bridge between consumers, reward programmes, and merchants, enabling users to redeem their points for purchases.

"Traditional rewards systems often operate within a closed-loop ecosystem, offering limited redemption options. Users typically redeem rewards by purchasing gift cards, booking travel, or converting points into cash. Unfortunately, these redemption options occur infrequently (usually once every six months), resulting in low customer engagement," Koshal said.

Twid has transformed this approach by enabling users to seam-

lessly earn and redeem points directly at merchant checkouts, he said, adding that users no longer need to remember loyalty card numbers; instead, they can use their mobile numbers for quick redemption.

This frictionless experience drives high levels of loyalty engagement and as a result, banking and non-banking rewards issuers have seen increased transactions on their platforms, making the system profitable, he said.

With increasing strength in new merchants and new issuer partners slated to go live in the upcoming quarters, Twid is well-positioned and aiming to grow 200 per cent by the end of FY26. (PTI)

Building Solutions Exhibition 2025 inaugurated in Guwahati

Indian Institute of Architects' flagship event showcases latest in construction and design

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, June 14: The Indian Institute of Architects (IIA), Assam Chapter, inaugurated the Building Solutions Exhibition 2025 at the Maniram Dewan Trade Centre in Guwahati on Saturday.

The three-day event, running from June 13 to 15, brings together professionals from the architecture, engineering, construction, and design sectors, as well as students and the general public.

According to an official statement, the exhibition was formally inaugurated by Chief Guest Ar Biswa Dutta in the presence of prominent architects including Ar R N Baishya, Ar H K Rajkhowa, Ar Budhin Borthakur, Ar Pankaj Phukan, Ar Pritam Nath, Ar Amitabh Sharma, Ar Sukanya Das, and several other dignitaries.

This year's edition features over 70 stalls showcasing the latest in construction materials, tools, technologies, and integrated interior and exterior solutions.

Participating brands and service providers include both industry leaders and emerging enterprises, offering visitors a diverse look at



innovations shaping the built environment.

The event also places a strong emphasis on professional development and knowledge exchange.

A series of technical seminars and workshops are being held during the exhibition, covering key topics such as urban rejuvenation, green building strategies, and air conditioning system design.

A GRIHA-certified workshop is scheduled for June 14.

Speaking at the inaugural event, Ar Budhin Borthakur, Vice Chair-

man of the Assam Chapter and Convenor of Building Solutions 2025, said, "This exhibition is a platform for innovation, knowledge-sharing, and collaboration. We are excited to engage with industry professionals and the public to explore the future of the building and construction sectors."

The exhibition is open to all with free entry, offering attendees an opportunity to interact with experts and gain insights into evolving trends in architecture and construction.

Contd. from Page 1...

SP transferred, Leena Doley named

miscreants to maintain a peaceful situation here."

He also said, "Since last week, the law-and-order situation in Dhubri has been challenging. The day after Bakri Eid, some elements kept a severed cow head in front of a Hanuman Mandir. People from both communities thereafter met, and the peace committee also held discussions, and it seemed to have resolved. But the next day, another cow head was kept in the premises. Then there was a stone pelting incident too. Moreover, there were posters to include Dhubri as part of Bangladesh that were pasted here. A communal group has been active here to spread unrest, and we have adopted a zero tolerance policy against the same."

Centre forms high-level

in the home ministry as members, according to an order dated June 13. Representatives from Gujarat home department, Gujarat disaster response authority, Ahmedabad police commissioner, Indian Air Force's director general of inspection and safety, director generals of Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS), and Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) are part of the committee. Other members include special director of the Intelligence Bureau and director of the Directorate of Forensic Science Services.

According to the statement, any other member, including aviation experts, accident investigators and legal advisors may be included in the committee. The panel will assess emergency response of various stakeholders, including rescue operations, and coordination.

According to the statement, the panel will have access to all records, including, among others, flight data, cockpit voice recorders, aircraft maintenance records, ATC (Air Traffic Control) log and witness testimonies.

The committee will also collaborate with international agencies if foreign nationals or aircraft manufacturers are involved. Civil Aviation Secretary Samir Kumar Sinha said the investigation is going on smoothly. The Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB) is probing the crash. Before the press conference, a one-minute silence was observed to pay homage to the victims of the crash. (PTI)

Congress committed 'historic blunder'

Let Pakistan Become a Nuclear State", Sarma claimed Israel had offered to help—from actionable intel to joint strike planning. Jamnagar Air Base was shortlisted as a potential launchpad and the Indian military gave full backing to a preemptive airstrike on Kahuta. "India had the capability and consensus to eliminate the threat before it became a reality. Yet at the last minute, Indira Gandhi hesitated, fearing international fallout," the chief minister alleged. Sarma further claimed that Rajiv Gandhi had 'shelved the plan, prioritising diplomacy over deterrence under foreign pressure'.

Its fallout was that in 1988, Rajiv Gandhi signed a no-strike nuclear agreement with Benazir Bhutto, the then prime minister of Pakistan, pledging mutual restraint on attacking each other's nuclear installations, he said.

A decade later, Pakistan tested nuclear weapons in 1998. India was pulled into a costly nuclear arms race. Kargil, proxy terror wars, and cross-border strikes have since occurred under Pakistan's nuclear shield," Sarma claimed. "To this day, Pakistan uses nuclear blackmail to deter international action and legitimize its rogue behaviour," he added. The chief minister also alleged that the key INDIA bloc ally CPI(M) had promised in its manifesto in 2024 to roll back India's nuclear deterrent if it comes to power.

"Where strong leadership demands resolve and foresight, Congress offered caution and delay. A historic window to safeguard India's long-term security was squandered—for short-term diplomatic comfort," Sarma said. India and the region continue to pay a strategic price for it even today, he added. (PTI)

NIA chargesheets ULFA (I) chief

(ULFA-I), they said. Baruah, along with Abhijit Gogoi alias Abhijeet Gogoi and Jahnur Boruah alias Arnob Asom alias Huntu, has been charged under various sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, and the Explosive Substances Act in a court in Guwahati on Friday, the NIA said in a statement. The three were found to be linked to Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) planted by the outfit at Dispur Last Gate in Guwahati as part of a broader ULFA (I) conspiracy to trigger multiple blasts across Assam to disrupt Independence Day celebrations in 2024, the agency said. The NIA, which took over the probe in September 2024, found that the IEDs were planted with the intent to cause death or injury, destroy property, and threaten the unity, integrity, and sovereignty of India and to spread terror among the people. (PTI)

Pradyut Bordoloi seconds Himanta's

state's internal security apparatus. Referring to claims of foreign involvement, he asked how individuals allegedly linked to Bangladesh were able to infiltrate Assam and trigger violence despite the presence of police and border security forces. "If these allegations are true, it's a glaring failure of the state's security machinery. With BSF and police in place, repeated incidents like this echo the kind of unrest once seen in Pahalgam," Bordoloi said, directly holding the Chief Minister and Home Minister accountable for the lapse. While extending support to tough countermeasures, the Congress leader also criticised CM Sarma's political positioning, accusing him of fanning communal divisions through what he termed a dangerous "Two Religious Theory."

Bordoloi likened Sarma's political rhetoric to the divisive "Two-Nation Theory" once advocated by both the RSS and the Muslim League during India's independence struggle—an ideology, he reminded, that was firmly rejected by Mahatma Gandhi and the Congress. "Since aligning with the BJP, the Chief Minister has adopted a polarising political strategy that encourages religious faultlines. Such politics embolden disruptive elements and contribute to the cycle of violence," Bordoloi warned.

KA benefitted immensely, says Tuliram

was levied. For farmers, ₹6,000 is being provided annually through PM Kisan Samman Nidhi, with a total disbursement of ₹3.7 lakh crore so far. Speaking on Karbi Anglong-specific developments, Ronghang said that after the BJP-led NDA government came to power, a KAAC delegation met Prime Minister Modi to submit a memorandum for the implementation of Article 244(A) of the Constitution for an Autonomous State.

Another memorandum was submitted seeking ₹1,000 crore for the overall development of Karbi Anglong, along with an appeal for a peace agreement with insurgent groups. "The Prime Minister gave us 45 minutes of his time. I have not seen a Prime Minister who is so concerned about every tribe and community in the country," Ronghang said. He added that through NITI Aayog, ₹94.11 lakh was sanctioned, which was used to build a football stadium at Karbi Anglong Sports Association (KASA) and at Dongkamukam. Listing major initiatives under the Modi government, Ronghang said that during his visit to Karbi Anglong in 2022, the Prime Minister laid foundation stones for various institutions including a degree college in Chinthong, a veterinary college at Manja, and an agriculture college at Kheroni. The Chinthong college is nearing completion, while tenders have been floated for the others. The CEM also informed that a new National Highway (NH-627), connecting Nellie via Hongkam, Dongkamukam, and Kheroni to Dima Hasao, is under progress. Responding to opposition regarding the setting up of a bio-gas plant by Reliance Industries Limited, Ronghang said, "We are moving forward with the project to reduce unemployment. A 30-year agreement is being signed. This initiative will benefit local youth and farmers who can grow Napier grass for the plant."

On the withdrawal of Asian Development Bank (ADB) funding for a solar project at Khatkhati near the Nagaland border, Ronghang blamed activist Pranab Doley. "He has a criminal record and is only obstructing development," he said, adding that an alternative arrangement will be made. He further stated that the project site is on reserve land of KAAC, currently being cultivated by Naga people without land patta.

Land encroachment row sparks

and instead included Bronson's close associates such as Assistant Secretary Longkiri Kramsa, Treasurer Ananda Kramsa, and Member Secretary Doloi Terange, Inspector of Taxes, KAAC.

Former committee members accused the current leadership of violating KAAC rules and by-laws by attempting to establish a market office without public consultation and creating a tense environment in the area. The Kramsa family's past involvement in land, sand, and timber-related disputes has further heightened public apprehension over their growing influence in local governance. Ajit Das has called upon the KAAC CEM, who also heads the Taxation Department, to personally investigate the actions of the current committee and ensure fairness in market administration. Residents fear that the ongoing conflict could disrupt the market's legacy as a vital economic centre and deepen communal divides in the region.

U'khand CM directs DGP to

the state's DGP to conduct a thorough and detailed investigation of the entire incident," Dhami posted on X. Sarma shared the post of Dhami and said, 'Grateful'. Hojai had travelled to Delhi to appear for a Railway Recruitment Board (RRB) examination and later accompanied two individuals to Rishikesh. She was reported to be missing in Rishikesh on June 6 and her body was found on the banks of river Ganga after five days. Sarma had written to Dhami on Friday requesting his kind intervention "to ensure that the matter is investigated in a comprehensive and time-bound manner, examining all possible angles". The chief minister had urged that if any criminal involvement is found, then the 'responsible individuals be identified, apprehended and prosecuted in accordance with the law so that justice is delivered'. Assam Pradesh Congress Committee (APCC) President Gaurav Gogoi has also written to Dhami requesting for a swift inquiry into Hojai's death.

"The circumstances surrounding her disappearance and subsequent death are deeply troubling and have raised serious concerns among her family, friends and the wider community", Gogoi said. Gogoi requested the Uttarakhand CM to "personally look into the matter and direct the concerned authorities to expedite the investigation so that justice is delivered to Hojai and her grieving family". (PTI)

'DNA samples of six plane crash

sent to the FSL in Ahmedabad and Gandhinagar for matching. "Till Friday, relatives of nearly 220 deceased persons had approached the police to give their samples," said police inspector Chirag Gosai, who is handling the affairs at the post-mortem room. Details are collected from relatives arriving at the post-mortem room, and these people are then sent to BJ Medical College to provide their DNA samples, he said. "It will take nearly 72 hours to complete the exercise of matching the DNA samples. Once they match, bodies will be handed over to the relatives from the post-mortem room," the inspector had said. (PTI)

PM Modi to take part in G7

believes the forthcoming meeting between the prime ministers of the two countries on the sidelines of the G7 Summit will offer an important opportunity to exchange views and "explore pathways" to reset bilateral ties. The MEA spokesperson also asserted that the "reset" of the relationship is based on mutual respect, shared interests and sensitivity to each other's concerns. The MEA statement said that in the final leg of his tour, Modi will undertake an official visit to Croatia on June 18 at the invitation of the prime minister of the European country, Andrej Plenkovic. Modi will hold a bilateral meeting with Prime Minister Plenkovic and also meet the President of Croatia, Zoran Milanovic.

"The visit to Croatia will also underscore India's commitment to further strengthening its engagement with partners in the European Union," the statement said. (PTI)

AFFIDAVIT

I, Dhanpal Sahu son of Sriram Sahu and Tuntun Devi resident of Jengkhla, West Karbi Anglong through Notary would like to mention that in my Voter ID my name wrongly recorded as Dhanpal Sahu and in my Aadhaar Card my and my father's name is wrongly recorded as Mohipal Sahu and Sri Ram Sahu instead of Dhanpal Sahu and Sriram Sahu.

Assam CM lays foundation stone of 200-bedded city hospital in Dibrugarh

HT Correspondent

DIBRUGARH, June 14: In a major boost to healthcare infrastructure in Upper Assam, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Saturday laid the foundation stone for a 200-bedded City Hospital, which will function as an annexe of the Assam Medical College and Hospital (AMCH). The proposed facility will be located at Jail Road in Dibrugarh.

The state-of-the-art B+G+6 storied hospital complex will be constructed under the World Bank-funded Assam State Secondary Healthcare Initiative for Service Delivery Transformation (ASSIST) Project, with a total financial outlay of ₹ 206 crore.

Spanning across 10 bighas of land, the hospital will cover a built-up area of 29,087 square metres and is expected to be completed within two years, as per officials from the Health and Family Welfare Department.

Of the 200 beds, 120 will be dedicated to the Maternity Department, while the remaining will serve patients from Medicine, Surgery, Orthopedics, Pediatrics, and other key departments. The facility is envisioned to ease the burden on the existing AMCH and significantly improve access to secondary-level healthcare services for residents across Dibrugarh and adjoining districts. Speaking on the occasion, CM Sarma said that the new hospital will not only enhance medical capacity but also reflect the government's commitment to building a resilient, inclusive, and responsive public health system across Assam. He highlighted that the facility will bring essential healthcare closer to urban and semi-urban populations, reducing travel time and load on tertiary hospitals.

The ceremonial event witnessed the presence of Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal, who termed the project a "landmark step" in strengthening Assam's healthcare ecosystem. Several other dignitaries, including Assam Ministers Jogen Mohan, Prasanta Phukan, and Bimal Borah, along with local MLAs, senior government officials, and members of the medical fraternity, also attended the foundation laying programme.

The City Hospital is expected to act as a model for future urban healthcare expansion in the state, under the broader vision of upgrading medical infrastructure and achieving universal health coverage.

CEM emphasised that this initiative was long overdue and should have been implemented much earlier

Dimasa textbooks unveiled under NEP 2020 Vision

HT Correspondent

HAFLONG, June 14: In a landmark moment for indigenous language education, the foundational stage textbooks in the Dimasa language were ceremonially launched today at the Cultural Institute Hall, Haflong, aligning with the vision of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.

The event was graced by the Chief Executive Member (CEM) of the North Cachar Hills Autonomous Council, Debola Gorlosa, as the chief guest, accompanied by a team of legislators and dignitaries. In a symbolic gesture, headmasters from five Lower Primary Schools received the newly introduced textbooks, marking the formal commencement of Dimasa as a medium of instruction at the foundational level.

This development follows the Government of Assam's recent decision to designate 278 Lower Primary Schools in Dima Hasao district as Dimasa Medium Schools. Beginning from the 2025-26 academic session, students in these institutions will be taught using the Dimasa language, a move aimed at strengthening cultural roots and enhancing learning outcomes among young learners.

Speaking at the occasion, CEM Gorlosa



emphasized that this initiative was long overdue and should have been implemented much earlier. He highlighted that one of the

most significant features of NEP 2020 is its focus on promoting mother tongues and regional languages, especially during the early years of education. However, he cautioned that the successful realization of this vision requires collective support from stakeholders across all sectors—educationists, policymakers, community leaders, and civil society.

He expressed deep gratitude to the Dimasa Sahitya Sabha, its sub-committee, the Dimasa Language Committee, and other community-based organizations for their contributions in developing the textbooks and advocating for language preservation. Gorlosa also issued a heartfelt appeal to work collectively toward the inclusion of the Dimasa language in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution, underlining that language is central to cultural identity, and losing a language is akin to losing a part of one's heritage.

Donpapon Thaoson, Executive Member in charge of Education, also addressed the gathering and expressed appreciation for being part of this momentous occasion. He clarified that the original proposal had included 282 schools, but only 278 were approved due to four schools lacking a valid

UDISE (Unified District Information System for Education) code, a technical prerequisite for formal recognition.

The Dimasa language, also known as Grao-Dima, belongs to the Tibeto-Burman language family and is primarily spoken by the Dimasa community in Assam and parts of Nagaland. It is regarded as one of the oldest and culturally rich languages of Northeast India, with deep historical ties to the region's legacy.

The event was attended by a host of dignitaries, including Chairman Mohet Hojai, Executive Members and Members of the Autonomous Council, Joint Secretary & in-charge of Education Rebecca Chansan, former ACS officer and President of Dimasa Sahitya Sabha Ramesh Thaoson, District Primary Education Officer Medhab Thaoson, Purabi Phonglo, DIPRO, and representatives from various civil societies, teachers' associations, and local community organizations.

The event concluded with a renewed sense of pride and commitment among attendees, who pledged to further the cause of mother-tongue education and to preserve and promote the Dimasa language for future generations.

NFR carries out eviction drive between Kamakhya and Guwahati railway stations

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, June 14: The Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) has been actively conducting eviction drives to remove unauthorized encroachments on railway land across its jurisdiction. As part of its commitment, a joint eviction drive was successfully conducted recently between Kamakhya and Guwahati railway stations to remove unauthorized encroachments on railway land. The operation was carried out between Railway Kilometer No. 8/0 to 10/0 from 10:00 am hours to 1:00 pm. The drive was aimed at clearing illegally occupied land to ensure the safety, cleanliness and operational integrity of the railway infrastructure.

The eviction was undertaken with the active participation and cooperation of multiple departments and security agencies. A total of 10 personnel from the Railway Protection Force, 7 personnel from the Government Railway Police, 6 police personnel from Panbazar and Fancy Bazar Police Stations and 20 staffs from the SSE/P.Way department were involved in the operation. Their coordinated efforts led to the demolition of 29 unauthorized soft



structures that had encroached on railway property.

The entire operation was conducted in a peaceful and orderly manner and no untoward incidents were reported during the course of the drive. N. F. Railway appreciates the prompt and effective action taken by all participating teams and remains committed to protecting railway land, enhancing passenger safety and facilitating

future infrastructure development. Awareness campaigns, surveillance patrols and strict enforcement actions are part of the strategic moves adopted by NFR and its protection unit to deter further unauthorized encroachments. Passengers and stakeholders are urged to cooperate with railway authorities and report any unauthorized occupation of railway property.

World Blood Donor Day observed

HT Correspondent

TEZPUR, June 14: In a bid to promote voluntary blood donation and honor the selfless contributions of blood donors, Kanaklata Civil Hospital, Tezpur, observed World Blood Donor Day (WBDD) with a series of awareness and appreciation events on Saturday.

To mark the occasion, a public rally was organized, followed by a public meeting, both of which witnessed enthusiastic participation from medical professionals, health officials, and members of various organizations from Sonitpur district.

The events were graced by several dignitaries including Additional Deputy Commissioner (Health) Twahir Alam, Joint Director of Health Services (DHS), Sonitpur Dr. Jagadish Goswami, Superintendent of Kanaklata Civil Hospital Dr. Hiranjan Saikia, Retired Joint DHS Dr. Atul Saikia, and the President and Secretary of the Indian Medical Association (IMA), Tezpur Branch — Dr. Dwipen Mahanta and Dr. Queen Gogoi, respectively. Members of various social and voluntary organizations from across the district were also present.

As part of the public meeting, a felicitation ceremony was held to recognize and appreciate the contributions of regular blood donors. Seven male and two female best



voluntary blood donors affiliated with the Blood Centre of Kanaklata Civil Hospital were honored for their consistent dedication to saving lives through blood donation.

In addition, blood donation camps were simultaneously organized at the Defence Research Laboratory (DRDO), Tezpur, and 30 Assam Rifles, Lokhra, reflecting the collaborative spirit and commitment of defense personnel to the cause of voluntary blood donation.

It is worth noting that World Blood Donor Day, observed annually on June 14, was established in 2004 by four international bodies — the World Health Organization (WHO), the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the International Federation of Blood Donor Organizations

(IFBDO), and the International Society of Blood Transfusion (ISBT). The global campaign aims to raise awareness about the importance of safe blood and blood products, while expressing gratitude to voluntary, unpaid blood donors for their life-saving contributions.

World Blood Donor Day is one of the 11 official global health campaigns recognized by WHO, which also include World Health Day, World Tuberculosis Day, World AIDS Day, World Immunization Week, World Malaria Day, and others.

This year's celebration at Kanaklata Civil Hospital served not only to honor donors but also to inspire more individuals, especially youth, to become part of the life-saving network of voluntary blood donors.

'Udayan Seva Sanstha' launches sacred service initiative for Ambubachi

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, June 14: In observance of the holy occasion of Ambubachi, Udayan Seva Sanstha has undertaken a sacred service initiative to assist the pilgrims and devotees visiting the Kamakhya Temple between June 22 and June 26.

As part of this service, the organization will be distributing drinking water, ORS solutions, glucose, fruit juices, and sherbet to help devotees cope with the summer heat and exhaustion during their pilgrimage.

Founder of the organization, Manoj Roy, has appealed to all devout individuals and well-wishers to extend their financial support to this noble cause, stating, "This service is not just about water—it symbolizes devotion, faith, and social responsibility." Udayan Seva Sanstha has been rendering such voluntary services during Ambubachi every year since 2018.

Beyond Ambubachi, the organization has also been actively engaged in various social welfare initiatives across Guwahati and different parts of Assam since 2018.

Individuals and organizations willing to support or contribute to this sacred initiative during Ambubachi may contact Udayan Seva Sanstha directly at 99573 37667.

Voluntary Blood Donation Camp held at Diphu Medical College

HT Bureau

DIPHU, June 14: In observance of World Blood Donor Day, the Blood Centre of Diphu Medical College and Hospital (DMC&H) organized a voluntary blood donation camp on Saturday. The event was conducted under the aegis of the Assam State Blood Transfusion Council, Guwahati, with active collaboration from the Assam State Chapter of the Association of Surgeons of India, Diphu, and the Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha — East Karbi Anglong District Committee (BJYM-EKADC).

The camp saw an encouraging turnout with over 50 voluntary

donors, including members from BJYM, the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP), and the Association of Surgeons of India, Diphu. The initiative aimed not only to collect blood for patients in need but also to raise awareness about the critical importance of voluntary blood donation in saving lives.

Speaking on the occasion, BJYM-EKADC President Jiten Bey shared that the event was a heartfelt effort to extend support to patients in urgent need of blood transfusion. He stated, "This noble step has given many patients a second chance at life. In a world increasingly in need of

compassion and solidarity, this act of selfless giving stands as a beacon of hope."

The event also had a practical impact — during the course of the camp, two patients, Kamen Rongpi and Sika Lekthepi, received the blood they urgently needed.

Prominent dignitaries present at the camp included BJP East Karbi Anglong District President Roland Killing and Vice President Robbie Rongpi, who applauded the BJYM team for their commendable dedication. Their presence boosted the morale of the volunteers and emphasized the

importance of youth involvement in social service initiatives.

Also attending the event were James Daimary, ACS Magistrate, Dr. Aparna Langthasa, Head of the Department of Pathology at DMC&H, and Dr. Rimi Phonglosa, Assistant Professor in the Department of Pathology, who all appreciated the efforts of the organizing teams.

The BJYM team's commitment to community service continues to inspire others, setting a shining example of how civic responsibility and youth engagement can make a tangible difference in society.

Survey work for Brahmaputra dredging begins at Bogibeel after long delay

HT Correspondent

DIBRUGARH, June 14: In a long-awaited development, survey work for the dredging of the Brahmaputra River finally commenced on Saturday at Bogibeel, marking the first physical step forward in a project that was initially announced over seven years ago.

A technical team from the Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) began survey operations along a specific 300-metre stretch of the river that has been identified as a critical zone for immediate dredging. The area has increasingly posed challenges for smooth navigation, affecting ferry, cargo, and cruise operations in the region.

According to official sources, actual dredging work is expected to begin shortly after the completion of the ongoing survey. The project, though currently limited in scope, is

being viewed as a significant step toward reviving the long-pending initiative to make the Brahmaputra a navigable and sustainable inland waterway.

It may be recalled that the preliminary survey for dredging the Brahmaputra was formally inaugurated on January 24, 2017, in Dibrugarh by then Assam Chief Minister and current Union Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, Sarbananda Sonowal. The broader vision was to improve navigability, promote inland water transport, boost river tourism, and enhance connectivity across Assam and the Northeast region, while integrating with the national waterway network.

Despite the initial enthusiasm and policy-level announcements, no substantial physical work had taken place on the ground until

now. The lack of visible progress over the years had led to growing concerns among stakeholders, especially river transport operators and local communities dependent on river-based connectivity.

However, with the current survey and impending dredging work, expectations have been rekindled. While modest in scale, the initiative has raised hopes for a more concerted and sustained effort to implement the larger vision of transforming the Brahmaputra into a viable inland water transport corridor. Local operators and residents have welcomed the move, seeing it as a positive beginning after years of delay. The successful execution of the pilot dredging at Bogibeel could potentially pave the way for broader dredging efforts along other stretches of the river in the future.

IRCS Biswanath observes World Blood Donor Day at Sootea's Chatia HSS

Research fellow from the University of Kota, Rajasthan, graced the event as the resource person



HT Correspondent

BISWANATH CHARTIALI, June 14: The World Blood Donor Day was observed with due solemnity and enthusiasm by the Biswanath district committee of the Indian Red Cross Society (IRCS) at Chatia Higher Secondary School, Sootea, on Friday. The day is globally commemorated every year on June 14 to honor voluntary blood donors and raise awareness about the need for regular blood donation to ensure the quality, safety, and availability of blood and blood products for patients in need.

This year's theme — "Give blood, give hope: Together we save lives" — was the central focus of the event, aiming to motivate both new and regular donors to continue their life-saving contributions.

The programme was presided over by Dr. Luhit Sarma, senior member of the Biswanath chapter of IRCS. At the outset, Rajendra Kumar Sarmah, Principal of Chatia HSS, extended a warm welcome to all participants, setting the tone for the day's proceedings.

Akash Bharadwaj, a research fellow from the University of Kota, Rajasthan, graced the

event as the resource person. In his address, Bharadwaj spoke in detail about the concept of blood donation, underlining its life-saving potential and the humanitarian values it represents. He also touched upon the scientific, emotional, and social dimensions of blood donation, making a compelling case for its continued promotion among the youth.

The key address was delivered by Ripunjay Bordoloi, an active member of the IRCS Biswanath chapter, who elaborated on this year's global theme. He encouraged students to become part of the voluntary donor community and emphasized that small acts like blood donation can make a monumental difference in someone's life.

The programme proceedings were conducted by Dr. Sanjib Upadhyaya, Secretary of the IRCS Biswanath district committee, who ensured the smooth flow of events throughout the session.

The event witnessed active participation from the school community, with around 150 students, along with teachers, members of the Red Cross Society, and invited guests attending the programme. The observance served not only as an educational initiative but also as a motivational platform to inspire future blood donors among the younger generation.

42nd biennial conference of All Assam Police Association Begins in Morigaon

HT Correspondent

MORIGAON, June 14: The 42nd Biennial Conference of the All Assam Police Association began today with much enthusiasm and formal proceedings in Morigaon. The two-day event, which is being held to deliberate on key issues concerning the police force, commenced this morning and will conclude tomorrow in the esteemed presence of Director General of Police (DGP) Harmit Singh.

The opening ceremony started with the hoisting of the association flag by Shukla Kakati, Executive President of the All Assam Police Association, marking the formal inauguration of the conference.

A seminar on the theme "Youth Disorder, Parental Responsibility and the Role of the Police" was organized in the morning session as a key highlight of the day. Rajdeep Bailing Barua, Editor-in-Chief of ND24, attended the session as the chief speaker. Addressing the gathering, he emphasized the pivotal role that parents play in shaping the educational and moral foundation of the youth, and highlighted how collaboration between families and police can contribute to social stability.

The event was graced by several distinguished guests including Devshish Sharma, Deputy Commissioner of Morigaon; Hemanta Kumar Das, Superintendent of Police, Morigaon; and Pranab Jyoti Goswami, Assistant Inspector General (Administration), Assam Police, among others. The second session of the conference is scheduled to be held at 11:30 AM tomorrow, which will be attended by several high-ranking officials and dignitaries. The key guests include Director General of Police Harmit Singh, Additional Director General of Police (Special Branch) Hiren Chandra Nath, Chairman of the 7th State Finance Commission Rana Pratap Kalita, and SP Morigaon Hemanta Kumar Das.

Upendra Singh, General Secretary of the All Assam Police Association, along with several police officers and association members from across the state, will also be in attendance.

The biennial conference serves as an important platform for dialogue, introspection, and policy suggestions among police personnel, and is expected to generate valuable insights and resolutions for the betterment of the police force and society at large.

Editor's pick

India builds aviation megahubs but policy bottlenecks stall global takeoff

By: Arva Roy Bardhan

On the tarmac, India looks unstoppable. Delhi's fourth runway and twin elevated taxiways are designed to raise the Capital's throughput to a staggering 109 mn passengers a year - higher than the tally of Atlanta, the world's busiest airport.

Two new megahubs - Navi Mumbai, built to accommodate 60-90 mn travellers, and Noida's Jewar airport, planned for 70 mn - are racing towards mid-decade openings. Meanwhile, domestic carriers have ordered 1,359 jets, led by IndiGo's record 500-plane Airbus deal and Air India's 470-aircraft shopping spree. Yet, above this hardware boom hangs a policy bottleneck: 116 air service agreements (ASAs) that New Delhi has signed, dictating the terms of air operations with different nations.

While ASAs are meant to facilitate travel between nations, their lack of dynamism leads to exhaustion of capacity and demand pile-up. For instance, the marquee India-Dubai bilateral still caps each side at 65,000 weekly seats, a limit last adjusted in 2014, which is now almost sold out.

It is not just the bilateral with Dubai but individual MoUs with the Emirates (Abu Dhabi, Sharjah and Ras Al Khaimah) that are holding back Indian aviation growth - considering the strong 40 lakh Indian diaspora in the UAE. The result: fares surge during holiday seasons, middle-class families detour through Doha or Riyadh, and India's new terminals risk turning into gleaming domestic halls attached to half-shut international doors.

The stakes are macroeconomic, not merely logistical.

GDP boost

IATA research finds that every 10% rise in a country's air-connectivity index lifts labour productivity by about 0.07%. For an economy approaching \$4.1 tn, even a modest 10% connectivity bump created by phased liberalisation would add \$2.9 bn to annual output. Aviation supports 7.7 mn jobs and contributes \$53.6 bn, or 1.55 of GDP. Applying the same ratios suggests that closing the connectivity gap could create about 4,10,000 additional jobs across airlines, airports, logistics and supply chains.

Namaste India

Gol data shows forex earnings from tourists hit ₹231,927 cr (\$28 bn) from 9.52 mn foreign tourist arrivals in 2023. A single extra million inbound travellers - plausible once fares drop and seats expand - would pump close to \$3 bn more into hotels, restaurants and heritage sites.

An ORF study, "Combined Skies: Unlocking the Benefits of UAE-India Aviation Liberalisation for Indian Travellers", indicates that each 1% rise in India-UAE passenger volume trims average fares by about 0.2%.

Consumer is king

Granting Dubai the extra 50,000 weekly seats - roughly a 75% capacity jump - could shave 10-15% off typical ticket prices, delivering an annual consumer surplus windfall well north of \$100 mn. Gradual liberalisation in UAE-India air services can generate benefits for Indian consumers upwards of \$1 bn.

Keeping bilateral quotas frozen while airport and fleet capacity explode is the economic equivalent of building an eight-lane expressway and barricading four lanes at the toll booth.

Gulf and Southeast Asian hubs are not too happy to harvest the spillover: roughly 30% of India's international traffic now flies to or through the UAE, clogging overseas runways that could just as well be Indian transfer points.

The protectionist argument - foreign mega-carriers will cannibalise home airlines - does not hold up against regional evidence. Asean's phased Single Aviation Market lifted third-, fourth- and fifth-freedom restrictions during the 2010s and saw passenger volumes and low-cost carrier penetration soar without extinguishing national champions.

India's carriers need open markets more than shelter, the freeze on rights hurts their ability to sweat those shiny new A321neos and A350s across profitable international routes.

The debate over air services liberalisation is no longer a niche quarrel between airline CEOs and civil aviation bureaucrats. It is a strategic lever for growth, jobs and global stature. India has runways, terminals, aircraft and, critically, the demand. What it lacks is the regulatory clearance to knit these assets into a seamless Indo-Pacific air-logistics network.

Liberalising bilaterals - starting with a transparent, time-bound schedule of 15-20% annual seat increases between India and the UAE - would align policy with infra, slash fares, lift GDP, and propel millions of tourists directly into India's burgeoning hospitality economy.

The alternative is to watch the world's fastest-growing aviation market taxi in circles while its neighbours claim the skies. The runway is built. The engines are spooled. New Delhi's only job now is to tell Indian aviation: wheels-up. (Courtesy: ORF)

Inferno in the skies: The Ahmedabad air tragedy

By: Dipak Kurmi

On the afternoon of June 12, 2025, a catastrophic event unfolded in the skies above Ahmedabad, India, as Air India Flight AI171, a Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner bound for London's Gatwick Airport, crashed mere moments after take-off from Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International Airport. Carrying 242 passengers and crew, the aircraft plummeted into the Meghani Nagar residential area, striking a medical college hostel and erupting into a fireball that sent plumes of thick black smoke spiraling into the sky. The tragedy, which claimed the lives of 241 people on board and numerous others on the ground, marked the first fatal crash of a Boeing 787 Dreamliner and stands as one of India's most personally devastating aviation disasters in recent history. Among the victims was Vijay Rupani, the former Chief Minister of Gujarat, while a single passenger, Vishwash Kumar Ramesh, miraculously survived. As investigators scramble to uncover the causes of this unprecedented catastrophe, the nation and the world mourn the profound human toll.

The ill-fated flight departed Ahmedabad at 1:39 p.m. local time, under the command of Captain Sumet Sabharwal, a seasoned pilot with 8,200 hours of flying experience, and First Officer Clive Kundra, with 1,100 hours. The aircraft, an 11-year-old Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner registered as VT-ANB, was carrying 230 passengers—169 Indian nationals, 53 British nationals, seven Portuguese nationals, and one Canadian—along with two pilots and ten cabin crew members. According to the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), the plane climbed to a mere 625 feet before issuing a desperate "Mayday" distress call, signaling a life-threatening emergency. Seconds later, all communication with air traffic control ceased, and the aircraft plummeted into the B.J. Medical College and Civil Hospital complex, approximately three kilometers from the runway. The impact ignited a massive fire, fueled by an estimated 125,000 liters of jet fuel intended for the long-haul journey to London.

The crash site in Meghani Nagar, a densely populated residential area, bore witness to scenes of unimaginable devastation. Eyewitnesses described the aircraft descending rapidly with its nose up and landing gear still extended, a sign that something had gone catastrophically wrong. Hareesh Shah, a local resident, recounted the horror: "The plane was flying very low and crashed into the residential quarters of doctors and nursing staff of the civil hospital and B.J. Medical College. Several buildings caught fire, and the blaze was so intense that trees were singed and cars damaged." Video footage circulating on social media captured the aircraft's final moments, showing it struggling to gain altitude before disappearing behind trees and exploding into a fireball. The wreckage, including the tail section lodged in a building's upper floor, painted a grim picture of the disaster's scale.

Among the 241 confirmed fatalities on board was Vijay Rupani, a prominent Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader and



former Chief Minister of Gujarat from 2016 to 2021. Rupani, aged 68, was traveling to London to visit his wife and daughter. His death, confirmed by BJP leader C.R. Patil, sent shockwaves through India's political landscape. Rupani's political career was illustrious, marked by his rise from a corporator in Rajkot to a Rajya Sabha MP and eventually Gujarat's chief minister. A low-profile yet influential figure, Rupani was known for his affiliation with the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) and his role in stabilizing the BJP's leadership in Gujarat during turbulent times. Congress leader Jai Ram Ramesh, reflecting on their interactions in the Rajya Sabha, described Rupani as "extremely affable," noting his contributions to discussions on climate change and urban issues. The loss of Rupani, a native of Yangon, Myanmar, and a key figure in Gujarat's political and cultural spheres, added a profound layer of grief to the tragedy.

The sole survivor, Vishwash Kumar Ramesh, a 40-year-old British national of Indian origin, emerged as a beacon of hope amid the devastation. Seated in seat 11A near an emergency exit, Ramesh recounted the terrifying moments to the Hindustan Times: "Thirty seconds after takeoff, there was a loud noise, and then the plane crashed. It all happened so quickly. When I got up, there were bodies all around me. I was scared. I stood up and ran." Bloodied and disoriented, Ramesh was rescued by locals and rushed to Ahmedabad's Civil Hospital, where Dr. Dhaval Gameti confirmed he was out of immediate danger despite multiple injuries. Tragically, Ramesh's brother, Ajay Kumar Ramesh, seated in 11J, is presumed dead, leaving the survivor grappling with both relief and profound loss. Ramesh's miraculous escape, attributed to his proximity to the emergency exit, has drawn attention to the critical role of seating arrangements in aviation safety.

The crash's impact extended beyond the aircraft, claiming lives and causing injuries on the ground. The plane struck a hostel at B.J. Medical College during lunchtime, killing at least five medical students, one postgraduate resident doctor, and the wife of a superspecialist doctor,

according to the Federation of All India Medical Association (FAIMA). Over 60 medical students were injured, many with severe burns, as the fire consumed multi-story buildings. The intense heat, fueled by the plane's full fuel load, made rescue efforts nearly impossible, as noted by Union Home Minister Amit Shah: "The temperature in the ill-fated plane was so high due to burning fuel that there was no chance to save anyone." Unofficial estimates suggest up to 25 additional deaths occurred on the ground, though the final toll awaits confirmation through DNA identification, a process complicated by the charred condition of many remains.

The human cost of the tragedy reverberated across communities in India and beyond. In Rajasthan, 11 individuals from six families perished, including a doctor couple from Banswara, Dr. Koni Vyas and Dr. Pradeep Joshi, along with their three young children—Pradyut, Miraya, and Nakul. The family had been preparing to relocate to London, with Dr. Koni resigning from her position at Pacific Hospital in Udaipur just a month prior. In Balotra, Khushboo, a newlywed traveling to join her husband in London, was among the victims, her emotional farewell captured in a video that later surfaced online. Udaipur lost a brother-sister duo, Shubh and Shagun Modi, who had recently taken over their father's marble business after completing their MBAs. The granddaughter of a former Bikaner MLA, Abhinav Padiyar, also perished, underscoring the tragedy's far-reaching impact.

Aviation experts have speculated on potential causes, with initial reports pointing to a lack of thrust in both engines or a possible bird strike. The aircraft's rapid descent, despite a full fuel load, and its failure to climb beyond 600-800 feet suggest a critical failure shortly after takeoff. Surveillance footage, verified by NBC News, showed the plane struggling to gain lift, a phenomenon described by former NTSB investigator Jeff Guzzetti as an "inability to climb." The extended landing gear, visible in videos, further indicates an abnormal configuration. One of the two black boxes—either the flight data recorder or cockpit voice recorder—has been recovered, according to the Hindu-

tan Times, and its analysis is expected to provide critical insights. The investigation, led by India's Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau with assistance from the UK's Air Accidents Investigation Branch, the US National Transportation Safety Board, and Boeing, will examine factors such as wing flap positions and engine performance.

Air India CEO Campbell Wilson, in a video statement, expressed "deep sorrow" and emphasized the airline's focus on supporting victims' families and emergency response efforts. The Tata Group, Air India's parent company, announced financial aid of ₹10 million (approximately \$117,000 USD) for each victim's family and coverage of medical expenses for the injured. Assistance centers have been established at Ahmedabad, Mumbai, Delhi, and Gatwick airports to facilitate family support, with hotlines provided for information. Boeing, facing its first fatal Dreamliner crash, saw its shares drop nearly 5% as CEO Kelly Orberg canceled plans to attend the Paris Air Show to focus on supporting the investigation.

The tragedy has drawn global condolences, with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi describing it as "heartbreaking beyond words" after visiting the crash site and injured victims. UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer and King Charles III expressed solidarity, with Gatwick Airport setting up a reception center for relatives. Russian President Vladimir Putin and Singapore's Lawrence Wong also extended sympathies, reflecting the international scope of the disaster, given the diverse passenger manifest.

As Ahmedabad grapples with the aftermath, the crash of Flight AI171 serves as a stark reminder of aviation's inherent risks, even in advanced aircraft like the Boeing 787 Dreamliner. The loss of lives, including prominent figures like Vijay Rupani and countless others with dreams and aspirations, has left an indelible mark on India and the global community. The ongoing investigation will be crucial in unraveling the sequence of events that led to this catastrophe, offering hope for answers and measures to prevent future tragedies. (The writer can be reached at dipakkurmipltd@gmail.com)

World has missed the target of eliminating child labour by 2025

Top 10 careers in Arts and Humanities after class 12

By: Navagam PP

If you mention arts and humanities as a preferred career stream, one would immediately think of law, media or civil services.

Today, the arts and humanities stream offers a vast and dynamic range of career opportunities that go far beyond the conventional roles of teaching or civil services.

As industries evolve with digital transformation and the demand for socially conscious professionals rises, the scope for students who graduate in arts has expanded significantly.

From design to diplomacy, the fields are as creative as they are impactful.

Choosing the right undergraduate course aligned with your passion, aptitude and future job prospects is essential to thrive in a multi-faceted world.

Here are the top 10 emerging arts and humanities career options for 2025, along with key skills required for success:

1. Bachelor of design (BDes)
Design is no longer restricted to fashion or interiors; it now powers user experiences in digital products, branding and even sustain-

ability projects.

BDes course focuses on creativity and innovation across fashion, graphics, products and interior design.

Skills required: Creativity, visualisation, technical drawing, software proficiency (like Adobe Suite), communication and problem-solving.

Career options: UX/UI designer, product designer, art director, fashion merchandiser or exhibition designer.

2. Bachelor of social work (BSW)

With rising awareness around mental health, gender issues and inclusive development, the demand for trained social workers has grown across the government, NGOs and corporate CSR sectors.

Skills required: Empathy, communication, critical thinking, interpersonal skills and organisational ability.

Career options: Aspiring professionals can work in NGOs or pursue a career as a social researcher, policy analyst, CSR executive or rehabilitation officer.

3. Bachelor of arts in psychology

Post-COVID, mental health awareness and corporate well-

being programmes have put the spotlight on psychology.

This course covers the study of human behaviour, psychological assessments and therapy techniques.

Skills needed: Analytical thinking, empathy, research aptitude, communication and problem-solving.

Career options: Clinical psychologist, counsellor, HR specialist, research assistant or behavioural analyst.

4. Bachelor in journalism and mass communication

In the era of 24x7 news cycles, influencer marketing and digital storytelling, media studies are both relevant and fast-evolving.

This course includes media ethics, content creation and digital production.

Skills required: Writing, storytelling, critical thinking, communication and adaptability.

Career options: You can choose to work as a journalist, digital content creator, PR executive, news anchor or media planner.

5. Bachelor in animation and multimedia

Gaming, OTT, advertising and entertainment industries have opened doors for animators and vi-

sual storytellers. This course teaches 2D/3D animation, VFX and interactive media.

Skills needed: Creativity, technical proficiency (like Maya or Blender), storytelling, attention to detail and teamwork.

Career options: Graduates can work as animators, VFX artists, game developers and designers, motion graphics experts or multimedia producers.

6. Bachelor of arts in political science

This course is ideal for students who love civil services, policy think tanks or international relations as it teaches you about governance, public policy and diplomacy.

Skills required: Analytical reasoning, research, communication, critical thinking and negotiation.

Career options: After completing the course, you can work in government organisations or corporate firms as a policy advisor, diplomat, civil servant, political analyst or legislative aide.

7. Bachelor of fine arts (BFA)

Fine arts have found new relevance in therapeutic settings, commercial galleries and digital art spaces like NFTs (non-fungible token).

This course trains students in visual and performing arts, including painting, sculpture, photography, graphic design and animation.

Essential skills: Creativity, artistic expression, discipline, observation and patience.

Career options: BFA graduates can pursue a career as a photographer, producer, visual artist, illustrator, art therapist, gallery curator or set designer.

8. Bachelor in foreign languages

With global business and cultural diplomacy booming, proficiency in languages like French, Spanish, German or Mandarin can open up high-paying global roles.

Skills required: Linguistic proficiency, cultural awareness, communication, adaptability and research.

Career options: As global tourism is booming, you can work as a translator, interpreter or language expert.

9. Bachelor of arts in history and archaeology

A foundation for careers in research, conservation and cultural tourism, this course delves into human civilisations, historical analysis and field archaeology.

Skills needed: Research, analytical thinking, writing, attention to



detail and critical analysis.

Career options: You can choose from a wide range of opportunities as a museum curator, historian, archaeologist, heritage consultant or academic researcher.

10. Bachelor in event management

From corporate launches to destination weddings, the event industry is evolving by the day.

This course covers planning, logistics, budgeting and creative execution.

Skills required: Organisational skills, communication, multitasking, creativity and negotiation.

Career options: You can become an event planner, wedding coordinator, brand activation specialist or organise conferences for corporate firms. (Courtesy: Rediff.com)

DC Majuli Recruitment 2025 – 10 Gaon Pradhan Posts

Last Date: 17/06/2025

District Commissioner, Majuli has released an advertisement for the recruitment of 10 Gaon Pradhan Posts under Majuli Revenue Circle and Ujani Majuli Revenue Circle. Interested and eligible candidates may apply.

Name of post: Gaon Pradhan
No of posts: 10 posts

Name of revenue circles:
Majuli Revenue and
Ujani Majuli

Pay: ₹9,000 per month

Eligibility Criteria of DC Majuli Recruitment

Age Limit: The candidates must not be less than 30 years and not more than 65 years of age as on 17/06/2025.

Nationality: Candidate should be a citizen of India and a permanent resident of the area in respect of which he/ she seeks appointment.

Property: Candidate should have land or immovable property in his/ her name in the area in which he/ she intends to be appointed as Gaon Pradhan.

Children: Candidate should not have more than 2 (two) living children from a single or multiple partner. Candidate should furnish a self-affidavit that the applicant does not have more than two living children from a single/ multiple partner.

Government Employee: The candidate should not be a government employee. Political Party: The candidate should not be a member of any political party.

Educational Qualification: The candidate must have passed 10th standard or matriculation from a recognized institution or board.

Physical Fitness: Candidate should be physically fit and have sound mind.

Insolvency: Candidate should not have been declared as an insolvent or defaulter in payment of Govt. dues.

Social Status: Candidate should be a person of high Status and command and have a respectable position in the society.

How To Apply for DC Majuli Recruitment ?

Candidates must submit their application in the Assam Gazette Standard form of application within stipulated date. Candidates need to submit their filled in application at the office of the District Commissioner, Majuli.

The application must be submitted along with the following documents :

Voter Id Card/ Aadhaar Card
2 passport sized photograph.
Permanent Resident-ship Certificate.
Copies of all educational certificates, Mark sheets, Admit Card of HSLC/ Age proof certificate.
Govt. dues and Bakijai clearance certificate.
Documents relating to land property in his/ her name.
The Applicant should furnish an affidavit that he/ she has not more than 2(two) living children from a Single or multiple partners. etc

Important Dates of Majuli Recruitment 2025

Starting date of submission of application: 3rd June 2025
Last date of submission of application: 17th June 2025 till 4 PM

UPSC CDS II Examination 2025 – Online Apply for 453 Posts

Last Date: 17/06/2025

Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) has released an employment notification for the recruitment of 453 vacancy through Combined Defence Services Examination (II), 2025. Interested and eligible candidates may apply online.

Name of exam: Combined Defence Services Examination (II), 2025
No of posts: 453 posts

Training Institute-wise vacancy:

Indian Military Academy, Dehradun: 100
Indian Naval Academy, Ezhimala: 26
Air Force Academy, Hyderabad: 32
Officers' Training Academy, Chennai (Madras), 124th SSC (Men) (NT): 276
Officers Training Academy, Chennai (Madras), 124th SSC Women (NT): 19

Eligibility Criteria of UPSC CDS II Examination

Nationality: Candidate must be unmarried and must either be:

(i) a Citizen of India, or
(ii) a subject of Nepal, or
(iii) a person of Indian origin who has migrated from Pakistan, Burma, Sri Lanka and East African Countries of Kenya, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia, Malawi, Zaire and Ethiopia or Vietnam with the intention of permanently settling in India.

Provided that a candidate belonging to categories (ii) and (iii) above shall be a person in whose favour a certificate of eligibility has been issued by the Government of India.

Certificate of eligibility will, however, not be necessary in the case of candidates who are Gorkha subjects of Nepal.

Age Limits, Sex and Marital Status:

IMA: Unmarried male candidates born not earlier than 2nd July, 2002 and not later than 1st July, 2007 only are eligible.

Indian Naval Academy: Unmarried male candidates born not earlier than 2nd July, 2002 and not later than 1st July, 2007 only are eligible.

Air Force Academy: 20 to 24 years as on 1st July, 2026 i.e. born not earlier than 2nd July, 2002 and not later than 1st July, 2006 (Upper age limit for candidates holding valid and current Commercial Pilot Licence issued by DGCA (India) is relaxable upto 26 yrs. i.e. born not earlier than 2nd July, 2000 and not later than 1st July, 2006 only are eligible.

Officers' Training Academy: (SSC Course for men) Unmarried male candidates born not earlier than 2nd July, 2001 and not later than 1st July, 2007 only are eligible.

Officers' Training Academy: (SSC Women Non-Technical Course) Unmarried women, issueless widows who have not remarried and issueless divorcees (in possession of divorce documents) who have not remarried are eligible. They should have been born not earlier than 2nd July, 2001 and not later than 1st July, 2007.

Educational Qualification:

I.M.A. and Officers' Training Academy, Chennai: Degree of a recognised University or equivalent.

Indian Naval Academy: Degree in Engineering from a recognised University/Institution.

Air Force Academy: Degree of a recognised University (with Physics and Mathematics at 10+2 level) or Bachelor of Engineering.

Application Fee:

Others: ₹ 200/-
Female/ SC/ ST: NIL
Payment mode: Candidates can pay either by depositing the money in any Branch of SBI by cash or by using net banking facility of SBI or by using Visa/Master/Rupay Credit/Debit Card .

Important Dates of UPSC Recruitment 2025

Starting date of submission of online application: 28th May 2025
Last date of submission of online application: 17th June 2025
Release date of Admit Card: To be updated later
Date of written exam: 14th September, 2025

SSC Selection Post Recruitment 2025 – 2423 (Phase XIII) Posts, Online Apply

Last Date: 23/06/2025

Staff Selection Commission (SSC) has released an employment notification for the recruitment of 2423 Selection Posts (Phase XIII) 2025 Vacancy. Interested and eligible candidates may apply online.

Name of post: Selection Post

No of posts: 2423 posts

Category-wise vacancy details:

SC: 314
ST: 148
OBC: 561
UR: 1169
EWS: 231

Detailed post/s details can be viewed in Advertisement Details section .

Helpline Number: 1800 309 3063

Eligibility Criteria of SSC Selection Post Recruitment

Educational Qualification:

Matric Level Posts: Class 10th or High School pass from any recognised board in India

Intermediate Level Posts: 10+2 or passed Intermediate Exam from any recognised board in India

Graduate-level Posts: Bachelor Degree in any field from any recognised University/Institution in India

Age Limit: Age limit for a particular category of post(s) is mentioned in Post-details in Advertisement Details against each category of post. The minimum age limit is 18 years and maximum age limit is 42 years as on 01.08.2025.

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

SC/ST: 5 years
OBC: 3 years
PWD: 10 years
PWD (OBC): 13 years
PWD (SC/ ST): 15 years
ESM: 3 years

Application Fee:

UR/OBC: ₹ 100

Women/ SC/ ST/ PWD/ Ex Serviceman: Nil

Payment Mode: Online Through BHIM UPI, Net Banking, by using Visa, MasterCard, Maestro, RuPay Credit or Debit cards or in SBI Branches by generating SBI Challan.

Important Dates of SSC Selection Post Vacancy 2025

Starting date of online application submission: 2nd June 2025

Last date of online application submission: 23rd June 2025

Date of Computer Based Examination: 24th July - 04th August 2025 (Tentative)

Selection Process of SSC Selection Post Recruitment

There will be three separate Computer Based Examinations consisting of Objective Type Multiple Choice questions, for the posts with minimum Educational Qualification of Matriculation, Higher Secondary, and Graduation & above Level. The details of subjects, marks and number of questions subject-wise will be as given below:-

Subject	No. of Questions	Maximum Marks
• General Intelligence	25	50
• General Awareness	25	50
• Quantitative Aptitude (Basic Arithmetic Skill)	25	50
• English Language (Basic Knowledge)	25	50
• Total Duration		60 Minutes

There will be negative marking of 0.50 marks for each wrong answer.

Marks scored by candidates in Computer Based Examination will be normalized by using the formula published by the Commission through Notice No: 1-1/2018-P&P-I dated 07-02-2019 and such normalized scores will be used to determine final merit and cut-off marks.

Skill Tests like Typing/ Data Entry/ Computer Proficiency Test, etc., where prescribed in the Essential Qualification, will be conducted, which will be of a qualifying nature.

Dr. Radhakrishnan School Dibrugarh Recruitment – 12 Posts, Online Apply

Last Date: 25/06/2025

Dr. Radhakrishnan School of Arts, Commerce and Science, Dibrugarh has released an employment notification for the recruitment of 12 Teaching and Non-Teaching posts. Interested and eligible candidates may apply.

1. PGT BOTANY

No of posts: 02
Pay: ₹ 12,000 to 45,000
Educational Qualification: M.Sc in Botany.
Experience: 2-3 years in XI & XII

2. PGT ZOOLOGY

No of posts: 02
Pay: ₹ 12,000 to 45,000
Educational Qualification: M.Sc in Zoology.
Experience: 2-3 years in XI & XII

3. PGT BUSINESS STUDIES

No of posts: 01
Pay: ₹ 12,000 to 35,000
Educational Qualification: M.COM
Experience: 2-3 years in XI & XII

4. PGT PSYCHOLOGY

No of posts: 01
Pay: ₹ 12,000 to 45,000
Educational Qualification: M.A in Psychology
Experience: 2-3 years in XI & XII

5. TGT SOCIAL SCIENCE

No of posts: 01
Pay: ₹ 12,000 to 35,000
Educational Qualification: M.A
Experience: 2-3 years in IX & X

6. HR EXECUTIVE

No of posts: 01
Pay: ₹ 10,000 to 18,000
Educational Qualification: MBA in Human Resource.
Experience: 2-3 years in the field of HR.

7. WARDEN

No of posts: 04
Pay: ₹ 9,000 to 20,000
Educational Qualification: Graduate in any discipline.

Gender: Both Male and Female
Application Fee: Nil.

How to Apply for Dr. Radhakrishnan School Dibrugarh Recruitment ?

Potential candidates having the requisite qualification & experience can send their (CVs) at hrkrschool@gmail.com or submit the same at the front office of Dr. Radhakrishnan School of Arts, Commerce & Science, Amolapatty, Dibrugarh, Assam – 786001 on or before 25th June 2025.

For any query please contact H.R Manager @ 8822400362 from 9.00 am to 4.00 pm.

Iran retaliates after Israeli strikes target its nuclear programme, military

A hospital in Tel Aviv treated seven people wounded in the second Iranian barrage

DUBAI, June 14: Iran launched retaliatory missile and drone strikes on Israel into Saturday morning, killing at least three people and wounding dozens, after a series of blistering Israeli attacks on the heart of Iran's nuclear programme and its armed forces.

Israel's assault used warplanes — as well as drones smuggled into the country in advance, according to officials — to assault key facilities and kill top generals and scientists.

Iran's UN ambassador said 78 people were killed and more than 320 wounded in the attacks.

Iran retaliated by launching waves of drones and ballistic missiles at Israel, where explosions lit the night skies over Jerusalem and Tel Aviv and shook the buildings below.

The Israeli military urged civilians, already rattled by 20 months of war sparked by Hamas' October 7 attack, to head to shelter for hours.

Both Israel and Iran said their attacks would continue, raising the prospect of another protracted Mideast conflict. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Friday that his objective was to eliminate any Iranian threat to Israel, but he also urged Iranians to rise up against their leaders. Israel would welcome the government's overthrow even if it is not actively seeking it.

Strikes could derail nuclear talks

Israel's strikes also put further talks between the United States and Iran over a nuclear accord into doubt before they were set to meet Sunday in Oman.

Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman called further nuclear talks with the United States "meaningless" after Israeli

strikes on the country, state television said. "The US did a job that made the talks become meaningless," Esmail Baghaei was quoted as saying. He added that Israel had passed all Iran's red lines by committing a "criminal act" through its strikes.

However, he stopped short of saying the talks were cancelled. The Mizan news agency, which is run by Iran's judiciary, quoted him as saying: "It is still not clear what we decide about Sunday's talks."

Iranian missiles strike Israel

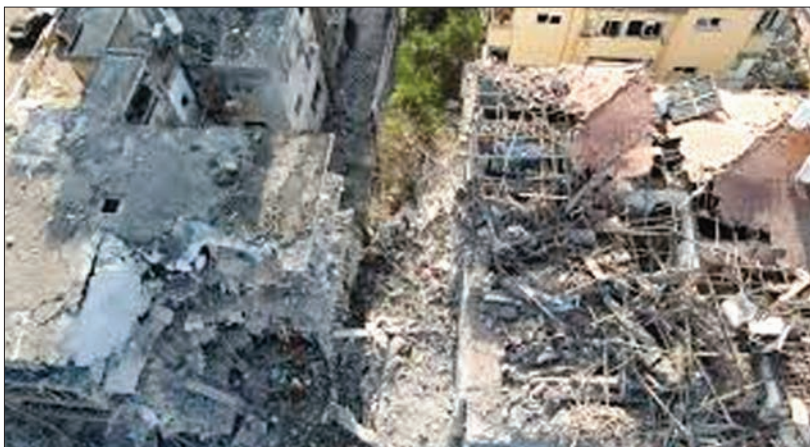
Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said in a recorded message Friday: "We will not allow them to escape safely from this great crime they committed."

Iran launched waves of missiles at Israel late Friday and early Saturday. Iranians awoke Saturday to state television airing repeated clips of strikes on Israel, as well as videos of people cheering and handing out sweets. Israel's military said more drones were intercepted near the Dead Sea early Saturday.

A hospital in Tel Aviv treated seven people wounded in the second Iranian barrage; all but one of them had light injuries. Israel's Fire and Rescue Services said they were wounded when a projectile hit a building in the city. A spokesperson for Beilinson Hospital said one woman was killed.

Hours later, an Iranian missile struck near homes in the central Israeli city of Rishon LeZion, killing two more people and wounding 19, according to Israel's paramedic service Magen David Adom. Israel's Fire and Rescue service said four homes were severely damaged.

Meanwhile, the sound of explosions



and Iranian air defence systems firing at targets echoed across central Tehran shortly after midnight on Saturday. An Associated Press journalist could hear air raid sirens near their home.

Iran's semiofficial Tasnim news agency reported a fire at Tehran's Mehrabad International Airport. A video posted on X showed a column of smoke and flames rising from what the outlet said was the airport.

The Israeli military said it carried out overnight strikes on dozens of targets, including air defences, "in the area of Tehran". Israel's paramedic services said 34 people were wounded in the barrage on the Tel Aviv area, including a woman who was critically injured after being trapped under rubble.

In Ramat Gan, east of Tel Aviv, an AP journalist saw burned-out cars and at least three damaged houses, including one where the front was nearly entirely torn away.

Residents of a central Israeli city that was hit Friday night told the AP the explosion was so powerful it shook their shelter door open. "We thought, that's it, the house is gone, and in fact half of the house was gone, it fell apart," said Moshe Shani. US ground-based air defence systems in the region were helping to shoot down Iranian missiles, said a US official who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the measures.

Strikes raise fears of all-out war

Israel's ongoing airstrikes and Iran's retaliation raised concerns about all-out war between the countries and propelled the region, already on edge, into even greater upheaval. Countries in the region condemned Israel's attack, while leaders around the globe called for immediate deescalation from both sides.

Israel had long threatened such a strike, and successive American administrations sought to prevent it, fearing it would ignite a wider conflict across the

Middle East and possibly be ineffective at destroying Iran's dispersed and hardened nuclear programme.

But a confluence of developments triggered by Hamas' October 7, 2023, attack — plus the reelection of US President Donald Trump — created the conditions that allowed Israel to finally follow through on its threats. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said the US was informed in advance of the attack.

On Thursday, Iran was censured by the UN's atomic watchdog for not complying with obligations meant to prevent it from developing a nuclear weapon.

The crossfire between Israel and Iran disrupted East-West travel through the Mideast, a key global aviation route, but Jordan's state-run Petra news agent said the country would reopen its airspace to civilian aircraft at 7:30 a.m. Saturday, signalling it believes there is no immediate danger. Lebanon's government also said Saturday it had reopened its airspace.

Above-ground section of Natanz facility destroyed

Among the key sites Israel attacked was Iran's main nuclear enrichment facility in Natanz, where black smoke could be seen rising into the air. It also appeared to strike a second, smaller nuclear enrichment facility in Fordo, about 100 kilometres southeast of Tehran, according to an Iranian news outlet close to the government that reported hearing explosions nearby. Israel said it also struck a nuclear research facility in Isfahan, and said it destroyed dozens of radar installations and surface-to-air missile launchers in western Iran. Iran confirmed the strike at Isfahan.

UN nuclear chief Rafael Grossi told

the Security Council that the above-ground section of the Natanz facility was destroyed. The main centrifuge facility underground did not appear to have been hit, but the loss of power could have damaged the infrastructure there, he said.

Netanyahu said the attack had been months in the making and was planned for April before being postponed.

Israel's Mossad spy agency positioned explosive drones and precision weapons inside Iran ahead of time, and used them to target Iranian air defences and missile launchers near Tehran, according to two security officials who spoke on condition of anonymity.

It was not possible to independently corroborate those claims.

Over the past year, Israel has been targeting Iran's air defences, hitting a radar system for a Russian-made air defence battery in April 2024 and surface-to-air missile sites and missile manufacturing facilities in October.

The first wave of strikes gave Israel "significant freedom of movement" in Iran's skies, clearing the way for further attacks, according to an Israeli military official who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorised to discuss details of the attack with the media. The official said Israel is prepared for an operation that could last up to two weeks, but that there was no firm timeline. Among those killed were three of Iran's top military leaders: one who oversaw the entire armed forces, Gen. Mohammad Bagheri; one who led the paramilitary Revolutionary Guard, Gen. Hossein Salami; and the head of the Guard's ballistic missile programme, Gen. Amir Ali Hajizadeh. (AP)

King Charles leads minute's silence for Ahmedabad plane crash victims

LONDON, June 14: Britain's King Charles III on Saturday led a minute's silence in memory of the Ahmedabad-London Air India plane crash victims after making last-minute amendments to his annual Trooping the Colour birthday parade, with black armbands commemorating the victims.

Buckingham Palace said the 76-year-old monarch wanted the alterations "as a mark of respect for the lives lost, the families in mourning and all the communities affected by this awful tragedy".

It saw all members of the royal family in uniform sporting black armbands as a mark of respect to the 241 passengers and crew who lost their lives in Thursday's London-bound plane crash in Ahmedabad.

"Following the Air India incident this week, His Majesty has requested that members of the Royal Family in uniform at Trooping the Colour should wear black armbands, as will mounted Officers in the Procession and all liveried Mews staff," Buckingham Palace said in a statement.

"The parade will also incorporate a minute's silence, to be observed after Her Majesties [King Charles and Queen Camilla] have exited the carriage and joined The Princess of Wales [Kate Middleton] on the dais, following the inspection of the parade," the statement said.

"The silence will be signalled by the sounding of a Last Post and Reveille. This will be as a mark of respect for all the lives lost, the families in mourning and the communities affected by the tragedy," it added.

In an earlier statement, King Charles had said he and Queen Camilla were "desperately shocked by the terrible events in Ahmedabad". "Our special prayers and deepest possible sympathy are with the families and friends of all those affected by this appalling tragic incident across so many nations, as they await news of their loved ones," a Buckingham Palace statement noted in the wake of the tragedy. "I would like to pay a particular tribute to the heroic efforts of the emergency services and all those providing help and support at this most heartbreaking and traumatic time," the statement added.

The amended Trooping the Colour followed the United Kingdom's flags being flown at half-mast on Friday on all royal residences and government buildings as a mark of respect.

The annual royal birthday parade includes an inspection of troops and parade, culminating traditionally in a Red Arrows Royal Air Force (RAF) flypast over Buckingham Palace watched over from the balcony by senior royals. King Charles III's birthday is on November 14, but traditionally the British monarch's public celebrations are held in mid-June during warmer weather.

The ceremony dates back to the 18th century and sees regimental colours being displayed in front of the monarch, with the colours of the Coldstream Guards to be presented at this year's parade. (AP)

Indian diaspora in UK coordinates fundraisers for Ahmedabad plane crash-hit families

LONDON, June 14: The Indian diaspora in London has been rallying around to coordinate fundraisers to support the UK-based family members of the Ahmedabad plane crash victims, including urgent assistance for two orphaned children.

Arjun Patoliya, among the 241 victims of the Air India plane crash, travelled to Gujarat to fulfil his late wife Bharti's wish to immerse her ashes in India after she recently lost her battle with cancer.

Their friends and family launched an online GoFundMe fundraiser in support of their two daughters on Friday and have already raised more than half of the GBP 500,000 target.

"In just 18 days, two young sisters — only four and eight years old — have lost both of their beloved parents," said Vinod Khimji, from Inspired Elements furniture maker, where Arjun worked.

"Arjun left to bid farewell to his wife, never returned to the children they both raised. Now, these two beautiful young girls have been left without parents — their world turned upside down in just over two weeks. Arjun was a valued member of our team at Inspired Elements and also a close family friend for many years. This campaign, set by me and the family, aims to provide security, stability, and love in the years ahead," he said. All funds raised are intended to be placed in a legal trust or to be managed by the appointed legal guardians of their daughters to support their education and emotional needs.

A similar effort has been launched for the family of Abdihi Patel, a resident of Northampton in England, who leaves behind her husband, Pankaj, and their eight-year-old son, Meer Patel.

Tehran will burn if Iran continues firing missiles: Israeli Defence Minister

JERUSALEM, June 14: Defence Minister Israel Katz has warned Iran that "Tehran will burn" if it continues firing missiles at Israel as tensions escalated between the two nations.

His comments came after Iran launched retaliatory strikes on Israel following Israel's attack on Iran's nuclear, missile and military complex.

"The Iranian dictator is turning the citizens of Iran into hostages and creating a reality in which they, especially the residents of Tehran, will pay a heavy price for the criminal attack on Israeli civilians," Katz said during a situation



"Abdhi was a beloved wife, a devoted mother, and a kind soul who touched the lives of everyone she met," one of her friends said.

Her friends and family have raised nearly GBP 2,000 towards funeral expenses and helping the family adjust to the tragic loss.

A family of three, Akeel, Hanna and their four-year-old daughter Sara, were returning to England from a surprise Eid trip to visit family when the plane crashed on Thursday.

The Gloucester Muslim Community informed the congregation of their passing in Thursday's plane crash, and the local community have since raised over GBP 1,000 in support of their families.

"They were pillars of their local community — Akeel, a committed entrepreneur and community volunteer, Hanna, a dedicated midwife and nonprofit advocate, and Sara, a bright and joyful child," reads the fundraiser for their relatives in the UK.

"Their sudden loss has left devastated relatives in Newport and Gloucester. Funds will support funeral and repatriation costs, travel expenses for family from India, grief counselling, and immediate financial support for those left be-

hind," it said.

Community leaders across the country have been coordinating commemorative events, with the Monitoring Group, Platform for Indian Democracy, and Southall Community Alliance coming together for a vigil in Southall, west London, on Friday evening. "With 169 Indian nationals and 53 British citizens onboard, this tragedy hits close to both our homelands. The loss is felt deeply in our communities, in India and the UK. During these difficult times, we must come together to support one another," they said in a joint statement.

"We also send our praise and thanks to the brave rescue workers who are working on the crash site. As the situation develops, we urge full transparency in the investigation to ensure accountability and safety for all," the statement said. The UK's Foreign Office minister for the Indo-Pacific, Catherine West, paid floral tributes at a memorial outside India House on Friday.

"My thoughts are with the many families in India and the UK affected by yesterday's events. The FCDO [Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office] continues to work all hours to support those who have contacted us for assistance," she said. The High Commission of India in London has also organised a remembrance event for the Indian community on Monday.

The death toll in the tragedy reached 270 on Saturday. The authorities had earlier pegged the death toll at 265.

The London-bound flight, with 242 people on board, crashed into a medical hostel and its canteen complex on Thursday, moments after taking off from the Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International Airport in Ahmedabad. (PTI)

not intercepted "according to protocol" allowing them to strike open areas without causing damage to any critical infrastructure.

A "small number" of missiles made it through air defences and caused casualties and damage, including in residential areas in Tel Aviv, Ramat Gan and Rishon LeZion in central Israel, the Army said. Three Israelis are said to have been killed and some 70 others wounded in the Iranian missile attacks.

The IDF said that all of its bases, including air bases, are operating as usual with no harm to their functionality. (PTI)

Trump says Iran has 'second chance' to come to nuclear deal as Israel and Iran exchange blows

WASHINGTON, June 14: President Donald Trump on Friday urged Iran to quickly reach an agreement on curbing its nuclear program as Israel vowed to continue its bombardment of the country.

Trump framed the volatile moment in the Middle East as a possible "second chance" for Iran's leadership to avoid further destruction "before there is nothing left and save what was once known as the Iranian Empire." The Republican president pressed on Iran as he met his national security team in the Situation Room to discuss the tricky path forward following Israel's devastating strikes, which Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu pledged to keep up for "as many days as it takes" to decapitate Iran's nuclear program.

The White House said it had no involvement in the

strikes, but Trump highlighted that Israel used its deep arsenal of weaponry provided by the US to target Iran's main enrichment facility in Natanz and the country's ballistic missile program, as well as top nuclear scientists and officials. Trump said on his Truth Social platform that he had warned Iran's leaders that "it would be much worse than anything they know, anticipated, or were told, that the United States makes the best and most lethal military equipment anywhere in the world, BY FAR, and that Israel has a lot of it, with much more to come - And they know how to use it."

Just hours before Israel launched its strikes on Iran early Friday, Trump was still holding out tattered threads of hope that the long-simmering dispute could be resolved without military action. (AP)



Israel and the United States say the new system is intended to replace a UN-run network that has distributed aid across Gaza through 20 months of war. They accuse Hamas of siphoning off the aid and reselling it to fund its militant activities.

UN officials deny Hamas has diverted significant amounts of aid and say the new system is unable to meet mounting needs. They say the new system has militarised aid by allowing Israel to decide who has access and by forcing Palestinians to travel long distances or relocate again after waves of displacement. They say the UN has meanwhile struggled to deliver aid even after Israel eased its blockade last month because of military restrictions and rising lawlessness.

Hamas, which is allied with Iran, sparked the war when its fighters led a rampage into southern Israel on October 7, 2023, killing some 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and abducting 251. They still hold 53 hostages, less than half of them believed to be alive, after most of the rest were released in ceasefire agreements or other deals.

Israel's retaliatory campaign has killed over 55,000 Palestinians, according to Gaza's Health Ministry, which has said women and children make up more than half of the dead but does not distinguish between civilians and combatants in count. (AP)



LOS ANGELES, June 14: After a week of protests over federal immigration raids, about 200 Marines moved into Los Angeles on Friday to guard a federal building in the city while communities across the country prepped for what's anticipated to be a nationwide wave of large-scale demonstrations against President Donald Trump's policies this weekend.

The Marine troops wearing combat gear and carrying rifles took over some posts from National Guard members who were deployed to the city after the protests erupted last week. Those protests sparked dozens more over several days around the country, with some leading to clashes with police and hundreds of arrests.

On Friday, Marines started to replace Guard members protecting

the federal building west of downtown, so the Guard soldiers can be assigned to protect law enforcement officers on raids, the commander in charge of 4,700 troops deployed to the LA protests said.

The Marines moved into Los Angeles before Saturday's planned "No Kings" demonstrations nationally against Trump's policies, which will also happen the same day as a military parade in Washington, D.C.

The Marines' arrival also came a day after the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals temporarily blocked a federal judge's order that had directed Trump to return control of Guard troops to California. The judge had ruled the Guard deployment was illegal, violated the Tenth Amendment, which defines the power between state and fed-

eral governments, and exceeded Trump's statutory authority. The judge did not rule on the presence of the Marines.

Military mission

Some 2,000 National Guard troops were deployed to Los Ange-

les this week. Hundreds have provided protection to immigration agents making arrests. Another 2,000 Guard members were notified of deployment earlier this week. Maj. Gen. Scott Sherman, the commander of Task Force 51

who is overseeing the 4,700 combined troops, said none of the military troops will be detaining anyone, though the Marines temporarily detained a man Friday afternoon who had walked onto the property and did not immediately hear their commands to stop. He was later released without charges.

Roughly 500 National Guard members have been used to provide security on immigration raids after undergoing expanded instruction, legal training and rehearsals with the agents doing the enforcement before they go on those missions.

When asked about working to-

gether with the Marines, Los Angeles police Chief Jim McDonnell said he "wouldn't call it coordination" but said he and the county sheriff were on a call with military

senior leadership Thursday to open lines of communication in case situations arise where collaboration is needed.

Under federal law, active-duty forces are prohibited by law from conducting law enforcement. By mid-afternoon Friday, more than a dozen Marines were stationed outside the 17-story Wilshire Federal Building. They mostly appeared to be checking tickets from members of the public who were there to renew their passports.

The federal building is the same place Democratic U.S. Sen. Alex Padilla on Thursday was forcefully removed from Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem's news conference and handcuffed by officers as he tried to speak up about the immigration raids. (AP)

State is projected to generate an estimated annual revenue of ₹ 4,525 crore from free power by 2035

Arunachal Cabinet reviews strategic, national security significance of SUMP



ITANAGAR, June 14: The Arunachal Pradesh government during a special Cabinet meeting reviewed the strategic and national security significance of the Siang Upper Multipurpose Project (SUMP), declared a 'National Project' by the Centre in 2008, and reiterated its commitment to equitable rehabilitation and compensation measures for families likely to be affected by the project.

The cabinet on Friday acknowledged concerns raised by sections of the public regarding the preparation of the pre-feasibility report

(PFR) of the proposed hydro project and noted the state government's sustained efforts to build consensus and allay fears among potential project affected families (PAFs) through a series of detailed consultations and interactions, a government statement said.

It emphasised the need for continuous engagement with affected communities and underlined the importance of ensuring fair, just, and transparent compensation and solatium mechanisms, should the project move forward based on the PFR findings.

To facilitate future development in the region, the cabinet directed the Urban Development department to establish new development authorities for Yingkiong and Geku. Additionally, it approved the formation of a committee under the secretary (Land Management) to examine land and property compensation rates and design a comprehensive rehabilitation and resettlement (R&R) framework for PAFs, it said.

The cabinet also decided to request a special development package from the Centre for Siang and

Upper Siang districts, covering beneficiary-oriented social development initiatives.

In related decisions, the Public Works department was directed to commence a survey for a proposed "necklace road" along both banks of the Siang river, above the anticipated submergence zone.

Further declaring 2025-35 as the "Decade of Hydro Power," the cabinet laid out a vision to harness Arunachal Pradesh's 58,000 MW hydropower potential through a balanced mix of mega, large, and small hydroelectric projects. The decade-long initiative aims to create a stable policy environment conducive to industrial growth, youth employment, and long-term economic sustainability. With nearly 19 GW of hydropower projects under various stages of development, representing an investment of over ₹ 2 lakh crore, the state is projected to generate an estimated annual revenue of ₹ 4,525 crore from free power by 2035.

To ensure strategic use of these revenues, the cabinet approved the creation of an escrow account for the proceeds of free power from hydroelectric projects (HEPs). The mechanism aims to facilitate transparent and long-term financial planning, helping drive Arunachal Pradesh's development agenda and support its energy security and socio-economic goals. (PTI)

Arunachal's Hillang Yajik creates history at 15th South Asian Bodybuilding and Physique Sports Championships



HT Bureau
NAMSAL, June 14: Hillang Yajik from Arunachal Pradesh has created history by winning one Gold and one Silver medal for India at the 15th South Asian Bodybuilding and Physique Sports Championships 2025, held in Thimphu, Bhutan, from June 11 to 15. Her outstanding performance marks a significant milestone, as she becomes the first female physique sports athlete from Arunachal Pradesh to win a Gold medal at the international level.

The announcement of her remarkable achievement was made by Nabam Tuna, President of the Arunachal Bodybuilding Association (ABA), who lauded Yajik's dedication, strength, and perseverance.

"Hillang Yajik's achievement is not only a matter of personal triumph but also a proud moment for Arunachal Pradesh and India as a whole. Her participation and success in this international championship have brought great honor to our state and the nation," said President Nabam Tuna in a press statement.

The 15th South Asian Bodybuilding and Physique Sports Championships 2025 was hosted by the Bhutan Bodybuilding Association and witnessed participation from several South Asian nations. The prestigious event was officially sanctioned by the World Bodybuilding and Physique Sports Federation (WBPF) and the Asian Bodybuilding and Physique Sports Federation (ABPF), ensuring high standards of competition and international recognition.

Yajik's dual victory at this highly competitive event not only highlights her individual excellence but also sets a precedent for aspiring athletes from the Northeast region, especially women, to pursue careers in physique sports.

The Arunachal Bodybuilding Association expressed its deepest appreciation for Yajik's commitment and extended best wishes for her future endeavors in the international bodybuilding arena.

AAPPMPWU submits six-point memorandum to Education Minister

Raises concerns over mid-day meal workers' future amid school closures



HT Bureau

NAMSAL, June 14: The All Arunachal Pradesh PM Poshan Workers Union (AAPPMPWU) on Friday submitted a detailed six-point memorandum to the Education Minister of Arunachal Pradesh, highlighting several pressing concerns faced by mid-day meal workers across the state. The memorandum comes in the wake of the recent announcement regarding the closure of hundreds of government schools, which has created widespread anxiety among the workers dependent on these institutions for their livelihood.

Addressing the media, AAPPMPWU President Mipet Tayeng informed that a special session of the union was convened in Itanagar, which saw the participation of all executive members, including district presidents and secretaries. "We held an extensive and serious discussion on the various challenges being faced by our members. After a thorough deliberation here at our office, a six-point resolution was unanimously adopted and subsequently submitted in the form of a memorandum to the office of the Education Minister at the Arunachal Pradesh Civil Secretariat," Tayeng said.

The president of the union expressed deep concern over the Education Department's recent decision to shut down 386 government schools across the state. "The news of the closure of such a large number of schools came as a bolt from the blue for mid-day meal workers, who have been sincerely performing their duties in these schools. These workers rely heavily on this employment for their survival and job security," she said.

Tayeng emphasized that the union has proposed a practical and fair solution to this issue: that the mid-day meal workers currently

working in these defunct schools should be redeployed or shifted to other nearby functioning government schools. "Just like teachers and other non-teaching staff are being reassigned, the same consideration must be extended to mid-day meal workers, as their services are equally vital for the day-to-day functioning and health management of the students," she asserted.

Raising the issue of inadequate remuneration, Tayeng pointed out that the existing honorarium paid to mid-day meal workers is grossly insufficient. "Currently, the workers are receiving a mere Rs 1,000 from the central government, with an additional Rs 1,000 top-up from the state government. In today's scenario, where prices of essential commodities are constantly rising, a total of Rs 2,000 per month is far from adequate to sustain a worker and their family," she said. Tayeng urged the state government, under the leadership of Chief Minister Pema Khandu, to consider a substantial hike in monthly wages as a welfare measure for these grassroots-level workers who play a critical role in the education system.

According to the union, the six-point memorandum includes several key demands:

Redeployment of Workers: PM Poshan/Mid-Day Meal workers of the schools declared defunct must be shifted to nearby functioning schools, ensuring continuity of their services and livelihood.

Wage Enhancement: The current daily wage of Rs 66.66 is inadequate. The union demands that it be enhanced to Rs 200 per day and credited directly to workers' respective bank accounts, ensuring timely and transparent disbursement.

Provision of Uniforms: The memorandum urges the govern-

ment to provide special dresses to the PM Poshan workers, serving both as a safety measure and as a standard hygiene dress code while working in school kitchens.

Training and Awareness: Given their role in directly handling the food and nutrition of school children, the workers should be provided with regular training and awareness programs. These should focus on hygiene, nutrition, cooking methods, food handling practices, and other essential aspects that directly affect the students' health.

Appointment Letters: The union has also demanded that all PM Poshan workers be issued official appointment letters by the respective Deputy Directors of School Education (DDSE) in their districts. This will provide clarity on employment terms and enhance job security.

Salary Revision: AAPPMPWU is calling for a revision of the monthly salary structure. The head cooks' wages should be increased from Rs 6,000 to Rs 10,000 per month, while assistant cooks or helpers should receive an enhanced salary of Rs 8,000, up from the current Rs 4,500. This, the union believes, will allow the workers to better sustain their families and continue to perform their duties effectively.

President Tayeng reiterated that these demands are not just reasonable but essential to ensure the dignity, security, and effectiveness of PM Poshan workers in the state. She expressed hope that the Education Minister and the state government would respond positively and swiftly to the memorandum, recognizing the critical role that these workers play in supporting the nutritional needs and overall wellbeing of school children across Arunachal Pradesh.

Nabam Rebia pays surprise visit to Kampor-Tapiaso PMGSY Road



HT Bureau
NAMSAL, June 14: Rajya Sabha MP Nabam Rebia on Friday paid a surprise visit to the Sangdupota circle

in Papum Pare district to inspect the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) road connecting Tapiaso with Jote.

During the inspection, MP Rebia expressed his displeasure over the pace and quality of the work being carried out. He interacted with local residents along the stretch, discussing various issues faced by the community, particularly during the monsoon season, including extreme heat and heavy rainfall. He assured the locals of his continued support for their wellbeing.

Speaking to this daily, Rebia stated, "I have visited most parts of the PMGSY road from Kampo (NIT) to Tapiaso. The progress of the work is not up to my satisfaction based on what I observed."

Highlighting a major concern, he said, "The absence of a proper bridge over the Rikso River is a serious issue. Locals are currently using a temporary bridge for two-wheelers. If a permanent bridge is not constructed, the last village in the area, Lao, will remain cut off."

He further urged the Rural Works Department (RWD) to ensure thorough verification of the work and its quality before releasing any payments.

Arunachal Guv emphasises need for embracing technology-driven governance



Zero tolerance towards corruption and the reinforcement of accountability

ITANAGAR, June 14: Arunachal Pradesh Governor K T Parnaik has emphasised the urgent need for embracing technology-driven governance while chairing a special Cabinet meeting held to mark the completion of one year of the present state government's tenure.

This is the first special cabinet meeting attended by the governor, a Raj Bhavan release said.

Presiding over the meeting at the Chief Minister's Office in Itanagar, the governor on Friday called for strategic integration of digital tools, artificial intelligence, and automation—from the circle level to the state headquarters—to empower decision-makers with real-time data and analytics, it said.

"Automation is not only

about making governance efficient, it is also about preparing ourselves for the opportunities and challenges of tomorrow," he remarked.

Highlighting transparency and efficiency as essential elements of modern governance, Parnaik urged the government to ensure that every rupee sanctioned translates into visible and meaningful outcomes on the ground. He also called for zero tolerance towards corruption and the reinforcement of accountability at all levels of administration.

The governor congratulated Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the central government for their continued support to Arunachal Pradesh. He hailed India's emergence as the fourth-largest global economy and praised the successful completion of Operation Sindoor, call-

ing it a stellar example of India's moral and strategic leadership in safeguarding its citizens abroad.

Aligning the state's vision with the national roadmap of Viksit Bharat @2047, Parnaik said the government is actively advancing the mission of Viksit Arunachal by expanding governance to the grassroots and building a resilient, future-ready state that contributes to India's journey towards becoming a \$5 trillion economy.

He cited the successful implementation of Seva Aapke Dwar 1.0 and 2.0, which brought doorstep delivery of schemes and services to over 15 lakh beneficiaries. The governor said that the upcoming third edition of the programme will deepen saturation coverage and help close the last-mile gap.

"This one-year milestone is not just a marker of time but a reflection of the state government's spirit of service, integrity, and people-first governance," the governor said. He praised government officials and grassroots functionaries for their tireless efforts and recognised them as the backbone of the state's administration.

The governor also advised the government to continue focusing on the four foundational pillars of sustainable development in the state—education, health, infrastructure and tourism—describing them as crucial for economic growth and improving quality of life. He also flagged concerns over land encroachments, calling for a balanced and law-bound approach to protect public assets. (PTI)

Cong attacks Modi Govt for abstaining on Gaza ceasefire resolution in UN

NEW DELHI, June 14: The Congress on Saturday attacked the Centre for abstaining from voting during the UNGA resolution for a ceasefire in Gaza and alleged that India's foreign policy is in shambles. The opposition party also demanded answers from the government on whether India has abandoned its principled stand against war, against genocide, and for justice.

"It is now increasingly evident that our Foreign Policy is in shambles. Perhaps, PM Modi must now take a call on his EAM's repeated blunders and set some accountability," Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge said.

In a post on X, he said that 149 countries voted for a UNGA resolution for a ceasefire in Gaza while India was only one of the 19 countries that abstained.

"We virtually stand isolated by this step," he added.

Kharge further stated that the Congress had condemned the attacks by Hamas on the people of

Israel on October 8, 2023.

"We have consistently condemned the indiscriminate actions that included a siege of the Gaza Strip and bombings in it. 60,000 people have died and there is a widespread and horrific humanitarian crisis. 'Have we abandoned India's consistent stand advocating for a ceasefire, peace, and dialogue in the Middle East and West Asia?'" he asked.

Kharge affirmed that this position is deeply rooted in India's long-standing tradition of non-alignment and moral diplomacy, through which the nation has always promoted justice and peace in global conflicts.

Noting that on October 19, 2023, the Congress called for an immediate ceasefire and humanitarian assistance to the people of Gaza, he said, "India cannot stand by silently or passively while the region faces horrific violence, humanitarian catastrophe, and increasing instability."

Echoing similar sentiments,



AICC general secretary, organisation, KC Venugopal said India always stood for peace, justice, and human dignity.

"But today, India stands alone as the only country in South Asia, BRICS, and SCO to abstain on a UNGA resolution demanding a ceasefire in Gaza. 60,000 killed. Most of them women and children. Thousands starving.

International aid blocked. A hu-

manitarian catastrophe is unfolding," he said in a post on X, questioning if India has abandoned its principled stand against war and genocide. Venugopal called on the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) to explain what had changed in the last six months that led India from supporting a ceasefire to abstaining from the vote.

Training guns on the Narendra Modi-led government, he accused

the Centre of having little regard for Jawaharlal Nehru's legacy and questioned why it had abandoned Atal Bihari Vajpayee's principled stance on Palestine.

Emphasising that India has long been a principled voice for ceasefire, peace, and dialogue in the Middle East, Venugopal reiterated that India has historically championed the cause of justice and humanitarian values in global conflicts. "At a time when the region is witnessing unspeakable violence, humanitarian collapse, and growing instability, India cannot afford to remain silent or passive," the Congress leader noted.

Similarly, Congress MP from Wayanad, Priyanka Gandhi Vadra also expressed her disappointment at India's stance at the UN.

"This is a tragic reversal of our anti-colonial legacy. In fact, not only are we standing silent as Mr Netanyahu annihilates an entire nation, we are cheering on as his government attacks Iran and assassinates its leadership in fla-

grant violation of its sovereignty and complete contravention of all international norms," she said in a post on X.

"How can we, as a nation, just abandon the principles of our constitution, and the values of our freedom struggle that led the way for an international arena based on peace and humanity?" she asked.

Noting that there is no justification for this, she added that true global leadership demands the courage to defend justice, and India has shown this courage unfailingly in the past.

"In a world that is increasingly divisive, we must reclaim our voice for humanity and stand fearlessly for truth and non-violence," Vadra asserted.

AICC media department head Pawan Khara also said that India's UN abstention on the Gaza ceasefire comes as "an act of staggering moral cowardice - a shameful betrayal of our anti-colonial legacy and the values of our own freedom struggle". (PTI)

Govt sets up high-level panel to examine causes of Ahmedabad plane crash: Civil Aviation Min

NEW DELHI, June 14: A high-level panel has been set up to investigate the causes of the Ahmedabad plane crash and the investigation is progressing smoothly, the government said on Saturday.

The black box of Air India's Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner plane that crashed on Thursday was recovered from the site on Friday evening.

"Decoding of the black box is going to give in-depth insight into what happened moments before the plane crash," Civil Aviation Minister K Ramamohan Naidu said at a briefing in the national capital.

Air India's Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner aircraft, operating a flight from Ahmedabad to London Gatwick, crashed soon after the take-off on Thursday afternoon. Out of the 242 people on board the plane, only one person survived.

The minister said the country has very strict aviation safety standards and robust protocols, and everything will be done to further improve safety.

"Any theory going around the plane crash will be analysed," he added.

A high-level multi-disciplinary panel, chaired by the home secretary, will hold a meeting on Monday, and the committee is expected to submit its report in three months.

Civil Aviation Secretary Samir Kumar Sinha said the investigation is going on smoothly into the Air India plane crash.

The Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB) is probing the crash.

Before the press conference, a one-minute silence was observed to pay homage to the victims of the Air India plane crash.

He said that DNA testing is happening to identify victims and hand them over to their families.

"The Gujarat government is coordinating with that. They have been there on the ground since the time of

the crash and they have been facilitating all the efforts and measures that are required from their side, so once the DNA testing is confirmed, the bodies will be given to the respective families," the minister said.

"We are hoping that the process also gets (completed) as soon as possible," Naidu added.

"We have very strict safety standards in the country also, and many, including the ICAO, international organisations have also time and again established that we do have a very strict protocol, robust protocol which we follow every time."

But even after that, when the incident happened, we also felt that there is a need to do an extended surveillance into the Boeing 787 series, Naidu said, adding, "So, through the DGCA, we have also given the order to do the extended surveillance for the 787 planes."

There are 34 (before the crash) Boeing 787-8 in the Indian aircraft fleet today and "I believe that eight have already been inspected," the minister said.

He said that whatever necessary steps are needed will be taken to improve the (aviation) safety.

On the formation of the high-level committee, the minister said its composition involves three persons from various backgrounds, and people, who the government feels, can bring a lot of expertise and value to it, will investigate in a holistic way into the incident.

"We have put a time limit of three months for them to sit down, talk to various stakeholders, and involve and discuss with any other important expert that is necessary as part of their investigation," he noted.

He said the AAIB team believes that "the decoding of the black box is going to give in-depth insight into what would have actually happened during the process of the crash or moments before the crash itself".

"So, we are also eagerly waiting for the report's results," Naidu said. (PTI)

Rajasthan's Mahesh Kumar tops NEET-UG, MP's Utkarsh Awadhiya bags second rank

NEW DELHI, June 14: Rajasthan's Mahesh Kumar has topped the medical entrance exam NEET-UG, while Utkarsh Awadhiya from Madhya Pradesh has bagged the second rank, the National Testing Agency (NTA) announced on Saturday.

More than 12.36 lakh candidates out of 22.09 lakh test takers qualified the exam. The number is down from last year's 13.15 lakh qualifying candidates. However, the number of test takers was also higher last year at over 23.33 lakh.

Among the qualifying candidates this year, over 7.2 lakh are females while over 5.14 lakh are males. While 529 qualifying candidates are foreign nationals, 405 are NRIs and 606 are OCI card holders. Maharashtra's Krishang Joshi and Delhi's Mrinal Kishore Jha bagged the third and fourth ranks, respectively.

Among females, Delhi's Avika Aggarwal emerged topper, bagging the fifth rank nationally. The maximum qualifying candidates are from Uttar Pradesh (over 1.70 lakh), followed by Maharashtra (over 1.25 lakh) and Rajasthan (over 1.19 lakh). A total of 73 candidates have scored marks in the range of 651 to 686 out of 720 while 1,259 candidates have scored between 601 to 650. "The NTA conducts the exam and declares

result based on the eligibility criteria provided by the National Medical Council (NMC). The admitting authorities will now draw a merit list based on all India rank for the MBBS and BDS seats available in their jurisdiction," said Col B Vijay Kumar, Director (Exams), NTA. The National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test-Undergraduate (NEET-UG) is the largest entrance exam in the country in terms of the number of candidates appearing for the test.

The NTA conducts the NEET every year for admission into medical colleges. A total of 1,08,000 seats are available for the MBBS course -- approximately 56,000 in government hospitals, and about 52,000 in private colleges.

Admissions to undergraduate courses in dentistry, Ayurveda, Unani and Siddha also utilise NEET results for admission.

NTA conducted NEET at 5,468 centres located at 552 cities in India and 14 cities in other countries on May 4. The cities outside India were Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Bangkok, Colombo, Doha, Kathmandu, Kuwait, Lagos, Kaula Lumpur, Manama, Muscat, Riyadh, Sharjah and Singapore.

The exam was conducted in 13 languages -- Assamese, Bengali, English, Urdu, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi,

Punjabi, Tamil, Telugu and Odia.

Over 18 lakh candidates had opted to appear for the exam in English while over 2.28 lakh candidates appeared in Hindi.

A total of 73 candidates have scored marks in the range of 651 to 686 out of 720 while 1,259 candidates have scored between 601 to 650. The NTA had earlier this year announced that the crucial exam will continue to be conducted in pen and paper mode. The decision came after detailed deliberations between education and health ministries on whether to conduct the NEET-UG in pen and paper mode or online mode.

In the line of fire over alleged irregularities in NEET and PhD entrance NET, the Centre had in July last year set up a panel to ensure transparent, smooth and fair conduct of examinations by NTA.

According to the high-level panel headed by former ISRO Chief R Radhakrishnan, multi-stage testing for NEET-UG could be a viable possibility that needs to be followed up. While NEET was last year plagued by several allegations of irregularities, including paper leaks, and litigation, UGC-NET was cancelled as the ministry received inputs that the integrity of the exam had been compromised. (PTI)

Failure to timely detect flaws in rail caused North-East Express derailment in Oct 2023: CRS probe



NEW DELHI, June 14: The failure to promptly detect the flaws in the rail caused the derailment of the North-East Express at Raghunathpur Station in Danapur Division of East Central Railway on October 11, 2023, according to a final investigation report.

At least four people were killed and several others were injured in the accident in Bihar's Buxar district. The report was submitted by Sumoy Mitra, the then Commissioner of Railway Safety (Eastern Circle). "Stricter monitoring should be exercised in controlling the various processes involved in manufacture of rails. Railway may consider exploring possibilities of Real Time Monitoring of the health of track, one of the recommendations of the report recently submitted to the Railway Board," it added. The Railways in its action taken report said that continuous improvement and upgradation are being done by it and the rail manufacturing plant of SAIL/Bhilai for ensuring better quality of steel making and rail rolling. It mentioned several steps taken to improve the chemical and metallurgical properties of rails too. Regarding proper monitoring of track health, it said that various modules in the Track Management System (TMS) are operational.

"These include monitoring of USFD (Ultrasonic Flaw Detection) testing of rails and welds. USFD operators regularly feed the USFD testing data of rail and weld during daily USFD testing on TMS," the Railways said. "These USFD testing data are monitored regularly at

all concerned levels for necessary maintenance," it added.

Addressing the concern of the CRS for real-time monitoring of the health of tracks, the Railways said that three technologies are under trial for broken rail detection systems in various zonal railways.

These are the Continuous Broken Rail Detection System (NGRT), which is under trial in North Eastern Railway, Acoustic Domain Technology Rail Acoustic, which is undergoing testing in North Central Railway and Vibration Energy-based Broken Rail Detection System whose trial is in progress in North Central Railway.

The CRS has further recommended that proper mechanisms should be available with the Railways for the identification of fatigue cracks developed in rails.

The Railways has said that it has come up with a new technology known as Phased Array Ultrasonic Single Rail Tester (PAUT SRT) and Zonal Railways/ PSUs have been advised for the adoption of this new method for rails testing.

Commenting on the condition of the engine and coaches, the CRS said that the locomotives and coaches of all running trains should be closely examined and defective rolling stock should not be permitted, more so in Mail Express Trains with high speed. "Records of maintenance of Coaches and Loco may be computerized similar to what has been done for Track Monitoring System (TMS) so that the data can be readily accessed for analysis and scrutiny," the probe body said. (PTI)

'Op Sindoor' stands as shining testament to unparalleled prowess of the Indian Air Force: IAF chief

HYDERABAD, June 14: IAF Chief, Air Chief Marshal A P Singh, on Saturday said that 'Operation Sindoor', launched after the Pahalgam terror attack, stands as a shining testament to the unparalleled prowess of the Indian Air Force. He also said that this operation demonstrated IAF's capability to deliver swift, precise and decisive blows to the enemy.

Addressing the Combined Graduation Parade (CGP) at the Air Force Academy, Dundigal near here, Singh also said the Operation Sindoor has showcased exceptional coordination, synergy and integration within the armed forces. He called upon the newly commissioned officers to keep furthering the spirit of jointness as they grow in service.

He said the graduating officers, as the future of the IAF, must understand that the Air Force has been and will always remain the first responder. "It is our collective responsibility to live up to the trust placed in the Indian Air Force by every citizen of India, and we must



be ready and prepared for this," Singh said. Observing that the battlefield is going to be more and more complex, he said the young officers would need to continuously "train and retrain" to succeed in future conflicts. With the Indian Air Force fast evolving into an aerospace force, many young officers will lead the nation's foray into space, he said. These challenges will require them to be totally committed, focused, innovative, and passionate about their

job, he said. Singh also exhorted the graduating officers to focus on physical and mental fitness and personal development through a healthy lifestyle. The event commemorated the successful completion of the pre-commissioning training of flight cadets across various branches of the Indian Air Force.

During the ceremony, the IAF Chief conferred the 'President's Commission' to the graduating trainees. (PTI)

Draft framework proposes sweeping changes to transport systems for persons with disabilities

NEW DELHI, June 14: A new draft framework has proposed sweeping changes to transport systems to make them more accessible for persons with disabilities (PwDs), including mandatory wheelchair space in buses and Metro trains, step-free toilets at stations, level boarding ramps, and trained staff across air, rail and road transport networks.

The Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPwD) under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has invited comments and suggestions from the stakeholders and general public on the draft accessibility standards for the transport and mobility sector.

The draft 'Transport Accessibility Framework' has been prepared by the Strategic Accessibility Cell - Rights of Riders (SAC-RR). It lays out detailed, enforceable standards across the transport chain -- from booking and boarding to infrastructure, vehicles and emer-

gency response. Most measures are marked "non-negotiable", meaning they would be binding once the guidelines take effect. The department said these draft standards, which identify non-negotiable rules, have been prepared to strengthen the creation of barrier-free environments in accordance with the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016, and relevant rules.

According to the draft, all new buses procured under Central schemes must include low-floor entry, ramps, safety belts, and designated wheelchair areas.

Existing services such as PM eBus Sewa and Type III intercity buses would also be retrofitted with tested lifts or bridge ramps. At least four priority seats with seatbelts are required in each bus for people with limited mobility.

Metro and rail platforms must deploy rubber gap fillers and boarding ramps, while coach doors and aisles must be widened to accom-



modate wheelchairs. Long-distance trains must include at least one accessible coach with wheelchair anchorage and a Type A toilet with grab bars, the draft noted.

At airports, the draft calls for step-free access from parking to check-in, aerobridges with rollout ramps, designated wheelchair-friendly seating in aircraft, and

availability of aisle chairs. Air carriers will have to provide storage space for assistive devices, and entertainment systems must include audio description and captions. The guidelines extend to taxi aggregators and e-rickshaws, which must include a share of wheelchair-accessible vehicles and train the drivers in disability assistance.

Vessel fire case: Firefighting continues, 8 ICG ships deployed

NEW DELHI, June 14: The Indian Coast Guard continued its relentless firefighting on Saturday with eight ICG ships currently on deployment, five days after a fire onboard a Singapore-flagged cargo vessel that occurred following a container explosion off the Kerala coast, officials said.

Additionally, an offshore patrol vessel of the ICG is carrying out mid-sea refuelling of a salvage tug to sustain towing operation, they said. The ICG on Friday said that it had achieved a "major milestone" in the ongoing operation to suppress fire onboard cargo vessel MV Wan Hai 503, which occurred following a container explosion on June 9 as its towing commenced to keep the ship away from the coast.

On Saturday, the relentless firefighting operations continued.

"Eight ICG ships -- Sachet, Samarth, Saksham, Samudra Prabh, Vikram, Rajdoot, Kasturba Gandhi and Arnav -- are participating in the firefighting operations," Spokesperson, Coast Guard, Comdt Amit Uniyal, told PTI. He added that "continuous boundary cooling is in progress".

The incident occurred at approximately 9.20 am IST, around 44 nautical miles off Azhikkal in the Kannur district of Kerala and 130 nautical miles northwest of Kochi.

A day earlier, the ICG in a post on X said, "Major milestone in the ongoing operation to suppress the fire onboard MV WAN HAI 503 and protect marine environment! @IndiaCoastGuard ships undertaking FF Op enabled tow connect up of Salvage vessel in extremely challenging and daunting operation. @indiannavy Sea King helicopter was tasked by #HQSNCT to winch down salvors who shifted the tow from #ICG ships to Salvage Tugs". The Indian Navy on Saturday shared some details of what it described as a "daring aerial insertion" of a salvage team onboard the vessel a day ago.

"In a prompt response, the salvage team members were embarked onboard a Seaking helicopter at INS Garuda, Kochi. The Naval helicopter successfully inserted the team on the vessel amidst challenging weather and sea conditions and fire onboard," a Navy spokesperson said.

The salvage team was winched down and connected up tow with the salvage tug Offshore Warrior. After the connection of the tow, the salvage team was successfully extracted by the naval helicopter from the vessel, he said. (PTI)

NIA chargesheets 17 accused, including 16 absconders, in CRPF camps attack case

NEW DELHI, June 14: The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has chargesheeted 17 accused, including 16 absconders, in a 2024 case of attacks on CRPF camps in Chhattisgarh by CPI (Maoist) terror operatives, officials said on Saturday. One of the chargesheeted accused is under arrest, who has been identified as Sodi Baman alias Deval, they said.

The absconders include two each central committee members and special zonal/state committee members, and other top cadres of the People's Liberation Guerrilla Army (PLGA) Battalion No. 1, Telangana state committee, and Pamed area committee of CPI (Maoist), the officials said.

The PLGA is the armed wing of CPI (Maoist). The chargesheet filed on Friday before an NIA special court in Jagdalpur, Chhattisgarh, has charged all the accused under various sections of Indian Penal Code, Arms Act, Explosive Substances Act, and Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, an official statement said. The case relates to

the attack on the Central Reserve Police Force's (CRPF) new camp at Dharmavaram and two adjacent CRPF/CoBRA (Commando Battalion for Resolute Action) camps at Chintawagu and Pamed in Bijapur district on January 16, 2024, it said. Armed with automatic weapons and barrel grenade launchers (BGLs), the attackers attempted to loot weapons and other belongings of the security forces from the camps, the statement said.

"Twelve CRPF personnel at the Dharmavaram CRPF camp, which was set up on December 17, 2023, were injured in the attack," it said.

The NIA took over the case from the local police on February 9, 2024, and registered it against 21 named and 250-300 unknown armed cadres of proscribed terrorist organisation CPI (Maoist), the statement said. Investigations revealed that the chargesheeted accused had been involved in the recruitment of youth, as part of a criminal conspiracy to wage war against the democratically-elected government of India, the probe agency said. (PTI)

Das also criticised the interim government in Bangladesh Pradesh BJP launches statewide stir over vandalism at Tagore's home

HT Correspondent

AGARTALA, June 14: The Tripura Pradesh BJP on Saturday staged state wide protests along the Bangladesh border, condemning the recent attack and vandalism of the ancestral home of Kabiguru Rabindranath Tagore in the neighbouring country.

Leading a protest rally in Agartala and near the Akhaura Integrated Check Post, BJP General Secretary and MLA Bhagaban Das said, "A barbaric incident in Bangladesh has shocked not only Tripura but the entire nation. The ancestral home of Kabiguru Rabindranath Tagore has been vandalised. Fascist and fundamentalist elements have targeted the residence of Tagore, who is a revered



figure for Bengalis in India and for the people of undivided India. This is a direct attack on our shared cultural heritage."

He added, "There must be a

limit to such destructive jealousy. Even a towering cultural icon like Tagore has not been spared. These groups of hyenas have committed an unforgivable act."

Das also criticised the interim government in Bangladesh, alleging its failure to maintain law and order.

"The administration has completely failed to prevent such attacks, creating unrest in the country," he stated.

The BJP leader informed that protests were being held at all ICPs and across every district in the state on Saturday, with further demonstrations scheduled for June 16 in all assembly constituencies.

"Through this protest, we are sending a clear message: those responsible for this act are mentally deranged. We urge everyone to raise their voice against such atrocities so that such acts are not repeated," he added.

Naga elders and leaders invited to House of Lords in London



DIMAPUR, June 14: Naga elders and leaders from various "Naga tribal hohos" from Northeast India were invited to the House of Lords in London, a press release from the Forum for Naga Reconciliation (FNR) said recently. They met with the Rt Hon the Lord Boateng of Akym and Wembley, Member of the House of Lords of the United Kingdom who expressed his solidarity and support for all Indigenous communities including the Naga people working to repatriate the physical remains of their respective ancestors, the press release also said. This is following the global outrage in October 2024 regarding the proposed sale of human remains by an Oxfordshire Auction House. These human remains were all from the global South and included Naga ancestral human remains in the UK. Lord Boateng was one of the key figures, alongside Baroness Black of Strome, in calling for a parliamentary debate in the House of Lords for preventing the sale and display of human body parts. Their intervention, alongside the voices of many Indigenous community members, was instrumental in preventing the sale, the press statement added.

The Naga delegation has come to the UK to work with the Pitt Rivers Museum on the repatriation of the Naga human remains the

museum holds in its collections. During the meeting with Lord Boateng the Naga team thanked him for his commitment in advocating for legislative change around the dehumanising sale of human remains, the press release also said.

While talking to the Naga delegation, Lord Boateng reflected on his Ghanaian roots and said that India and Ghana experienced oppression under British colonial rule, and each fought for their independence, the press release stated. This arc of independence for India and Ghana became the foundations of freedom and justice. Parliament was the site, on the one hand, where Indigenous lands were taken. On the other hand, Parliament was also the site where acts of independence were signed. He reiterated that there is freedom now in most former colonies, but they are yet to experience justice, the statement also said.

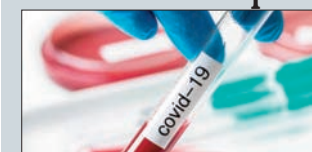
Focusing on the ongoing process of repatriation of Naga ancestral human remains, Lord Boateng presented the official report on the Parliamentary debates held at the House of Lords. The debates focused on the sale and display of human body parts in the United Kingdom and how to find a legal resolution to criminalise any ongoing practice of displaying the remains. "No human remains

should be treated as possessions, curiosity, or for profit. It is morally wrong and offensive," said Lord Boateng during his interaction with the Naga tribal leaders and elders. Lord Boateng added, "I salute your struggles to give voice to all Indigenous Peoples because this process represents the Indigenous peoples of the world. We are one people and all of us are deserving of respect."

On behalf of the Naga leaders and elders, Thejao Vihienuo, president of the Angami Public Organisation, thanked Lord Boateng for the invitation. He emphasized that the Naga delegation was in the United Kingdom to redress the history of colonialism through which the ancestors' remains were taken. Each of the tribal leaders expressed their appreciation to Lord Boateng for his welcome and they spoke about the urgency of the repatriation of their ancestral remains to the Naga homeland. Ngongba Tange Thamlong Phom, vice president of the Phom Peoples' Organization said, "There are many ancestors belonging to our people, and the spirits will not find rest and peace until we bring them home".

Rev. Aching Peihwang Wangsa, Konyak Union representative, talked about the importance of coming to the UK and witnessing their ancestors who were taken away many decades ago. Dr. Ngulie, an elder from the Forum for Naga Reconciliation (FNR), said, "We have been called to this place by our ancestors who were cared for by the Pitt Rivers Museum". He emphasised the importance of spiritual connections amongst different peoples, which is strongly based on the Indigenous beliefs of the Nagas. "We are here", he said, "to reconcile and bring healing not only to the Naga lands, but to humanity", the press release further added. (NNN)

Five positive Covid cases in Manipur



IMPHAL, June 14: The number of active COVID-19 cases in Manipur has increased, with five positive cases confirmed till date, according to the latest status report issued by the Directorate of Health Services.

The department reported that on Friday 15 samples were tested - 1 from Imphal East, 13 from Imphal West, and 1 from Tamenglong. Of these, three tested positive - one from Imphal East district and two from Imphal West district.

The cumulative number of COVID-19 samples tested for the disease in the state stands at 36, with five confirmed positive cases.

According to official data, four individuals who tested positive are currently in home isolation. This resurgence follows a gap of nearly two years since the last reported case. The reappearance of COVID-19 in the state was detected on June 1, 2025.

Since the outbreak began in 2020, Manipur has recorded a total of 1,40,045 COVID-19 cases. Of these, 1,37,893 patients have recovered, while 2,149 individuals have succumbed to the virus.

Director of Health Services, Dr. Chambo Gommei, told the media that no new guidelines have been issued by the central health ministry so far. However, as a precautionary measure, the public is advised to wear face masks, maintain personal hygiene by washing hands regularly with soap, and undergo testing if they experience high fever or any symptoms related to COVID-19. (NNN)

Nagaland evicts encroachers from Dimapur airport land



HT Correspondent

DIMAPUR, June 14: The Nagaland government on Friday carried out an eviction drive at Dimapur airport land in Diphuphar village to reclaim approximately 17.9 acres of land illegally occupied by 22 individuals.

A total of 24 structures, including four RCC buildings, three semi-concrete structures, and 17 thatched houses were dismantled during the eviction drive.

During a press briefing after the eviction drive, Chumokedima DC Polan John said the district administrations of Dimapur, Chumokedima and police, along with

all relevant departments, carried out the eviction drive in the presence of independent observers from tribal bodies and civil society organizations of both Dimapur and Chumokedima and independent witnesses such as the village councils of neighbouring areas.

John said the exercise pertained to the eviction of 22 individuals who were in illegal occupation of the Dimapur airport land.

The Gauhati High Court, Principal Bench, in Civil Revision Petition (CRP) number 104/2024, by an order dated May 27, 2025, quashed and set aside the temporary injunction granted to the en-

croachers, which enabled the district administrations of Dimapur and Chumokedima to execute the eviction orders dated December 21, 2019, and December 11, 2020.

Dimapur DC Tinojongshi Chang said there was no resistance from the evictees. He said most of the structures had already been voluntarily dismantled by the occupants.

He added that a five-day grace period was granted to the encroachers before the final eviction took place.

Chang said the land in question was purchased by the state government and handed over to the Airport Authority of India.

Over 300 rifles among arms, ammunition recovered by security forces in Manipur



IMPHAL, June 14: A large cache of arms and ammunition, including over 300 rifles, were recovered from the five Imphal valley districts of Manipur, an official said on Saturday. The arms seizure was made by joint teams of the Manipur Police, Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs), and the Army in a well-coordinated intelligence-based operation on the intervening night of Friday and Saturday, he said. Among the items seized were 151 SLR rifles, 65 INSAS rifles, 73 other rifles, five carbine guns, two MP5 guns, 12 light machine guns, six AK series rifles, two Amogh rifles, one mortar, six pistols, one AR-15 and two flare guns, he added.

On receipt of specific intelligence that a large cache of arms and ammunition was stashed in different areas of the valley districts - Imphal East, Imphal West, Bishnupur, Kakching and Thoubal, simultaneous search operations were launched, leading to the major recovery, the official said. He said the operation marks a significant achievement for the security forces in their continued efforts to restore normalcy, maintain public order, and ensure the safety and security of people and their property in the strife-torn state.

Besides a total of 328 rifles and guns, the security forces recovered 591 assorted magazines, 3,534 SLR rounds, 2,186 INSAS rounds, 2,252 rounds of .303 rifles, 234 AK rounds, 407 Amogh rounds, 20.9-mm pistol rounds, 10 grenades, three lathos and seven detonators, he said.

Reiterating their commitment to ensuring a peaceful and secure Manipur, police urged the people to cooperate with the security forces and report any suspicious activities or information related to illegal weapons to the nearest police station or the Central Control Room.

Senior police officers are in close coordination with all security stakeholders to ensure that such operations continue in a sustained and focused manner, the official said. (PTI)

5 militants arrested from various parts of Manipur

IMPHAL, June 14: Five militants were arrested from various parts of Manipur on charges of extortion, police said on Saturday. The arrests were made from Thoubal, Kakching, Imphal West and Tengnoupal districts on Friday, they said.

A member of the United Peoples' Party of Kangleipak (UPPK) was arrested from Langmeidong Maning Leikai in Kakching district. The suspect, identified as Akoijam Robinson (51), was accused of extorting schools in Imphal, police said. A .32 pistol was seized from him, they said. A member of the proscribed Kangleipak Communist Party (Noyon) was arrested from Thoubal Melaground in Thoubal district, while a cadre each of PREPAK (Pro) and PREPAK were arrested from near the India-Myanmar border in Shanglong in Tengnoupal district.

A member of KCP (PWG) was arrested from Langol Game village in Imphal West district, police said.

In a separate operation at Khalong in Baruni Hill in Imphal East district, security forces recovered three vehicular radio sets, 13 radio wireless handheld sets, seven wireless set antennas, a solar charger converter, and three solar plates, among other items. (PTI)

SIT files chargesheet against 25 persons in Dimapur encroachment case

HT Correspondent

DIMAPUR, June 14: The SIT formed to investigate the land encroachment issue at Dimapur airport filed chargesheet against 25 persons (private individuals) and is awaiting sanction against six public servants for prosecution from the Nagaland personnel & administrative reform (P&AR) department and the land record department as required by law.

The Nagaland police, in a release, on Saturday said as directed by the home department, a preliminary enquiry was conducted by the SIT into the allegations pertaining to illegal encroachment by preparation of forged and fabricated documents.

RENOVATION OF OFFICE OF THE DRM (P) SECTION AND OFFICER'S CHAMBER

E-Tender Notice No. LMG/Engg/45 of 2025; Dated: 11-06-2025. E-tenders are invited by the undersigned for the following work: **SN. 1. Brief Description of Item:** Renovation of office of the DRM (P) section and officer's chamber at Lumding under the jurisdiction of ADEU/II/Lumding. **Tender Value:** ₹94,99,966.56; **Earnest Money:** ₹1,90,000.00. E-tenders will be closed at 15:00 hrs. on 07-07-2025 and opened at 15:00 hrs. on 08-07-2025. The complete information with tender documents of above e-tender will be available upto 15:00 hrs. of 07-07-2025 in website <http://www.irops.gov.in>. **DRM/Works, Lumding**
NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY
"Serving Customers with a smile"

Tourist footfall in Sohra increases despite defamation attempt: Minister

SHILLONG, June 14: Meghalaya Tourism Minister Paul Lyngdoh said recently that tourist footfall in Sohra in Meghalaya is increasing despite the "recent attempt to tarnish Meghalaya's image" following the murder of a tourist from Indore.

He said tourist numbers are expected to touch 20 lakh after the upcoming Cherry Blossom Festival to be held later this year.

"As we speak, the footfall in Sohra itself is increasing. There are more and more visitors. Even when the case was still not solved, the footfall remained steady. Now, with the name

of Meghalaya being vindicated and cleared, we are only seeing more footfall, and we expect that it would touch 20 lakh by the Cherry Blossom Festival," Lyngdoh told reporters.

He said the government's demand for an apology stemmed from several wild comments, including incitement to violence against the people from Meghalaya, following the tragic incident in Sohra.

The minister also informed that the state already has a tourism app that records the movement of tourists, including vehicles used and requires compulsory registration of all visitors

at homestays, resorts, and hotels.

"Currently, the use of this app is roughly around 50%, but we will now make it compulsory for all homestays, resorts, and other places of accommodation to mandatorily register all visitors," he added.

Meanwhile, the minister said the department has issued a notice inviting interested youth fluent in Khasi, Garo, English, and Hindi to join the tourist buddy scheme. "Within the next two months, we should be able to clear the appointment of hundreds of tourist buddies," he said. (NNN)

Sikkim Guv Mathur calls on PM Modi, VP Dhankhar

GANGTOK, June 14: Sikkim Governor Om Prakash Mathur called on Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi, and discussed with him various issues related to the development of the state.

Mathur also called on Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh in the national capital on Friday.

During the meeting with the PM, various issues related to the development of Sikkim were discussed in detail, said a statement issued by the Raj Bhavan on Saturday. The two leaders also discussed the overall development of the border areas under the 'Vibrant Village' scheme, it said.

In a separate meeting, Mathur apprised the vice president of various ongoing developmental projects in the state, another statement said.

Issues related to infrastructure, education, tourism, and welfare of the people of Sikkim were also discussed, it said. In the brief meeting with the defence minister, the governor discussed various developmental schemes, projects and security-related issues of the state, the statement said.

He also briefed Singh about the recent natural calamity in the Mangan district, where Army personnel lost their lives on the line of duty, it said.

The meetings took place on a day when the first batch of pilgrims of the Kailash Manasarovar Yatra began their journey. The government organises the Kailash Manasarovar Yatra every year between June and September, through the two official routes of Lipulekh Pass (since 1981) in Uttarakhand and Nathu La (since 2015) in Sikkim. Sikkim celebrated 50 years of statehood last month with mega programmes. PM Modi was scheduled to visit the state on May 29 to take part in the celebrations, but inclement weather disrupted his travel plans, and he had to address the programme virtually. (PTI)

Discovery raises the total number of documented megadrile earthworm species in Tripura to 38 Two new earthworm species unearthed in Tripura

HT Correspondent

AGARTALA, June 14: In a major breakthrough for ecological science in Northeast India, two new species of earthworms—Kanchuria tripruensis and Kanchuria priyasankari—have been formally identified in Tripura.

The discovery stems from a collaborative research initiative involving scientists from Tripura and Kerala, led by Dr Animesh Dey, Assistant Professor at the Ecology and Biodiversity Laboratory, Department of Zoology, Tripura University.

Dr Dey said that the original specimens were collected between 2004 and 2010 during his PhD research with Dr Sabyasachi Nath under the mentorship of renowned earthworm taxonomist Prof. Priyasankar Chaudhuri (Retd.). A



new team of young researchers recently managed to recollect the specimens, leading to their official classification.

The first species, Kanchuria tripruensis, has been named after the state of Tripura, where it was

discovered in rubber and pineapple plantations. The second, Kanchuria priyasankari, pays tribute to Prof Priyasankar Chaudhuri for his pioneering contributions to earthworm taxonomy over the past four decades, which have brought

national and international recognition to Tripura's biodiversity. According to the research findings, K. tripruensis is distinct within the genus Kanchuria for its single ventromedian spermathecae located in segments 7 and 8. K. priyasankari falls under the tripruensis species group, noted for having three pairs of spermathecal pores, and differs from its close relative K. tripruensis in its smaller body size and specific reproductive features.

With these additions, the genus Kanchuria, endemic to Northeast India, now comprises 10 species. This discovery raises the total number of documented megadrile earthworm species in Tripura to 38, underscoring the Eastern Himalaya-Northeastern Hills as the second most earthworm-diverse region in India.

NEVER WORKED FOR 20 HOURS, PRODUCERS WERE UNDERSTANDING: KAJOL ON DEBATE OVER WORK HOURS IN INDUSTRY

MUMBAI, June 14: Actor Kajol says maintaining work-life balance has always been a priority since she started acting in the 1990s and the journey became easier with the support of her family as well as the producers.

"I was one of the few people who worked on one film at a time; I didn't do 4 films at the same time (like other actors). I used to finish one film, then start another. I didn't work for 20 or 30 hours. I was always very clear that we would work a certain amount only, and my mom also backed me up big time on it," the 50-year-old actor told PTI in an interview.

Actor Deepika Padukone's alleged exit from Sandeep Reddy Vanga's "Spirit" after the two did not agree over an eight-hour working shift among other conditions has sparked a discussion around shooting hours in the industry.

Kajol, who next appears in horror thriller "Maa", said she had the same discussion after she gave birth to her first child, Nysa, with husband Ajay Devgn.

"I remember having this discussion, and I think most producers are so (okay), they don't even think twice," the actor said.

Sharing her past experiences, Kajol said whenever she faced challenges on the personal front, the producers of her movies were quite "understanding" and allowed her to leave the sets early when necessary.

"I remember shooting for 'U Me Aur Hum' (2008), and my dad was in the hospital at that time, and Nysa was two years old, so it was a double whammy. But Ajay, being the producer, managed it; he worked around it to make sure that I went home early, so I could go to the hospital. So, we managed that work-life balance, as you put it.

"Even when I was doing 'Fanaa' (2006), everybody worked around very comfortably without kind of making it an issue or even writing it in the contract, for that matter. So, I've had wonderful experiences. Most of the time, people do understand, and they work around you."

Kajol has a slew of projects in the pipeline, beginning with "Maa", which is directed by Vishal Furia, who is known for his work on "Lapachhapi", "Criminal Justice" and "Chhorii".

The movie narrates the story of a mother who becomes Goddess Kali to end a demonic curse rooted in fear, blood, and betrayal.

Kajol said "Maa", written by Saiwyn Quadras, started out as a thriller, and gradually transformed into a full-blown

horror movie.

"When I agreed to do the film and heard the concept, I loved it. I'm a full mythological buff. I love our Indian mythology, we've amazing characters, stories, ideas and viewpoints, whether it is karma or dharma.

"When they came to me, I thought it was very apt that this story is coming out at a time when they say that we are living in the Kalyug. The timing is perfect," she added.

Kajol said she is someone who doesn't lean towards horror films and credits Furia for convincing her to do the project.

"The scripts that I was approached with didn't have the right feel and vibe to it. Though I haven't read too many horror scripts, of the few that I have been offered, they have not been of the greatest calibre.

"The horror films that were made earlier never concentrated on their script. It was about the supernatural element, blood, gore, how to scare people, etc was given more importance than the story and characters," said the actor.

"Maa", which is slated to be released in cinema halls on June 27, is produced by Devgn. She said Devgn played a pivotal role in shaping up the story of "Maa", and even shot some portions of the climax.

"He is a great producer. He is involved on the script level, VFX and the action. He did shoot parts of the climax as well," Kajol said, adding, she has always had a great "creative process" working with her actor-filmmaker husband. "Maa" also stars Indraneil Sengupta, Kherin Sharma and Ronit Roy. It is presented by Jio Studios and Devgn Films, and is produced by Jyoti Deshpande and co-produced by Kumar Mangat Pathak.

Besides "Maa", Kajol will also feature in action thriller "Maharagini" with Prabhudeva and Naserruddin Shah, Karan Johar's upcoming home production "Sarzameen", and season two of her series "The Trial".

The actor working on back-to-back movies turned out to be an "interesting" experience.

"I shot them back-to-back. I finished work on 'Sarzameen' and 'Maharagini'. Right now, the current thing is 'Maa' and then 'The Trial' season two.

"I've been working for like 34 years now, and, I feel like in my 33rd year, I've worked more than I have in the last many years. So, it's been quite an interesting year," Kajol said. (PTI)



Imtiaz Ali's next film with Diljit Dosanjh to release in April 2026



MUMBAI, June 14: Filmmaker Imtiaz Ali's new film with actor-musician Diljit Dosanjh will be released in theatres in April 2026, coinciding with the festival of Baisakhi.

Billed as a "charming story of love and longing", the untitled movie marks the second collaboration between Ali and Dosanjh after their 2024 widely loved movie, "Amar Singh Chamkila".

Actors Naseeruddin Shah, Vedang Raina and Sharvari will also feature in the film, which has a contemporary and witty narrative that explores the depth of human connection.

Quoting legendary poet Momin Khan Momin's couplet 'Tum mere paas hote ho goya, Jab koi doosra nahin hota' ('You are with me, however, when there is no one else'), Ali said he aims to offer a "touching cinematic experience" through his movie.

"Can love really be lost? Can home be taken away from someone's heart? This film has a big heart. It has a large canvas, yet is very personal. It is a story of a boy and a girl, but also of a country.

"Wish us well as we dive into the currents of this dynamic story, we hope to emerge next year with a touching cinematic experience in a theatre near you," the filmmaker said in a statement. The film will reunite the legendary trio of Ali, AR Rahman, and Irshad Kamil, who have given some of their most memorable soundtracks in films like "Amar Singh Chamkila", "Tamasha", and "Rockstar", among others.

"As the journey unfolds, expect a film that moves you, music that stays with you, and a love story that becomes a part of you," the statement added.

The movie will go on floors in August this year. Ali's previous movie with Dosanjh, "Amar Singh Chamkila" was also released on Baisakhi in 2024. (PTI)

PAINED AND FILLED WITH IMMENSE REMORSE: AMITABH BACHCHAN ON AIR INDIA PLANE CRASH



NEW DELHI, June 14: Megastar Amitabh Bachchan on Saturday said he is pained and filled with grief over the tragic loss of lives in the Air India plane crash in Ahmedabad.

The London-bound Air India plane carrying 242 passengers crashed into a medical college complex in Ahmedabad and burst into a ball of fire less than a minute after takeoff on Thursday. The dead in the country's worst air disaster in recent times included several people on the ground.

Bachchan posted a note on his personal blog, sharing his sorrow over the tragic incident.

"Most pained and filled with immense remorse on the Air India

crash .. empathy and support for the lives lost of our people , and across all nations and communities .. may grief transform into solidarity in honouring lost lives.

The 82-year-old actor called for "transparent investigation" in the accident.

"Through transparent investigation, let there be sustained remembrance .. and resilience .. for meaningful action and prompt lessons .. and for the healing of all," he added.

Besides Bachchan, several celebrities including Shah Rukh Khan, Priyanka Chopra Jonas, Akshay Kumar, Alia Bhatt, Allu Arjun and Karan Johar have also condoled the loss of lives in the incident. (PTI)

Yet to say goodbye to Seong Gi-hun: Lee Jung-jae on his popular 'Squid Game' character

NEW DELHI, June 14: South Korean Superstar Lee Jung-Jae says he is yet to say goodbye to player number 456 or Seong Gi-hun though the third and final season of "Squid Game", the globally popular Netflix series, has wrapped production.

Lee shot to international stardom with his performance as the perpetually down-on-his-luck yet kind-hearted Gi-hun in the first season of the smash hit Netflix series in 2021. He won a Primetime Emmy award and multiple other trophies for the show.

He returned for the much-anticipated second season in 2024 and is now awaiting the release of the third season on June 27.

"We haven't released season three yet and we still don't know how the audiences are going to respond to season three, I haven't said goodbye to Gi-hun yet although we have wrapped production.

"As an actor and as part of those that have created the show, I feel like seeing how the audience responds to it is also part of the journey. So when we get to do that, then I think I'll be ready to say goodbye," Lee told PTI in a virtual interview through the help of an interpreter.

"Squid Game", created by Hwang Dong-hyuk, revolves around a deadly

contest where 456 players, all facing financial hardship, play a series of deadly children's games to win 45.6 billion won in prize money.

At the end of the first season, Gi-hun won the prize money but instead of going back to his life, he set out to end the deadly games for good.

The second season saw Gi-hun return to the games with a mission — to uncover the true identity of the mastermind. Whether he succeeds in his mission or not will be revealed in the upcoming third season.

Lee, 52, a renowned face in the South Korean film and television industry with credits such as "An Affair", "Il Mare", "The Housemaid", "Hunt" and drama series "Chief of Staff", said while playing Gi-hun he was reminded of values people tend to overlook in daily life.

"The biggest lessons that I felt by portraying Gi-hun and also through 'Squid Game', is that there are so many things that we think we are aware of, but we tend to forget in life.

"Some of them being the importance of understanding other people and genuinely helping others when they are in need. 'Squid Game' is definitely a show that has given me the opportunity to reflect and look back on these important messages," he



said.

The actor said people often ask how similar he is to Gi-hun and he believes they share many traits.

"As I'm the actor who portrayed Gi-hun, my own interpretation of the character went into creating him. So we are quite similar," he said.

Asked about the reason why Korean storytellers tend to tackle issues like inequality and the gap between rich and poor with nuance, Lee said it is not unusual as the Korean entertainment industry loves to explore a variety of themes.

"And these themes are explored in a very free way through which a lot of different messages can be conveyed. I think that's the power that recent Korean content has.

"Whether it's a social message or political or even if it's about romance, when we explore a particular theme, we dive into it, really get to the heart of it all, and try to express it in as free a way as possible. That's what's unique about Korean content and also why it's so powerful these days," he said.

Season three of "Squid Game" will also feature Lee Byung-hun, Wi Ha-joon, Im Si-wan, Park Sung-hoon, Kang Ha-neul, Park Gyu-young, Yang Dong-geun, Jo Yu-ri, Lee David, and Roh Jae-won. (PTI)

SA'S WTC TRIUMPH: A QUICK GLANCE BACK AT THEIR HURTING PAST



Late goals sink India again, lose 2-3 to Australia in Pro League



ANTWERP (BELGIUM), June 14: There was no end to Indian men's hockey team's woes in the FIH Pro League as the side slumped to its fifth straight defeat, losing 2-3 to Australia despite leading the contest by two goals after Abhishek's brace, here Saturday.

The Indian team has already lost twice to Netherlands and Argentina in the tournament.

Starting strong, India took a 2-0 lead by the 35th minute through Abhishek's (8th, 35th minutes) brace.

But the Kookaburras came out all attacking after the change of ends, scoring through Nathan Ephraums (42nd), and two penalty corner conversions by Joel Rintala (56th) and Tom Craig (60th) to secure the win.

After suffering four close defeats against Netherlands and Argentina in their first four matches of the European leg of Pro League, the Indians looked a motivated lot against Australia and dominated the share of exchanges in the first two quarters.

The Indians were without skipper and ace dragflicker Harmanpreet Singh as he has been rested due to a injury suffered in the last match against Argentina.

The Indians showed intent from the word go and took lead in the eighth minute through Abhishek, who flicked from top of the circle after receiving a pass from Manpreet Singh.

In the 11 minute, Australia secured a penalty corner but goal-

keeper Suraj Karkera made a good save to deny the opposition.

Abhishek nearly put India two up with some sensational play in the opposition defensive area but his backhand flick just went inches wide off the goal.

In the 19th minute, Karkera made a fine save to deny Joel Rintala from close range.

India had another chance in the form a penalty corner in the 22nd minute but Jugraj Singh could not go past the first rusher in Tim Brand.

After the change of ends, India doubled the lead when Sukhjot Singh disposed an Australian player in front of their circle and passed it on to Abhishek, who slapped a reverse hit into the goal past the opposition goalkeeper to score his second of the day.

Australia earned a penalty corner in the 37th minute but Karkera made a fine save. Australia pulled a goal back when Tom Craig's reverse hit was saved by Karkera but Ephraums scored from rebound.

India secured back-to-back penalty corners in the 48th minute but could not convert. The Australians pressed hard in the final 10 minutes, earning four penalty corners in quick succession, the last of which was converted by Rintala.

Just 42 seconds from the hooter, India conceded another penalty corner and Craig deflected in Jeremy Hayward's flick to hand Australia the win. (PTI)

NEW DELHI, June 14: On a clement London Saturday, South Africa atoned for years of hurt, dejection and near-misses, lifting the World Test Championship title, beating Australia by five wickets at the Lord's.

And as the Rainbow Nation celebrates, PTI takes a walk down the memory lane to revisit all those times when the Proteas ended up so near yet so far before finally breaking the jinx.

1. 1992 WC, Semifinal vs England

Also Read | South Africa Win ICC WTC 2025; Aiden Markram, Temba Bavuma, Kagiso Rabada Star as Proteas Beat Australia to Clinch First ICC Trophy Since 1998.

It had more to do with weather than nerves. But SA's fate to be the bridesmaid at major moments began at Sydney. SA needed 22 runs off 7 balls with Brian McMillan and David Richardson at crease.

Skies opened up at juncture and the equation became 22 runs off 1 ball, thanks to a miscommunication on their revised target.

2. 1999 WC, Semifinal vs Australia

The most disastrous day in SA

cricket history. They needed just 9 off the final over bowled by Aussie pacer Damien Fleming. Lance Klusener smashed the first two balls to bring the equation down to 1 run off four balls. But after a couple of dot balls, a scamper for a single ended in the run out of last batter Allan Donald.

The match was tied and the Aussies entered the final against Pakistan by virtue of their earlier win over the Proteas in the Super Six.

3. 2003 WC - The Boucher Blunder
Co-host SA needed a win over Sri Lanka at Durban to enter the second phase of Super 6s. SA were 229 for six when the rain stopped the play, the par score under D/L method.

But before umpire S Venkataraghavan called the teams inside, SA wicket keeper batter Mark Boucher blocked the last ball of the 45th over bowled by Muttiah Muralitharan.

At that point the match was tied, and the game never resumed, signalling the end of the road for SA at their home event.

4. 2015 WC semifinal vs New Zealand

SA posted a healthy 281 in a

rain-curtailed 43-over-a-side last four clash against the Kiwis, who needed 30 runs off the last three overs.

So, SA finally winning? But Grant Elliot had other ideas as he smashed a last-ball six off Dale Steyn to crush SA dreams.

5. 2022 T20 WC Super 12 vs Netherlands

South Africa needed just one win to enter the semifinals. They had a rather easy opponent in the inexperienced Netherlands at Adelaide.

But SA choked while chasing a gettable 159. A spirited Netherlands bundled out SA for 145 to celebrate a 13-run win that ended the former's journey at the ICC showpiece.

6. 2024, T20 WC vs India

South Africa was coasting at 151 for four in 16.1 overs chasing 177 against India at Bridgetown. Heinrich Klaasen and David Miller were well set with SA needing 26 runs off 29 balls with six wickets in hand.

But Hardik Pandya got rid of Klaasen to spark a familiar SA collapse and they ended up at 169 for eight, losing by just 7 runs.

7. 1st Test vs Sri Lanka, Durban, 2019

Skipper Faf du Plessis (90) and Quinton de Kock (55) ensured that SA reached 259 in their second innings, setting the tourists a stiff 304-run target.

SA bowlers led by left-arm spinner Keshav Maharaj inflicted regular blows as SL slipped 226 for 9. Easy win then? But the Proteas failed to dismiss Kusal Perera (153 not out), who in the company of Vishwa Fernando (6 not out), knocked off the remaining 78 runs for the final wicket.

Daryl Cullinan vs Shane Warne

This is one of the most famous personal rivalries in cricket. The magician from Down Under held a psychological edge over Cullinan, a languid SA batter with oodles of talent. But Warne just bullied him so much that he could amass only 157 runs across seven Tests against the Aussie at an average of 12 while getting dismissed four times.

"Hello Daryl! What colour is the couch?" Warne's sledge to Cullinan, reminding him of his session with a psychologist to counter the leg-spinner is still being talked about. But otherwise, the SA batter retired with 4554 runs from 70 Tests at 44.21 with 14 hundreds. (PTI)

BCCI tweaks Ranji format as one team to be promoted and relegated; Super League in SMAT

NEW DELHI, June 14: The 2025-26 Ranji Trophy will be held from October 15 to February 28 in two phases with a tweaked format which will see the promotion and relegation of one team from the plate group instead of the current two sides, the BCCI decided in its Apex Council meeting on Saturday.

Back in 2018-19, the BCCI had added nine teams in the Ranji Trophy including the team from the North East but that has impacted the quality of cricket in the premier domestic competition.

Meghalaya played in the Ranji Trophy elite division but lost all their seven games last season.

"All multi-day men's tournaments (senior and junior), 1 team will be promoted and 1 team will be relegated for the 2026-27 season grouping," read a BCCI note in PTI's possession.

The format change in red ball cricket will apply to all BCCI tournaments across age groups.

The first phase of Ranji Trophy



will be played from October 15 to November 19 while the second phase will run from January 22 to February 1.

The knockouts will be played from February 6 to 28.

The Duleep Trophy, which returns to the zonal format, will mark the start of the season and will be run from August 28 to September 15. "The team will be

picked by the Zonal Selection Committee," the BCCI added.

The Irani Cup will run from October 1 to 5.

The Plate division has been reintroduced in all one-day competitions including the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy.

Until last season, the knockout games included the standard quarterfinal, semifinal and final

stage but from this season, the qualified team will get three extra matches in Super League.

Top team from group A and B will meet in the final. The bottom placed six teams from the last season will form the plate group. The SMAT will be played from November 26 to December 18.

Additionally for all the white ball tournaments, the head to head clause for qualification has been done away with and net run rate will determine which team advances in the competition if they have equal points and wins.

The likely venues for the white-ball series against New Zealand from January 11 to 31, 2026 include Hyderabad (first ODI, Jan 11), Rajkot (second ODI, Jan 14), Indore (third ODI, Jan 18), Nagpur (first T20, Jan 21), Ranchi (second T20, Jan 23), Guwahati (third T20, Jan 25), Visakhapatnam (fourth T20, Jan 28), Thiruvananthapuram (fifth T20, Jan 31). (PTI)

Gilgeous-Alexander goes wild in 4th, Thunder rally to top Pacers 111-104 and tie finals

INDIANAPOLIS, June 14: Game on the line, season quite possibly on the line, the Oklahoma City Thunder had only one place to turn.

They went to the MVP.

And Shai Gilgeous-Alexander delivered, scoring 15 of his 35 points in the final 4:38, capping Oklahoma City's rally from a 10-point, second-half deficit and sealing a 111-104 win over the Indiana Pacers 111-104 on Friday night to tie the NBA Finals at two games apiece.

"He definitely showed who he is tonight," Thunder coach Mark Daigneault said.

It was all SGA for OKC down the stretch. The Thunder closed

the game on a 16-7 run; he had all but one of those points.

"We played with desperation to end the game," Gilgeous-Alexander said, "and that's why we won."

Jalen Williams added 27, Alex Caruso had 20 and Chet Holmgren finished with 14 points and 15 rebounds for the Thunder. They did it the hard way — with a season-low three 3-pointers, and no assists from Gilgeous-Alexander for the first time all season.

Pascal Siakam scored 20 for Indiana, which got 18 from Tyrese Haliburton and 17 from Obi Toppin.

Game 5 of the series — now

essentially a best-of-three — is at Oklahoma City on Monday night, with the Thunder now having reclaimed home-court advantage.

"This kind of a challenge is going to have extreme highs and extreme lows," Pacers coach Rick Carlisle said. "This is a low right now and we're going to have to bounce back from it."

The Thunder basically saved their realistic chance at winning the title. Teams with a 3-1 series lead in the NBA Finals have gone on to win the championship 37 times in 38 past chances. The Pacers looked well on their way to being the 39th team with such an edge, before Gilgeous-Alexander saved the day.

"We knew it when we woke up this morning: 3-1 is a lot different than 2-2 going back home," Gilgeous-Alexander said.

The Pacers came out flying, scoring 20 points in the first 4:59 — only the second time all season the Thunder gave up so many so quickly. They led by as many as nine early, but were unable to pull away.

And things got chippy for the first time in the series: Toppin was called for a Flagrant 1 on Caruso midway through the second quarter, then Toppin was the recipient of a Flagrant 1 from Lu Dort just before the half. The Pacers closed on a 15-6 run, taking a 60-57 lead into the break. (AP)

Abhijeet Gupta wins fourth Delhi Open title

NEW DELHI, June 14: Indian Grandmaster Abhijeet Gupta clinched his fourth Delhi GM Open title, scoring 8.5 points out of 10 at the Asia's prestigious event.

Gupta, 36, delivered a flawless campaign, remaining unbeaten across 10 rounds. His decisive round 9 victory over Belarusian GM Mihail Nikitenko gave him the edge, and a final-round draw against IM Aronyak Ghosh secured the title outright.

Nikitenko (2520, Belarus) finished second with eight points, edging Indian GM Diptayan Ghosh (2573) on tiebreaks.

Ghosh claimed third place, having impressed with sharp play and a key final round win over GM Karthik Venkataraman.

Despite also finishing on eight points, IM Aronyak Ghosh and GM Aditya S Samant settled for fourth and fifth respectively on tiebreaks.

The top 10 featured a compelling mix of seasoned professionals and rising stars.

Vietnam's GM Nguyen Duc Hoa secured sixth place with 7.5 points, followed by India's top seed GM SL Narayanan in seventh. Armenian GMs Mamikon Gharibyan and Manuel Petrosyan finished eighth and ninth respectively, both with 7.5 points.

Rounding off the top 10 was Kyrgyzstan's IM Tologon Tegin Semetei, who also ended with 7.5 points - highlighting the tournament's diverse and competitive field. (PTI)

TVS's Aishwarya Pissay eyes victory in INRC Round-2

NASHIK, June 14: Petronas TVS Racing's Aishwarya Pissay, India's only FIM World Cup winner and a three-time world champion, is all set to continue her charge in Round 2 of the 2025 MRF MoGrip FMSCI National Rally Championship for two-wheelers here on Sunday.

The race is being promoted by Godspeed Racing and organised by AW Events.

Brimming with confidence after a dominant win in Round 1 at Indore last month, the 2019 FIM Baja World Cup Ladies Champion and 11-time national title holder is on track to secure a record seventh national rally title. Fresh from her international campaign, where she secured second overall finish in her class at both Baja Aragon and Hungary, Aishwarya currently holds third spot in the 2025 FIM Bajas World Cup standings, making her return to domestic competition even more impactful. "This round being a tarmac rally, it's going to test both precision and endurance," said Aishwarya. "I've focused heavily on tarmac training in the lead-up and I'm ready to go all out. Winning at Indore was the perfect season opener and I want to carry that momentum forward and strengthen my grip on the championship," added Aishwarya, who is supported by Petronas TVS Racing, along with Micro Labs, IIFL and Surana College. (PTI)

SA captain Bavuma says WTC win squashes doubters of the team's credentials

LONDON, June 14: Their historic World Test Championship triumph has squashed the doubts about the team's credentials, asserted an elated South Africa captain Temba Bavuma, dismissing suggestions that they did not face quality rivals en route the title clash.

South Africa's 27-year-long wait for an ICC trophy ended on Saturday when they beat Australia in the final by five wickets.

It is their maiden WTC title and their first ICC trophy since winning the ICC Knock-Out Trophy (now ICC Champions Trophy) back in 1998.

The Proteas reached the WTC final after series wins over Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Pakistan, defeat against New Zealand and draw against India in the 2023-25 cycle.

"We got ourselves into the

final, there were doubters on the route we took, this win squashes that," Bavuma said at the post-match presentation.

"It's been a special couple of days, at some points it felt like we were in SA. We prepared hard, we came in with a lot of belief and lot of doubters, glad we played well," he added.

Rabada dismissed suggestions that the Proteas reached the WTC final after playing weak opponents.

"We deserve to be here. People said we haven't faced strong oppositions which is rubbish. We beat Australia this time, had to be on our A game," he said.

"Can't describe in words how I feel. Extremely happy, we've planned well and worked hard. Thanks to everyone for the support, last four days felt like a home game."

Despite boasting world-class

talent over the years, South Africa have struggled to clinch ICC trophies, falling short or 'choking' at crucial stages. Bavuma hoped that WTC title would change all that.

"We've been relentless, getting to the doorstep consistently and experienced heartache, the sun's been with us. Hopefully, this win is one of many," said the captain who battled an apparent hamstring strain to make 66 and stitch 147 runs for the third wicket with centurion Aiden Markram (136) during SA's second innings to lay the foundation of the win.

"Special moment for us and people back home, probably will sink in a couple of days. The energy was there, I think us as a team have been wanting this."

Besides Markram, fast bowler Kagiso Rabada (nine wickets in

two innings) also played a major role in the win.

"KG is a massive player, a couple of days ago I went to the Hall of Fame inductees, I think he'll be on there in a few years. Came into the game under controversy and did what he did," Bavuma said, referring to Rabada's suspension after testing positive for a recreational drug before the WTC final.

"Aiden is unbelievable, people have questioned his place, but he has character. He played in true Aiden fashion, he and Rabada have carried the character." The SA captain said the title win was "an opportunity for us as a nation, divided as we are, to unite."

"You can be rest assured we'll celebrate as one."

Player of the match Markram said "it's one of the most special days" of his career.

"Haven't scored more important runs. Weird how things worked out after a duck in the first innings. Need a bit of luck, spent some time in the middle and find runs, glad things worked out. Reception will stick out. "Lord's is the place every Test cricketer wants to play. To play a final here is incredibly special. Plenty of SA fans who've made through, plenty at home too, it's one of the most special days," he said.

Asked how he maintained the tempo in the second innings after going into the shell in the first, he said, "It's always one side of the sword - to absorb, but when you look at the wicket and quality of the bowling, you have x amount of balls to face and have to be try and maximise scoring off those balls."

On captain Bavuma staying to bat despite injury, Markram

said, "To be honest, a lot of it came from him. He's led us from the front for the last two-three years."

"He didn't want to walk off the field yesterday, found a way to score really important runs, played an innings lot of people will remember."

Australia captain Pat Cummins, who lifted the ICC mace in 2023 after beating India, said reaching the WTC final was a huge achievement.

"It's the pinnacle, I love Test cricket. Huge achievement to make the final, one-game shootout is a spectacle, didn't end up on the right side but it's been a great week."

He said SA were deserved winners as they kept themselves in the game throughout.

"Aiden and Temba didn't give us a chance. SA showed why they're here and are deserved

winners, they kept themselves in the game throughout.

"Things can change quickly, but it was a bridge too far. Few things we didn't do right. Didn't bat out the opposition after a decent first-innings lead. There are concerns in the top-seven, guys have performed well in the last two years. Bowlers did well in the first two days. We gave everything a chance, Lyon bowled particularly well but didn't get a wicket."

Teary-eyed South Africa spinner Keshav Maharaj said the win was a special one for the team and for the country.

"It's special, it's an honour to lift the cup for everyone out here and back home. It's what the country's about, the unity among everyone in the last five days. We're very grateful, as a team as a nation, as a proud country." (PTI)

South Africa wins the World Test Championship, its first major cricket title in 27 years



LONDON, June 14: South Africa won the World Test Championship against titleholder Australia by five wickets after knocking off the last 69 runs required on the fourth morning of the final on Saturday. The Proteas achieved their first major cricket title in 27 years, sparking celebrations at Lord's.

They moved from a portentous 213-2 overnight to 282-5, the second-highest successful run chase in the 141-year test history at the home of cricket.

Australia didn't give up the WTC race easily, relentlessly attacking the stumps and pressuring a South Africa side with an infamous history of blowing winning positions on

big ICC stages.

But South Africa was staunch and composed — only three boundaries in more than two hours — and lost only three wickets on Saturday in an air of inevitability.

"We've come a long way as a team, as a country," an emotional Keshav Maharaj said. "We always say we want to be good people and play good. We're moving in the right direction as a cricketing nation."

"After 25 years of pain, to finally get over the line is super emotional. We're so grateful to have Temba (Bavuma, captain) to get us over the line. Diversity is our strength, so to see the crowd, they stand for the meaning of

our rainbow nation. To lift the trophy is going to unite the nation even more."

The desperate Australians used up all of their three reviews in vain within the first 90 minutes but fought to the end. They took the new ball but were still blunted by a flat pitch. Markram was the colossus Australia could not topple until it was too late.

The opener resumed the day on 102 and was out for 136 when only six more runs were needed. He spent six hours, 23 minutes in the middle. About 15 minutes later, Kyle Verreynne broke the tension by hitting the winning run, a drive into the covers.

Markram and captain Temba Bavuma set

up the victory with an unbeaten and chanceless partnership of 143 runs the day before. They could not finish what they started, adding only four runs together before Bavuma edged Pat Cummins behind for 66, one more than he had overnight.

Tristan Stubbs was castled on 8 by Mitchell Starc with 41 runs needed and South Africa was too close to the finish to be denied.

But Markram couldn't have the pleasure himself. With six runs needed to win, he was caught at midwicket by Travis Head off Josh Hazlewood.

Australia didn't celebrate. Instead, players slapped Markram on the back and congratulated him on his match-winning knock as the Lord's crowd stood and applauded.

They stood again when the end finally came, a rout of red-hot Australia with five sessions to spare. South Africa's only previous global trophy was the Champions Trophy's precursor in 1998. Before then and since, its history on the ICC's biggest stages has been infamously cruel.

The venues and dates of their most heartbreaking losses include Birmingham 1999, Dhaka 2011, Auckland 2015, Kolkata 2023 and Bridgetown 2024. But London 2025 will go down as one of the greatest days in South Africa sports, when its cricket underdogs grabbed the advantage and didn't let go against one of the great Australia test sides.

South Africa was criticized before the final for its supposedly easier road — it didn't face Australia or England in a series in the 2023-25 WTC cycle — but it has won eight straight tests, its second longest streak in history, and half of them away from home. (AP)

Dominant Arya-Arjun pair wins World Cup Gold beating Olympic Champions from China

MUNICH, June 14: India's Arya Borse and Arjun Babuta dished out a thoroughly dominant performance and outplayed China's reigning Olympic and world champion duo Zifei Wang and Lihao Sheng 17-7 to win the gold medal in the 10m air rifle mixed team event of the ISSF World Cup here on Saturday.

Arya and Arjun were in fine fettle when it mattered the most to win the top prize in the prestigious tournament, not giving the Chinese an inch.

The Indian duo entered the gold medal round after aggregating 635.2 in the qualifications, just .7 behind Wang and Sheng (635.9), which is also the qualifications world record.

Arya had paired with Rudranksh Patil to win the 10m air rifle mixed team silver in the World Cup in Lima, Peru, earlier this year.

The other Indian pair in the event, Elavenil Valarivan and Ankush Jadhav finished sixth in the qualifications with 631.8.

Norway's Jeanette Hegg Duestad and Jon-Hermann Hegg bagged the bronze medal with a 16-14 victory over the UAS's Sagen Maddalena and Peter Matthew Fiori.

This is India's fourth medal and second gold in the ongoing World Cup after Suruchi Singh's yellow medal and the two bronze won by Sift Kaur Samra and Elavenil in their respective individual events earlier this week.

In the 10m air pistol mixed team event, the combo of Manu Bhaker and Aditya Malra ended sixth with a combined total of 577 in the qualifications, while the Suruchi Singh and Varun Tomar was placed 10th with 576.

Taking aim on the concluding day of the tournament, Arjun (317.7) and Arya (317.5) shot a combined 635.2 to finish second behind Sheng and Wang, who topped the 58-team field with a world record (also junior) score of 635.9. In the final, Arya began with a 9.8 to give the Chinese pair an early lead (0-2), but in the next seven series of single shots, the Indians shot only one shot below 10.5 (a 10.2) to take a huge 13-3 lead after the eighth series.

The top Chinese pair then managed to win the next two narrowly in the race to 16, but it was again business as usual from the 11th series, as Arya and Arjun fired a couple of 10.5 and 10.7s respectively, to get to match point.

In the final 12th series, while Arjun cancelled out Sheng with identical 10.1s, Arya outgunned Wang 10.6-10.4, to give India a memorable gold medal. (PTI)



Chopra aims top spot at Paris DL on June 20 after back-to-back second-place finishes

PARIS, June 14: Neeraj Chopra will be eyeing the first major title of the season after finishing second in back-to-back competitions as the superstar Indian javelin thrower returns to the Paris Diamond League after eight years to compete in a top-class field on June 20.

The 27-year-old Indian had skipped the Paris DL last year in order to focus on the Olympic Games in the French capital. He last competed in the Paris DL in 2017 as a

junior world champion and had finished fifth with a throw of 84.67m.

The Paris organisers are yet to publish the full list of competitors but they announced that Chopra and two-time world champion Anderson Peters of Grenada would be among five entrants who have already crossed the 90m mark.

"Javelin throwers Neeraj Chopra, a double Olympic medalist, and Anderson Peters, a double world champion, are among the

five entrants who have already crossed the 90m line in a competition that promises to be a crazy one," the organisers said.

Peters had finished third behind Chopra in both Doha Diamond League on May 16 and Janusz Kusocinski Memorial meet in Poland on May 23.

Chopra began the 2025 season with a title in an invitational meet at Potchefstroom, South Africa, which was a minor -- category F -- event with a throw of 84.52m. He then

finally breached the elusive 90m mark with a throw of 90.23m at Doha Diamond League on May 16 though German Julian Weber won the top spot with 91.06m.

A week later, the double Olympic medalist again finished second behind Weber at the Janusz Kusocinski Memorial meet in Poland with a best throw of 84.14m, which was a below-par show considering his high standards, though the competition was held under chilly and overcast conditions. (PTI)

Pranati Nayak wins bronze in vault at Asian Gymnastics Championships

NEW DELHI, June 14: Indian gymnast Pranati Nayak clinched a bronze medal in the vault final at the 12th Senior Women's Asian Artistic Gymnastics Championships in Jecheon, South Korea, on Saturday.

The 30-year-old, who had earlier claimed a bronze at the FIG World Cup in Antalya, Turkey, in March this year, scored 13.466 to finish third on the podium.

China's Yihan Zhang bagged the gold with a score of 13.650, while Vietnam's Thi Quynh Nhu Nguyen took silver with 13.583.

Young Indian gymnast Protistha Samanta also impressed, narrowly missing out on a medal with a fourth-place finish after registering a score of 13.016 at the Jecheon Gymnasium.

With this performance, Nayak secured her third medal in the continental championships, surpassing veteran gymnast Dipa Karmakar's tally of two. She had previously won bronze in the vault at the 2019 edition in Ulaanbaatar and again in 2022 in Doha.

Karmakar had won her first continental medal, a vault bronze, at Hiroshima in 2015 and followed it up with a gold in Tashkent earlier this year.

Nayak, a Tokyo 2020 Olympian, had posted a strong first attempt in the final, scoring 13.666, but a lower second vault of 12.866 affected her overall score.

She had entered the final after placing fourth in the qualification round with a score of 13.083. Protistha also made it to the medal round, qualifying with a commendable 12.916. (PTI)

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