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Cabinet approves major land allotments, panchayat rule amendments and council ordinances

Moran, Matak Council ordinances cleared

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, June 27: In a significant meeting held under the chairmanship of Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, the Assam Cabinet on Friday took a series of key decisions aimed at infrastructure development, empowerment of socio-cultural institutions, and strengthening of local governance and autonomous councils.

The decisions, which were shared through an official statement following the Cabinet meeting, reflect the state government's ongoing commitment to inclusive development, institutional reform, and community upliftment.

One of the major highlights of the meeting was the Cabinet's approval for allotment of government land to 942 infrastructure projects under various state departments.

These projects fall under the ambit of Mission Basundhara 3.0 and are located in urban areas across 11 districts



of Assam.

The initiative is expected to ease land acquisition hurdles and accelerate the pace of public infrastructure works such as schools, hospitals, administrative buildings, and other development-oriented facilities.

Among the districts receiving the highest number of land allotments were Dhemaji with 207 projects, Lakhimpur with 175, and Barpeta with 170, followed by Bongaigaon with 152 and Dhubri with 140.

In a parallel move, the Cabinet also

approved the allotment and subsequent settlement of government land in favour of 1,977 non-government institutions across 12 districts.

These include educational, religious, and socio-cultural organisations that play a vital role in shaping the social fabric and community welfare.

The districts receiving the largest number of approvals were Barpeta (296), Biswanath (261), Tinsukia (252), Charaideo (242), and Nalbari (233).

The land allotment under Mission Basundhara 3.0 for these institutions is expected to not only regularise their standing but also empower them to expand their community services.

The Cabinet also took a major step towards reforming the governance process at the grassroots level by approving amendments to certain provisions of the Assam Panchayat (Constitution) (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Finally, ONGC well capped after 16 days

SIVASAGAR, June 27: ONGC on Friday successfully capped the blowout of its crude oil well in Assam's Sivasagar district after 16 days of gas leakage from there, Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri said.

The Petroleum and Natural Gas minister said the capping was done without any injury, casualty or fire.

"ONGC has successfully capped the blowout of well RDS#147A at 1115 hours hrs today. This blowout started on 12th June and has been capped successfully within shortest possible time following all the best practices," Puri said in a post on X.

He said the crisis management team of Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) along with the international well control experts "finally brought the curtains down on the gas well blowout through meticulous planning and concerted efforts in a safe manner, without any injury, casualty or fire, testifying the competency of crisis management".

Puri also thanked Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma and state government officials for their support to the team on the ground.

The blowout took place on June 12 at Well



No RDS 147A of Rig No SKP 135 of Rudrasagar oil field of ONGC at Barichuk in Bhatiapar. A private firm, SK Petro Services, was operating the well on behalf of the state-run Maharatna company.

Around 350 families were evacuated from the neighbouring areas as a safety measure, with the state government announcing ex-gratia of ₹ 25,000 to each of the affected families.

Sarma, thanking Puri and ONGC for their capping efforts, also acknowledged the perseverance and cooperation of local people in the operation. "Thank you Hon'ble Minister Shri @HardeepSPuri ji for your exceptional leadership and persistence (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Assam govt to tighten Aadhaar, late birth certificate issuance rules to check infiltration: Himanta

GUWAHATI, June 27: The Assam government is mulling stricter Aadhaar card issuance rules for adults as part of its efforts to curb illegal immigration from Bangladesh, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said on Friday. Toughened Aadhaar card issuance rules will also further boost the state government's efforts in detecting and deporting illegal foreigners, he added.

The government is also planning to tighten guidelines for issuing late birth certificates, with district commissioners to be made the authority for allowing such documents in the future.

"Today, we discussed a proposal where Aadhaar cards for adults will be issued only after thorough veri-

fication. The Cabinet will take a decision in this regard soon," he said while addressing a press conference after chairing a Cabinet meeting.

Highlighting that nearly 100 per cent of adults in Assam already have Aadhaar cards, Sarma added, "If any adult applies for an Aadhaar card, we will conduct a thorough check. Only the District Commissioner will be authorised to approve its issuance once the new rules come into effect." "This will ensure that no illegal immigrant can obtain an Aadhaar card, and we can track and deport them easily," he said.

He said eligible adult citizens who may have been left out of Aadhaar enrollment for (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

'No directive in HC order to reinstate dismissed APSC officers'

GUWAHATI, June 27: Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Friday said the recent Gauhati High Court directive in the cash-for-jobs APSC scam did not instruct the state government to reinstate the dismissed tainted officers.

He claimed that the order had only asked for issuance of 'non-stigmatised' discharge letters for these former officers so they can seek future employment.

"We examined the HC order yesterday. There is no directive to reinstate the dismissed officers in their jobs," Sarma said at a press conference, referring to the court order of June 20 in a case relating to the Assam Public Service Commission (APSC) job scam.

"We have been only told that the discharge order be made non-stigmatised one, with no mention of the APSC or anything, and that they were (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

State-level event marks World MSME Day 2025

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, June 27: The Government of Assam celebrated World MSME Day 2025 with a state-level event aimed at promoting entrepreneurship and inclusive growth.

The event was organised by the Assam Small Industries Development Corporation Ltd (ASIDC), under the Department of Industries, Commerce & Public Enterprises, in association with FICCI FLO Northeast, Assam Startup, and the Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship (IIE), at the ITC Centre, Machkhowa, Guwahati, on June 27.

According to an official statement, the programme aimed to showcase the achievements of Assam's MSME sector and to deliberate on strategies for its sustained growth and competitiveness.

The event witnessed participation from senior government officials, financial institutions, industry bodies and over 800 entrepreneurs, most of whom were



women. In her welcome address, Rashmi Manchanda, Chairperson of FICCI FLO Northeast, set the tone for the day.

P Vijay Bhaskar Reddy, IAS, Managing Director of ASIDC, delivered the opening remarks and highlighted the MSME sector's vital role in employment generation and inclusive industrial growth.

He elaborated on the Raising and Accelerating MSME Per-

formance (RAMP) scheme, a World Bank-supported initiative of the Ministry of MSME that aims to strengthen the MSME ecosystem in Assam by enhancing access to markets, finance, technology, and capacity building through institutional reforms.

Oinam Sarankumar Singh, IAS, Commissioner of Industries and Commerce, presented an overview of the MSME landscape in (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Five Bangladesh nationals, two Indian touts arrested



AGARTALA, June 27: Five Bangladeshi nationals, including four women, were arrested in West Tripura district over the past 24 hours for illegally entering India, police said on Friday.

Two Indian nationals accused of aiding them were also taken into custody.

On Friday, two Bangladeshi women and an Indian tout were arrested from Northgate area under East Agartala police station.

Acting on a tip-off, a police team detained the trio and questioned them.

"During interrogation, the two women failed to produce valid travel documents and later admitted they had crossed over from Bangladesh," East Agartala police station officer-in-charge Rana Chatterjee said.

The Indian tout, identified as Krishna Debnath from Nutanbazar in South Tripura district, was arrested for facilitating their illegal entry, he added. All three were produced in court, (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Emphasis on sustainable mining in natural resource-rich North East at conclave

GUWAHATI, June 27: Coal and Mines minister G Kishan Reddy Friday emphasised on Centre-state synergy to drive investments and innovation while ensuring sustainable mining.

Inaugurating the second North East Mining Ministers' Conclave at Sonapur, on the outskirts of Guwahati, he posted on X: "The Conclave marks a key step towards sustainable mining, ease of doing business, and enhancing centre-state synergy."

"It is expected to catalyse future investments, innovation, and inclusive growth in the North Eastern Region," Reddy added.

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, also present on the occasion, outlined the state's focus on the mining sector along with sustainability and principle of circular economy.

"The North East region holds immense potential in the mining sector with abundant availability of natural resources. At the 2nd Northeast Mining Ministers' Conclave, an excellent platform to deliberate on the future of mining in the region, balancing with environmental needs, Ministers from all NE states and industry stakeholders have converged to chart a new way," Sarma said in

a post on the micro-blogging site.

"The focus is on sustainability and zero waste mining aligning with the principle of circular economy, as envisioned by Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri @narendramodiji on development aligned with the environment," he added.

Sarma said that Assam has recently seen over ₹ 46,000 crore of commitment in this sector and a State Mineral Exploration Trust to boost minor mineral exploration has been approved.

"We are also opening up the sector and bringing in required reforms to sustainably exploit the opportunities that lie in the region," he added. The Chief Minister's Office (CMO), sharing details of Sarma's speech, posted on X that the Assam Mineral Policy is currently in its final stages and may be introduced within the coming month.

He outlined key steps to unlock Assam's mining potential, emphasising on boosting investments, signing MoUs, initiating community projects and advancing rare earth exploration across the state, the CMO added.

Union MoS for Coal and Mines Satish Chandra Dubey, among others, also attended the opening of the two-day meet. (PTI)

Rail services to Tripura, Mizoram, Manipur, south Assam remain disrupted for 5th day

GUWAHATI, June 27: Rail services to Tripura, Mizoram, Manipur and parts of southern Assam remained suspended for the fifth consecutive day on Friday, even as the Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) claimed steady progress in restoring the affected Lumding-Badarpur hill section.

NFR general manager Chetan Kumar Shrivastava visited the site to review the situation and assess the progress, an official statement said.

"Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) is progressing rapidly towards early restoration of the affected location between KM 108/6-8 in the Lumding-Badarpur Hill Section, which was severely impacted by multiple instances of earth slips due to heavy rainfall," it said.

Shrivastava, who visited the site to re-study the ground situation, directed that maximum manpower



and machinery be deployed to expedite the restoration process and ensure early resumption of train services.

As part of the restoration efforts, around 20,000 cubic metres of earth that came down from the hill slope are being removed for track fitting, with 14,100 cubic metres already completed.

From the track area itself, 3,000 cubic metres of earth were targeted for removal, of which 2,850 cubic metres have already been cleared, it added.

In addition, a massive 1,27,000 cubic metres of earth have been removed from vulnerable hill slopes. Drainage improvement measures are also underway, including the

construction of 600 metres of kutchha drains and the cleaning of 400 metres of existing hillside drains.

"Until restoration is completed, it has been decided to cancel/partial cancel certain trains for the safety of passengers. Passengers are requested to stay updated through official railway communication channels for further information regarding train movements and restoration of services," it added.

An NFR bulletin had said on June 23 that the train services had to be suspended as tracks were rendered unsafe owing to "improper" road repair work by NHAI in the area.

"On account of boulders along with land mass falling over the railway track in the New Haflong-Jatinga Lampur section owing to improper construction work being undertaken by the NHAI for repairing of (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

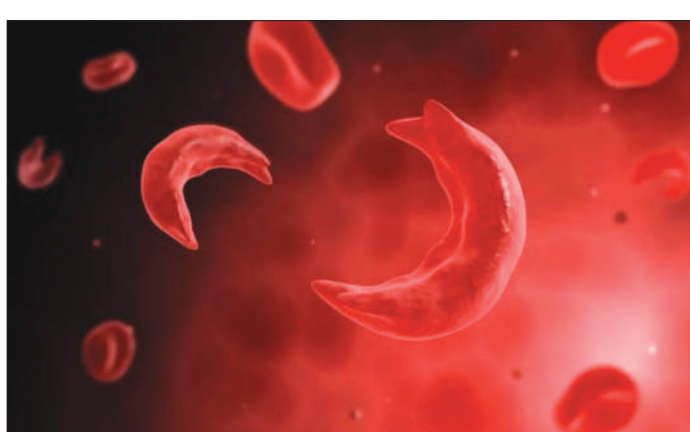
CSIR chief hails sickle cell anaemia screening in tribal belts as a major success

Over 20 lakh from tribal areas screened for sickle cell anaemia in past 8 years: CSIR DG

NEW DELHI, June 27: More than 20 lakh people from tribal areas have been screened since we started the sickle cell anaemia project eight years back, said CSIR's Director General Nallathambi Kalaiselvi, terming it among the institute's more successful missions.

Introduced in the Union Budget 2023 and launched in July the same year, the 'National Sickle Cell Anaemia Elimination Mission' is aimed at eliminating the blood disease from the country by the end of 2047.

The genetic disorder affects red blood cells, making them sickle-shaped, instead of the usual round one. Common symptoms include acute painful episodes, blocking of blood vessels and possible organ



damage.

Speaking to PTI Videos, Kalaiselvi, who is also the Secretary of Department of Scientific and Indus-

trial Research, said, "While the country started talking about sickle cell anaemia only three years back, Council of Scientific and Industrial

Research (CSIR) started addressing sickle cell anaemia eight years back, thanks to the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, who gave the funding for the first five to six years."

"It is actually one of our very visionary, successful missions, I would say," she said.

Kalaiselvi made history when she was appointed the first woman chief of CSIR -- the country's largest research and development organisation, with 37 national laboratories and over 3,400 scientists.

She explained that the sickle cell anaemia mission was divided into three parts, first being the screening and surveillance done by the Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB) in Hyderabad. "If you just see the (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Upgrade of Sukhoi jets figured in Rajnath's talks with Russian counterpart

NEW DELHI, June 27: Upgrading India's Sukhoi-30MKI fighter fleet, production of air-to-air missiles and expeditious supply of two batches of S-400 missile systems figured prominently in Defence Minister Rajnath Singh's talks with his Russian counterpart Andrey Belousov in the Chinese city of Qingdao.

The two defence ministers held a bilateral meeting on the sidelines of a conclave of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) on Thursday.

The Indian Air Force is operating around 260 Sukhoi 30-MKI jets and is looking at upgrading the fleet under an ambitious plan.

The Russian-origin Sukhoi jets played a key role in Operation Sindoor last month.

Singh and Belousov held in-depth discussions on a range of subjects covering current geopolitical situations, cross-border terrorism

and Indo-Russian defence cooperation, the defence ministry said on Friday.

The Russian defence minister highlighted the long-standing Indo-Russian relations and expressed solidarity with India on the horrendous and cowardly Pahalgam terrorist attack, it said.

"Supply of S-400 systems, Su-30 MKI upgrades, and procurement of critical military hardware in expeditious timeframes were some of the key takeaways of the meeting," the ministry said in a statement.

"It was one of the most important recent meetings between the leaders of the two nations, being held in the backdrop of Operation Sindoor and the consequent necessity of augmenting defence production, especially in critical items such as air defence, air-to-air missiles, modern capabilities, and upgrades of air platforms," it said. In his talks with Belousov, (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Himanta slams Congress for Satra land encroachment

GUWAHATI, June 27: Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Friday alleged that the previous Congress government's appeasement of illegal immigrants led to massive encroachment of over 13,000 bighas (more than 4,300 acres) of 'Satra' (Vaishnavite monastery) land in the state.

He affirmed the BJP-led ruling dispensation's commitment to reclaim the land for these Vaishnavite monasteries.

"The Congress Govt ignored sentiments of the indigenous people while pandering to their illegal immigrant vote bank, which led to 922 Satra lands being encroached upon," Sarma said in a post on X.

He said thousands of bighas of Satra land have been encroached across major centres, including 7,137 bighas (2,355.21 acres) in Barpeta, 2,583.79 (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

FROM GUNS TO GILLS

How fish farming is transforming former Naxalites in Jharkhand

GUMLA, June 27: Former insurgents in western Jharkhand are trading guns for fishing nets under a central government scheme that has helped transform a once violence-torn region and contributed to its removal from a list of Naxalite-affected areas.

Jyothi Lakra, 41, was once part of a Naxalite group before abandoning the Left-wing insurgency in 2020. Today, he runs a fish feed mill that earned him ₹ 8,00,000 in net profit last year under the Centre's Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY) scheme.

"There were no shops selling fish feed nearby. Villagers had to travel 150 km to buy fish feed," said Lakra, who received ₹ 18 lakh grant to set up his mill in Gumla district's Basia block. "So I decided to set up a fish feed mill," he told PTI.

The PMMSY scheme, launched in 2020-21 with joint central and state implementation, has trained 157 individual beneficiaries in Gumla district over four years. About 25 per cent of the 8,000-9,000 families in the district now engaged in fish farming were former Naxalite supporters or participants, according to District Fishery Officer Kusumlata.

Gumla district was removed from the Union Home Ministry's list of Naxalite-affected areas in May 2025, alongside Ranchi district, marking a significant decline in Left-wing extremism in the re-



gion. The transformation is stark in areas where "eight out of ten families" once supported what they called a "revolutionary" way of life, according to local officials. Deserted villages have been repopulated, schools and hospitals reopened, and agricultural activity resumed.

Ishwar Gop, 42, another former Naxalite who joined the anti-Maoist Shanti Sena group, now harvests eight quintals of fish annually worth ₹ 2,50,000 from a government pond he leases for ₹ 1,100 per three-year period.

"I make a profit of ₹ 1,20,000 after expenses," said Gop, who owns 25 acres of farmland but found fish farming more profitable than traditional agriculture.

The fish farming initiative began in 2009 when State Fishery Extension Officer Mugda Kumar Topo

was posted in the region despite security concerns.

"It was difficult to enter Basia block of Gumla district as Naxal activities were at their peak," said Topo, now based in state capital Ranchi. "After speaking to 50-odd families, a pilot was launched."

The government leased 22 tanks to interested families, including one in a remote forest area that required convincing a former Naxalite to operate due to security fears.

Om Prakash Sahu, an active Naxal supporter until 2007, now operates six fish ponds and harvests 40 quintals annually. In 2024, he received assistance for three ponds with advanced Recirculatory Aquaculture System technology. The scheme has created a

"three times multiplier effect" in local employment generation and helped reduce migration from the region, according to government data. Lakhan Singh, 51, a former Naxal supporter with 150 acres, shifted from paddy cultivation to fish farming across five ponds on his property.

"Fish farming is much better than paddy cultivation. Each pond is a revenue generator to pay for my children's school education," Singh said.

The district has about 4,000 privately owned ponds and 360 government-owned ponds across 12 blocks.

While Gumla and Ranchi have been removed from the Naxalite-affected list, West Singhbhum remains the most-affected district in Jharkhand. Districts, including Bokaro, Chatra, Garhwa, Giridih, Khunti, Lohardaga, and Seraikela Kharsawan are considered partially affected.

The Naxalite insurgency, also known as Left-Wing Extremism, has affected parts of eastern and central India for decades, with insurgents claiming to fight for the rights of tribal communities and against economic inequality.

The success in Gumla demonstrates how targeted development programmes can provide economic alternatives to insurgency, contributing to broader counterterrorism efforts in the region. (PTI)

Contd. from Page 1

Moran, Matak Council ordinances

Rules, 1995. A key feature of this amendment is the proposal to change the method of reservation for the offices of President and Vice President of Zilla Parishads. Instead of a fixed rotational method, the reservation for Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST), and women candidates will now be determined through a lottery system. However, Zilla Parishads that have already had reservations through rotation or lottery in the previous term will be excluded from the current draw. Importantly, the lottery will be conducted in a public, transparent manner in the presence of political party representatives, administrative officials, and other stakeholders. This move is aimed at ensuring equitable opportunity and fairness for all constituencies with SC and ST representation. In another set of decisions focused on the rights and development of indigenous communities, the Cabinet approved the Moran Autonomous Council (Amendment) Ordinance, 2025.

This ordinance seeks to amend both the preamble and core provisions of the Moran Autonomous Council Act, 2020. The changes are expected to enhance governance mechanisms and accelerate the socio-economic uplift of the Moran community. Along similar lines, the Cabinet also passed the Matak Autonomous Council (Amendment) Ordinance, 2025, to revise the Matak Autonomous Council Act, 2020.

The amendment aims to strengthen institutional frameworks for the development of the Matak community. These decisions, taken together, represent a comprehensive push by the state government to support infrastructure growth, uphold the rights of traditional institutions, empower marginalised communities, and enhance grassroots governance. The Cabinet's initiatives under Mission Basundhara 3.0 are particularly aimed at providing clarity and security of land ownership, which has long been a sensitive and crucial issue in Assam.

By linking land reforms to broader social, cultural, and developmental goals, the government hopes to address both administrative challenges and longstanding community aspirations.

Finally, ONGC well

in sealing the gas leak at #RDS147A, Sivasagar- which has been a great cause of concern for all of us," he said in a post on X. He also acknowledged the tireless efforts put in by the ONGC team and members of the state administration. "But above all, my deepest gratitude to the brave men and women of Sivasagar, especially those residing in the affected areas, for displaying extraordinary levels of perseverance and extending unstinted cooperation with all concerned agencies over the last two weeks," the chief minister added.

Sharing details of the capping process, an ONGC statement said, "At the break of dawn, ONGC's Crisis Management Team (CMT), along with experts from Cudd and local operations teams, commenced the critical operation to safely remove the damaged Blowout Preventer (BOP) from the wellhead."

The effort was carried out with high precision and coordination to ensure stability and prevent any imbalance or toppling during the lifting process. Once the BOP was safely removed, the pre-positioned capping stack, prepared at the staging area, was carefully and accurately placed onto the wellhead. This pivotal action redirected the gas flow securely to the top of the capping stack, ensuring containment and control, the statement said. The capping stack was firmly installed and secured, following which the BOP was successfully closed, effectively bringing an end to the gas discharge from Well RDS#147A, it added.

Subsequent steps in the well control roadmap will now be taken up as per operational protocols.

The operation was executed with utmost safety, without a single injury, fatality or incident of fire, and ONGC maintained full transparency throughout the operation, issuing daily press releases over the fortnight to keep all stakeholders informed, the statement said. (PTI)

'No directive in HC order

dismissed for unsatisfactory performance. The court has asked for it so that they can seek employment elsewhere in the future," he claimed. Sarma said the new discharge letters would be given to the civil, tax and other service holders. As the tainted Assam Police Service (APS) officers had not completed their probation period at the time of dismissal, the court has asked the government to take them back and complete departmental proceedings within three months, leaving it on the government to decide whether to retain them or dismiss them after that, the CM said.

"We are examining whether we have to move the Supreme Court with regards to the APS part," he added. He maintained that the HC order has actually "closed all doors" for the tainted officers and said, "I have heard that the dismissed officers may now go to the apex court as this order doesn't help them in any way." The APS's cash-for-jobs came to light in 2016 and over 70 people, including its former chairman Rakesh Kumar Paul and 57 civil service officials, were arrested during the course of investigation by police. (PTI)

Assam govt to tighten Aadhaar

various reasons will still have the opportunity to apply, with the Deputy Commissioner designated as the issuing authority. Sarma added that a similar tightening of procedures for obtaining birth certificates at a later stage will also be implemented, with the DC designated as the issuing authority in such cases. "There are many instances where a person applies for birth certificate years later, especially since it is becoming increasingly mandatory under various government rules. In such cases also, the DC will go through the claim," he said.

The chief minister maintained that though the Aadhaar card is not a citizenship document per se, it is used widely for all official purposes like getting enlisted in the voter list, gas connection, opening bank account, etc. "If we can block the Aadhaar card, we can stop issuance of other documents. We have no issue with foreigners staying legally for prolonged period and getting Aadhaar card. Our problem is with illegal foreigners," he added. Sarma also maintained that tightening of rules will help in its deportation efforts.

"Last night we deported 20 more Bangladeshis as part of our ongoing efforts to detect and push back illegal infiltrators. The decision to toughen Aadhaar issuance rules will only aid our efforts in this direction," he added. Among the decisions taken at the Cabinet meeting are approval for allotment of land under "Basundhara 3.0" to various temples, 'namghars' (Vaishnavite place of worship), clubs, educational institutions and socio-cultural organisations. The council of ministers also okayed the reservation of zilla parishad president and vice-president seats for women, Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe persons on basis of lottery. (PTI)

Five Bangladesh nationals

and police sought their remand for further interrogation. In a separate incident on Thursday evening, three more Bangladeshi nationals — including two women — were apprehended from the Amtali bypass area. An Indian woman from Sepahijala district, who allegedly helped them enter Indian territory, was also arrested, police added. (PTI)

Himanta slams Congress for Satra

bighas (852.66 acres) in Nagaon, 2,757.39 bighas 909.94 acres) in Bajali and 896.76 bighas (295.94 acres) in Lakhimpur. "We are on a mission to reclaim them," the chief minister asserted. Sarma had earlier this month announced that the government will set up a permanent 'Satra Aayog' to look after the welfare of these Vaishnavite monasteries located across the state. At a meeting of the temporary Satra Aayog formed to study the issues of these historic institutions, Sarma said the permanent body of the Aayog will work to lend sustainability to the Satras.

The Aayog, formed on November 24, 2021, with AGP MLA Pradip Hazarika as its chairman and BJP MLAs Mrinal Saikia and Rupak Sarma as its members, visited 126 satras and examined the existing problems there and gave several recommendations in the report. (PTI)

Rail services to Tripura, Mizoram

road, train services over the Lumding-Badarpur hill section had to be suspended from evening hours of today in order to ensure safety of railway passengers," it said. (PTI)

Upgrade of Sukhoi jets

Singh pressed for expediting the supply of two remaining units of S-400 Triumf surface-to-air missile systems to India, it is learnt. Russia has already supplied three units of the long-range missile systems to India under a USD 5.5 billion deal. The missile systems were used extensively by the Indian Air Force during the May 7-10 military conflict with Pakistan. Singh also held separate bilateral talks with his counterparts from Belarus, Tajikistan and Kazakhstan on the margins of the SCO meet. "In his interaction with the ministers, Raksha Mantri highlighted the importance of continued engagement in defence cooperation and exploring new opportunities for collaboration in areas of technical collaboration," the defence ministry said. (PTI)

Over 20 lakh from tribal

screening and surveillance, it is a great success story for our team, headed by Dr Giriraj Chandak (at CCMB), which went to Raipur, Bilaspur and other places," Kalaiselvi said, adding that 20 lakh people have been screened so far. "They interacted with the tribal communities and provided counselling pre and post-marriage, before and during pregnancy, and also after child birth," she explained. "The second part looked at drugs and medicines that could be utilised for sickle cell anaemia. This was headed by the Indian Institute of Chemical Technology," Kalaiselvi added. The third part, involving genome sequencing and editing, was headed by the Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology, New Delhi, the 58-year-old said. Kalaiselvi said, "Now, after five to six years, we realised the great potential of coming up with a sickle cell anaemia detection kit, developed by (Chandak's) group." (PTI)

State-level event marks World

Assam, pointing to a rise in UDYAM registrations and improved policy support and institutional mechanisms. J B Ekka, IAS, Additional Chief Secretary of the Industries, Commerce & Public Enterprises Department, reiterated the government's commitment to developing the MSME sector through targeted interventions and flagship initiatives. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between the Department of Industries and Commerce and A TREDS Ltd (Invoice Mart) to facilitate digital credit access for MSMEs through the Trade Receivables Discounting System (TREDS).

The MoU was signed by Oinam Sarankumar Singh and Prakash Sankaran, MD and CEO of A TREDS Ltd. The event also featured a session titled "Entrepreneurship as Catalysts," in which Ishwar Chanabasappa Poojar, Director of IIE, emphasised the importance of entrepreneurship in building local capacity and driving inclusive economic growth. A panel discussion on "Unlocking Growth for MSMEs in the Northeast" featured representatives from organisations such as A.TREDS Ltd, NEDFi, FINER, MSMEDFO, NSIC, and DICC Kamrup (Metro). A second panel discussion, "Make in Assam - MSME Success Stories," was organised by Assam Startup and featured entrepreneurs from Fuloni LLP, Dream Hives, Svastha Samridhi, AVA Creations and AmbyGold Manorama Foods, who shared their journeys and strategies.

An interactive Q&A session followed, with entrepreneurs engaging directly with panellists. To enhance awareness, RAMP scheme brochures and MSME scheme booklets were distributed among the participants. An audio-visual presentation highlighted the objectives and achievements of the RAMP scheme and related interventions. The event concluded with a vote of thanks delivered by Pronita Barua, Senior Vice Chairperson of FICCI FLO Northeast. As stated in the official release, the Government of Assam reaffirmed its resolve to build a robust, inclusive, and resilient MSME ecosystem aligned with the vision of Aatmanirbhar Bharat.

ICI Lombard and Bajaj Allianz Life strengthen insurance awareness in Tripura

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, June 27: ICI Lombard General Insurance and Bajaj Allianz Life Insurance are intensifying efforts to raise insurance awareness in Tripura, according to an official statement.

As the lead insurers for non-life and life insurance under the State Insurance Plan, both companies have made notable progress in expanding insurance outreach across the state.

The recently concluded fifth meeting of the Tripura State Level Insurance Committee (SLIC) reviewed these efforts and reaffirmed the insurers' commitment to bridging the insurance gap.

The companies will continue to share regular updates on their initiatives, further strengthening their partnership with the state government to achieve comprehensive insurance coverage.

SLIC, which oversees insurance-related

activities in the state, has played a key role in implementing awareness programs and policy initiatives aligned with the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India's (IRDAI) 'Insurance for All by 2047' vision.

Anand Singhi, Chief of Retail & Government at ICI Lombard, said the company is working closely with the state government and local organisations to deliver need-based insurance solutions that protect and empower communities.

He added that beyond insurance, ICI Lombard is also contributing through its CSR initiatives in road safety, healthcare, and education to support families and ease the financial impact of unforeseen events.

The SLIC continues to play a crucial role in promoting financial literacy and improving access to insurance across both urban and rural areas of Tripura.

Forex reserves decline by USD 1 bn to USD 697.93 bn

MUMBAI, June 27: India's forex reserves dropped by USD 1.01 billion to USD 697.93 billion for the week ended June 20, the Reserve Bank of India said on Friday.

In the previous reporting week, the reserves had jumped by USD 2.29 billion to USD 698.95 billion. Forex reserves had touched an all-time high of USD 704.885 billion in September 2024.

For the week ended June 20, foreign currency assets, a major component of the reserves, dropped by USD 357 million to USD 589.06 billion, the data released on Friday showed.

Expressed in dollar terms, the foreign currency assets include the effect of appreciation or depreciation of non-US units like the euro, pound and yen held in the foreign exchange reserves.

The gold reserves were down by USD 573 million to USD 85.74 billion during the week, the RBI said. The Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) declined by USD 85 million to USD 18.672 billion, the apex bank said.

India's reserve position with the IMF also declined by USD 1 million to USD 4.45 billion in the reporting week, the apex bank data showed. (PTI)

Rupee rises 24 paise to close at 85.48 against US dollar

MUMBAI, June 27: The rupee rose 24 paise to close at 85.48 (provisional) against the greenback on Friday on the back of strong FII inflows and firm domestic equity markets.

Lower level of American currency index also favoured the Indian currency though an uptrend in crude oil prices capped its gain, forex traders said.

Foreign institutional investors (FIIs) purchased equities worth ₹ 12,594.38 crore on a net basis on Thursday, according to exchange data.

At the interbank foreign exchange, the rupee opened at 85.50 against the dollar and traded in the range of 85.43-85.65 before settling at 85.48 (provisional), up 24 paise from its previous close.

The local unit rose 36 paise to close at 85.72 against the US dollar on Thursday.

"FII inflows and falling dollar index allowed the

rupee to move higher. The RBI is also buying the dips to liquidate its month-end positions," Anil Kumar Bhansali, Head of Treasury and Executive Director, Finrex Treasury Advisors LLP, said.



"The Trump tariff's date of July 9 is fast approaching and... market remains gripped with uncertainty. Therefore, there is a chance of rupee hitting 86 next week," he said.

The dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, inched up 0.10 per cent to 97.24 after declining earlier in the day.

Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, went up 0.72 per cent to USD 68.22 per barrel in futures trade after declining in the previous session.

Meanwhile, in the domestic equity market, Sensex climbed 303.03 points to settle at 84,058.90, while Nifty rose 88.80 points to 25,637.80. (PTI)

Emerging cities, edge centres to give a boost to data storage infrastructure, says NES Data

NEW DELHI, June 27: Rising demand from emerging and small cities and scalable solutions like edge centres are expected to boost the data centre infrastructure in India in the coming years, a top official of data centre operator NES Data said on Friday.

Mumbai and Chennai account for around 70 per cent of India's total data centre capacity, but the future of data infrastructure lies in the rise of edge and containerised data centres, especially across Tier II cities and remote areas, NES Data founder and Managing Director Umesh Sahay said.

Pune-based NES Data is a leading infrastructure-as-a-service entity specialising in colocation services and Storage-as-a-Service. It is developing edge and containerised data centres across the country that are expected to go online by next month.

"We believe edge and containerised data centres are set to democratise data access, enabling low-latency, high-efficiency solutions for India's AI-first digital ecosystem, particularly in Tier II and remote towns and cities," Sahay said.



Such data centres will provide scalable, modular and sustainable solutions tailored for AI, real-time applications, and remote deployments, he added.

Edge data centres are smaller computer data storage facilities that are located closer to end-users, which help reduce latency and increase data processing speeds. Containerised centres, built in prefabricated, portable units, offer plug-and-play scalability, ensuring deployment in weeks and providing relocatability for flexible infrastructure.

"With data storage needs skyrocketing and investments in tra-

ditional hyperscale centres slowing due to high costs and resource constraints, India is poised for a significant surge in edge and containerised data centres, particularly in Tier II and remote towns and cities like Jaipur, Ahmedabad, Kochi, Vizag, Lucknow, Patna, and Bhubaneswar," Sahay said.

Citing studies, he stated that India's data centre industry registered a growth of 288 times in the last eight years and currently stands at USD 1.2 billion. Edge and containerised centres are likely to account for nearly 25-30 per cent of new data infrastructure by 2030 in India. (PTI)



HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, June 27: KFC India has launched a nationwide "Win Big" campaign aimed at offering customers the chance to win exciting prizes while enjoying their favourite meals.

According to an official statement, the campaign will run every weekend until July 31, 2025, across KFC restaurants in India, excluding outlets in Tamil Nadu and airport locations.

Under the offer, customers dining in or opting for self-takeaway between Friday and Sunday and placing a minimum order of ₹299 are eligible to enter a lucky draw by simply sharing their mobile number at the counter.

There is no additional fee required for participation.

Prizes include a Mahindra Thar, Apple MacBook, iPhone 16 SE, Sony Bravia Home Theatre system, and other high-value items.

Winners will be selected randomly, and the initiative is designed to enhance weekend dining experiences for KFC customers.

The company has clarified that the offer is subject to terms and conditions, which can be accessed on its official website.

The use of brand names such as Apple, Sony, and Mahindra is for identification purposes only and does not imply sponsorship or endorsement, the statement noted.

RPF observes International Day Against Drug Abuse

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, June 27: Marking the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, observed globally every year on June 26, the Railway Protection Force (RPF) of Indian Railways reiterated its commitment to combat the rising threat of narcotics smuggling through the nation's railway network.

According to an official statement, the force reaffirmed its mission to safeguard the youth and the country from the devastating impact of drug abuse, using a multi-faceted strategy under its ongoing nationwide campaign "Operation Narcos".

The RPF's observance of the day this year came amid growing global concern over drug addiction and trafficking, with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) reporting that around 296 million people used drugs in 2021—an alarming 23 per cent increase over the last decade.

In India, the railway system's vastness, accessibility, and affordability make it a frequent target for smugglers who attempt to exploit its reach for transporting narcotics across states.

Trafficers often use unreserved compartments, sleeper coaches, parcel vans, and even individual passengers as unwitting carriers, creating a complex enforcement challenge.

Despite this, the RPF has remained alert and adaptive, working consistently to close these gaps in security.

Under Operation Narcos, launched to intensify anti-narcotics operations, the RPF has made remarkable progress. In 2024 alone, the force seized narcotic substances valued at over ₹220 crore and arrested 1,388 individuals involved in drug trafficking.

The trend has continued into 2025, with seizures worth over ₹68 crore recorded in just the first four months of the year.

The official statement noted that the RPF has deployed a wide array of tools and strategies to strengthen its crackdown. Regular and surprise checks on trains, platforms,

and parcel facilities have become routine.

Special surveillance teams, undercover officers, and sniffer dog squads are stationed at high-risk locations to monitor and intercept drug trafficking attempts.

Technological support in the form of CCTV surveillance, body-worn cameras, and handheld scanners has enhanced the RPF's operational efficiency.

The force also works in close coordination with other key agencies, including the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB), Government Railway Police (GRP), state police forces, and other law enforcement bodies to share intelligence and carry out joint operations.

These collaborative efforts have proven critical in dismantling trafficking networks operating through the railway system.

Beyond enforcement, the RPF continues to place emphasis on public awareness.

Through regular outreach and sensitisation campaigns, passengers and railway employees are educated about the signs and dangers of drug trafficking and abuse. The force actively encourages citizens to remain vigilant and report suspicious activity, reminding them that the fight against narcotics is not just a law enforcement responsibility but a collective societal challenge.

The official statement underlined that while the RPF has made substantial headway in curbing the misuse of the railway network for drug smuggling, the long-term success of such efforts will depend equally on public cooperation, awareness, and proactive vigilance.

It urged the public to recognise drug trafficking not only as a criminal offence but as a profound threat to public health, youth welfare, and national integrity.

By observing the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking with this renewed call to action, the Railway Protection Force signalled its unwavering commitment to a drug-free society and reaffirmed its role as a key line of defence in the national battle against narcotics.

Initiatives include mandatory DMIT, ₹5 lakh insurance cover, and compulsory yoga training in colleges across BTR BTR govt announces new educational initiatives for student welfare

HT Correspondent

KOKRAJHAR, June 27: The government of the Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR) has announced a series of educational initiatives aimed at promoting holistic development and student welfare across academic institutions in the region.

The information was shared during a press briefing held at the Bodoland Guest House in Kokrajhar.

Executive Member Wilson Hasda and BTC Education Director Jagadish Prasad Brahma stated that under the leadership of BTR Chief Executive Member Pramod Boro, the administration has taken several progressive steps for the academic and personal growth of students in the region.

Among the key initiatives is the mandatory implementation of the Dermatoglyphics Multiple Intelligence Test (DMIT) for students



from Class 5 to 12 in both government and private institutions.

This test is intended to help students and parents identify innate

talents, learning styles, and cognitive strengths, thereby assisting in more informed academic and career decisions.

The government will also pro-

vide insurance coverage of ₹5 lakh for students enrolled in degree and postgraduate courses, offering financial protection in emergencies and ensuring greater peace of mind for families.

To further promote physical fitness, mental wellness, and discipline, yoga training will be made compulsory in all colleges under BTR.

These initiatives are part of the government's broader commitment to nurturing a secure and supportive academic environment.

Hasda also highlighted ongoing efforts for overall societal development through various human well-being programmes.

He noted the positive response to the Bodofa UN Brahma Super 50 Mission for UPSC/APSC aspirants, under which many students have availed free coaching opportunities at reputed institutions.

High-level committee conducts site survey for proposed sainik school at langvoku

HT Bureau

DIPHU, June 27: A high-level delegation comprising members of the Advisory Committee for Supervision and Monitoring of the proposed Sainik School at Langvoku, Karbi Anglong, conducted an extensive site survey of the selected location for the upcoming institution.

According to an official statement, the committee was constituted by the Government of Assam to oversee the progress of the project and ensure timely execution.

The delegation was led by Lt Gen (Retd) Rana Pratap Kalita, who is serving as Chairman of the committee.

He was accompanied by Major Gen (Retd.) Bhaskar Kalita, Brigadier SM (Retd.) Ranjit Borthakur, and Brigadier (Retd.) Palash Choudhury. Senior government officials from both the Government of Assam and the Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council (KAAC) were also

part of the team, including Pranjal Choudhury, ACS, Joint Secretary to the Government of Assam, Department of Education, and the Chief Engineer of PWD (Buildings).

Other members of the visiting team included Principal Secretary of KAAC Mukul Kumar Saikia, IAS; Deputy Secretary Ibon Teron, ACS; engineers and architects from the Public Works Department (Buildings); and officials from the Land and Revenue Department.

The team conducted a detailed review of the site plan, which was prepared by the Chief Engineer's office, and physically inspected the area where the school infrastructure is to be developed.

The proposed Sainik School, which has been sanctioned under Clause 5.1 (Annex-II) of the Memorandum of Settlement (MoS) 2021 and approved by the Ministry of Defence, Government of India, will be established on a 133-acre

plot of land allotted by the Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council.

During the survey, the committee also evaluated the site's connectivity and its proximity to essential services such as highways, airports, railways, and healthcare facilities, all of which are crucial for the functioning of a residential institution of this scale.

The visit is seen as a major step forward in the establishment of the Sainik School in Karbi Anglong, a project that holds significant promise for the region's youth.

The institution is expected to provide quality education with a strong emphasis on discipline and national service, aligning with the broader objective of nurturing future leaders and defence personnel. The committee's involvement underscores the seriousness of the initiative and the government's commitment to ensuring that the school becomes a centre of excellence in the northeastern region.

Forest Rangers' Body aids deceased guard's family

HT Correspondent

NAGAON, June 27: The Assam Forest Rangers' Association has extended financial support to the family of a forest guard who lost his life in the line of duty at Kaziranga National Park.

Jirchang Ingti, a forest guard, tragically drowned while performing his duties at the park on March 19. A team from the Assam Forest Rangers' Association, led by President Pranjal Baruah and General Secretary Shamim Akhtar, visited Ingti's residence at Dharmatol, Bokalia in Karbi Anglong district on Thursday to offer condolences and financial assistance.

The association handed over ₹50,000 to the bereaved family during the visit. Executive Member Dipon Deka and members Girish Bora, Prabhat Baruah, and Pita Singnar were also present.

The family expressed their gratitude to the association for the support, which has been widely appreciated and seen as a morale booster for forest personnel and their families.

ATSU holds citizen meeting on land rights and governance issues

HT Correspondent

MORIGAON, June 27: The central committee of the All Tiwa Students' Union (ATSU) on Friday organised a citizen meeting at Pabitora Hut in Morigaon to deliberate on the governance commission constituted under the chairmanship of Retired Justice Prasanta Kumar Deka for amending the Assam Land and Revenue Regulation, 1886.

The meeting, held under the leadership of ATSU president Prasanta Masrong and secretary Tarun Madar, saw the participation of around 200 delegates from across the district.

It unanimously resolved to demand immediate transfer of land rights to the Tiwa Autonomous Council (TAC) in areas under its jurisdiction.

The meeting also strongly opposed the inclusion of any new ethnic group in the list of reserved categories within the Tribal Belts and Blocks.

It further demanded eviction of all illegal settlers identified in ongoing surveys in these protected areas and urged the government to issue land pattas to tribal people.

Handicrafts exhibition-cum-sale begins in Nagaon

HT Correspondent

NAGAON, June 27: A handicrafts exhibition-cum-sale fair, organised by Sonaiporiya Handicraft Producer Company Ltd, was inaugurated on Friday at Bhutia Market in front of the Deputy Commissioner's Office in Nagaon.

The event has been sanctioned by the Office of the Development Commissioner (Handicraft), Ministry of Textiles, Government of India, for the cluster artisans of the Itapara and Majarati craft cluster areas.

The exhibition was inaugurated by Nagaon District Commissioner Debashish Sarma in the presence of Assistant Commissioner Tejas Agnihotri, Assistant Manager of DIC Nagaon Tapan Saha, Senior Branch Manager of Indian Bank Joydeep Roy, Accounts and Programme Officer of Mera Yuva Bharat Dhananjay Talukdar, and youth leader A S Kabir.

The exhibition-cum-sale will continue for 10 days from June 27 to July 6, 2025.

The event aims to promote local artisans and traditional handicrafts by offering them a platform to showcase and sell their handmade products. A wide range of handicraft items are on display for sale.

Tayabur Rahman, Director of Sonaiporiya Handicraft Producer Company Ltd, welcomed the dignitaries and attendees and expressed his gratitude for their presence.

Jagannath Rath Yatra celebrated with devotion and fervour

HT Bureau

DIPHU, June 27: The annual Jagannath Rath Yatra, also known as the Chariot Festival, was celebrated with great enthusiasm and religious fervour in Diphu, drawing hundreds of devotees across all age groups.

The festival, which commemorates Lord Jagannath's desire to visit his birthplace, Mathura, is one of the most significant events in the Hindu calendar.

While the grandest celebration takes place in Puri, Odisha, where the main temples of Lord Jagannath, Lord Balabhadra, and Devi Subhadra are located, the festival also holds deep significance for devotees in other parts of the country, including Diphu.

The Rath Yatra in Diphu began with morning rituals such as mangala arati and devotional singing (kirtan path) at both Barbari Mandir and ISKCON Temple in Rongthe-ang.

A large number of devotees gathered at the ISKCON Mandir from early morning to take part in the rituals and express their devotion to Lord Jagannath.

Prasad offerings made to the deity were distributed among devotees by 1 PM, and khichri was also served to the community before the chariot procession began.

With the heat wave easing by late afternoon, the Rath Yatra commenced at 4 PM from the ISKCON Temple.

The idols of Lord Jagannath, Lord Balabhadra, and Devi Subhadra were placed on the chariot, and devotees, including elders, men,

women, youth, and children, joined together to pull the ropes of the chariot in a grand display of devotion.

The procession from Rongthe-ang moved along the main road towards Diphu town, taking a route through the Forest Office Rongnihang, Joysing Doloi Auditorium, and into the Diphu market, finally reaching the designated location at Mapitung.

Another chariot procession was taken out from the Barbari Temple, which passed through the Diphu bus stand and the Super-



intendent of Police office before concluding at Jhilpar, where a temporary home had been set up for the deities.

Devotees believe that participating in the Rath Yatra or pulling the chariot brings spiritual blessings, removes negative karma, and promotes peace and good health.

The event in Diphu echoed the same spiritual sentiment, with a large turnout marking the occasion and reflecting the deep cultural and religious ties of the community to this age-old tradition.

Rio on 2-day visit to Karnataka to strengthen partnerships

HT Correspondent

DIMAPUR, June 27: Nagaland chief minister Neiphiu Rio on Friday embarked on a two-day official visit to Vijayanagar in Karnataka.

Hosted by the JSW Group, the visit aims to strengthen partnerships in sports development, industrial collaboration, and cultural engagement.

Dibrugarh University signs MoU with Geological Survey of India

HT Correspondent

DIBRUGARH, June 27: Dibrugarh University on Friday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Geological Survey of India (GSI), marking a significant step towards advancing geoscientific research and academic collaboration.

The MoU was signed in the presence of Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma; Union Minister of Coal and Mines G Kishan Reddy; Assam Minister of Mines and Minerals Kaushik Rai; Ministers of Mines and Minerals from all eight northeastern states, and other dignitaries from both the Central and State governments. The agreement is aimed at fostering co-operation in the field of geosciences.

It will facilitate the exchange of faculty and scientists between Dibrugarh University and GSI in areas of mutual interest, enabling collaborative research initiatives and promoting academic interaction between university faculty and students and GSI's professional geoscientists.

GOVT OF ASSAM OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER: BAITHALANGSO DIVISION (IRRIGATION) HAMREN (Temporary Campus at Hongkram, West Karbi Anglong, Pin-782450)

NO. EE/BDI/T/1/Part-IV/2025-26/..

Date:.....

PRESS NOTICE INVITING TENDER

The Executive Engineer, Baithalangso Division (Irrigation), Hamren on behalf of Governor of Assam invites the percentage basis rates from registered contractor of class-I, II & III of Irrigation Department as per existing norms for different Irrigation Schemes under SOPD, 2025-26 in separate Groups, under Baithalangso Division (Irrigation) Hamren, (Temporary Campus at Hongkram) under the administrative control of Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council, Diphu for the year 2025-26. Detail particulars may be seen in office of the undersigned during office hours from 27/06/2025 upto 12.00 PM of 11/07/2025.

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
Baithalangso Division (Irrigation)
Hamren

Memo No.EE/BDI/T-I/ Part-IV/2025-26/1062-A

Date 26.06.2025

Rare conjoined leaf collection by Dhubri artist Pradip Kumar Ghosh draws attention

Collection features rare fused leaves of multiple species, highlighting nature's wonders and the artist's commitment to sustainability

HT Correspondent

DHUBRI, June 27: Pradip Kumar Ghosh, a veteran artist from Dhubri, has drawn widespread attention with his exceptionally rare collection of conjoined leaves.

Known for his commitment to sustainable art, Ghosh's latest collection has generated significant public interest.

According to available information, Ghosh has spent years gathering conjoined leaves from various locations.

His collection includes fused leaves of Mango, Guava, Banyan, Kadam, Bay leaf, Sacred fig, and several other species.

The natural occurrence of conjoined leaves, in which two leaves grow in a fused form, is considered rare, making the collection particularly unique.

A resident of Dhubri, Ghosh has earned a reputation over the past decade for his



innovative work in sustainable art.

He is known for creating intricate idols using discarded materials such as sugarcane waste, old cycle tubes, plastic bot-

tles, coconut fibre, and defunct home lighting systems.

Ghosh's artistic efforts underscore the importance of recycling and environmental consciousness.

Reflecting on the significance of his collection, he said, "In Hinduism, we pray to trees, mountains, rivers, stones, snakes, animals, etc., as forms of God. Trees are the natural source of energy. They take carbon dioxide emanating from us and give oxygen required for our survival."

Ghosh's conjoined leaf collection is not only an artistic achievement but also a tribute to nature and its vital role in human life.

His work continues to serve as a message of environmental awareness and inspires the community to adopt a more respectful and thoughtful view of nature and waste materials.

No.RDB-69/15th Finance/BTC/2021-22

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Dated Kokrajhar the 26th June, 2025

Sealed tenders with a validity period of 180 (one hundred eighty) days from the date of receipt in prescribed form affixing non-refundable court fee stamps of Rs. 8.25 (Rupees eight and paise twenty five) only subsequently to be drawn up in printed F-2 form are hereby invited from the Govt. registered PWD Roads, Irrigation, Water Resources, PHE others Govt. Contractor's under Class-I (A, B, C), Class-II and Class-III category according to tender limit of eligibility for the following works and will be received in the office of the undersigned from 11.00 AM up to 2.00 pm. on 02-07-2025 and will be opened on 21-07-2025 at same place at 2.15 pm in the presence of willing contractors or their authorized agents.

Name of Dev. Block	Name of Scheme	Tender Amount (Rs.)	Earnest Money	Cost of Tender in Rs.	Time for completion in days
Rupshi Dev. Block.	Imp. of road E/F & S/G from Pandragao to Kazigaon PWD road 1 Nos. Culvert HPC	Rs. 17,00,000.00	(1% for ST, SC, OBC) & (2% for others)	Rs. 510.00	3 (Three) months

Details NIT may be seen in all working days in the office of the undersigned. Tender paper will be issued to the contractors or their authorized agent up to 12.00 Noon on all working days from 27-06-2025 to 02-07-2025 in the office of the undersigned on payment of in the form of Banker cheque/ Demand draft of nationalized Bank (Preferable SBI) duly pledged to the BDO, Rupshi Dev. Block, BTC, Kokrajhar. The Cost of tender (Non-Refundable) must be in the form of Demand Draft/ Banker Cheque of any SBI Branch drawn in favour of the Principal Secretary, BTC, Kokrajhar and payable at SBI, Kokrajhar to be deposited 0.03%.

IPR(BTC)/C/2025-26/1249

Sd/- Block Development Officer,
Rupshi Dev. Block, Rupshi

THE HILLS TIMES

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QUOTE OF THE DAY

We aim above the mark to hit the mark
—Ralph Waldo Emerson

Proposal of a trilateral bloc

Despite running the administration for almost eleven months virtually unchallenged, the interim Government in Bangladesh has not been able to achieve functional cohesion or departmental coordination even on major matters of policy. The most recent example is a controversy within the administration over the proposed new trilateral grouping, meant to promote and expand economic co-operation among China, Bangladesh and Pakistan. Only days ago, sections of the Bangladeshi print media prominently displayed the news... Some reports gleefully claimed that this initiative would cause serious concerns above all in India. Contrary to such speculation, there was hardly any official reaction in India to the announcement. As with most countries in South Asia or elsewhere, official attention was mainly focused on the major ongoing conflict involving the mighty US, along with Iran and Israel, both heavyweights in military terms in West Asia. Bangladeshi media reported that the idea for a new trilateral grouping had indeed been discussed among top officials of the countries involved at Kunming, China some time ago. However, the move was examined only at the preliminary level. There was no question of the matter being discussed officially. The major reason for this was, unlike the other parties involved, Bangladesh was being ruled only by an interim government. It was not in a position to take major policy decisions on its own. The first priority for Bangladesh was to organise free and fair general elections at the earliest. Before the polls, the interim government had to introduce some new measures within the administration and hold talks with political parties contesting the polls.

The reports further claimed that it had been fully understood that there would be no public announcement about this. Both China and Bangladesh agreed that there should be more talks before going public. It seemed that a 'leak' had unfortunately occurred and it could only emanate from Pakistan. Dhaka-based reports named Pakistan as the main suspect behind the press reports that followed. A Bangladeshi official involved with the preliminary talks, apart from criticising Pakistan, also took on the interim Government officials. What with the elections and many other issues that needed to be settled urgently, there was enough work to keep the Dhaka-based administrators busy for the next many weeks. They hardly needed to face awkward press queries or questions from common people regarding not-so-urgent issues. The Kunming meeting, part of the 9th South Asia China Expo session came out with five major announcements on major regional issues. As for the new triangular initiative, it had been discussed only at the sidelines of main proceedings.

The majority of Bangladeshi analysts however felt that an indiscretion had been committed. Both India as well as the US were closely engaged with all major developments in the region. It would be natural on their part to be alert to any new development, going forward. Besides, there was no guarantee that any proposed new group would be more effective than other alliances and associations already at work, such as the BIMSTEC, etc. Therefore, there was no reason to feel unduly elated over or excited by such premature leakages.

Continuing Israeli killings of ailing hungry Palestinians in Gaza is worst humanitarian tragedy

By Asad Mirza

While the continuing Israel-Iran missile war captivated the global attention, innocent and unarmed Palestinians are being killed in Gaza. Reportedly, 450 Palestinians have been killed near Aid Centres or Food Centres being run by an American relief organisation. But the so-called Islamic countries and even India, which has always championed the Palestinian cause, remain silent. The question is how long should we allow these brutal and inhuman killings by the Israeli forces of hungry Palestinians.

For the last 13 days, it seems the world has forgotten Gaza, yet again. During these 13 days several reports of unarmed Palestinians being gunned down by the Israel Defence Force (IDF) have appeared.

On June 17, 70 Palestinians were killed in a single day during the distribution of US-Israeli aid in southern Gaza — specifically in Khan Younis and Rafah — under the same repeated justification, "protecting American aid workers."

Daily Times of Israel reported on June 25, that in Gaza, Israeli forces killed 71 Palestinians yesterday (June 24), including at least 50 people who were waiting to receive aid. Among the dead are at least 27 people killed in an Israeli strike on civilians waiting for food in central Gaza, an attack that also wounded dozens and turned a relief site into what one Palestinian official called an "open field of death."

Responding to the reported deaths, the IDF later said that a gathering overnight had been identified in an area "adjacent" to its troops in the Netzarim corridor in central Gaza, where the US- and Israeli-backed Gaza Humanitarian Foundation (GHF) aid group is known to hand out food.

Earlier this month, the IDF had warned Palestinians not to approach routes leading to Gaza Humanitarian Foundation sites between 6 pm and 6 am, local time, describing those roads as closed military zones. However, the GHF has contradictorily indicated it may be open during those hours.

In central Gaza, three witnesses told the Associated Press that the army opened fire as people advanced east toward aid trucks south of Wadi Gaza. "It was a massacre," said Ahmed Halawa. He said tanks and drones fired at people, "even as we were fleeing. Many people were either martyred or wounded."

Another eyewitness, Hossam Abu Shadda said drones were flying over the area, watching the crowds, then there was gunfire from tanks and drones as people were



On June 17, 70 Palestinians were killed in a single day during the distribution of US-Israeli aid in southern Gaza — specifically in Khan Younis and Rafah — under the same repeated justification, "protecting American aid workers"

moving eastward. He described a "chaotic and bloody" scene as people tried to escape. He said he saw at least three people lying motionless and many others wounded.

In the southernmost city of Rafah, witnesses said Israeli troops opened fire as crowds tried to reach another food distribution site run by the GHF. Two witnesses said Israeli troops started firing as thousands of Palestinians gathered at the Shakhoush area, several hundred metres from the distribution site.

According to figures issued on Saturday by the Hamas health ministry, at least 450 people have been killed and nearly 3,500 injured by Israeli fire while seeking aid since late May. Many of the incidents have occurred near sites operated by the GHF, according to rescuers.

GHF, a US- and Israeli-backed organisation, which was established to circumvent Hamas in the distribution of aid, issued a complaint Tuesday to the Israeli military over "possible harassment by Israeli soldiers directed at our convoys" heading to the Wadi Gaza site.

Israel, which said that 79 humanitarian aid trucks entered the Gaza Strip Monday via the Kerem Shalom and Zikim crossings, has acknowledged firing warning shots at suspicious people near distribution sites, but denies targeting civilians or using starvation as a weapon of war, and has accused Hamas of hijacking aid deliveries and embedding itself among civilians.

Speaking at a press conference in Geneva, UN human rights spokesman Thameen Al-Kheetan said, "Israel has militarised humanitarian assistance mechanism."

Asked if Israel was guilty of weaponising the distribution of food, he said, "The legal qualification needs to be made by a court of law. But, the weaponisation of food for civilians, in addition to restricting or preventing their access to life-sustaining services, constitutes a war crime and, under certain circumstances, may constitute elements of other crimes under international law."

The head of the UN agency for Palestinian refugees also hit out at the GHF system.

"The newly created so-called aid mechanism is an abomination that humiliates and degrades desperate people," said Lazzarini. Philippe Lazzarini said at a press conference in Berlin. "It is a death trap costing more lives than it saves."

"The humanitarian community, including UNRWA, has the expertise and must be allowed to do their job and provide assistance with respect and dignity," said Lazzarini. "There is no other alternative to address the challenges of spreading hunger in the Gaza Strip."

Israel has accused UNRWA of providing cover for Hamas operatives and, earlier this year, banned the agency from operating on Israeli soil or contacting officials.

The UN and major aid groups have refused to cooperate with the GHF over concerns that it was designed to cater to Israeli military objectives. The GHF began operating in Gaza after a nearly three-month blockade Israel placed on the Strip following the collapse of the last ceasefire-hostage deal with Hamas in early March.

Aid deliveries to Gaza were allowed by Israel on May 19, after a pause since March 2. Since then, 2,033 trucks have entered the Strip.

BBC reported that without including the latest deaths, the UN has said that more than 410 Palestinians are reported to have been killed by Israeli gunfire or shelling since the GHF began work in late May.

However, one wonders that where are the so-called Islamic countries, while this mayhem continues. None of them has voiced sincere condemnation on the killings or came out with an aid plan involving them. The largest organisation of the Islamic countries, Organisation of Islamic Countries (OIC) is more concerned about the plight of the Indian Muslims, than those being killed nearer home to it.

Dalia Abu Ramadan, in a first person account written for the website, Truthout, correctly says that the humanitarian crisis in Gaza is not merely a human tragedy, it is a widespread catastrophe threatening every living being on this land. Since the beginning of the war, even the animals have not been spared — horses and donkeys are deliberately killed and destroyed to prevent them from assisting us in moving and surviving. This intentional targeting of animals is part of a systematic strategy to immobilize the population and deepen our suffering. These animals, once an inseparable part of our lives and a vital source of support, now teeter on the brink of death due to starvation and deliberate killing, Dalia wrote. (IPA Service)

In Zohran Mamdani's win mayoral primary, socialism beat the status quo in New York

By Nick French

Political lightning struck New York City last night. Against all expectations, thirty-three-year-old democratic socialist and third-term state assemblyman Zohran Mamdani took a commanding lead in the first round of ranked-choice votes against former New York governor Andrew Cuomo, the primary's front-runner. By the end of the night, Cuomo conceded defeat to his young rival.

The race has the potential to reshape national politics, upsetting the balance of forces within the Democratic Party and pointing the way to a new era of possibilities for the Left.

Even before the results started rolling in yesterday, it was clear the race had taken on major political significance, both locally and nationally. Mamdani had overcome a huge deficit in name recognition and outside campaign spending to narrow the gap with Cuomo, with some polls in recent weeks showing the two more or less in a dead heat. Almost none of the polls, however, predicted Mamdani besting the former governor in the first round, and by a large margin.

How did Mamdani pull off "the biggest upset in modern New York City history," as a Democratic Party strategist put it? He ran an exceptional campaign, one that the Left and their opponents will be studying for years to come. Unfailingly focused on the city's cost-of-living crisis, Mamdani proposed a handful of bold reforms that involved redistributing wealth and expanding the public sector, including fare-free buses, city-owned grocery stores, free childcare, and a massive, publicly driven expansion of affordable housing stock — issues that spoke to the most urgently felt needs of New York's working class. The campaign ran a savvy and infectious social media operation that communicated in an upbeat and accessible way about material issues and Mamdani's proposed solutions.

Mamdani also made important inroads with the city's labor unions, a constituency that makes for a natural ally for the democratic socialist but that has historically tended to be more conservative in its political endorsements. And the campaign boasted a massive field operation, powered in no small part by the New York City chapter of the Democratic Socialists of America, that sent tens of thousands of volunteers to canvass for Mamdani across the five boroughs.

Attempts by opponents and the massive super PACs supporting them to paint Mamdani as a dangerous radical who hates Israel and wants to defund the police fell flat. The socialist candidate proved both principled and politically adroit. Rather than getting bogged down in sectarian disputes or unnecessarily associating himself with maximalist far-left rhetoric likely to confuse or unsettle voters, Mamdani spoke about Israel-Palestine and public safety in terms that were both commonsense and universalistic. Instead of falling



into the trap laid by talking heads who asked him whether Israel had "a right to exist," Mamdani asserted, simply, that it had a right to exist "as a state with equal rights" for all its citizens. And on policing and public safety, Mamdani rejected the language of "defund" and "abolition," arguing that police had a "crucial role to play" in public safety but that police are currently expected to do the work of social workers and mental health professionals, work that they are not trained or well-suited to do.

For all the strengths of his campaign and his platform, Mamdani is also personally a charming presence and effective communicator, the likes of which the American left has rarely seen. He also had the fortune of running against a weak opponent in the disgraced Cuomo, who attempted to revive his political life after a slew of sexual harassment allegations forced his resignation. (Those allegations, of course, were just the tip of the iceberg of a corrupt, scandal-ridden career.)

Cuomo ran a campaign marked by very few public appearances, which relied on boatloads of outside spending to fund a deluge of attack ads against Mamdani in the race's final stretches. And Mamdani was able to form tactical alliances with principled progressives like Brad Lander, the third-place candidate in the race, to advance their shared aim of stopping Cuomo.

Though Cuomo conceded defeat last night, the race is far from over. The later-round votes in the ranked-choice system still have to be counted. And Cuomo has set himself up to run as an independent in the general election. Whether he does or not, in the general, Mamdani will have to face off against the current mayor, Eric Adams, who skipped the Democratic primary to run on his independent (and absurdly named) "End Antisemitism" ballot line. Mamdani will almost certainly confront a flood of

cash from the pro-Israel lobby, real estate interests, and other wealthy opponents on a scale that exceeds the massive amounts they spent in the primary.

Mamdani has made what could have been a depressing mayoral contest of mostly local interest into a national and international political phenomenon. By running a campaign centered on ambitious egalitarian proposals to make the city affordable for working-class New Yorkers, he is forcing establishment politicians and their supporters in the media to engage the Left on questions of class and the distribution of material resources. By defending universalism and Palestinian human rights when it comes to Israeli crimes, he is exposing the moral bankruptcy at the core of US foreign policy. By drawing big money and national political figures — including even former president Bill Clinton, who endorsed Cuomo in the final days — into the race, he is revealing the deep divides within a Democratic Party torn between fealty to corporate interests and a genocidal warmongering, on the one hand, and righteous democratic socialists like Mamdani on the other.

In this way, Mamdani's mayoral campaign has captured some of what made his acknowledged political inspiration Bernie Sanders's presidential campaigns so exciting. The campaign is forcing people to pick a side: for or against corruption, for or against big money in politics, for or against human rights, for or against a program that actually serves the material needs of workers.

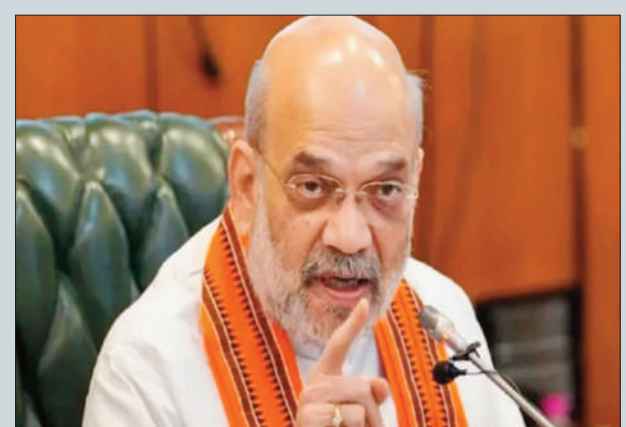
Mamdani and those who side with him will face considerable resistance in advancing their pro-worker vision in the general election. But the coalition that has already cohered around Mamdani and delivered an astounding blow to the political establishment is a promising sign that a better world is, in fact, possible. (IPA Service)

Amit Shah resolved to wipe out Maoism for ever

By: Er.Rajesh Pathak

Whoever said, said truly that to be suave and successful is not all, the presence of social-national character should also reflected in the life. And this is what reflected in the life of Sachin Tendulkar. With 'My Deshi Foundation' and his own 'Sachin Foundation' 50 new playgrounds are being developed in the tribal villages adjoining Dantewada (Bastar), while earlier 20 have already been prepared. Under this scheme the 13 kinds of game will be made available to the aspirants. This is, notably, the part of the various initiatives taken by the home minister Amit Shah to save the tribals residing socially isolated in far flung places in forests from the Maoist's tactics misleading them to grow anti-national.

Not for ordinary visible crime of violence indulge in by Maoist that Amit Shah resolved to free the nation from them. Notably, it was the same the Maoists who got Vedanta Sterile Copper Plant closed in Tuticorin by spreading chaos, bringing law and order situation to halt. Owing to which the production of copper in the country fell by 46.1%. In 2017-18 where we were among the top five world exporters, by 2020 we turned to be the importer of copper. The issue of Kudankulam Nuclear Plant is no different either. Every tactic from demonstration, public-protest to agitation was adopted so that the project could anyhow not come into execution. The then minister of Manmohan Singh led UPA government, Narayan Samy, alleged that the two NGOs were given 54 crores rupees in this matter. Fortunately, all the tactics failed. Nuclear plant came into existence finally. Incident of destruction by agitating mob in the mobile manufacturing unit of Wistron lying in Narasapur



[Bangalore] occurred three years back. Here too who were caught found to be having link with the same elements, one of them had been the renowned student leader more notably.

To be capable and being full of vigor oneself alone is not enough. The whole society collectively to be moving ahead in the direction of imbibing these merits will ensure bright future of the country. By his initiative Sachin Tendulkar spread this message to the country. What he did will strengthen the feeling among the young generation of Bastar region that they are no different but very much like others in other parts of the country.

Remember, all about the social service what Vivekananda says: "Why should we do good to others? Apparently to help the others, but really we help ourselves — help ourselves to reach nearer to the eternal bliss of higher life." Once, he adds, I read a sermon — "All this world is very beautiful, for it gives us time and opportunity to help other."

Besides government, at collectively social-level much also needed to be done through being grown harmonious with the tribal people. Mohan Bhagwat of RSS says: "Where we went wrong during the last 1000 years is that we got to have confined Dharma

into Bhojan guruh (Dining-room), and into Pooja guruh (Prayer-room). Whereas in sheer explicit manner Dharma is described to be standing on four pillars of Satya- Karun- Shuchita-Tapas (Righteousness- Compassion- Impeccability- Penitence). Whatever you consider to be the part of Dharma that should be accommodative of these four. And if it appears to be surpassing the four-cornered boundary of that, know it as Adharma. No matter you have been following that traditionally. If you follow untouchability traditionally, thinking it to be acceptable. Then it is Adharma, as it is devoid of Karuna. For this leads to hurt one's sentiments, one's self-dignity. It is also in the contravention of Satya. For Satya defined in Dharma propagates, 'Ishwar sarvbhootanaam', means 'God dwells in all the beings' (18-61, Shrimad Bhagwat Gita). And it dwells equally, 'Samanam sarvbhooteshu' (13-27&28, Gita)."

Mohan Bhagwat said so because still today Hindus of many parts of the country could not get themselves free of this self-annihilating bondage. The efforts are though, thankfully, being made at different levels by the different organizations and personalities like Sachin Tendulkar.

Fifty years of Emergency in India

By: Himangshu Ranjan Bhuyan

On June 25, 1975, India experienced one of the most controversial and dark chapters in its democratic history. The government, led by then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, declared a nationwide Emergency under Article 352 of the Constitution, citing "internal disturbances" as the reason. This declaration suspended fundamental rights, censored the press, and gave the government sweeping powers to detain political opponents and curtail civil liberties. The Emergency lasted for 21 months and ended on March 21, 1977, leaving behind a legacy of political repression, human rights abuses, and a deep impact on India's democratic fabric.

To understand the Emergency, it is important to look at the political and social context of India in the early 1970s. The country was facing significant economic challenges. Inflation was high, unemployment was rising, and food shortages had caused distress among large sections of society. This economic unrest created fertile ground for protests and demands for change. Adding to this turmoil was the increasing opposition to the ruling Congress party, especially after allegations of corruption and misgovernance. In 1974, the widespread 'Navnirman Andolan' in Gujarat and the 'JP Movement' led by Jayaprakash Narayan called for social justice and an end to corruption, gaining massive popular support and challenging the authority of Indira Gandhi.

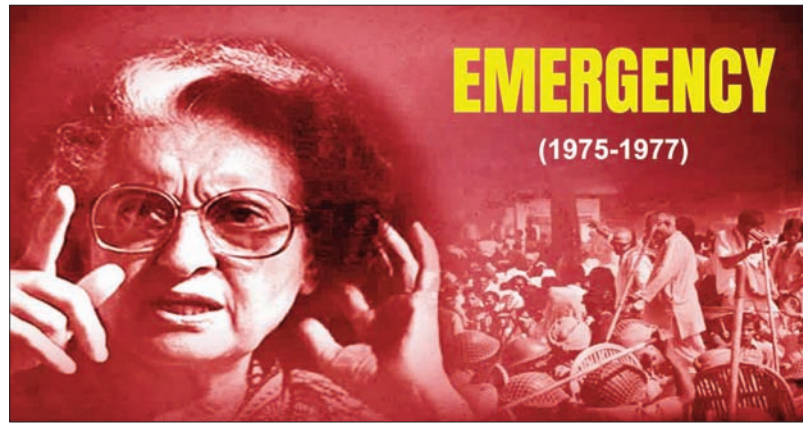
The immediate trigger for the Emergency was a legal verdict. On June 12, 1975, the Allahabad High Court found Prime Minister Indira Gandhi guilty of electoral malpractice and declared her election to the Lok Sabha void. This verdict was a serious blow to her legitimacy as the leader of the country and threatened her hold on power. Faced with mounting political pressure and mass

protests led by opposition leaders, Indira Gandhi advised President Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed to declare an Emergency, suspending constitutional guarantees and granting the government extraordinary powers.

Once the Emergency was imposed, the nature of governance in India changed dramatically. Parliamentary democracy was effectively put on hold. The government ruled by decree, and many laws were enacted without the usual democratic processes. The press was heavily censored, with newspapers being forced to publish only what the government approved. Political opponents, journalists, activists, and ordinary citizens who spoke out against the government were arrested and detained without trial under laws such as the Maintenance of Internal Security Act (MISA). The police and intelligence agencies operated with wide-ranging authority, often disregarding legal protections.

One of the most notorious aspects of the Emergency was the government's forced sterilization campaign. As part of an aggressive population control drive led by Sanjay Gandhi, the Prime Minister's son, millions of sterilizations were carried out, often through coercion and force. Men were the primary targets for vasectomies, and many were sterilized without their full consent or under pressure. The program sparked widespread resentment and fear, particularly among the poor and marginalized communities. This policy not only violated basic human rights but also became a symbol of the authoritarian excesses of the Emergency regime.

Another dark episode during the Emergency was the forced demolition of slums and unauthorized colonies, especially in Delhi. Slum dwellers were evicted with little or no warning, and their homes were destroyed in the name of urban beautification and development. The Turkman Gate incident of May 1976 remains one of the most tragic examples,



where police opened fire on protesters resisting eviction, resulting in deaths and injuries. The state's heavy-handed approach towards the urban poor left deep scars and amplified public anger against the regime.

The judiciary, which is expected to act as a guardian of fundamental rights and constitutional morality, largely failed to check the government during this period. The Supreme Court's ruling in the ADM Jabalpur case (also called the Habeas Corpus case) in 1976 was a significant blow to civil liberties. The court held that during Emergency, the right to life and personal liberty could be suspended, effectively endorsing the government's power to detain people indefinitely without cause. Only Justice Hans Raj Khanna dissented, standing as a lone voice for justice and constitutional values amid widespread judicial compliance.

The Emergency also led to significant constitutional changes. The 42nd Amendment, passed during the Emergency in 1976, attempted to strengthen the central government's authority by curbing the powers of the judiciary and Parliament. It sought to limit judicial review and made it more difficult for fundamental rights to be enforced. This amendment was later called the "mini-Constitution" due to its sweeping im-

pact. However, after the Emergency ended, successive governments repealed many of its provisions to restore the democratic balance.

The public's reaction to the Emergency was one of widespread discontent and frustration. Although the government tried to justify the Emergency as necessary to restore order and implement reforms, many saw it as a blatant attempt to cling to power and suppress democratic freedoms. The restrictions on the media, the mass arrests, and the excesses like forced sterilization eroded the trust of citizens in their leaders and institutions. Despite the censorship, underground resistance movements and the opposition worked tirelessly to keep the spirit of democracy alive.

The Emergency came to an end in March 1977 when Indira Gandhi called for general elections, confident of securing a mandate. However, the results were a massive rejection of the Congress party. The Janata Party, a coalition of opposition groups united by their opposition to the Emergency, won a landslide victory, and Morarji Desai became India's first non-Congress Prime Minister. This electoral verdict was a powerful demonstration of India's democratic resilience and the people's determination to restore constitutional governance.

In the aftermath, the Janata government established the Shah Commission to investigate abuses during the Emergency. The Commission documented widespread violations of human rights, illegal detentions, torture, and other excesses, exposing the full extent of the authoritarianism. The Emergency left an indelible mark on India's political landscape and served as a cautionary tale about the fragility of democracy.

Fifty years since the Emergency, its legacy remains deeply relevant. It stands as a reminder of how easily democratic institutions can be undermined when power is concentrated and accountability is weakened. The events of 1975-77 highlight the importance of safeguarding civil liberties, maintaining a free and independent press, and ensuring that checks and balances are respected in a democracy.

In recent years, debates about the Emergency have resurfaced in public discourse, often invoked as a warning against authoritarian tendencies. The forced sterilization campaign, the censorship of the press, and the suppression of dissent during that time continue to influence how Indians view their rights and freedoms. Educational institutions, media, and political leaders stress the importance of remembering this period, not just as history but as a living lesson.

One of the most enduring lessons from the Emergency is the vital role played by individuals who stood against oppression. Figures like Jayaprakash Narayan, who inspired the resistance movement, and Justice Hans Raj Khanna, whose dissent remains a beacon of constitutional courage, remind us that even in the darkest times, the spirit of democracy can survive through the commitment of principled citizens.

The Emergency also forced a reassessment of India's constitutional framework. The 44th Amendment to the Constitution, enacted after the Emergency, introduced safeguards to prevent

misuse of emergency powers. It narrowed the grounds on which Emergency can be declared and restored fundamental rights, making it clear that such a drastic measure should only be used in exceptional circumstances and with proper parliamentary oversight.

India's democracy has since evolved, learning from the mistakes of the Emergency period. Yet, the potential for authoritarianism always exists, making the lessons of those 21 months more urgent than ever. The Emergency serves as a warning that democratic freedoms are fragile and must be constantly defended by an alert citizenry, a free press, and strong institutions.

Today, as India faces new challenges—social, political, and economic—the spirit of the Emergency reminds us of the price of complacency. Democracy is not guaranteed; it is a constant endeavor requiring participation, vigilance, and courage from all its citizens.

In conclusion, fifty years after the Emergency, it remains a pivotal chapter in India's democratic journey. It exposed the vulnerabilities within the political system and underscored the importance of constitutional safeguards. The Emergency was a period of repression and fear, but it also became a catalyst for democratic renewal and reform. Remembering this era is crucial not only to honor those who suffered and resisted but also to ensure that the lessons learned continue to guide India's democratic future.

The Emergency was a harsh reminder that democracy is precious and precarious. It teaches us that power unchecked can lead to disaster, but also that democracy's strength lies in the resilience and vigilance of its people. As India moves forward, fifty years on, the Emergency stands as both a warning and a testament to the enduring spirit of democratic India. (The writer can be reached at himangshur1989@gmail.com or 9954812261, 9864000260)

41 years later: India's new space hero



By: Satyabrata Borah

On June 25, 2025, India marked a historic milestone in its space exploration journey as Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla became the first Indian astronaut to reach the International Space Station (ISS), 41 years after Rakesh Sharma's pioneering mission in 1984. Launched aboard SpaceX's Falcon 9 rocket from the Kennedy Space Center in Florida, the Axiom-4 mission not only symbolized India's return to human spaceflight but also reignited national pride and inspired a new generation of innovators. This achievement, a collaborative effort involving the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), Axiom Space, and SpaceX, underscores India's growing prominence in global space exploration. Shukla's journey to the ISS is a testament to India's scientific ambition, technological prowess, and unwavering commitment to pushing the boundaries of human endeavour.

The Axiom-4 mission, which carried Shukla alongside astronauts from the United States, Poland, and Hungary, represents a significant step forward for India's space program. This mission is a precursor to ISRO's ambitious Gaganyaan project, which aims to launch India's first indigenous human spaceflight by 2026 or 2027. Shukla's 14-day mission at the ISS involves conducting a series of scientific experiments designed by ISRO and India's Department of Biotechnology (DBT). These experiments, ranging from studying microgravity's effects on biological systems to exploring human-computer interactions in space, are poised to contribute valuable data to both Indian and global scientific communities. The success of this mission not only highlights India's technical capabilities but also its ability to collaborate with international partners in the pursuit of scientific discovery.

Shubhanshu Shukla, born on October 10, 1985, in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, is a seasoned Indian Air Force pilot with over 2,000 hours of flight experience. Having flown fighter jets such as the MiG, Sukhoi, Jaguar, Hawk, and Dornier, Shukla's selection as an astronaut in 2019 marked a turning point in his career. His rigorous training at Russia's Yuri

Shubhanshu Shukla, born on October 10, 1985, in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, is a seasoned Indian Air Force pilot with over 2,000 hours of flight experience. Having flown fighter jets such as the MiG, Sukhoi, Jaguar, Hawk, and Dornier, Shukla's selection as an astronaut in 2019 marked a turning point in his career

Gagarin Cosmonaut Training Center equipped him with the skills needed to navigate the complexities of spaceflight. As the pilot of the Axiom-4 mission, Shukla joined a diverse crew, including American astronaut Peggy Whitson, Poland's Sławosz Uznański-Wichniowski, and Hungary's Tibor Kapu. Together, this four-member team represents 31 nations and is tasked with conducting approximately 60 scientific experiments, making the mission a landmark in international cooperation.

The road to the Axiom-4 launch was not without challenges. Originally scheduled for May 2025, the mission faced multiple delays due to adverse weather conditions, a liquid oxygen leak in the Falcon 9 rocket, and technical issues in the Russian segment of the ISS. These setbacks pushed the launch date to June 25, with earlier attempts on June 11, 19, and 22 proving unfeasible. ISRO's meticulous approach, combined with SpaceX's expertise, ensured that all issues were resolved, culminating in a successful launch at 2:31 AM local time (12:01 PM IST). The flawless execution of the launch demonstrated the robustness of the collaboration between ISRO, Axiom Space, and SpaceX, as well as the reliability of the Falcon 9 rocket, which has become a cornerstone of modern space

exploration.

From the ISS, Shukla sent a heartfelt message to his fellow Indians: "Namaskar, my dear countrymen. What a journey! After 40 years, we are back in space. The tricolor on my shoulder tells me I'm not alone here—you are all with me." These words resonated deeply across India, evoking a sense of unity and pride. For a nation of 1.4 billion people, Shukla's mission is more than a scientific endeavor; it is a symbol of India's resilience, ambition, and potential. His journey has captured the imagination of millions, particularly young Indians who see in him a role model for pursuing excellence in science and technology.

The scientific experiments Shukla is conducting at the ISS are a critical component of the Axiom-4 mission. Among the seven experiments designed by Indian researchers are studies on the growth of microalgae and cyanobacteria in microgravity, muscle regeneration, seed germination, tardigrade resilience, and human-computer interaction. These experiments, developed in collaboration with institutions like the DBT and various Indian academic organizations, aim to advance our understanding of biological and physical processes in space. The data collected could have far-reaching implications, not only for future human spaceflight but also for applications on Earth, such as improving agricultural practices or developing new medical technologies. By contributing to these experiments, India is positioning itself as a key player in the global scientific community.

The Axiom-4 mission also highlights the growing role of commercial space exploration. Unlike traditional government-led missions, this collaboration between ISRO, Axiom Space, and SpaceX demonstrates the potential of public-private partnerships in advancing space research. India's investment of approximately ₹550 crore in this mission reflects its commitment to leveraging commercial platforms to achieve its space ambitions. This approach not only reduces costs but also allows India to tap into cutting-edge technologies developed by private companies like SpaceX, which has revolutionized space travel with reusable rockets like the Falcon 9.

Shukla's mission is a stepping stone for India's broader space aspirations.

The Gaganyaan program, which aims to send three Indian astronauts into low Earth orbit for three days, is the next major milestone. Beyond that, ISRO has set its sights on establishing an Indian space station by 2035 and sending a human mission to the Moon by 2040. These ambitious goals reflect India's determination to become a global leader in space exploration. Shukla's experience at the ISS will provide invaluable insights into the challenges of human spaceflight, helping ISRO refine its technologies and training protocols for future missions.

The impact of Shukla's achievement extends beyond the scientific and technical realms. It has sparked a wave of national pride and inspired countless young Indians to dream big. From Prime Minister Narendra Modi to President Droupadi Murmu, leaders across the country have hailed Shukla's mission as a new chapter in India's space journey. Modi described it as "a testament to India's growing capabilities in space exploration," while Murmu called it "a moment of pride for every Indian." These sentiments echo the feelings of millions who see Shukla's success as a reflection of India's potential to achieve greatness on the global stage.

The Axiom-4 mission also underscores the importance of international collaboration in space exploration. With NASA, the European Space Agency, ISRO, and SpaceX working together, the mission exemplifies how nations can pool their resources and expertise to achieve common goals. The inclusion of astronauts from Poland and Hungary alongside India and the United States further highlights the mission's global significance. By participating in such collaborative efforts, India is not only gaining access to advanced technologies but also establishing itself as a reliable partner in the international space community.

As Shukla conducts his experiments aboard the ISS, he carries the hopes and dreams of a nation. His journey is a reminder that with determination, hard work, and innovation, no goal is too distant. For India, a country with a rich history of scientific achievement, this mission is a reaffirmation of its ability to overcome challenges and reach for the stars. The data and experience gained from Axiom-4 will pave the way for future missions, bringing India closer to its dream of becoming a space superpower.

Shubhanshu Shukla's mission to the ISS aboard the Axiom-4 mission is a landmark achievement for India. It marks the country's return to human spaceflight after four decades and sets the stage for even greater accomplishments in the years to come. From inspiring young minds to advancing scientific knowledge, this mission has far-reaching implications for India and the world. As Shukla gazes at Earth from the ISS, the tricolor on his shoulder serves as a powerful symbol of India's aspirations, resilience, and unwavering commitment to exploring the final frontier. This moment will be remembered as a turning point in India's space odyssey, a journey that is only just beginning.

China's cautious calculus in the Iran-Israel conflict

By: Antara Ghosal Singh

In his first public comment following the escalation of tensions in the Middle East, Chinese President Xi Jinping stated that China is "deeply worried" about Israel's military operation against Iran, and that "China stands ready to work with all parties to play a constructive role in restoring peace and stability in the Middle East." Meanwhile, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi has already spoken to Iranian Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Araghchi, Israeli Foreign Minister Gideon Sa'ar, and Omani Foreign Minister Sayyid Badr bin Hamad bin Hamood Albusaidi regarding the latest hostilities. While publicly slamming Israel for attacking Iran, China has sought to engage both countries to ensure that Chinese interests are safeguarded and that the safety of Chinese institutions and personnel is maintained. Beijing also wants to explore the possibility of mediating between Tel Aviv and Tehran as a potential peacemaker in the current crisis.

One reason behind China's overwhelming support for Iran could be Tehran's less-than-ideal reputation within China, particularly in the public opinion space. Since the beginning of the latest episode of hostilities between Israel and Iran, the dominant discourse in China is that Iran's future appears bleak. A series of news reports, commentaries, and blogs on the Chinese internet deliberated the various perceived shortcomings faced by Tehran: it has too many traitors, serious internal contradictions, has been under sanctions for far too long—with its economy crumbling, technology outdated, and military incompetent. Criticism of Iran flooded the Chinese internet space as Iran's senior military personnel were killed and its nuclear facilities destroyed by Israeli strikes. Overall, Chinese public opinion shows little sympathy or support for Iran—only a vague hope that Iran might sap some of Israel's, and by extension America's, power by dragging it into a quagmire, and thereby easing pressure on China.

Some in China argue that Iran's refusal to allow a Chinese military base in the country, its decision to halt a railway transit, its "abandonment" of the Assad regime in Syria, and its decision to ink a strategic cooperation agreement with India amidst the latest episode of India-Pakistan hostilities highlight Iran's unreliability. However, a common criticism of Iran remains that it has not fully embraced China. In the Chinese assessment, unlike Russia and Pakistan, Iran refrained from "embracing China" because the regime in Tehran has a strong sense of self-esteem and autonomy, and is unwilling to rely too heavily on one country. Further, some Chinese observers believe that there has always been a strong pro-European and pro-American sentiment within Iranian society, especially after the United States, Britain, France, China, Russia, and Germany signed a nuclear agreement with Iran in 2015. Iran, they argue, has unrealistic fantasies about Europe and the United States lifting sanctions and cooperating with Tehran. Although the Trump administration withdrew from the Iran nuclear agreement in 2017, the current Iranian regime is not

seen as determined enough to develop nuclear weapons like North Korea, nor is it seen as likely to break completely with the United States and the West. In the Chinese view, given the present circumstances, it is impossible for Iran to fully "embrace China". The Iranians' attitude towards China is often described as high on rhetoric and low in substance, with a contempt for what Tehran sees as overreliance on China.

It is further argued that not only does Tehran have a complicated stance towards Beijing, but what the country can offer China is also not substantive, relative to countries such as Russia. Had Iran successfully upheld the "Shia Arc" in the past few years, it would have gained more respect in terms of Chinese public opinion and managed greater support and sympathy from the Chinese government, but not anymore. Instead, Chinese commentators have become increasingly open in expressing their distrust of and dislike towards Iran.

Explaining this phenomenon, a reader-generated article in Guancha.com observed that the era of Cold War-era generosity is over; today, great power diplomacy is driven by pragmatism. Both China and the United States face significant domestic pressures, and therefore have little room for generosity towards other nations—a trend likely to deepen as great power competition intensifies.

Discussions in the Chinese media suggest that any support for Iran will be highly conditional:

- If Iran can adopt a guerrilla-style strategy and sustain a prolonged conflict with Israel and the United States—periodically launching ballistic missile attacks on Israel, bolstering Hezbollah and the Houthis, and encouraging its allies in the "Axis of Resistance" to blockade Israel's Mediterranean ports—then American entanglement in both Ukraine and the Middle East may afford China a strategic breather. However, Chinese analysts remain uncertain whether Iran, given its internal fragilities, has the capacity for such sustained and full-scale confrontation.

- In the short term, China's priority is to ensure that any Iran-Israel or Iran-US conflict does not affect Chinese investments in Iran, particularly infrastructure and related supporting projects.

- Over the medium to long term, Beijing would expect greater access to Iran's military-industrial sector and broader economic opportunities as a condition for deeper strategic engagement.

Despite the adverse public opinion, China realises that Iran is not comparable to Libya or Syria. Iran is a member of both the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) and the BRICS. For the vast majority of Global South countries, if SCO and BRICS membership cannot shield Iran from external pressure, the credibility and appeal of these groupings—alongside China's own reputation as a rising superpower—will be called into question.

This places Beijing in a dilemma. While it does not want to see the regime in Iran collapse under US-Israeli pressure, it also doubts whether defending Tehran is worth the cost at this juncture. (Courtesy: ORF)

Orientation programme for Arunachal MLAs concludes with call for informed and ethical lawmaking



HT Correspondent
ITANAGAR, June 27: The two-day orientation programme for the Members of the 8th Arunachal Pradesh Legislative Assembly concluded on a high note on Friday with a valedictory session held at the Nokmey Namati Hall.

The event marked the culmination of an initiative aimed at enhancing the legislative competence and institutional understanding of the newly elected lawmakers.

According to an official statement, the programme featured a series of sessions led by experts from the Parliamentary Research & Training Institute for Democracies (PRIDE), under the Lok Sabha Secretariat, and was hailed

as a step forward in strengthening democratic governance in the state.

Delivering the valedictory remarks, Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Pasang Dorjee Sona underscored the importance of continuous learning in public service.

He said that the programme provided an essential platform for lawmakers to better understand the responsibilities of their role and the tools available to them in shaping policy and legislation. Emphasising the need for informed decision-making and ethical conduct in public life, Sona called on the legislators to commit themselves to transparent and effective governance.

Speaker of the Arunachal Pradesh Legislative Assembly Tesam Pongte, in his address, commended the enthusiastic participation of the Members and the depth of insight offered by the resource persons from PRIDE.

He described the orientation as a valuable opportunity for legislators to strengthen their legislative roles and better serve their constituents.

Pongte encouraged the MLAs to carry forward the lessons learned and apply them to legislative proceedings in a manner that would enhance the quality and impact of the Assembly's work.

Deputy Speaker Kardo Nyigyor delivered the vote of thanks, ex-

pressing gratitude to PRIDE for their support and to the organising team for their dedicated efforts in ensuring the smooth conduct of the programme.

He also acknowledged the commitment shown by the Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs), whose active engagement was key to the programme's success.

In a noteworthy gesture of solidarity and commitment, deputy chief minister Chowna Mein attended the full duration of the two-day programme.

His presence, the statement noted, demonstrated his deep interest in capacity building and his commitment to the cause of legislative excellence.

As part of the valedictory session, the resource persons from PRIDE were felicitated for their guidance and contribution to the orientation.

All participating MLAs were presented with certificates of participation in recognition of their involvement and commitment to the learning process.

The programme concluded on a reflective and optimistic note, with a shared pledge among lawmakers to work toward a more informed, responsible, and people-oriented legislature.

Organisers and participants alike expressed confidence that the orientation would translate into more effective lawmaking and governance, in keeping with the evolving needs of Arunachal Pradesh and its citizens.

Kaling Moyong pays tribute at Jaswant Garh War Memorial

HT Correspondent

TAWANG, June 27: Arunachal Pradesh State BJP President Kaling Moyong on Friday paid a solemn visit to the Jaswant Garh War Memorial in Tawang district as part of his ongoing five-day interaction tour across Tawang, West Kameng, and Bichom districts.

The visit, according to an official statement, was aimed at honouring the valour of Indian soldiers who laid down their lives during the 1962 Indo-China War.

Jaswant Garh stands as a symbol of unwavering courage and sacrifice.

It commemorates Rifleman Jaswant Singh Rawat of the 4 Garhwal Rifles, who became a legend for his heroic resistance during the Battle of Nuranang.

Soldiers of the 24 Jat Regiment, currently deployed in the region, recounted to Moyong how, on November 17, 1962, Chinese forces launched a sudden and deceptive assault in the early hours, attempt-

ing to capture Indian positions in the high mountains of Arunachal Pradesh.

In response, Indian soldiers mounted a fierce resistance, and Rifleman Rawat emerged as the face of that defiance.

Holding his ground against overwhelming odds, Rawat is believed to have fought valiantly until his last breath. His actions delayed the enemy advance and inspired his comrades to fight on.

For his exceptional bravery, he was posthumously honoured with the Maha Vir Chakra, one of India's highest gallantry awards.

The soldiers narrated these stories with deep reverence, and Moyong listened intently, visibly moved by their words and the legacy they preserved.

At the memorial, Moyong offered floral tributes and expressed his deep gratitude to the armed forces. He said the nation would forever remain indebted to its brave soldiers.

"The sacrifices of our soldiers will never be forgotten. The government holds the highest respect for the armed forces and stands committed to their welfare and support in every way possible," he said.

Moyong was accompanied by senior members of the BJP State Unit, including Vice President Ashok Sanchou, General Secretary Tadar Niglar, Arunachal Pradesh Chairman Nalong Mize, Chairman Nima Sange, and Media Incharge Dolang Tako.

Their presence underlined the party's commitment to acknowledging India's military legacy and honouring its protectors.

The visit was not only an act of remembrance but also a message of solidarity with the armed forces.

It reinforced the state BJP's efforts to connect with the region's historical and strategic significance and to pay homage to the enduring spirit of Indian soldiers who continue to guard the nation's frontiers with valor and devotion.

East Siang DC stresses inter-departmental coordination for holistic development

HT Correspondent

PASIGHAT, June 27: East Siang Deputy Commissioner Sonalika Jiواني has underscored the importance of inter-departmental coordination and a sustainable approach in the implementation of government projects and infrastructure to achieve the district's overall development goals.

According to an official statement, the DC made these remarks while chairing her first monthly District Level Monitoring Committee (DLMC) meeting at the DC Conference Hall in Pasighat.

Presiding over the meeting, Jiواني directed all government departments to prepare and chart out clear ac-

tion plans aligned with their respective development responsibilities.

She further instructed departments, especially those involved in delivering essential public services, to integrate their operations with the Integrated Control and Command Centre (ICCC) of Smart City Pasighat.

This integration is aimed at improving the delivery of citizen-centric services through a unified digital platform. Highlighting the need for economic empowerment of the farming community in East Siang, the Deputy Commissioner called for proactive steps to create effective market linkages for the agricultural produce of local farmers.

Military-Civil fusion seminar concludes at Rayang, emphasises synergy in nation-building



HT Correspondent

RAYANG, June 27: A two-day Military-Civil Fusion Seminar concluded at Rayang in East Siang district, Arunachal Pradesh, with a strong message on the importance of coordinated national efforts in defence preparedness, regional development, and sustainable nation-building. The event, organised to foster a whole-of-nation approach, brought together a diverse group of stakeholders from the military, civil administration, and various strategic sectors.

According to an official statement, the seminar saw the active participation of representatives from the Military, Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), Border Roads Organisation (BRO), National Hydro-electric Power Corporation (NHPC), Rashtriya Raksha University (RRU), the Agriculture Department, the National Cadet Corps (NCC), and the State Police. Key government officials including Upper Siang Deputy Commissioner Talo Jerang, Upper Siang Superintendent of Police Token Saring, and Pasighat Superintendent of Police Pankaj Lamba were also present, sharing their insights on administrative and law enforcement challenges and opportunities in the region.

The seminar opened with discussions centred on border management, infrastructure and capability development, tourism promotion, and Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) coordination. Stakeholders exchanged institutional approaches and explored joint strategies aimed at strengthening security and fostering sustainable growth in India's sensitive border regions.

On the second day, deliberations extended to long-term strategic initiatives, notably the Siang Multipurpose Project, and the role of human resource development as a foundation of national strength. The General Officer Commanding of the Spearhead Division contributed to the discussions, offering perspectives on civil-military synergy and reinforcing the importance of collaborative frameworks in achieving national objectives.

The seminar concluded with a consensus on several key deliverables and a roadmap for future collaboration. Among the proposed actions were improved inter-agency coordination mechanisms, aligned infrastructure planning, enhanced disaster response protocols, and the promotion of strategic tourism as a means of economic empowerment and national integration.

The event highlighted the critical role of integrated responses to both traditional and emerging challenges and reaffirmed the collective resolve of all participating agencies to work together for a secure, resilient, and developed nation.

Udhyami Panjikaran Mela held in Pasighat

HT Correspondent

PASIGHAT, June 27: In a major push to empower rural entrepreneurs and foster self-reliant communities, the Arunachal State Rural Livelihoods Mission (ArSRLM) organized the Udhyami Panjikaran Mela on June 26 at the District Administrative Office in Pasighat, East Siang District.

The initiative, aimed at strengthening the rural economy through entrepreneurial development and inter-departmental collaboration, witnessed enthusiastic participation from various stakeholders, including Self Help Group (SHG) members and government

income generation through crop diversification and sustainable practices.

The Assistant Director of Textile and Handicrafts stressed the need for branding and advertising to enhance the marketability of locally-produced goods.

He urged SHG members to adopt branding strategies and weave storytelling into their products to improve visibility in competitive markets.

The Assistant Director of Industries introduced the audience to the centrally-sponsored Pradhan Mantri Formalisation of Micro Food Processing Enterprises (PMFME) scheme, encouraging rural entrepreneurs to utilize the financial and technical support available to formalise and scale up their ventures.

Food safety was another major focus of the mela, with the Food Safety Officer delivering a detailed session on obtaining FSSAI licenses. Participants were briefed on label requirements, hygiene standards, and product testing methods essential for ensuring consumer safety and compliance with regulatory norms.

The Program Manager of Selco Foundation presented on the advantages of adopting renewable energy solutions in rural livelihoods.

By introducing the concept of solar-powered livelihood equipment, he emphasised how such innovations could reduce dependence on traditional energy sources and improve efficiency and productivity.

Financial inclusion was a key component of the event, with representatives from APRB and Central Bank of India guiding attendees through the process of applying for MUDRA loans.

They offered insights on how rural micro-entrepreneurs could access credit without the need for collateral, thereby removing one of the most significant barriers to starting or expanding a business.

The program concluded with a visit to various stalls where SHG members displayed a wide range of locally-made products.

These included processed foods, traditional handicrafts, textiles, and herbal goods, reflecting the diverse talent and entrepreneurial spirit of the region's rural communities.

The successful conduct of the Udhyami Panjikaran Mela not only reinforced ArSRLM's commitment to grassroots empowerment but also reflected the government's larger vision of creating a sustainable ecosystem for rural economic development.



officials.

According to an official statement, the event was graced by Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Tatling Pertin, who attended as the Chief Guest.

Heads of key government departments including the Extra Assistant Commissioner (EAC) of Pasighat, District Agriculture Officer, District Horticulture Officer, Assistant Directors of Textile and Handicrafts and Industries, the Food Safety Officer, and program representatives from Selco Foundation, along with Branch Managers from Arunachal Pradesh Rural Bank (APRB) and Central Bank of India, were also present.

In his address, ADC Tatling Pertin highlighted the importance of unity among departments and communities in achieving lasting rural development.

He commended ArSRLM officials for their consistent efforts in uplifting rural populations and enabling grassroots entrepreneurship in East Siang.

The District Horticulture Officer elaborated on opportunities available under the Atmanirbhar Bagwani Yojana (ANBY), a scheme designed to boost the horticultural capabilities of SHG members and promote

Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya inaugurated at Lable Moring in Upper Subansiri



HT Correspondent

DAPORJO, June 27: A newly established Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV) was officially inaugurated at Lable Moring in Upper Subansiri district, marking a significant step towards promoting girls' education in the remote region.

According to an official statement, the school has been set up under the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao initiative and will be operated by the ABCD Charitable Society.

The inauguration ceremony was attended by Minister for Industries, Trade & Commerce, Skill Development, IPR & Printing, Nyato Dukam, who emphasised the state government's commitment to the educational and holistic development of girls, particularly in rural and underserved areas.

Speaking at the event, the minister highlighted that the residential school for girls is designed to serve the needs of the local population and support deserving families in accessing quality education for their daughters.

Reaffirming the government's focus on strengthening the educa-

tion infrastructure in the district, Minister Dukam assured that additional facilities such as a playground, boundary wall, and other essential amenities will be developed to create a safe and supportive learning environment for the students.

He encouraged the students to seize the opportunity and dedicate themselves to their studies with sincerity and determination.

The minister stressed the transformative power of education and called on the students to make it a priority in their lives.

The inauguration ceremony witnessed the presence of several dignitaries and community members, including Upper Subansiri Deputy Commissioner Tasso Gambo, Chairman of the ABCD Charitable Society Tadam Haging Cherom, Heads of Departments, PRI leaders, School Managing Committee members, local leaders, residents, and villagers from nearby areas. The gathering underscored the community's collective support for the initiative and its long-term impact on the region's educational landscape.

Udhyami Panjikaran Mela showcases women-led rural enterprise in Namsai

HT Bureau

NAMSAI, June 27: In a spirited celebration of grassroots entrepreneurship and women-led economic empowerment, the Arunachal State Rural Livelihoods Mission (ArSRLM), Namsai Block, organised the Udhyami Panjikaran Mela at the Namsai Town Club on Thursday. According to an official statement, the event witnessed enthusiastic participation from Self-Help Group (SHG) entrepreneurs, community leaders, government officials, and various departments committed to rural development.

The day-long programme was aimed at fostering enterprise registration, spreading awareness about livelihood opportunities, and strengthening the ecosystem for rural entrepreneurship in the region. The Mela was graced by the presence of Additional Deputy Commissioner (HQ) Ms. Kalyani Namchoom, who attended as Chief Guest, and Shri Kamal Roy, Assistant General Manager of NABARD, who was present as the Guest of Honour. Represent-

tatives from the Department of Textile & Handicrafts, DIPRO Namsai, Department of Industries, Umang Multipurpose Cooperative Society (MPCS), and Community Resource Persons for Enterprise Promotion (CRP-EPs) of Namsai Block were also in attendance.

The programme began with a welcome address by Shri Ronald Dkhar Baghar, Block Mission Manager of ArSRLM, who highlighted the importance of the event in promoting non-farm livelihood initiatives. Shri Michi Bida Buda, Block Coordinator for Non-Farm Livelihoods, delivered a detailed briefing on the objectives and scope of the Mela, focusing on the need for structured support to emerging rural enterprises.

In her address, ADC HQ Kalyani Namchoom lauded the remarkable transformation being led by rural women through SHGs. She noted visible improvements in self-confidence, financial literacy, and active decision-making among SHG members. Namchoom also emphasised the need for

strategic pricing of local products to ensure sustainability and competitiveness in broader markets. Her remarks encouraged participants to think beyond traditional income activities and explore long-term entrepreneurial pathways.

Speaking on the occasion, Shri Kamal Roy of NABARD elaborated on the institution's ongoing efforts to bolster the SHG movement and create robust support systems for rural enterprise. He highlighted the importance of building resilient and sustainable business models that could withstand market challenges while remaining inclusive. Roy also reiterated NABARD's commitment to supporting rural women entrepreneurs through funding, training, and capacity-building initiatives.

During the event, 128 products were officially registered by the CRP-EPs, signalling a growing interest and readiness among rural entrepreneurs to formalise their ventures. The registration not only marked a step forward in en-

terprise documentation but also opened doors to market access, credit linkages, and institutional support.

As the programme drew to a close, BMM Ronald Dkhar Baghar expressed his heartfelt gratitude to the dignitaries, departmental officials, SHG participants, and supporting staff for their active involvement in making the Mela a success. He also acknowledged the critical role played by the Block Officials of ArSRLM Namsai and the CRP-EPs in ensuring the seamless coordination of the event.

The Udhyami Panjikaran Mela emerged as more than just a registration drive. It reflected the region's growing momentum toward inclusive rural development and the crucial role women are playing in shaping the future of Arunachal Pradesh's economy. With collaboration between government agencies, financial institutions, and local communities, the event reinforced a shared vision for sustainable and people-centric livelihood development in the state.



केन्द्रीय विद्यालय नामसाई
KENDRIYA VIDYALAYA NAMSAI

चल -साक्षात्कार (Walk-in-Interview)

सत्र 2025-26 के लिए अंशकालिक अनुबंध पर शैक्षिक पदों के पैनल बनाने हेतु चल साक्षात्कार निम्न विवरणानुसार आयोजित किये जाने हैं-

A walk-in interview for preparing part-time contractual panel of teaching posts for the session 2025-26 is scheduled as under: -

पद	साक्षात्कार की तिथि व समय
TGT (Mathematics)	1 st July 2025 सुबह 08:30 बजे से

आवेदन पत्र का प्रारूप तथा विस्तृत जानकारी वेबसाइट <https://namsai.kvs.ac.in> से प्राप्त करें।
For Application form and detailed information visit website <https://namsai.kvs.ac.in>

प्रभारी प्राचार्य / Principal (I/C)

संपर्क / Contact: 9207660804

DIVINE JOURNEY BEGINS AS FAITH AND FESTIVITY SWEEP PURI

RATH YATRA: AMID CHANTING OF ‘JAI JAGANNATH’, THOUSANDS PULL CHARIOTS IN PURI



PURI, June 27: Thousands of people pulled the ropes attached with chariots of Lord Jagannath and his siblings on a road from near the 12th-century shrine here towards Shree Gundicha temple, around 2.6 km away, as the main part of Rath Yatra festival began on Friday.

Odisha Governor Hari Babu Kambhampati, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, and many other dignitaries were among those who pulled the chariots of Lord Jagannath, Devi Subhadra and Lord Balabhadra. Amid chanting of “Jai Jagannath” and “Hari Bol”, beating of cymbals and blowing of trumpets and conch shells, the ‘Taladwaja’ chariot of Lord Balabhadra first started rolling at 4.08 PM. It was followed by Devi Subhadra’s ‘Darpadalan’ chariot and finally Lord Jagannath’s ‘Nandighosh’.

While the devotees were pulling the chariots, the priests surrounded the deities on the chariots as the procession made its way through the Grand Road of this temple town.

While thousands of people pulled chariots, lakhs of others also reached the seaside temple town to participate in the festival.

Around one million devotees are estimated to have converged on this town for the annual car festival, officials said.

The chariot pulling started after Puri’s titular king, Gajapati Maharaja Divyasingha Deb, performed ‘Chhera Pahanra’ (sweeping of chariots) on all three chariots.

Wooden horses of different colours were fitted on three chariots before they were pulled by the devotees.

Earlier, the trinity- Lord Balabhadra, Devi Subhadra and Lord Jagannath had ascended their respective chariots after over two-hour long ceremonial ‘Pahandi’ ritual here on Friday.

During ‘Pahandi’, the three wooden idols were carried to the chariots from the 12th-century Jagannath temple. Odissi dancers, folk artists, music players and many other groups drawn from different parts of the state performed before the idols.

The Shankaracharya of Govardhan Peeth, Swami Nischalananda Saraswati, along with selected disciples, visited three chariots after the deities were placed on them.

The 81-year-old seer came near the chariots in a wheelchair. The Shankaracharya’s visit is also part of the Rath Yatra rituals.

Union Ministers Dharmendra Pradhan, Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, Puri MP Sambit Patra, Odisha ministers and many others witnessed the ceremonial Pahandi, one of the major attractions of Rath Yatra here in Puri.

The festival is being held amid unprecedented security arrangements with deployment of around 10,000 personnel of Odisha police, central armed police force, NSG and others.

“We have made all possible arrangements for smooth conduct of Rath Yatra,” DGP Y B Khurania told reporters, adding that over 275 AI-enabled CCTV cameras were installed to keep a watch on the crowd. ADGP (Law and Order) Sanjay Kumar said that the arrangements are made in view of some information following the Pahalgalam terror attack.

“Several central government agencies are collaborating with Odisha Police, including NSG snipers, Coast Guard drones, and anti-drone systems. Canine teams and Odisha’s anti-sabotage units are also engaged in duty here,” he said. (PTI)

Raj, Uddhav to stage joint protest against ‘imposition’ of Hindi, three-language formula

MUMBAI, June 27: Estranged cousins Uddhav and Raj Thackeray will unite for the cause of the Marathi language, as their parties will stage a joint protest against the “imposition” Hindi and the state government’s three-language formula for Classes 1-5. The protest on July 5 will bring Shiv Sena (UBT) chief Uddhav Thackeray and Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) president Raj Thackeray on the same platform.

Both leaders had asserted on Thursday that they would vehemently oppose the imposition of Hindi and the three-language formula while addressing separate press conferences at the same time. Uddhav had announced to join a protest by civil society at Azad Maidan on July 7, while Raj declared that he would take out a non-political march from Girgaum Chowpatty on July 6, and would invite leaders of all political outfits, including the Shiv Sena (UBT).

Talking to reporters on Friday, Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Sanjay Raut said Raj invited him to take part in the July 6 protest. He said Uddhav immediately consented to be part of the protest but raised concerns that Ashadhi Ekadashi, which is celebrated across the state with much fanfare, falls on July 6, and it would be inconvenient for everyone. Raut said the Sena (UBT) chief suggested a joint protest by both parties on July 5, and Raj also consented to it.

“A joint protest of MNS and Sena (UBT) will take place on July 5. There is only an issue of the timing because the time suggested by Raj Thackeray is 10 am, and it would be inconvenient for people,” he said, adding that the parties will discuss the timings. There has been a buzz about a possible rapprochement between the Thackeray cousins, and the language issue may prove to be the platform they need to put up a united front.

The Rajya Sabha MP said that the two cousins feel there should be a fight similar to the one put up during the Samyukt Maharashtra movement for the formation of the state in 1960, and the Thackerays should lead it. (PTI)

Rahul assures political power to tribals within Cong to strengthen community socially

NEW DELHI, June 27: Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi has said the Congress wants to strengthen the tribal community socially by politically empowering them with position, voice and support within the party.

In a meeting with the representatives of the tribal society a few days ago at his residence, Gandhi discussed their problems and later shared a video of the interaction in which he is heard saying, “We want to develop tribal leadership in the Congress across the country.” “I want to help the tribals for which the community will have to get united and those actually fighting for the rights of the tribals need to come forward.”

“We want to strengthen Adivasi leaders and want 10-15 tribal leaders should emerge in every state,” Gandhi told the tribal representatives. About the meeting, the former Congress chief said that he assured the representatives that he stood with them in this “fight”.

“My goal is to strengthen them socially by giving them political power, which will begin by giving them position, voice and support within the Congress party,” Gandhi said during the meeting. In a post shared on his WhatsApp channel, he also said, “Their struggle for water, forest, land and constitutional rights continues - whether it is social injustice or land being snatched away by digitisation, the tribals of the country continue to suffer.” (PTI)

Student ‘gang-raped’ in Kolkata college, 3 held

KOLKATA, June 27: An aspiring student of a law college in Kolkata was allegedly raped inside the institution by an alumnus, even as two seniors of the educational institution assisted the prime accused in the crime, a police officer said on Friday.

All three accused were arrested and produced in court which remanded them in police custody for four days.

The process of the victim’s submission of a confidential statement before a judicial magistrate was also underway, police said.

The ghastly incident at the South Calcutta Law College triggered the horrific memories of the rape and murder of an intern inside the city’s RG Kar Medical College in August last year which created a major political dust-up across the state. The prime accused in the recent incident is a former student of the college and, ironically, a practising criminal lawyer at the Alipore Police and Sessions Court, college sources said.

The two other accused are bonafide students of the institution and senior to the victim, police confirmed. (PTI)

YES BANK YES BANK LIMITED

Regd. & Corporate Office: YES BANK House, Off Western Exp. Highway, Santacruz East, Mumbai-400055. CIN: L65190MH2003PLC143249, E-mail:communications@yesbank.in, Website: www.yesbank.in

APPENDIX IV [Refer Rule 8(1)]

POSSESSION NOTICE (For Immoveable Property)

Whereas, The undersigned being the authorised officer of YES Bank Limited (herein under referred as the “bank”) under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (“herein referred as “the Act”) and in exercise of the powers conferred under section 13(12) of the Act read with Rule 9 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002, had issued a demand notice dated 31.03.2025, calling upon Mr. Piku Bordoloi (Mortgagor/Guarantor/Co-borrower), to repay sum aggregating to Rs. 36,52,367.03/- (Rupees Thirty Six Lakhs Fifty Two Thousand Three Hundred Sixty Seven and Zero Three Paise only) under the Loan A/c No. 01786460000040, Rs. 15,26,648.11/- (Rupees Fifteen Lakhs Twenty Eight Thousand Six Hundred Forty Eight and Eleven Paise only) under the Loan A/c No. 017861900001336, Rs. 4,96,356.86/- (Rupees Four Lakhs Ninety Six Thousand Three Hundred Fifty Six and Eighty Six Paise only) under the Loan A/c No. 178LA40213520001, all are due as on 31.03.2025, within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice being under section 13(2) of the Act.

The Borrowers/ security providers having failed to repay the amount within the stipulated time period hence this notice is hereby given to the Borrower/ security providers and to the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 9 of the said rules on 26.06.2025

The Borrowers / security providers in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property mentioned below and any dealings with the said property will be subject to the charge of the Bank for an repay sum aggregating to Rs. 36,52,367.03/- (Rupees Thirty Six Lakhs Fifty Two Thousand Three Hundred Sixty Seven and Zero Three Paise only) under the Loan A/c No. 01786460000040, Rs. 15,26,648.11/- (Rupees Fifteen Lakhs Twenty Eight Thousand Six Hundred Forty Eight and Eleven Paise only) under the Loan A/c No. 017861900001336, Rs. 4,96,356.86/- (Rupees Four Lakhs Ninety Six Thousand Three Hundred Fifty Six and Eighty Six Paise only) under the Loan A/c No. 178LA40213520001, all are due as on 31.03.2025, together with all the other amounts outstanding including the costs, charges, expenses and interest thereon.

Please note that under Section 13 (8) of the aforesaid Act, in case our dues together with all costs, charges and expenses incurred by us are tendered at any time before the date of publication of notice for the public auction/ lender/ private treaty, the secured asset shall not be sold or transferred and no further steps shall be taken for transfer or sale of that secured asset.

Details of the security/security interest details of the mortgaged property

A R.C.C. First Floor Area (i.e. Upper Open Roof of Ground floor upto sky limit) measuring about 244.88 Sq. Meter standing on land measuring 1 Katha 19 Locha covered by periodic patna No. 160, Dag No. 5454, Block No.3, Municipal Holding (Ground Floor) No. 476, situated at K.K.Baruah Road, Jorhat Town, Jorhat with the following boundaries :- East By : Public Road, West By : Mr. Gobind Bezbaruah, North By: Land of Mr. Rana Ranjit Sharma, South By: K.K. BARUAROAD.

Date: 26.06.2025
Place : Jorhat

Sd/- (Authorized Officer)
YES Bank Limited

GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM

OFFICE OF THE ADDITIONAL CHIEF ENGINEER CUM COUNCIL HEAD OF THE DEPARTMENT

IRRIGATION: KARBI ANGLONG AUTONOMOUS COUNCIL: DIPHU.

NOTIFICATION

Dated: 27-06-2025

No. ACEI-CHD/E/Recruitment/1/2024-25/18: It is for general information to all the shortlisted candidates that in continuation of the advertisement vide No. ACEI-CHD/E/Recruitment/1/2024-25/11 Dated Diphu, the 25th October 2024 the Interview/Viva-voce and Computer Test for the post of Junior Assistant, Section Assistant, Tracer and Interview/Viva-voce for the post of Assistant Mechanic, PPO, Electric Pump Mechanic, and Assistant Fitter under Irrigation Department, Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council, Diphu will be held as per programme given below.

SL. No.	NAME OF THE POST (GRADE-III)	ROLL NO. OF SHORTLISTED CANDIDATES	VENUE	DATE & TIME OF INTERVIEW	REPORTING TIME
i	ii	iii	iv	v	vi
1.	JUNIOR ASSISTANT	26, 31, 38, 43, 45, 48, 75, 81, 119, 124, 130, 158, 172, 184, 193, 219, 227, 237, 238, 245, 250, 326, 417, 429, 443, 450, 456, 490, 507, 537, 538, 644, 653, 667, 686, 712, 737, 747, 776, 823, 834, 835, 837, 872	Office of the Addl. Chief Engineer cum Council Head of the Department, Irrigation, Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council, Diphu	Date: 08-07-2025 Time: 10.00 AM Onwards	09.30 AM
2.	SECTION ASSISTANT	7, 22, 38, 42, 49, 50, 56, 58, 63, 80, 92, 109, 115, 126, 142, 143, 167, 173, 192, 206, 219, 248, 281, 317, 332, 351, 370, 377, 434, 501, 502, 512, 517, 518, 519, 539, 558, 559, 594, 625, 627, 642, 685, 792, 806, 810, 819, 821, 832, 854, 858, 910, 918, 928, 979, 1016, 1020, 1046, 1060, 1072, 1079, 1080, 1098, 1110, 1118, 1119, 1133, 1145, 1151, 1276, 1318, 1335, 1341, 1379, 1383, 1408, 1455, 1472, 1476, 1498, 1499, 1507, 1532, 1576, 1670, 1685, 1690, 1691, 1692, 1710, 1728, 1729, 1736, 1770, 1786, 1799, 1812, 1832, 1841, 1853, 1885, 1888, 1938, 1946, 1958, 1960, 1961, 1964, 1969, 2034, 2041, 2044, 2078, 2092, 2171			
3.	TRACER	13, 21, 23, 38, 43, 44, 51, 86, 110, 123, 124, 147, 179, 228, 276, 314, 359, 370, 378, 379			
4.	ASSISTANT MECHANIC	7, 8, 13, 16, 20			
5.	ASSISTANT FITTER	3, 4, 5, 6			
6.	POWER PUMP OPERATOR	2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 11, 13, 15, 19, 26			
7.	ELECTRIC PUMP MECHANIC	2, 3, 8, 12, 20			

N.B: The candidates bearing the roll no. as listed above are requested to appear for interview/viva-voce and computer test (only for Junior Assistant, Section Assistant & Tracer) as per above schedule. They are also requested to bring the Admit Card and all relevant documents in original for verification/scrutiny on the day of interview.

Sd/-

Addl. Chief Engineer & CHD

Cum

Member Secretary, Selection Committee

Irrigation Department

Memo No. ACEI-CHD/E/Recruitment/1/2024-25/18(A)

Dated Diphu, the 27th June’ 2025

Sable eyes personal best and World C'ship redemption

BENGALURU, June 27: Fit again after recovering from a nagging calf injury that plagued him for over a year, India's premier 3000m steeplechaser Avinash Sable has his sights firmly set on bettering his personal best in the upcoming meets, the foremost being the World Championship in September.

The reigning Asian Games champion has been undergoing high altitude training in Ooty and also sharpening his form at the Sports Authority of India's Southern Centre here this season.

"Last year was not good, it didn't even look like I'll be able to perform well. But this year I am competing in the Diamond League, so preparation (for the World Championship) is good," Sable told a select group of reporters here.

"My target is to notch my personal best, closer to eight minutes. 15 days are left of training, I think I will be able to go near eight."

The 30-year-old was battling a calf injury since the Hangzhou Asian Games in 2023. He opened his 2025 season with a time of 8:22.59sec at the Xiamen Diamond League, followed by an 8:23.85sec effort in Shaoxing.

However, he bounced back by clinching gold at the Asian Championships in Gumi, South Korea in May after clocking an improved 8:20.92sec. "Preparations are going well. I was injured in the opening of the season. But despite that I participated in two Diamond League events in China."

"The results weren't good because of the injury. Then I competed in the Asian Championships to boost my confidence. I started training in November, the off season also went well. I faced a lot of trouble due to injuries last season."

"I had a calf injury, there was a lot of pain in my right calf and hamstring. It started after the Asian Games and continued the entire year. The pain was there till January-February this year."

The 30-year-old had failed to reach the final at the last World Championships, finishing a disappointing seventh in his heat. But this time, he's determined to do better. (PTI)

Bowlers in need of better lengths to end India's Edgbaston jinx in Bumrah's possible absence



BENGALURU, June 27: Jasprit Bumrah's possible absence from next week's second Test against England in Birmingham will rob India's bowling unit of control, not an ideal element to miss when the visitors are trying to go level at a ground where they have never won a red-ball match.

The passage between overs 65 and 82 of the first Test at Leeds, which England won by five wickets to take a 1-0 lead in the five-match series, will offer further validation to that grim fact.

England were 286 for four when India's pace talisman ended that spell with overall figures of 19-3-57-0, and he was not summoned for another over.

Perhaps, skipper Shubman Gill wanted to preserve him for the second new ball which was due in 15 overs and it also aligned with India's workload management plan for their premier pacer.

England were still 85 runs away from a win and some tight overs, probably dotted with a couple of wickets, would have set the stage perfectly for Bumrah's return in the 80th over.

But by the time that mark arrived, England were 349 for five, rattling up 63 runs in 15 overs, in excess of four runs an over, and a mere 22 runs separating them from an incredible victory.

It was beyond even Bumrah to salvage the situation. Now, India might just have to make peace with the reality of not having the 31-year-old in their ranks at Edgbaston.

Mohammed Siraj was distinctly unlucky in the second innings not to have a wicket despite hitting better lines, but his effort in the first essay left a lot to be desired when he eased the pressure Bumrah built from the other end while giving away plenty of boundary balls.

Siraj has considerable Test experience to find some quick remedy, but Prasidh Krishna and Shardul Thakur -- India's third and fourth pacers -- only have a combined experience of 16 Tests.

They went over 6 and 5 runs per over across the first Test, and it reduced the impact of the wickets they took.

Prasidh, who had a five-wicket match haul at Headingley, was quite disappointing as he fol-

lowed the hard lengths strategy that he adopted in Australia but England demanded much fuller lengths from him, and he could deliver the, only in periods.

Can he challenge England batters more meaningfully in Birmingham? Former India pacer Dodda Ganesh believes Prasidh can produce a heftier effort provided he makes some minor tweaks to his approach.

"Prasidh has always been a wicket-taker, but he needs to bowl with some consistency, and needs to focus on the areas he bowls. It will help him bowl more maidens especially when the ball gets older. He can't bowl on both sides of the wickets," Ganesh told PTI. "In England, the ball swings around a bit because of the conditions. He just needs to watch Bumrah on how to bowl consistent lines, lengths. He just needs to concentrate more on the channel outside (off-stump), and he will be better," he added.

There is a growing clamour to bring Kuldeep Yadav in place of Shardul Thakur for the second Test, but the left-arm wrist spinner has just played one traditional

format match in England.

Even in the last Test he played against New Zealand at Bengaluru in 2024, the 30-year-old had spells of 18.3-1-99-3 (Economy: 5.3) and 3-0-26-0 (Economy: 8.6), failing to make much impression in blustery conditions, not very unlike England.

In contrast, Ravindra Jadeja produced figures of 20-1-72-3 (3.6) and 7.4-1-28-0 (3.6) against the Kiwis, and if the left-arm spinner can rediscover that stifling length then Ben Duckett or Ben Stokes might just find it tough to play those unsettling reverse sweeps.

Ganesh feels that replacing Thakur, if that is indeed the plan, with Washington Sundar rather than Kuldeep would make more sense. "Washington can also take the ball away from left-handers, and of course, he is a much better batsman too and can be slotted in various positions. He has that flexibility," he noted.

It's evident that this Indian attack, even without Bumrah, has oodles of quality in it, but can they refocus on their lengths? (PTI)

Whenever I've done well, I've trained here: Sable, Sindhu laud SAI Bengaluru's evolution

BENGALURU, June 27: With a smart track that captures every stride, advanced sports science labs, and a research kitchen for customised recipes, Sports Authority of India's Southern Centre here has transformed into a world-class facility that is endorsed by athletes like two-time Olympic medallist PV Sindhu and top steeplechaser Avinash Sable.

Once a modest training base, an "cumulative investment exceeding Rs 140 crore" by the sports ministry has seen the centre undergo a sweeping transformation in the last decade.

For 3000m steeplechase national record-holder Sable, who first trained at the centre in 2017, the upgrades have made a tangible difference.

"I came here for the first time in 2017 so from that time to today there have been a lot of changes. Earlier there was only one synthetic track but now there are two," Sable told a select group of reporters here.

The national record holder in the 3000m steeplechase spoke about the athletics smart track, which helps in collection and analysis of valuable data with embedded sensors. "...it can track all our activities. The recovery centre is new. I have trained in the USA etc as well and no facility has so many things together at one place. So I like training here. Whenever I've run a good race, I have trained here," he said. Women's steeplechase ace Parul Chaudhary, who has trained at the centre since 2016, has also witnessed this evolution firsthand.

"I have been training here since 2016 and I have seen a lot of changes take place. Now we have two grounds, one sand track and advanced scientific infrastructure. Recovery, physiotherapy, biomechanics -- everything has improved significantly," she said.

Spread over 80.2 acres, the centre has state of the art labs for sports psychology, and bio mechanics which help acquire data pertaining to strength testing, muscle recovery and injury prevention.

Sindhu underwent isokinetic testing here on Thursday to assess strength in her knees, hips, and shoulders, and spoke highly of the centre's meticulous approach.

"I have come here a couple of times and SAI Bengaluru has always been very helpful and made sure everything was on point and everything was fulfilled. I'm here to test my strength levels and see how you can improve it more," Sindhu said.

"My father also used to come here when he was a volleyball player. Back then it was very different, a lot of improvement has taken place and I have heard that there will be much more improvement going forward."

Currently, the national camps of hockey, athletics, race walking, table tennis, volleyball, kabaddi, and water polo are held here.

"Not just me but hockey players, Olympic medallists have been training here and also Neeraj (Chopra) has come here. Such centres are very important for athletes to make sure everything is on point," Sindhu added.

For India's first World Championship medallist in athletics, former long jumper turned administrator Anju Bobby George, the evolution of the centre is a dream come true.

"I was a SAI NCOE athlete 20 years back and I got India's first World Championship medal training here. I know the changes that happened here as an athlete and as an administrator," said the Athletics Federation of India vice-president. "Now we have multiple tracks, multiple infrastructure, recovery centres and that was my dream. Now this dream has come true and the athletes are utilising and enjoying the infrastructure," she added.

The centre has a research kitchen that keeps experimenting with new recipes. An in-house team crafted customised multi-grain cookies and energy bars comprising dry fruits, figs and dates leading up to the Paris Olympics. (PTI)

1st T20I: India women eye bright series with broader picture of World Cup in mind

NOTTINGHAM, June 27 (PTI) India women will be keen to internalise the conditions and character of venues in England ahead of next year's World Cup here during the five-match T20I series against the hosts, beginning with the opening game on Saturday.

The ICC showpiece is almost a year away, but this series is a perfect stepping stone after their disappointing group stage exit from the last year's edition.

The management will try to draft in some initial ideas about the peculiar playing surfaces and the fickle weather pattern that jointly make playing cricket a unique experience in England.

The rubber might also give the think-tank an inkling on the kind of players who could potentially make an impact here.

The return of explosive opener Shafali Verma apart, India have added some new names such as Kranti Goud, Sree Charani and Sayali Satghare into their squad.

Shafali, in all likelihood, will be paired with Smriti Mandhana at the pole position where Uma Chetry failed to impress as an opener in the few matches she played. This is India's first T20 assignment of the year, and the return of off-spin all-rounder Sneha Rana and fast bowling all-rounder Amanjot Kaur will be keenly watched.

Rana is coming back to the side since February 2023, and her confidence has been boosted by a fruitful outing in this year's Women's Premier League (WPL). However, India will miss the experience of pacers Renuka Singh and Pooja Vastrakar, who are out of this series with respective injuries. Therefore the team management will hope that the young names will step up, and they know the challenges of playing England at their home.

The visitors have lost both their practice matches -- a 50-over and a T20 game -- to the ECB Development Squad, and they will be up against a formidable team led by the talismanic Nat Sciver-Brunt.

The home side has several experienced stars in their ranks such as Amy Jones, Tammy Beaumont, Danny Wyatt-Hodge and Sophie Ecclestone.

Along with them, England will also field talented young players such as Issy Wong, Alice Capsey and Sophia Dunkley.

In that context, India will require their premier batters like skipper Harmanpreet Kaur, Mandhana, Shafali, Jemimah Rodrigues and Richa Ghosh to be in their groove from the first match itself.

Harmanpreet might also have regained her confidence after guiding Mumbai Indians to their second WPL title earlier this year, contributing with the bat and as the skipper.

However, India will welcome some more runs from their batters lower down the order, who in the recent past have failed to shore up the team in some critical moments.

Teams (from): India: Harmanpreet Kaur (C), Smriti Mandhana (VC), Shafali Verma, Jemimah Rodrigues, Richa Ghosh (wk), Yastika Bhatia (wk), Harleen Deol, Deepti Sharma, Sneha Rana, Sree Charani, Shuchi Upadhyay, Amanjot Kaur, Arundhati Reddy, Kranti Gaud, Sayali Satghare.

England: Nat Sciver-Brunt (C), Em Arlott, Tammy Beaumont (wk), Lauren Bell, Alice Capsey, Charlie Dean, Sophia Dunkley, Sophie Ecclestone, Lauren Filer, Amy Jones (wk), Paige Scholfield, Linsey Smith, Danni Wyatt-Hodge, Issy Wong.

Match starts at 7 pm IST. (PTI)

AITA EC removes Dhupar; Sunder Iyer made interim Secretary General

NEW DELHI, June 27: The Executive Committee of the All India Tennis Association (AITA) on Friday removed Anil Dhupar as the Secretary General of the federation, saying his position has become untenable after attaining the age of 70 and that he has already completed his four-year term.

Attended by 17 of the 25 members, the EC passed a resolution by 3/4th majority to make joint secretary Sunder Iyer as interim secretary, empowering him to file a reply to the writ petition filed in the Delhi High Court by Somdev Devvarman and Purav Raja, who challenged the validity of the elections conducted in September 2024. Dhupar, 72, was elected for a four-year term in 2020. While he did not file his nomination for any office bearer's post in the last year's polls, he was continuing in his position since the court did not declare the results of the elections.

"We passed a resolution today and removed Mr Dhupar as Secretary General. We have appointed Sunder Iyer as interim secretary. He will also look into (players') petition, till the results are declared," AITA Vice President (Sports) Hironmoy Chatterjee told PTI. "The Executive Committee is supreme but the President and Secretary General are taking decisions without consulting the EC, which is the highest body. Mr. Dhupar has already crossed the age of 70 and he can't continue as per the Sports Code which bars continuation of office bearers beyond 70."

"The appointment of the lawyers in matters concerning AITA is a decision that needs to be taken by the EC. The President did not consult anyone before filing the reply. The Federation can't run on someone's whims and fancies, it's a democratic institution."

When reminded that AITA Constitution allows an office bearer to complete their term, if they are elected before the age of 70, Chatterjee said, "They made that change to continue in their positions. We have to follow the Sports Code. And he has completed his term of four years, so why is he continuing?" Reacting to

the development, Dhupar told PTI that he remains the Secretary General of the Federation since the matter related to new elections is still sub-judice.

"I am waiting for a court order, the matter is sub-judice. No one can make a new secretary unless there is a vacancy. I may file contempt after taking legal advice, as I have not resigned. This is against the High Court order, which had advised the status quo. I am still the Secretary of the AITA," said Dhupar. Chatterjee said they will submit the minutes of the meeting to the Sports Ministry as well to the Delhi High Court, which will hear the matter on July 11.

"We have recorded this meeting, we will share it with the ministry. We are Code compliant and that is why the government has recognised it as a NSF. Till the new Code comes into effect, we have to follow the existing one and we will abide by the new one as well. "There is no direction from the Court that EC can't meet or take decisions," he said.

Seven EC members attended the meeting held in Ahmedabad virtually. Those present physically were Hironmoy Chatterjee, Chintan Parikh, Sunder Iyer, Suman Kapur, Raktim Saikia, Prem Karra, Rushmi Chakravarti, Ankush Dutta, Thomas Paul and Capt. Murti Gupta.

Sunder Raju, Rajan Kashyap, Rohit Rajpal, Bharat Oza, Asit Tripathi, G S Hora and Sujit Roy attended the meet virtually. "Mr. Hironmoy Chatterjee, Senior Vice President, issued the notice for this meeting to discuss urgent and pressing matters pertaining to the affairs of the AITA after the President/Secretary General did not call this meeting within the stipulated 30 days' time period as mandated in the AITA Rules & Regulations," AITA said in a statement. "This is the first time a requisition meeting is being held by the people who have requisitioned it due to intentional inaction of the President and Secretary. All the resolutions were unanimously passed by majority of three-fourth of the total strength of the EC," it added further. (PTI)

ASSAM RIFLES ORGANISES FRIENDLY FOOTBALL MATCH

HT Correspondent

BISWANATH CHARIALI, June 27: Assam Rifles organised a friendly football match with the local community at the Football Ground, Lokra on Thursday, stated a press release. The match was played between Boroline Women Football Team and DGAR Women Football Team, showcasing enthusiasm, discipline, and team spirit. The event aimed to promote women empowerment through sports under Perception Management (PXN) and strengthen the bond between locals and security forces. A total of 62 individuals participated in the event, including 04 Officers, 01 JCO, 32 Players, 10 Village pers and 15 personnel of Assam Rifles. The match received an overwhelming response from the local audience and concluded with mutual appreciation and encouragement for the players.



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