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THE HILLS TIMES

PUBLISHED SIMULTANEOUSLY FROM GUWAHATI & DIPHU

Voice of the hills people

Vol .No. II

Issue No. 093

RNI-ASSEN/2023/86488

GUWAHATI, WEDNESDAY, JUNE 4, 2025

PAGES 12

PRICE ₹ 8



অসম চৰকাৰ

আমাৰ ভূপেনদা

"যিমান পাৰাঁ হোৱাঁ অগ্ৰগামী
নৰ'বা কিঞ্চিৎ কোনো লাভ নাই
ধ্বংসকাৰীক পৰাস্ত কৰা
শান্তি-যুঁজৰ কোনো ক্ষয় নাই।"

সুধাকণ্ঠ ড° ভূপেন হাজৰিকাদেৱৰ
বহুৰজোৰা জন্ম শতবাৰ্ষিকী উদ্‌যাপনৰ
আড়ম্বৰপূৰ্ণ শুভাৰম্ভণি সন্দৰ্ভত

মুখ্যমন্ত্রী ড° হিমন্ত বিশ্ব শৰ্মাৰ সভাপতিত্বত
মূল সন্মিতিৰ প্ৰথমখন বৈঠক

উপস্থিত থাকিব কেইবাগৰাকী বিশিষ্ট ব্যক্তি



তাৰিখ: ৪ জুন ২০২৫

সময়: দিনৰ ১১:৩০ বজা

স্থান: ভূমি মহলা, লোক সেৱা ভৱন

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DIPR/D/HLT/23/4-Jun-25

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 4, 2025

THE HILLS TIMES 3

Modi calls up CM, assures full support

Assam flood scene remains critical, death toll 11

GUWAHATI, June 3: The flood situation in Assam continued to be critical on Tuesday with over 5.35 lakh people affected in over 20 districts while the toll remained unchanged at 11.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi took stock of the flood situation from Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, assuring him of full support from the central government.

Sarma visited Cachar district, which is among the worst-hit, during the day, while the meteorological department issued a forecast of more rain in several parts of the state.

BJP president JP Nadda also expressed concern over the situation in most parts of North East and urged the people in the affected areas to take precautions and follow the advisories from local authorities.

Briefing Modi over the phone, Sarma informed him how continuous rainfall in Assam and adjoining



states has led to flooding and impacted the people.

"A short while ago, Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri @narendramodiji called me to enquire about the current flood situation in Assam," Sarma said in a post on X.

The chief minister briefed him on how continuous rainfall in Assam and adjoining states has led to flooding and impacted many

lives. He also apprised the prime minister of the relief operation undertaken by the state government.

"The Hon'ble PM expressed concern and assured full support from the Central Government for our relief and rehabilitation efforts," Sarma said.

"Grateful for his guidance and unwavering support to the people of Assam," the CM added.

Nadda, also in a post on X, expressed deep concern for the people affected by the continuous heavy rainfall in parts of the north-eastern states.

"I have directed BJP state units and karyakartas to provide all possible assistance in accordance with the issued guidelines. I urge everyone in the affected areas to take necessary precautions, avoid unnecessary travel and follow the advisories from local authorities," he added. The Regional Meteorological Centre (RMC), Guwahati issued an 'orange alert' for the four districts of Dhubri, South Salmara Mankachar, Goalpara and Kokrajhar for Tuesday.

An 'orange alert' implies 'be prepared to take action' and is sounded when thunderstorms and lightning accompanied by gusty wind reaching wind speed 30 to 40 kmph with heavy to very heavy rainfall are likely to occur at isolated places. (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

CM for wetland conservation to tackle urban flooding

Himanta visits Silchar

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, June 3: Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, during a visit to Silchar in Cachar district on Tuesday, underscored the importance of conserving wetlands as a long-term solution to urban flooding.

The Chief Minister, while reviewing the prevailing flood situation in the Barak Valley town, said that preserving wetlands such as Malini Beel, Maheesha Beel, Rangirkhaal and Singerkhal is vital, as they function as natural drainage basins and help mitigate waterlogging.

Speaking to the media during his inspection, Sarma warned that the depletion of these wetlands could worsen flooding in Silchar and other towns. "When wetlands are lost, the situation goes haywire," he said, adding that the state government is (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

After IWT abeyance, Pak weaving threat narrative of 'what if China stops Brahmaputra flow': Himanta



GUWAHATI, June 3: Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Tuesday said that after India put the Indus Water Treaty (IWT) in abeyance, Pakistan is weaving a new "manufactured threat" narrative of what will happen if China stops Brahmaputra's flow into the country.

He clarified that though China has not announced any such move, but even if it happens, it would in fact help mitigate the annual Assam floods. He said that most of Brahmaputra's flow is generated due to downpour in northeast India while glacial melt and limited Tibetan rainfall contribute to only 30-35 per cent of the river's water flow.

In an X post titled 'What If China Stops Brahmaputra Water to India? A Response to Pakistan's New Scare Narrative', he said, 'After India decisively moved away from the outdated Indus Waters Treaty, Pakistan is now spinning another manufactured threat: What if China stops the Brahmaputra's water to India?'

'Let's dismantle this myth -- not with fear, but with facts and national clarity,' he added.

Sarma pointed out that even if China were to 'reduce water flow (unlikely as China has never

threatened or indicated in any official forum), it may actually help India mitigate the annual floods in Assam, which displace lakhs and destroy livelihoods every year'.

"Meanwhile, Pakistan, which has exploited 74 years of preferential water access under the Indus Water Treaty, now panics as India rightfully reclaims its sovereign rights," he said.

Sarma claimed that Brahmaputra is a river that grows in India and does not shrink.

He pointed out that China contributes only 30-35 per cent of the Brahmaputra's total flow -- mostly through glacial melt and limited Tibetan rainfall.

The remaining 65-70 per cent is 'generated within India, thanks to the torrential monsoon rainfall in Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Nagaland, and Meghalaya'.

Major tributaries like Subansiri, Lohit, Kameng, Manas, Dhansiri, Jia-Bharali, Kopili also contribute to it while additional inflow comes in from the Khasi, Garo, and Jaintia Hills via rivers such as Krishnai, Digaru, and Kulsi, Sarma said.

"At the India-China border (Tuting), the flow of the river is ~2,000-3,000 m³/s while in the plains of Assam like Guwahati, the flow swells (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Dipen Boro retained as ABSU president for new term

HT Correspondent

KOKRAJHAR, June 3: Dipen Boro and Khanindra Basumatary have been re-elected as President and General Secretary respectively of the All Bodo Students' Union (ABSU) for a fresh two-year term.

The decision was taken during an extended delegate sitting of the students' union held at the Jhwla Nileswar Brahma Auditorium of Bodoland University in Kokrajhar district on Tuesday.

Originally scheduled to be held during the 57th Annual Conference of ABSU in March this year at Bodofa Fwthar, Dotma, the delegate sitting was successfully conducted with wide participation. The session was attended by ABSU delegates, senior leaders, and student representatives from across Assam as well as unit committees from other states.

Deliberations during the session centred on reaffirming the union's longstanding commitments, particularly the effective implementation of the Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR) Accord, the advancement of educational reforms under 'Mission Quality Education,' socio-economic upliftment of the Bodo community, and the preservation of Bodo language, literature, and culture.

Addressing the gathering, ABSU President Dipen Boro announced the launch of a week-long 'Bodofa Camp' aimed at building a disciplined and ideologically sound youth force within the organisation.

He stated that the newly formed committee comprises a mix of experienced members and young students from institutions such as Bodoland University and those based in Delhi.

The camp, he said, will focus on enhancing the physical and mental well-being of members, while instilling ABSU's core values, discipline, and a strong sense of collective responsibility.

He emphasised that ABSU's work must always prioritise the interests of the Bodo people above all, followed by the organisation and its members.

He added that ABSU would align its goals with the vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah, particularly in the areas of education reform and youth empowerment.

He also reiterated the union's commitment to grassroots-level engagement to address pressing issues faced by the Bodo community. Several resolutions were adopted during the session.

These include the observation of World Environment Day on June 5 through a tree plantation drive involving more than one lakh saplings across the state. (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Jorhat Municipal Board demolishes alleged illegal structures following protest

HT Correspondent

JORHAT, June 3: The Jorhat Municipal Board (JMB) on Tuesday demolished the residence and several scrap shops belonging to Azad Chowdhury, following allegations by Veer Lachit Sena Assam that he was an illegal migrant encroaching on civic body land.

The demolition was carried out in the presence of a large police contingent, a magistrate, Executive Officer of JMB Parmananda Nath, and other board members.

Speaking at the site, Nath informed the media that the decision was taken during a meeting of all board members earlier in the day.

The meeting had been convened to discuss the allegations brought by Veer Lachit Sena Assam in a memorandum submitted on May 28.

Nath stated that Chowdhury had previously been served with three eviction notices—once in 2016, again in 2020, and a third on Tuesday—but had failed to comply. He added that although Chowdhury had applied for a lease after 2016, it was never granted.

The NOC in his possession clearly stated that no permanent structure could be erected and that the Board reserved the right to evict him when necessary.

Azad Chowdhury, a contractor who has previously undertaken work for the JMB, claimed he had not received any notices and should have been given time to relocate.

He also contended that the matter was sub judice and that the demolition of his property was therefore unjust. Chowdhury further claimed he had leased the land from the Board but was unable to produce any

supporting documents or a valid land revenue receipt.

Chowdhury alleged he had been unfairly targeted, pointing out that about 125 other families and even a school had constructed houses on the same six bighas of land, but no action had been taken against them.

In response, Nath said the school and other illegal occupants would also be evicted in due course, following due process, and that the school would be given time to shift to a new location.

The demolition comes after a rally organised by Veer Lachit Sena Assam on May 28, led by Organisational Secretary Shrinkal Chaliha and Chief Secretary Rantu Paniphukan. The protest began at Jorhat Stadium and concluded at the JMB office, where the group demanded the eviction of Azad Chowdhury. (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

India to build first indigenous polar research vessel

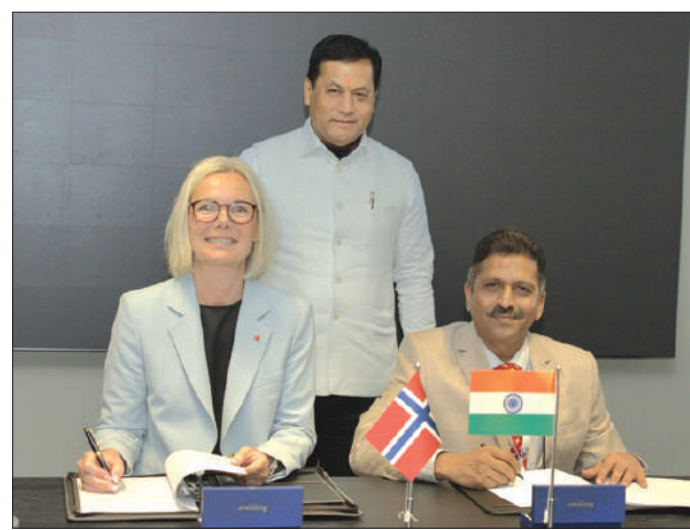
GRSE-Kongsberg MoU signed in Norway; Sonowal highlights boost to 'Make in India' and global scientific cooperation

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, June 3: India has taken a significant step towards enhancing its polar and ocean research capabilities, with the signing of a landmark Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers Ltd. (GRSE), Kolkata, and Norway's Kongsberg. The official signing ceremony was attended by Union Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, Sarbananda Sonowal, in Norway on Tuesday.

The MoU paves the way for the country's first-ever indigenous Polar Research Vessel (PRV), a move hailed by Minister Sonowal as a "legacy of innovation, exploration, and international cooperation."

He noted that the vessel, equipped with advanced scientific instruments, would significantly boost India's capacity for deep-ocean exploration and polar research, contributing to global



efforts on climate change and marine science.

"This vessel will stand as a testament to India's shipbuilding capabilities and will further strengthen the 'Make in India' initiative," said Sonowal. "Under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji, this partnership highlights India's firm commitment to scientific advancement and (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

tiative," said Sonowal. "Under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji, this partnership highlights India's firm commitment to scientific advancement and (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

One more arrested in Assam for 'sympathising' with Pak

GUWAHATI, June 3: One more person has been apprehended for allegedly 'sympathising with Pakistan on social platforms', taking the total number of such arrests to 82 so far in the wake of the Pahalgam terror attack, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said on Tuesday.

The police arrested Ajibul Islam from Lakhimpur.

"#Update on crackdown against Anti-national elements| June 3. A total of 82 people are behind bars now for sympathising with Pakistan on social platforms". The action will continue..., the chief minister posted on X.

Sarma had earlier said the "state-wide crackdown on traitors will continue and nobody will be spared".

The police have launched action against those people who were allegedly indulging in 'anti-India and pro-Pakistan activities'.

The chief minister had also said that the National Security Act (NSA) will be clamped on certain people arrested but not on all. Opposition AIUDEF MLA Aminul Islam was (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

ECI to launch real-time voter turnout monitoring via ECINET App

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI June 3: The Election Commission of India (ECI) is set to overhaul its voter turnout reporting system with a more efficient, technology-driven process designed to deliver timely updates on polling trends.

According to an official statement issued by the ECI, the updated system will significantly reduce the delays associated with the earlier manual methods of reporting, which often led to public confusion and misinformation due to a lag of four to five hours—or more—in the release of voter turnout data.

The upgraded mechanism will see Presiding Officers (PROs) inputting turnout figures directly into the ECINET App every two hours on polling day.

This new approach allows data to be aggregated at the constituency level in near real-time and published on the Voter Turnout (VTR) App at the same frequency.

In addition, PROs will now enter final turnout figures immediately after polls close, before departing the polling station. This shift aims to ensure that constituency-wise voting percentages are promptly available to the public, subject to mobile network connectivity.

Where connectivity is limited, data can be stored offline and synchronized once the network is restored.

While the statutory obligation under Rule 49S of the Conduct of Elections Rules, 1961—which requires PROs to provide Form 17C detailing the account of votes to polling agents—remains unchanged, the VTR App functions as a non-statutory, facilitative tool for public information. Previously, voter turnout data was collected (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Tripura recorded a 98.1 percent success rate

Tamil Nadu, Tripura, Delhi among top performers in adult literacy: FLNAT data

NEW DELHI, June 3: Delhi, Tripura and Tamil Nadu are among the top performers in dealing with challenges related to adult literacy and education while Uttarakhand, Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh lag behind in certification outcomes, according to results of the Foundational Literacy Numeracy Assessment Test (FLNAT).

FLNAT is a nationwide assessment focused on foundational literacy and numeracy certification. States and Union territories identify illiterate populations, train them, and then test and certify them as they come out of illiteracy.

The assessment comprises three subjects - Reading, Writing, and Numeracy - each carrying 50 marks, totalling 150 marks. The



test has been developed to evaluate the foundational literacy and numeracy skills of registered non-literate learners.

The FLNAT process was rolled out in phases between July 2024 and March 2025, with over 1.77 crore adult learners tested. By May

2025, only 34.31 lakh were officially certified, reflecting a national certification average of about 19.4 pc.

The assessment conducted under the ULLAS - Nav Bharat Saaksharta Karyakram, reveals significant variations in adult literacy certification across Indian states.

The data compiled and declared by the National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) offers insight into how states differ in tackling adult education and literacy challenges. Tamil Nadu recorded a 100 per cent success rate, certifying all 5,09,694 learners who appeared for FLNAT. Tripura closely followed, certifying 13,909 of 14,179 learners, a 98.1 pc success rate, while Delhi certified (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

ONGC says losing money in Assam, counters protesting employees

NAZIRA, June 3: India's top oil and gas producer ONGC on Tuesday said it is losing money in Assam because of low production and high employee headcount, as it countered allegations of protesting employees over stoppage of contentious overtime payment.

In a statement, Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) emphasised that it is hiring locally and is investing heavily in the local community in Assam.

Reacting to a sit-in by members of the ONGC Purbanchal Employees' Association (OPEA) at the Assam Asset in Nazira, the company said the demonstration, while peaceful, has been primarily initiated as a protest against discontinuation of a particular overtime payment, "which was not admissible".

"The company is losing money while continuing its operations at Assam for the last few years; one of the reasons being low production and high manpower," it said. It went on to state that the claim of the Union with respect to medical facilities being stopped was "factually incorrect".

"The change from direct credit to reimbursement mode has been introduced to curb misuse and malpractice related to a unique welfare facility the company provides to its in-service as well as to its former employees," it said.

Despite financial pressures linked to rising production costs in the Assam Asset, ONGC said it continues to maintain a significant presence in the region.

The company reiterated "its commitment to Assam through a wide range of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives. These include sustained investment in education, healthcare, infrastructure, and skill development. The Siu-Ka-Pha Hospital at Sivasagar is one such flagship project providing healthcare to the locals."

While the current changes may cause short-term friction, they are aimed at ensuring long-term sustainability for ONGC's operations in Assam.

The situation remains stable, with dialogue channels open between management and employee representatives. (PTI)



QUOTE OF THE DAY

A friend is one who knows you and loves you just the same.
- Elbert Hubbard

Unemployment scenario

Global Labour market outlook for 2025 is increasingly fragile. One the one hand, slower economic growth is expected to reduce global employment growth rate, and on the other unemployment rates in the countries with early 2025 data remain at historic low. Job vacancies are slightly below their long-term trends, and business and consumer sentiment has declined in the first quarter of 2025. Global GDP growth has recently been revised down by IMF to 2.8 per cent from 3.2 per cent due to persistent geopolitical tensions, recent trade disruptions, and heightened uncertainty that is expected to reduce global employment growth from 1.7 per cent to 1.5 per cent in 2025, which will reduce employment by 7 million. It is important to note that this projection does not imply a comparable rise in unemployment, as slower economic growth may reduce labour force entrants or increase exits. The estimated shortfall of 7 million workers is especially concerning considering the global jobs gap – defined as the number of people who would like a job but currently do not have one – which is estimated to reach 407 million people in 2025. Slower employment growth also raises concerns if it were to result in a greater share of workers taking lower-quality or more vulnerable jobs.

Across 71 countries, around 84 million workers whose employment is linked to consumer demand in the United States face elevated risks of disruption due to higher tariffs and trade uncertainties. That amounts to 4.3 per cent of total employment in these countries. Most of those workers – 56 million – are in Asia and the Pacific. The labour income share fell from 53 per cent in 2014 to 52.4 per cent in 2024, reinforcing upward pressure on inequality. Had the labour income share remained at its 2014 level, global labour income would have been \$1 trillion (in constant PPP) higher in 2024, and each worker would have earned an additional \$290 (in constant PPP) on average that year. Generative AI is set to transform the labour market, though its future impact remains difficult to predict. Nearly one in four workers is employed in occupations with some level of exposure to tasks that could be automated by AI. About 16.3 per cent of workers are in roles with medium exposure to generative AI and 7.5 per cent face high exposure – particularly in high-skill occupations – where generative AI could automate most tasks. Asia and the Pacific remains among the world's fastest-growing regions, with projected growth of 3.8 per cent in 2025 led by strong growth in South Asia.

The weakening of the global economy in 2025 has important implications for employment prospects worldwide, with lower economic growth likely to translate into slower employment growth in the short term. A key driver of the more pessimistic outlook is the recent shift in trade dynamics, which has heightened uncertainty around global demand. Employment growth remains a critical priority for many countries, particularly those facing underemployment, as it contributes directly to improved livelihoods and social stability. However, for gains in employment to translate into meaningful improvements in living standards, they must be accompanied by rising labour incomes. This, in turn, depends on sustained productivity growth.

POST BAG

The human cost of development: A plea for accountability and empathy

Sir/Ma'am

I write this letter with a heavy heart, reflecting on the recent tragedy along the 'Rongnadi' river. The incident has left us not only saddened but also deeply disturbed by the repeated human cost of our so-called development.

Who are those responsible for displacing people who slept peacefully, believing in the quiet rhythm of the river? In those modest houses too, electric lights glowed, and lamps of hope burned bright. Yet, despite the glow of electricity, the walls of those homes have been broken – not just physically, but emotionally and spiritually.

We are living in an age of science and technology. But the use of technology must be guided by scientific temper, accountability, and empathy. Those responsible for power generation must not remain detached from the people living along the riverbanks. They must understand the river, its nature, its seasonal fury, and above all, the lives and livelihoods it sustains.

Technology, while capable of transforming lives, can also destroy them if not handled responsibly. Accidents may be a part of progress, but negligence is not. The burden of responsibility lies with those who manage and implement these technological ventures. Safety cannot be compromised. Public concerns must not be ignored in the name of progress.

There are countless reasons why we must be cautious about where and how we invest – not just financially, but ethically. The products of a development model that displaces the poor and disregards local ecology are not worth endorsing.

This is not just about one incident – this is about a pattern that repeats, across rivers, valleys, and lives. The tears of the victims of the Red River incident should awaken us to the need for a more humane and inclusive approach to development.

Let us hope, sincerely, that such a tragedy never repeats. And let us also demand that those in positions of power and responsibility act with care, compassion, and commitment.

Mowsam Hazarika
Bharalukh, Guwahati
mowsam2000@yahoo.co.in

Regarding institutions promising job guarantee

Sir/Ma'am

I have been offering free career counselling to students and parents every Saturday from 6 PM to 9 PM via phone (09435188630) since 2005. Many students and parents inquire about educational institutions that claim to offer a job guarantee. If any institution claims to provide 100% job placement guarantee after completing a course, such a claim should not be blindly trusted. This is because employment depends on multiple factors such as the student's communication skills, technical competence, self-confidence, and performance during the interview. A certificate or promise from an institution alone cannot guarantee a job.

Before enrolling in any course, students must thoroughly verify the authenticity of the institute, the recognition and value of the degree, the management, and the credibility of its accreditations. Students should not make decisions solely based on attractive advertisements. Building a student's future is a serious matter, and everyone must take responsibility to make informed and careful decisions.

Dr. Buljit Buragohain
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Tharoor's gambit: A dance of loyalty, ambition, and ideology

At 69, Shashi Tharoor—four-time Congress MP from Thiruvananthapuram, prolific author, and former UN under-secretary-general—remains an enigma, a political polymath whose every move ignites speculation and intrigue. Is he poised to abandon the Congress for the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)? Does he harbor ambitions to become Kerala's chief minister? Or, as gossip columns whisper, is he entangled in new romantic ventures or planning another wedding? Tharoor's flamboyant persona, coupled with his penchant for high-octane rhetoric, ensures the rumour mill never rests. Recent events, particularly his vocal support for the Modi government's Operation Sindoor and his appointment to lead an all-party diplomatic delegation, have intensified scrutiny of his loyalties. While Tharoor denies any intention to join the BJP, his growing frustration with the Congress, evident in his alignment with the G23 rebels and his 2022 presidential bid against Mallikarjun Kharge, fuels speculation. As he navigates Kerala's complex political landscape ahead of the 2026 assembly elections, Tharoor's blend of pragmatism, intellectual independence, and secularist convictions positions him as both a Congress asset and a potential disruptor, embodying a post-political era where ideology yields to merit-based pragmatism.

Tharoor's recent actions have thrust him into the spotlight, particularly his enthusiastic endorsement of Operation Sindoor, the Modi government's military strikes against Pakistan following the April 22, 2025, Pahalgam terror attack. Leading a multi-party delegation to Guyana, Panama, Colombia, Brazil, and the United States, Tharoor articulated India's resolve against terrorism, declaring, "We will not be silenced by terrorism, and we don't want the world to look away either." His alignment with the government's narrative, including defending the ceasefire brokered after U.S. intervention, sharply contrasted with the

Congress's cautious stance, which demanded a Pahalgam review committee and questioned the ceasefire's timing. The Centre's decision to nominate Tharoor, bypassing Congress's proposed names—Anand Sharma, Gaurav Gogoi, Syed Naseer Hussain, and Raja Brar—sparked a BJP-Congress slugfest, with BJP leaders like Amit Malviya taunting Congress for sidelining its eloquent MP. Congress leaders, including Udit Raj, accused Tharoor of "crossing the Lakshmanrekha," with some labeling him a "super-BJP man" for comments likening the Pahalgam attack to Israel's intelligence failures. Despite calls for disciplinary action, Congress relented, citing Tharoor's personal opinion and his electoral value in Thiruvananthapuram.

Expressing irritation at persistent speculation, Tharoor reiterated his commitment to Congress, denying any plans to join the BJP. His extensive writings, including over 20 books critiquing Hindutva ideology, underscore his secularist credentials, yet his "soft Hindu" stance—evident in his nuanced views on cultural identity—has fueled BJP-switch rumors. Tharoor's frustration with Congress's leadership is palpable. His 2022 presidential candidacy against Kharge, supported by the G23 rebels, exposed a coterie around Rahul Gandhi that marginalized independent thinkers. A February 2024 podcast hinting at "other options" if Congress failed to utilize him, coupled with his alignment with the G23's call for party reform, underscored his discontent. Posts on X reflect this tension, with some suggesting Tharoor's nationalism clashes with Congress's line, prompting calls for his departure.

Tharoor's praise for Modi is not a recent pivot but a consistent trait. In 2013, he wrote for The Daily (USA), noting Modi's shift from a "hate figure" to an "avatar of modernity" post-2014 elections, a view that irked Congress. His 2014 acceptance of a

Swachh Bharat nomination led to his removal as Congress spokesperson, and his praise for Modi's communication skills and global image further strained ties. In 2019, Tharoor felt vindicated when Jairam Ramesh and Abhishek Singhvi urged against "demonizing" Modi, tweeting that praising Modi's successes lends credibility to criticism. His 2023 lauding of the G20 Summit's Delhi Declaration as a "diplomatic triumph" and his 2024 endorsements of Modi's vaccine diplomacy, U.S. trade talks, and India-UK FTA negotiations reflect this philosophy. In March 2025, Tharoor admitted misjudging Modi's Russia-Ukraine stance, praising India's neutral role in fostering peace.

Tharoor's alignment with non-Congress initiatives, like sharing a stage with Modi at the Vizhinjam International Seaport inauguration despite Congress's boycott, has deepened mistrust. Modi's jibe that Tharoor's presence would give the INDIA bloc "sleepless nights" highlighted the rift, as did Tharoor's selfie with Piyush Goyal and UK trade officials. His praise for the CPI(M)-led Kerala government's pro-business policies further muddied ideological lines. BJP leaders, including Kerala chief Rajeev Chandrasekhar, have praised Tharoor as a "sane voice," though Chandrasekhar dismissed defection rumors. Posts on X speculate about a June 2025 BJP switch, though these remain unverified.

Tharoor's ambitions appear focused on Kerala's 2026 assembly elections, with the chief minister's post a tantalizing prospect. His appeal, bolstered by the Indian Union Muslim League's endorsement and his cross-community charisma, positions him as Congress's best hope to challenge the CPI(M)'s Pinarayi Vijayan, whose two-term incumbency faces anti-incumbency. Tharoor's announcement that he will not contest future Lok Sabha elections signals a

strategic pivot to state politics. However, internal Congress opposition, led by figures like K.C. Venugopal, Rahul Gandhi's confidant, poses a formidable hurdle. Kerala Congress leaders, wary of Tharoor's "soft Hindutva" tone, fear it alienates minorities, though his Thiruvananthapuram victories rely on the 38% minority vote. The appointment of Sunny Joseph as KPCC president over Tharoor's allies further dims his prospects.

Tharoor's identity as a creative thinker, not a career politician, explains his maverick streak. His mantra—"there is only India in foreign policy," not Congress or BJP policy"—echoes P.V. Narasimha Rao's 1994 choice of Atal Bihari Vajpayee for a UN delegation. This pragmatism, lauded by some as post-political, is criticized by others as eroding ideological clarity. Tharoor's critique of Nehru's license raj, the Emergency, and Left ideology, alongside his opposition to Hindutva, reflects a merit-based worldview. His May 24, 2025, criticism of Kerala's ₹10 crore aid to Turkey, citing its support for Pakistan, aligns with national sentiment but irks local Congress leaders who note Wayanad's need for funds.

Personal rumors, including whispers of romance or a fourth marriage, lack substantiation but reflect Tharoor's larger-than-life persona. A defamation case by Rajeev Chandrasekhar over 2024 election bribery allegations adds legal pressure. Yet, Tharoor's intellectual heft and oratory keep him indispensable. As Frontline notes, his brinkmanship may persist until 2026, with neither Congress nor Tharoor rushing to sever ties. His ability to court diverse voters while navigating internal strife makes him a wildcard. Whether he remains a Congress stalwart, seeks independence, or—against all odds—joins the BJP, Tharoor's gambit reflects a bold, if perilous, quest to redefine Indian politics on his terms, balancing loyalty, ambition, and a vision for a progressive Kerala. (The writer can be reached at dipakkurmigpltd@gmail.com)

DEGREE OF THOUGHT

By: Dipak Kurmi

Agriculture sector's schemes for farmers in India

By: Diganta Barooah

Micro Irrigation Fund (MIF) Scheme :

A Micro Irrigation Fund (MIF) of initial corpus ₹ 5000 crore has been created with NABARD with major objective to facilitate the States in mobilizing the resources for expanding coverage of Micro Irrigation. Under the funding arrangement, NABARD lends to the States/UTs at 3% lower interest rate than the corresponding cost of fund mobilized by NABARD from the market. The interest subvention on the loan under MIF is borne by Centre under PDMC. Projects with loans under MIF worth ₹ 4710.96 crore have been approved so far. Loans amounting ₹ 2812.24 crore have been disbursed to States of Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan. The Ministry provides interest subvention on the loan availed by the States which is met from PDMC Scheme. As per the Budget 2021-22, the corpus of the fund is to be doubled to ₹ 10000 crores. MIF is now merged with PDMC.

Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY):

Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY) aims to increase soil fertility and thereby helps in production of healthy food through organic practices without the use of agro-chemicals. The scheme is implemented in a cluster mode with unit cluster size of 20 hectares. A group shall comprise minimum 20 farmers (may be more if individual holdings are less). Farmers in a group can avail benefit of maximum of 2 ha as per provision of PKVY. 25 such clusters are converted into one large cluster of about 500 ha area to facilitate marketing of organic produce. The scheme provides for an assistance of ₹ 31,500 per ha to states, out of which i.e., ₹ 15,000 is given as incentives to a farmer directly through DBT.

Sub-Mission on Agriculture Mechanization (SMAM) Scheme:

Sub Mission on Agricultural Mechanization (SMAM) is being implemented w.e.f April, 2014 which aims at catalyzing an accelerated but inclusive growth of agricultural mechanization in India with the objectives of Increasing the reach of farm mechanization to small and marginal farmers and to the regions where availability of farm power is low, promoting 'Custom Hiring Centres' to offset the adverse economies of scale arising due to small landholding and high cost of individual ownership, creating hubs for hi-tech & high value farm equipments, creating awareness among stakeholders through demonstration and capacity building activities and Ensuring performance testing and certification at designated testing centers located all over the country. Till date ₹ 6748.78 Crore have been released to State Governments, distributed more than 15,75,719 agricultural machinery & equipments including Tractors, Power Tillers, Self-Propelled Mechanizers and Plant Protection Equipment and established 23,472 nos of Custom Hiring Centres, 504 nos of Hi-Tech Hubs and 20,597 nos. of Farm Machinery Banks.

Promotion of Drone Technology under SMAM :

Looking into the unique advantages of Drone technologies in agriculture, a Standard Crop Specific Operating Procedures (SOPs) was released for use of drones in pesticide and nutrient application in public domain on 20th April, 2023, which provides concise instructions for effective and safe operations of drones.

From within the funds of SMAM, so far an amount of ₹ 138.82 crores have been released towards Kisan drone promotion, which include purchase of 317 Drones for their demonstration in 79,070 hectares of land and supply of 461 drones to the farmers on subsidy and also supply of 1,595 drones to the CHCs for providing drone services to the farmers on rental basis.

Crop Residue Management Scheme:

Crop Residue Management was implemented from 2018-19 in Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and NCT of Delhi. Its objectives include protecting environment from air pollution and preventing loss of nutrients and soil micro-organisms caused by burning of crop residue through promoting in-situ management of crop residue. In this regard, it proposes to set up Farm Machinery Banks for custom hiring of in-situ crop residue management machinery. It also aims to create awareness among stakeholders through demonstration, capacity building activities and differentiated information, education and communication strategies for effective utilization and management of crop residue. ₹ 3,333.17 crore has been released under the scheme since inception and distributed more than 2,95,845 CRM machinery. CRM is now merged with SMAM.

Agro-forestry Scheme:

Agro-forestry was conceived on the recommendation of the National Agro-forestry Policy 2014 to promote plantation on farmlands. The restructured agro-forestry under RKVY is aimed to provide Quality Planting Materials (QPM) and the certification in order to promote planting of trees on farm land for improving the livelihood of farmers.

Krishonnati Yojana :

National Food Security Mission (NFSM):

The Mission aims at increasing production of rice, wheat, pulses, coarse cereals (Maize and Barley) and Nutri-Cereals through area expansion and productivity enhancement in a sustainable manner in the identified districts of 28 States and 2 UTs (i.e., J&K and Ladakh). Other objectives include restoring Soil fertility and productivity at the individual farm level, enhancing farm level economy to restore confidence amongst the farmers and post harvest value addition at farm gate.

Since the declaration of the International Year of Millets (IYM) 2023 by the UNGA in 2021, Government has taken a proactive multi stakeholder engagement approach to achieve the aim of IYM 2023 and taking Indian millets globally. 25 seed-hubs have been established to ensure availability of quality seed of latest improved varieties of Nutri cereals in the country. Millet missions have been launched across 13 states including Odisha, Tamil Nadu, Chhattisgarh, Assam, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Himachal Pradesh, Gujarat and Rajasthan. More than 500 start-ups and 350 FPOs have been established and are operational in the millet ecosystem as of now.

Sub-Mission on Seed and Planting Material (SMSM):

SMSM covers the entire gamut of seed production chain, from production of nucleus seed to supply of certified seeds to the farmers, to provide support for creation of infrastructure conducive for development of the seed sector, support to the public seed producing organisations for improving their capacity and quality of seed production, create dedicated seed bank to meet unforeseen circumstances of natural calamities, etc. For effective monitoring, efficiency and transparency covering Seed chain from Nucleus-Breeder-Foundation-Certified Seed, first phase of Seed Authentication, Traceability & Holistic Inventory (SATHI) portal was launched on 19th April, 2023. SMSM is now merged with NFSM.

National Mission on Edible Oils (NMEO)-Oil Palm:

A new Centrally Sponsored Scheme namely, National Mission on Edible Oil (NMEO)-Oil Palm (NMEO-OP) has been launched by Government of India in 2021 in order to promote oil palm cultivation for making the country Atamirbhar in edible oils with special focus on North-Eastern States and A&N Islands. The Mission will bring additional area of 6.5 lakh ha under Oil Palm plantation with 3.28 lakh ha in north-eastern states and 3.22 in rest of India in next 5 years from 2021-22 to 2025-26.

Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH):

Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH), a Centrally Sponsored Scheme was launched during 2014-15 for holistic growth of the horticulture sector covering fruits, vegetables, root and tuber crops, mushrooms, spices, flowers, aromatic plants, coconut, cashew, cocoa and Bamboo. Major components include plantation infrastructure development, establishment of new orchards and gardens for fruits, vegetables, spices and flowers, rejuvenation of unproductive, old, and senile orchards, protected cultivation, promotion of organic farming, pollination support through bee keeping, horticulture mechanization, post-harvest management (phm) and marketing infrastructure etc.

Under MIDH since 2014-15 to 2023-24 (as on 31.10.2023) an additional area of 12.95 lakh ha. of identified horticulture crops has been covered, 872 nurseries established for production of quality planting material, 1.41 lakh ha. of old and senile orchards has been rejuvenated, 52,069 ha. has been covered under organic practices and 3.07 lakh ha. has been covered under Protected Cultivation.

National Bamboo Mission (NBM):

The Scheme is implemented in 23 States and 1 UT (J&K) through the State Bamboo Missions (SBM)/ State Bamboo Development Agency (SBDA). NBM mainly focuses on the development of complete value chain of the bamboo sector. It is envisaged to link growers with consumers with a cluster approach mode.

Under NBM, 367 Bamboo Nurseries have been established, 212 bamboo Nurseries have been Accredited by the State Level Accreditation Committees, 46,000 ha bamboo

plantations have been established in non-forest Government & private lands, 81 units for bamboo primary processing have been established, 416 units have been established for value addition and product development, and capacity building for 15,000 persons including farmers, artisans and entrepreneurs. NBM is now merged with MIDH.

Integrated Scheme for Agriculture Marketing (ISAM):

ISAM supports state governments in governing the agricultural produce marketing through creation and improvement of market structures, capacity building and generating access to market information. During 2017-18, National Agriculture Market Scheme popularly known as e-NAM scheme has also been made part of the same. National Agriculture Market (e-NAM) is a pan-India electronic trading portal which networks the existing APMC mandis to create a unified national market for agricultural commodities. 1,389 mandis of 23 States and 04 UTs have been integrated to e-NAM platform and more than 1.76 Crore Farmers & 2.5 Lakh traders have been registered on e-NAM portal.

Mission Organic Value Chain Development for North Eastern Region (MOVCDNR):

The MOVCDNR aims at development of commodity specific, concentrated, certified organic production clusters in value chain mode to link growers with consumers and to support the development of entire value chain starting from inputs, seeds, certification, to the creation of facilities for collection, aggregation, processing, marketing and brand building initiative in North Eastern Region (Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, and Tripura). Since 2015-16 (as on 06.12.2023), ₹ 1,035.17 crore has been released, 379 FPO/FPCs created covering 1,89,039 farmers and 1,72,966 ha area.

Sub-Mission on Agriculture Extension (SMAE):

The scheme aims at making the extension system farmer driven and farmer accountable by disseminating technology to farmers through new institutional arrangements viz. Agricultural Technology Management Agency (ATMA) at district level to operationalize extension reforms in a participatory mode. Digital initiatives taken up in agricultural extension include:

✓ VISTAAR - Virtually integrated Systems to Access Agricultural Resources being developed as a DPI for Agriculture Extension

✓ Apurva AI- Capturing farmer innovations- Acts as a peer to peer learning Platform and provide content for advisory retrieval through VISTAAR Bot and also for impact Assessment of schemes (AIF completed)

✓ Wadhvani- Krishi 24X7 for Realtime News monitoring, Tamil language and image-based cotton pest identification to be plugged in with FLEW/farmer profile mapping

✓ Kisan Call Centre - Integration with VISTAAR and other IT applications and with Kisan Sarathi (ICAR) for direct contact with Agri experts

✓ RAWE- Integration of Agri students for behavioral interaction through VISTAAR Bot and Feedback system

✓ IMD- Weather forecast integrated through DAMU along with advisory delivery through VISTAAR

✓ NRLM- Decentralised Extension Mechanism (Krishi Sakhi, Pashu Sakhi, Matsya Sakhi etc) - Capacity building on Digital Extension -VISTAAR

Digital Agriculture:

The scheme aims to improve the existing National e-Governance Plan in Agriculture (NeGPA) by developing a digital public infrastructure for agriculture that will be built as an open source, open standard and interoperable public good to enable inclusive, farmer-centric solutions through relevant information services for crop planning and health, improved access to farm inputs, credit and insurance, help for crop estimation, market intelligence, and support for the growth of Agri Techs industry and start-ups.

AgriStack architecture has the following foundational layers:

✓ Core registries
✓ Base databases
✓ Farmers Database: Farmers ID linked with land records

✓ Geo-referencing of plots
✓ Crop Survey, Crop planning and Soil Mapping, Soil Fertility
✓ Unified Farmers Service Interface for state, Pvt. Players
✓ Data Exchange

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How are PMDD and PMS different?

By: Jenna Fletcher

Premenstrual dysphoric disorder (PMDD) is similar to premenstrual syndrome (PMS), but symptoms are more severe. Symptoms include emotional, behavioral, and physical symptoms in the week or two leading to a person's period.

PMDD symptoms include depression, anxiety, or severe irritability a week or two before a period. Over 90% of females report some form of PMS before their period, and symptoms may include swollen and tender breasts and a loss of interest in sex.

This article breaks down the differences between the two conditions and outlines symptoms, treatment, and diagnosis.

Symptoms of PMDD and PMS

People with either condition may experience physical, behavioral, emotional, or affective (psychological) symptoms that change the way they think and feel. However, the frequency and severity of these symptoms vary between the two conditions.

PMDD symptoms

PMDD symptoms are more severe than those of PMS and have a more significant impact on a person's day-to-day life. Doctors and other experts classify PMDD as a depressive disorder.

According to the Office on Women's Health, a doctor diagnoses PMDD when a person experiences five PMDD symptoms, including a mood-related symptom.

Affective, or psychological, symptoms include:

- Mood swings
- Sudden sadness
- Increased sensitivity to rejection
- Anger
- Irritability

- Sense of hopelessness
- Self-critical thoughts
- Tension
- Anxiety
- Depressed mood
- Suicidal thoughts

Physical and behavioral symptoms include:

- Difficulty concentrating
- Change in appetite, food cravings, and overeating
- Diminished interest in usual activities
- Easily tired and decreased energy
- Feeling overwhelmed or out of control
- Breast tenderness
- Bloating
- Weight gain
- Joint or muscle aches
- Sleeping too much or not sleeping enough

PMS symptoms

A person with PMS may or may not experience any affective or psychological symptoms. People with PMS may experience the following symptoms.

Mental and emotional symptoms include:

- Fatigue or feeling tired
- Irritability
- Problems with sleeping too much or too little
- Changes in appetite
- Mood swings
- Issues with memory or concentration

- Anxiety
- Decreased sex drive
- Tension
- Feeling sad, frequent crying or depression

Physical symptoms may include:

- Diarrhea
- Constipation
- Swollen or tender breasts
- Cramping
- Lower tolerance for light or noise



- Feeling bloated or gassy
- Clumsiness
- Headaches or backaches

Causes of PMDD and PMS

Experts do not know the exact cause of PMDD and PMS. But research suggests that fluctuations in hormones may be responsible. A person's sensitivities to these fluctuations could determine whether they experience PMDD or PMS.

Hormone fluctuations may cause a serotonin deficiency. Known as the happy hormone, serotonin is a neurotransmitter that can affect both mood and physical symptoms associated with PMDD and PMS.

In a 2016 study, researchers suggested that a person's sensitivity to estrogen and progesterone may have links to PMDD and PMS. Other factors, such as stress and genetics, may also contribute to

symptoms.

PMDD and PMS treatment

Treatments for PMDD and PMS are typically similar but depend on the severity of a person's symptoms and whether they have any underlying health conditions.

PMDD treatments

Treatments for PMDD vary according to the symptoms, and some therapies work better for some people than others. If treatment does not succeed at first, a person should not give up and keep working on a treatment plan with their doctor.

A doctor may suggest one or more of the following to help alleviate PMDD symptoms:

- Increasing sleep
- Not smoking
- Eating healthily
- Acupuncture
- Oral contraceptives

- Selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs)
- Mood stabilizers
- Gonadotropin-releasing hormone (GnRH) agonists

PMS treatments

In some cases, a person may be able to alleviate PMS symptoms at home with over-the-counter (OTC) pain relief medications, regular exercise, and a healthy diet.

According to the Office on Women's Health, a doctor may recommend or prescribe:

- Antidepressants
- Hormonal birth control
- Water pills
- Anti-anxiety medication

Home care for PMDD and PMS

Home care is an integral part of PMDD and PMS management. Though PMDD symptoms are more severe than PMS, a combina-

tion of home care methods and other therapies could help a person effectively manage PMDD.

Many people with PMS notice a difference in symptoms when they change aspects of their diet or practice stress management techniques.

Home care methods that help alleviate PMS or PMDD symptoms include:

- Not smoking
- Eating a healthy diet
- Getting regular exercise
- Managing stress
- Getting about 8 hours of sleep each night
- OTC pain medications, such as ibuprofen

PMDD and PMS diagnosis

According to the Office on Women's Health, there is no single test for PMDD or PMS. A doctor will likely ask several health-related questions to determine what symptoms a person is experiencing, how often they occur, and how severe they are.

For a doctor to diagnose PMDD, a person must have five or more PMDD symptoms, including at least one mood-related symptom.

A doctor may also take into account:

- Symptoms that interfere with home, school, or work-life
- Symptoms that are not related to or exacerbated by another medical condition

A person likely has PMS or PMDD if:

- Symptoms end a few days into the period
- Symptoms present 5 days before a period for at least three menstrual cycles in a row
- Symptoms prevent enjoyment or participation in everyday activities

Differences in severity between PMDD and PMS

The main difference between PMDD and PMS is the severity and type of symptoms a person experiences. For example, someone with PMDD may experience more affective symptoms more often than someone who doesn't have it. These symptoms include depressed mood or mood swings days before their period starts.

When to see a doctor

A person should talk to their doctor if they are experiencing PMDD or PMS symptoms that interfere with their daily lives. A doctor should be able to help distinguish between the two conditions and suggest a treatment plan.

Keeping a journal of symptoms can help a doctor reach a diagnosis, especially if the symptoms are severe and regular enough to indicate PMDD.

A person should also talk with their doctor if their symptoms worsen or treatment is no longer effective, as they can make adjustments to the treatment plan. If a person, family member, or friend expresses thoughts of suicide, they should contact emergency services or the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline immediately.

Summary

PMDD and PMS are similar conditions. PMDD is a more extreme form of PMS that may require additional therapy. Pain relief medication and hormonal birth control may help prevent or reduce some of the symptoms.

If a person's life is adversely affected in the week or two leading up to their period, they should talk to their doctor about possible treatment options.

It may take a while for someone to find an effective treatment plan, so they must stay in touch with their doctor and provide updates on what works well and what does not. (Courtesy: Medical News Today)

Let's learn more about skin cycling

By: Shahnaz Husain

"Skin cycling", also known as skin fasting or skin detoxing, is all about taking a cyclical approach to your facial skincare routine to improve skin quality, texture and tone and strengthen the skin's protective moisture barrier. It's a term used to describe the way products are applied to the skin. Skin cycling is a four-night skincare practice in which you rotate your skincare products to avoid irritation—and then repeat it all over again.

Skin cycling is also about strategically using skin products for maximum benefits and minimum damage.

Skin cycling suggests that you should change skincare products each night while maintaining the same daytime routine.

Using specific products on different days regenerates the skin and improves skin quality, but it's important for all skin types to tailor their routine to suit their skin needs.

The cycle typically spans three to four nights that strategically plans out when you should exfoliate, when you should use retinol and when you should give your skin a little break. It's designed to help you use products exactly when your skin needs them and is ready for them, for the maximum, glow-boosting results. It involves alternating the use of a physical or chemical exfoliant, a retinol-based product, and a hydrating cream or concentrate strategically alternated for optimal impact. The theory behind this approach is that you can optimise skin regeneration and enhance skin quality by utilising specific products on different days.

Every day of the cycle: Cleanse

Wash your face with a gentle cleanser to remove dirt, grime and makeup every morning and evening. Always remember to moisturise and use SPF in the morning.

Night 1: Exfoliate

On the first night of your skin cycling routine, first you'll cleanse and pat dry, then exfoliate. Exfoliation removes the dead skin cells from the surface layer of your skin and unclogs pores for a more even, smoother complexion.

Opting for a gentle exfoliating scrub for the face holds significant merit, as other products will perform more effectively because they

can penetrate more deeply into the skin in a controlled, predictable way.

After the exfoliation ritual, you'll want to moisturise to lock in hydration and promote overall skin health.

While exfoliation improves the look of their skin, over-exfoliation can disrupt your skin's natural balance and barrier and can lead to irritation, redness, breakouts, or flaky skin as a result. Chemical exfoliants are more gentle than physical scrubs.

Physical exfoliants contain microparticles. As they're massaged gently into the skin, they help to remove dead skin cells (impurities). This type of exfoliation is more abrasive and is only suitable for non-sensitive skin types.

Chemical exfoliants contain AHAs or BHAs, which promote gradual cell renewal. In other words, they speed up the cell replacement process.

Night 2: Retinol

Retinoids are one of the powerful ingredients to include in your skin cycling routine that work to boost your skin's renewal process. Choosing the right retinol product for your skin is key. Retinoids are a common treatment for acne as well as an anti-ageing product. Retinol contains vitamin A derivatives that can help treat age spots, reduce the appearance of fine lines, wrinkles and expression lines, as well as the loss of firmness and brightness. On the second day, after removing makeup and cleansing, apply a hydrating cream to the sensitive areas of the face—under the eyes, around the corners of the nose, and on the marionette lines—to act as a buffer and prevent dryness and irritation. Then, apply your retinoid over the whole face, down the neck, and across the décolletage and leave it to act on your skin overnight. You should start with a lower percentage concentration of retinol, allowing your skin to get used to it gradually. Stronger retinoids should be used for oily or acne-prone skin. The number of moisturising nights in each cycle should be increased for a longer recovery for dry or sensitive skin.

Retinisation (the period over which your skin adapts to a retinoid) can last up to three months.

So if you notice some sensitivity at the start, use nourishing and calming products to

alleviate any negative effects, but if you notice a burning sensation/irritation, please consult a dermatologist. Always use sunscreen during the day.

Night 3: Recovery

Day three is dedicated to giving your skin a break from exfoliation and active ingredients. This night is aimed at recovery, so apply moisturiser after thoroughly cleaning the skin.

Use gentle, nourishing products like hydrating serums, soothing masks, and lightweight moisturisers. This phase helps your skin repair and maintain its natural barrier.

I will recommend cleansing, leaving the skin damp, and then applying a serum that contains ingredients like hyaluronic acid, ceramide, glycerin, and/or niacinamide. A moisturising serum provides additional hydration to particularly dry skin.

If you suffer from dry skin, get in-depth nourishment from an intensive nourishing hydrating cream. Hydrate for only one night if you have oily or acne-prone skin and use a lighter cream or a concentrate.

Hydrate for two or three nights if you have sensitive, dry or easily irritated skin. Hydrating more nights allows for longer repair and recovery.

Avoid products with strong active ingredients or exfoliants. Try to keep your skincare routine simple to avoid overstimulation.

Night 4: Maintenance

The fourth night in a skin cycling process is dedicated to hydration and rebalancing. The fourth night focuses on maintaining your skin's health with balanced, non-irritating products. Use this to apply basic skincare essentials, such as cleansers, moisturisers, etc. Look for ingredients that nourish, hydrate, and protect the skin barrier. It will restore the skin's barrier, pH, and microbiome, and your skin will be primed for when you cycle back into the actives. This phase helps your skin maintain its condition and prepares it for the next exfoliation cycle and active treatment.

Skin cycling is helpful for people who may be struggling to find a good regimen because they're using too many products or not giving products adequate time to work. (The author is international fame beauty expert and is called herbal queen of India)

The journey of feminism in English literature

By: Satyabrata Borah

The evolution of feminist themes in English literature is a story of change, struggle, and growth. Over time, literature has reflected the changing roles and experiences of women in society. Feminism, at its core, is about equality and giving women a voice in spaces where they were previously unheard. This movement has influenced literature for centuries, shaping the narratives we read and the characters we encounter. Writers have used their works to challenge stereotypes, question societal norms, and imagine a world where women are free to live and express themselves as equals.

In the early days, women were largely absent from the world of literature. Men dominated writing and publishing, and women were often relegated to roles as muses, caretakers, or supporting characters in stories. Their inner lives and experiences were rarely explored. When women appeared in literature, they were often idealized or depicted as symbols of virtue, beauty, or temptation. This lack of representation did not mean that women were silent. It simply meant they were forced to express themselves through other means, often in the privacy of their homes or in diaries and letters. The situation began to change during the Renaissance period. Women like Mary Sidney and Aphra Behn began writing and publishing their work. Aphra Behn, in particular, was a trailblazer as one of the first English women to earn a living as a writer. Her plays, poems, and novels often explored themes of love, power, and gender. She demonstrated that women could succeed in a field dominated by men, opening the door for others to follow.

The 18th and 19th centuries marked a significant turning point. During this time, the rise of the novel provided a platform for women writers to express themselves more freely. Authors like Jane Austen, Mary Shelley, and the Bronte sisters used their novels to explore the lives of women in depth. Jane Austen, for example, examined the challenges faced by women in a patriarchal society, such as limited opportunities for education and economic independence. Her sharp wit and keen observations of human behavior made her a beloved writer, and her works continue to resonate with readers today. Mary Shelley, on the other hand, broke new ground with her novel "Frankenstein". Though often regarded as a work of science fiction, it also explores themes of creation, responsibility, and the consequences of exclusion. It was remarkable that a young woman could produce



such a profound and thought-provoking work at a time when women were still expected to conform to traditional roles.

The Bronte sisters—Charlotte, Emily, and Anne—also made a significant impact. Their novels, including "Jane Eyre" and "Wuthering Heights", explored complex female characters who defied societal expectations. These women were not passive or submissive; they had strong wills, deep emotions, and a desire for freedom. The Brontes' works challenged traditional notions of femininity and opened up new possibilities for women in literature.

As the 19th century gave way to the 20th, feminist themes became even more prominent in English literature. The suffrage movement, which fought for women's right to vote, inspired many writers to address issues of gender inequality. Virginia Woolf emerged as a key figure during this period. In her essay "A Room of One's Own", she argued that women needed financial independence and personal space to create art and express themselves. Her novels, such as "Mrs. Dalloway" and "To the Lighthouse", often focused on the inner lives of women, exploring their thoughts, desires, and struggles.

Another influential writer was Sylvia Plath, whose poetry and novel "The Bell Jar" delved into themes of mental health, identity, and the pressures faced by women in a patriarchal society. Plath's work was deeply personal, and she used her writing to express feelings of confinement and frustration. Her honest portrayal of these issues resonated with many readers, particularly women who felt trapped by societal expectations.

The latter half of the 20th century saw the rise of feminist literary criticism, which examined the ways in which literature has been shaped by gender. Writers like Angela Carter and Margaret Atwood challenged traditional narratives and created powerful female characters who refused to conform to societal norms. Angela Carter's "The Bloody Chamber" reimagined fairy tales from a feminist perspective, while Margaret Atwood's "The

Handmaid's Tale" offered a chilling vision of a dystopian society where women are oppressed and stripped of their rights.

Feminist themes in literature continued to evolve in the 21st century. Contemporary writers like Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, Zadie Smith, and Arundhati Roy have brought diverse perspectives to the conversation. These authors explore intersections of gender, race, class, and culture, showing that feminism is not a one-size-fits-all movement. Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's "We Should All Be Feminists" is a powerful manifesto that calls for equality and inclusion, while her novels, such as "Americanah", explore the complexities of identity and relationships.

Zadie Smith's works often feature strong, multifaceted female characters who navigate complex social and cultural landscapes. Similarly, Arundhati Roy's "The God of Small Things" examines the ways in which women's lives are shaped by societal expectations and traditions. These writers demonstrate that feminist literature is not limited to any one style or perspective; it is a rich and diverse field that continues to grow and adapt.

Throughout history, feminist themes in English literature have been shaped by the broader social and political context. As women gained more rights and opportunities, their voices became stronger and more diverse. Literature became a space where women could challenge stereotypes, question norms, and imagine new possibilities. Feminist literature is not just about women's experiences; it is about envisioning a world where everyone can live free from discrimination and inequality.

The journey of feminist themes in literature is far from over. Today, writers continue to push boundaries and explore new ideas. They use their stories to advocate for change, highlight injustices, and celebrate the resilience and strength of women. Feminist literature reminds us that words have the power to transform society and inspire generations. By giving voice to women's experiences, it ensures that their stories will not be forgotten.

One in three Indian women have faced child sexual abuse, Lancet study reveals

By: Nandita Banerji

Nearly one in three Indian women and more than one in ten Indian men were sexually abused before the age of 18, according to a new global study published in the journal The Lancet, spotlighting a harrowing crisis of child sexual abuse that often begins early in life.

The research, conducted by the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation at the University of Washington, analysed data spanning 204 countries over three decades, from 1990 to 2023. Data from the Global Burden of Diseases, Injuries, and Risk Factors study was used to calculate the prevalence of sexual violence against children (SVAC).

The study estimated that 30.8 per cent of Indian women and 13.5 per cent of Indian men experienced sexual violence during their childhood, placing India among the countries with the highest prevalence rates for women. For young Indian adults aged 20-24, the numbers remain stark: 26.9 per cent of women and 9.4 per cent of men reported having ex-

perienced sexual violence as children.

Globally, the figures are no less grim. The paper found that 18.9 per cent of women and 14.8 per cent of men worldwide have been victims of child sexual abuse. Of those aged 13-24 who reported ever experiencing sexual violence, two-thirds of girls and nearly three-quarters of boys said it happened before they turned 18.

The findings reveal that SVAC is not only pervasive but alarmingly persistent over time, showing little change since 1990. India, alongside countries such as Costa Rica, Chile and the Solomon Islands, recorded among the highest prevalence for women, underlining that the crisis is global, not regional.

Narrow window for intervention

The research showed that the vast majority of sexual abuse begins before adulthood. Childhood and adolescence are not just vulnerable years, they are the primary years of risk. Across the global sample, 67.3 per cent of female survivors and 71.9 per cent of male survivors said their first encounter with sexual violence happened during childhood.

The researchers argued that these early windows must be the focus of future prevention efforts through safe schooling environments, better social support systems and the dismantling of patriarchal norms that enable secrecy and shame.

The true scale of the problem may be even greater, the research cautioned. The study adjusted for underreporting linked to how surveys were conducted. For instance, face-to-face interviews often yield lower disclosures than anonymous methods. In fact, 63 countries had no publicly available data on sexual abuse against children and even among countries with data, most had only one year of usable information, making it difficult to track trends or policy impact. In India, while prevalence is high, the frequency and consistency of surveys remain patchy.

Boys are being overlooked

While sexual violence against girls has long received attention in public discourse, the study also finds that boys are significantly affected, sometimes more than girls. (Courtesy: Down to Earth)

Russian rockets kill 3 in Ukrainian city as Kyiv claims it damaged key bridge deep in Russia

Delegations agreed to swap dead and wounded troops but terms for ending war remains far apart

KYIV, June 3: A Russian attack targeted the Ukrainian city of Sumy on Tuesday, killing at least three people and leaving many injured, officials said. Ukraine's Volodymyr Zelenskyy denounced the assault, saying it underscored that Moscow has no intentions of halting the three-year war.

Meanwhile, Ukraine's secret services said they struck again in Russia's rear, two days after a spectacular Ukrainian drone attack on air bases deep inside Russia.

In Sumy, local authorities said a barrage of rockets struck apartment buildings and a medical facility in the centre of the northeastern city, a day after direct peace talks made no progress on ending the 3-year war.

Delegations from the warring sides held talks in Istanbul on Monday and agreed to swap dead and wounded troops but their terms for ending the war remained far apart.

A vital bridge to Crimea
The Ukrainian Security Service, known by its acronym SBU, claimed it damaged the foundations of the Kerch Bridge linking Russia and illegally annexed Crimea — a key artery for Russian military supplies in the war.

The SBU said it detonated 1,100 kilograms of explosives on the seabed overnight, damaging the bridge's foundations in an operation that took several months to set up. It was the third Ukrainian strike on the bridge since Russia's invasion of its neighbour in February 2022, the SBU said.

"The bridge is now effectively in an emergency condition," the SBU claimed.



It said no civilians were killed or injured in the operation. It was not possible to independently confirm the claims. Traffic across the Kerch Bridge was halted for three hours early Tuesday morning but reopened at 9 am, official Russian social media channels said.

Zelenskyy appeals for pressure on Moscow

The Ukrainian president said the attack on Sumy was a "completely deliberate strike on civilians and that one of the rockets pierced the wall of an apartment building but failed to detonate."

"The Russians brutally struck Sumy — directly targeting the city, ordinary streets — with rocket artillery," Zelenskyy said. "That's all you need to know about Russia's desire to end this war," the Ukrainian president wrote in a post on Telegram.

Zelenskyy appealed for global pressure and "decisive action from the United States, Europe, and everyone in the world who holds power" — without it, he said, Russian President Vladimir Putin "will not agree even to a ceasefire."

The war has killed more than 12,000 Ukrainian civilians, according to the United

Nations, as well as tens of thousands of soldiers on both sides along the roughly 1,000-kilometre front line where the war of attrition is grinding on despite US-led efforts to broker a peace deal.

A stunning Ukrainian drone attack

Though Russia has a bigger army and more economic resources than Ukraine, a spectacular Ukrainian drone attack over the weekend damaged or destroyed more than 40 warplanes at air bases deep inside Russia, Ukrainian officials said, touting it as a serious blow to the Kremlin's strategic arsenal and its military prestige.

The Russian Defence Ministry acknowledged that the Ukrainian attack set several planes ablaze at two air bases but said that the military repelled attempted attacks on three other air bases.

Both Zelenskyy and Putin have been eager to show US President Donald Trump that they share his ambition to end the fighting — and also avoid possible punitive measures from Washington. Ukraine has accepted a US-proposed ceasefire, but the Kremlin effectively rejected it. Putin has made it clear that any peace

settlement has to be on his terms.

Dmitry Medvedev, a former Russian president who now serves as deputy head of the country's Security Council chaired by Putin, indicated on Tuesday that there would be no let-up in Russia's invasion of its neighbour.

"The Istanbul talks are not for striking a compromise peace on someone else's delusional terms but for ensuring our swift victory and the complete destruction of (Ukraine's government)," he said.

In an apparent comment on the latest Ukrainian strikes, he declared that "retribution is inevitable."

"Our army is pushing forward and will continue to advance," Medvedev said, adding that "everything that needs to be blown up will be blown up, and those who must be eliminated will be."

A Putin-Zelenskyy-Trump meeting 'unlikely' soon, Moscow says

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov responded to suggestions that a face-to-face meeting between Putin, Trump and Zelenskyy could break the deadlock, said the possibility was "unlikely in the near future."

Meanwhile, a senior Ukrainian delegation led by First Deputy Prime Minister and Economy Minister Yulia Svyrydenko has travelled to Washington for talks about defence, sanctions and postwar recovery. Andriy Yermak, the head of Ukraine's presidential office, said Tuesday. The delegation will meet with representatives from both major US political parties, as well as with advisors to Trump, Yermak added. (AP)

Expect India-US trade deal in not-too-distant future: US Commerce Secy

WASHINGTON, June 3: Secretary of Commerce Howard Lutnick has said one should expect a trade deal between India and the US in the "not-too-distant future" as the two countries have found a place that works for them.

"So the idea is when they put the right person and India put the right person on the other side of the table, and we've managed, I think, to be in a very, very good place," Lutnick said in his keynote address at the eighth edition of the US-India Strategic Partnership Forum (USISPF) Leadership Summit here Monday.

"And you should expect a deal between the United States and India in the not-too-distant future because I think we found a place that really works for both countries." "I would say very optimistic," Lutnick said about the trade deal between India and the US.

Noting the high tariffs that India has, Lutnick said that President Donald Trump is willing to call that out straight away.

"Now the President is willing to call out things straight away, meaning India is very protectionist with tariffs. They have a 100 per cent tariff on this, and a 100% tariff on that. And if you ask them why, the answer is, 'I don't know why. It just is.'"

Lutnick said the idea of really looking at those things, thinking about them and bringing them down to a level that is reasonable and appropriate "so we can be great trading partners with each other, I think is absolutely on the table and it's not stressful" and the sides are now working to "make this a proper trading relationship."

On the trade deal with India, he further said that "earlier countries get a better deal. That's the way it is."

He noted that India is trying hard to be one of the earlier countries, "which I appreciate. But these kind of deals used to take two or three years, and we're trying to get them done in a month, which is, just not the ordinary DNA of trading relationships between countries."

"But what I hope to achieve is we would like market access. We would like our businesses to have reasonable access to the markets of India. Now, it's not going to be everything, and it's not going to be everywhere, but we want to have the trade deficit reduced," he said.

In exchange for that, Lutnick said India is going to want certain key markets, to want to make sure that they have special access to the American marketplace. "And so that's the trade-off. If I say, 'Look, I'll treat you incredibly kindly on the things that are really important to you, and you bring down your tariffs and give us market access and let's find the proper place in the middle.'"

Underlining the importance of having the right person on the other side for negotiations, Lutnick said that "if they put a normal trade minister, it's an endless set of talking and no outcome because they're used to saying, 'this kind of deal would take three years, we'll get this done in two years', and that's not really fun for me."

On what he sees as the vision of the India-US relationship, Lutnick said that it is "unusual" that President Donald Trump is the only person in the administration elected by the full United States of America and Prime Minister Narendra Modi is elected by the people in India.

"If you think about the world, how many other leaders actually are elected by their country," he said, adding that it is "very, very rare. So that connection is pretty unique because it's rare... And so their relationship is very strong and very positive. And so that gives an easy path to me to do trade negotiations, because we start from a very positive place." (PTI)

Iranian minister says Tehran backs Lebanon in its push to end Israel's military presence

BEIRUT, June 3: Iran's foreign minister said Tehran supports Lebanon's efforts to pressure Israel to end its military presence in parts of the country, including diplomatic moves "to expel the occupiers."

Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi added on Tuesday that Iran looks forward to relations with Lebanon based on mutual respect under the new circumstances in the country following the Israel-Hezbollah war.

Araghchi's visit comes after Iran's main Lebanese ally, Hezbollah, was weakened by the 14-month war with Israel that left much of the Iran-backed group's political and military leadership dead.

Araghchi's visit is his first since October, which came at the height of the Israel-Hezbollah war that ended a month later with a US-brokered ceasefire. The war killed more than 4,000 in Lebanon, displaced over 1 million people and caused destruction that the World Bank said will cost USD 11 billion in reconstruction.

Since the war ended, army commander Joseph Aoun was elected president and prominent jurist and diplomat Nawaf Salam became the country's prime minister. Both Aoun and Salam have repeatedly said that only the state will monopolize the use of weapons in Lebanon. The visit also comes after the government of Syrian President Bashar Assad was removed from power in December by insurgent group's opposed to Iran's influence in the region. Assad was one of Tehran's closest allies in the Arab world and his country was a main link for the flow of weapons from Iran to Hezbollah. Aoun told the visiting Iranian official during their meeting that Beirut wants "to strengthen relations from state to state with Iran." Aoun's comments were released by his office.

Over the past decades, Iran funded Hezbollah with billions of dollars and sent all types of weapons to the Lebanese group enjoying wide influence in the small Mediterranean nation through. Since the Israel-Hezbollah war ended, Lebanese authorities have taken tight measures at Beirut's airport to prevent the flow of funds from Iran to Hezbollah and flights by Iranian companies have been suspended to Beirut. "We look forward to having relations (with Lebanon) based on mutual respect and non-interference in each country's internal affairs," Araghchi told reporters after meeting Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri. He added that Iran backs a national dialogue in Lebanon between rival groups. Iran condemns the occupation of Lebanese territories "by the Zionist entity and supports all efforts exerted by the Lebanese government and people to expel the occupiers through any way including diplomatic methods," Araghchi said, referring to five posts Israel refused to withdraw from earlier this year. (AP)



OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (PHE) URBAN WATER SUPPLY DIVISION, DIPHU Notice Inviting Tender

N.I.T. No. – 1 of 2025-26 (Under SOPD- KAAC for the year 2025-26)

Sealed tender affixing KAAC receipt worth ₹10.00 (Rupees ten) only are invited from registered contractors/ firms of PHE Department, Karbi Anglong and West Karbi Anglong district for the below mentioned work of AAP 2025-26 (SOPD) duly approved and accorded Administrative Approval by the KAAC authority vide No. KAAC/ FIN-A-454/ Budget/2024-25/27 Dt. 07-05-2025 under Urban Water supply division, Diphu will be received upto 25/06/2025 upto 2.00 P.M. and tender so received will be opened on the same date at 2:30 PM in presence of intending tenderer or their authorized representative who likes to be present.

Detail tender papers, specification, terms and condition etc may be obtained from the office of the undersigned on all working days any queries regarding it from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM of 04/06/2025 to 24/06/2025 and upto 12.00 noon of 25/06/2025 on payment of ₹100.00 (Rupees one hundred) only in demand draft which should be pledge in favour of "Executive Engineer (PHE), Urban Water Supply division, Diphu". The undersigned have reserved the right to accept or reject or cancel the same without any reason and claim thereof. In case of any unavoidable circumstances if tender could not be received or open on the predetermined time and date the same shall be received and opened in the next working day at the same time for which no separate communication will be made.

The estimates were prepared based on APHE SOR (2015-16) & CPWD DSR, 2021 and rate analysis based on present market price and tender is called as per the EC regulation No- 29 of the 10th executive committee meeting.

Name of the work: - As per Annexure – "A"

ANNEXURE-A

NIT Memo. PHEE / UWSD / DIP / TB -40 (C) / 2025-26 / 153-162

Date:-03/06/2025

Sl No	Name of Work	Amount (In Lakhs)	Earnest Money		Time of Completion
			Gen	ST/SC	
1	Renovation of GI delivery pipe line from Intake to Delivery tank at old TP.	₹ 10.00	2%	1%	20 Days
2	Renovation and repairing including colour washing of pump house over UGR at Rongkangtui WSS including including of Filter Media and TP shed.	₹ 5.00	2%	1%	10 Days
3	Installation of GRP tank 24KL including fabrication of staging and GI delivery and inlet etc. at Malaria tank under DWSS(M)	₹ 9.00	2%	1%	15 Days
4	Dismantling of old tank and Installation of New Tank at Lorulangso	₹ 10.00	2%	1%	10 Days
5	Construction of boundary wall at Lorulangso PWSS Campus	₹ 5.00	2%	1%	20 Days
6	Installation of Pump Sets, Changing of filter media, Other Electrical Components and Other Necessary works at Professor's colony PWSS	₹ 5.00	2%	1%	7 Days
7	Power connection at Professor colony scheme	₹ 6.00	2%	1%	7 Days
8	Boulder Pitching for water diversion to intake well at siloni I.P Section	₹ 7.00	2%	1%	10 Days
9	Supply, fitting and fixing of GI suction & Delivery mains for intake well & pump sets at siloni I.P section including labour charge for installation of pumps	₹ 8.00	2%	1%	10 Days
10	Power connection along with all electrical works including installation of transformer, panel board etc. at siloni I.P section	₹ 30.00	2%	1%	25 Days
11	Installation of electrical and mechanical parts including rewiring at Binapani T.P.	₹ 5.00	2%	1%	10 Days
12	Replacement of Filter media and cleaning of filter beds at Binapani T.P.	₹ 5.00	2%	1%	7 Days
13	Replacement of all electrical wire, cabling and its points at Low and high Pressure	₹ 6.50	2%	1%	7 Days
14	Supplying, fitting, fixing and commissioning of 5 nos Starter including all electrical connections at Low pressure	₹ 7.00	2%	1%	7 Days
15	Replacement of Air valve and construction of valve chamber at 450 mm dia. raw water main pumping line from Manja HP to Binapani TP	₹ 5.00	2%	1%	7 Days
16	Replacement of some old 450 mm dia. main pumping line MS pipe and colouring of all exposed pipe at different place from Manja HP to Binapani TP	₹ 5.00	2%	1%	10 Days
17	Strengthening of staff Quarter at Addl Chief Engineer Colony	₹ 7.00	2%	1%	15 Days
18	Refurbishing including external colour washing of ACE office.	₹ 10.00	2%	1%	15 Days

Terms and Condition: -

- Bidder should quote their rates distinctly both in figures and in words on percentage basis as per below / above / and the estimated rates / departmental approved rates.
- The Bidder should furnish their full name and address distinctly in the tender papers.
- Earnest money should invariably be enclosed to the tender papers.
- Income tax, Professional tax and GST clearance certificate should be enclosed with the tender papers.
- The work must be completed within stipulated time.
- The work should be started after signing necessary agreement and in consultation with AEE (PHE) / SO (PHE) i/c.
- Payment will be made subject to availability of fund.
- No advance payment will be made for the work.
- Non-tribal tenderer must produce up to date KAAC trading license along with the tender documents.
- All other terms and condition will be followed as per APWD – 2 form of tender.
- The undersigned reserved the right to accept / reject any or all tender in part of in full without assigning any reason thereof and he does not bind himself to accept the lowest tender rate.

Sd/-
Executive Engineer (PHE)
Urban W/S Division, Diphu.

Memo NO. PHEE / UWSD / DIP / TB -40 (C) / 2025-26 / 153-162

Date:-03/06/2025

पीएम श्री केन्द्रीय विद्यालय डिफू/PM SHRI KENDRIYA VIDYALAYA DIPHU
काबी आंगलॉन्ग, असम-782462 | KARBI ANGLONG, ASSAM-782462
शिक्षा मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार के अधीन (Under Ministry of Education, Govt. of India)

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CBSE Affn. No. – 200019, CBSE School Code- 39274, School Code- 1867, Station Code-487, Region- Guwahati, Region Code – 10

ADMISSION NOTICE

PM SHRI Kendriya Vidyalaya Diphu invites applications for admission to **Classes 1,2,4,7,8, 10,11 & 12** against a few remaining vacant seats for the academic session 2025-26. Registration will be start from **04.06.2025** continued upto **10.05.2025**, provisional list will be declared on **11.06.2025**. Admission will be carried out from **12.06.2025 to 16.06.2025**. Admission will be carried out as per KVS Admission guidelines 2025-26.

938 affected in 23 districts

Arunachal flood toll rises to 11 as labourer dies in wall collapse



ITANAGAR, June 3: The death toll in floods and landslides triggered by relentless rain in Arunachal Pradesh has increased to 11 as a labourer died in a wall collapse incident in Anjaw district, officials said on Tuesday.

According to a State Emergency Operation Centre (SEOC) statement, while 38-year-old Bhaben Murmu died when a wall collapsed during a landslide on June 1, three GREF workers were injured in the incident.

A total of 938 people are now affected by floods in 156 villages in 23 districts, it said.

Lower Subansiri district re-

ported significant damage, including the destruction of 114 kutchas houses, 45 pucca houses, and nine huts. The district has also seen serious infrastructure losses, including the damage of 51 roads, 17 power lines, 23 water supply lines and two schools, officials said.

Widespread destruction has also been reported in the Itanagar Capital Region (ICR) and Pakke Kessang, where key assets such as ICR's main water pipeline and the road at Dariya Hill have been severely affected.

Flood-like conditions and landslides have been reported in multiple districts, including West

Kameng, Kamle, Lower and Upper Subansiri, Papum Pare, Dibang Valley, Lower Dibang Valley, Lohit, Changlang, Kra Daadi, Kurung Kumey, and Longding, as rivers and tributaries continued to flow above danger levels, they said.

The floods and landslides have damaged around 15 hectares of crop fields, eight hectares of horticulture plantations, and seven hectares of agricultural land.

In Changlang district, flash floods from the Buri-Dihing River washed away half of the Makantong bridge on the Trans-Arunachal Highway on Saturday, cutting off road connectivity be-

tween Miao and Bordumsa. Large areas in the Miao subdivision are submerged, with significant loss of livestock and horticultural property.

Popular tourist spots like Zupra and River Cafe along the Noa-Dehing River have also been submerged. The Industrial Training Institute (ITI) at Balinong, under Kharsang circle, suffered massive damage, with hostels, staff quarters, water tanks, and other infrastructure destroyed, they added.

The Noa-Dehing River has further eroded large tracts of agricultural and horticultural land in Dharmapur block under Namphei circle.

In Upper Subansiri, the water supply system has been badly disrupted after the Hangkar pipeline suffered multiple breaches. Public Health Engineering Department (PHED) teams are working to restore the system while tankers are providing emergency water supply.

Authorities in Namsai district have opened a relief camp at Alubari Government Secondary School, where 59 displaced people are currently being sheltered.

State Disaster Management Secretary Dani Sulu said that relief and rescue operations are ongoing.

So far, 18 people have been evacuated, including 14 labourers who were airlifted from Lower Dibang Valley and four others rescued from Jallukbari village in Lohit district, he added. (PTI)

Arunachal orders closure of 386 govt schools for zero enrolment



ITANAGAR, June 3: The Arunachal Pradesh government has ordered the closure of 386 government schools across the state that have recorded zero student enrolment in the current academic year.

The order, issued by the state's Education department on Monday, follows a detailed analysis of data from the Unified District Information System for Education (UDISE), which identified a significant number of schools that have remained non-functional, in some cases for several years.

The decision is aimed at rationalising educational infrastructure and making better use of teaching staff and facilities.

The closure affect schools in almost every district, including remote and border regions such as Kurung Kumey, Tawang, Anjaw, Changlang, and Upper Subansiri.

The list includes primary, upper primary, middle, and secondary government schools that have had no student enrolment this year and, in some instances, for multiple academic sessions.

According to the official notification, West Kameng district reported the highest number of closures, with 73 schools shut down. Other districts with significant numbers include Papum Pare with 50 closures, West Siang with 31, Upper Subansiri and Siang with 28 each, and East Kameng with 23. Several other districts also saw closures ranging from one to 22 schools.

Education department officials explained that the closures are part of a larger rationalisation initiative that focuses on consolidating educational resources and improving learning outcomes.

By closing schools with no students, the government aims to reassign staff to institutions that are actively serving children and require support, they said.

The officials added that the move is aligned with the goals of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, which advocates for the efficient management of school infrastructure and emphasises the need for quality over quantity.

The department has instructed

all deputy directors of school education (DDSEs) and block education officers (BEOs) to ensure the immediate physical closure of the listed schools and begin redeployment of teaching and non-teaching staff wherever necessary.

The officials also confirmed that in cases where students may have recently migrated to the now-closed institutions, arrangements will be made to shift them to nearby functioning schools to prevent any disruption to their education.

This is the second major round of closures in the state.

Last year, the state government had also closed 600 schools, which were either non-functional or had zero enrolment.

Nearly 600 such schools have already been shut down or merged with other schools; state Education minister Pasang Dorjee Sona had informed the assembly last year.

The northeastern state has over 2,800 government-run lower primary, upper primary, secondary and higher secondary schools, with more than 7,600 regular teachers. (PTI)

Jharkhand assembly team visits Arunachal assembly to foster inter-state legislative collaboration

ITANAGAR, June 3: A Jharkhand assembly delegation visited the Arunachal Pradesh assembly on Tuesday as part of efforts to foster inter-state legislative collaboration and knowledge exchange.

The visit by the delegation of the Jharkhand assembly's Committee on Food, Public Distribution, and Consumer Affairs is aimed at understanding the functioning and best practices of the Arunachal assembly to enhance public welfare systems in their state, a statement said.

During the visit to the assembly led by the committee's chairman Vikas Kumar Munda, they met Speaker Tesam Pongte, it said.

Committee members Louis Marandi and Jairam Mahato participated in a detailed discussion with the speaker on legislative procedures, institutional functioning, and governance practices followed by the Arunachal assembly, it added.

The delegation toured the assembly hall, museum, and library. They interacted with officers and staff of the assembly secretariat to gain firsthand insight into its administrative and operational structure.

During their three-day study tour in Arunachal Pradesh, the delegation is also scheduled to visit the scenic Ziro Valley. (PTI)

Viksit Krishi Sankalp Abhiyan marks sixth day with multi-village outreach in Namsai

HT Bureau

NAMSAI, June 3: The nationwide pre-Kharif campaign "Viksit Krishi Sankalp Abhiyan" (VKSA) entered its sixth day with a series of impactful programs held across various locations in Kherem, Adi Ningroo, and New Mohong, situated in the Chowkham, Namsai, and Lekang blocks of Namsai district. The events were aimed at sensitizing farmers on the adoption of scientific agricultural practices, promoting sustainable farming systems, and creating awareness about government schemes available for farmers' welfare.

At Kherem, the program was graced by Shri C.R. Khampa, Deputy Commissioner of Namsai, who addressed the gathering with a motivational message urging farmers to shift from traditional to modern and scientific farming practices. Emphasizing the importance of innovation in agriculture, he encouraged farmers to embrace sustainable methods that not only enhance productivity but also ensure long-term ecological balance. He reiterated the government's commitment to strengthening the farming community through technology, training, and timely support.

Simultaneously, in Adi Ningroo, the program was presided over by the District Planning Officer (DPO), Namsai, who highlighted the multitude of schemes and subsidies currently being implemented by the state and central governments. He urged the farmers to actively participate in government schemes, adopt integrated farming prac-



tices, and aim for self-reliant and resilient agricultural livelihoods. He pointed out that income security in agriculture today requires diversification, value addition, and a holistic approach to farming.

At New Mohong, the campaign witnessed enthusiastic participation from the farming community. Dr. Theja Angami, Scientist from ICAR-AP Centre, Basar, played a pivotal role in guiding farmers toward modern practices in scientific vegetable cultivation. He introduced farmers to low-cost polyhouse technologies, which can significantly improve yield, especially in off-season vegetable production. Dr. Angami also educated farmers on the importance of plant spacing and encouraged the adoption of intercropping systems, particularly in arecanut plantations, for enhanced land use efficiency and income diversification.

A dedicated farmer-scientist interaction session

at the New Mohong venue provided a platform for open dialogue. Farmers raised practical queries, especially regarding arecanut planting methods, to which the experts responded with detailed and field-tested guidance. The interaction was well-received and reflected the farmers' growing interest in adopting research-backed solutions.

The program at New Mohong also featured insightful inputs from the District Horticulture Officer (DHO), who cautioned against the use of glyphosate in plantation crops, citing its harmful effects on both crops and the environment. He instead promoted the use of appropriate farm implements to encourage safe, sustainable, and mechanized agriculture practices in the region.

Experts from KVK Namsai, including Dr. Utpal Barua, Senior Scientist and Head, along with Dr. Madhumita Sonowal Bora, Subject Matter Specialist (Plant Protection), and K. Nithinkumar, SMS (Agronomy), shared extensive knowledge on scientific cultivation practices of paddy and maize, which form the staple crops in the region. The team emphasized organic and natural farming methods, urging farmers to diversify crops and integrate livestock and horticulture into their systems for better economic returns and environmental health.

The KVK team further advocated for natural resource conservation, underscoring it as a non-negotiable principle for achieving long-term agri-

cultural sustainability. Their address focused on making farming economically viable without compromising soil health, water resources, and biodiversity.

Additionally, representatives from the State Departments of Agriculture, Horticulture, Fisheries, and Veterinary also participated in the campaign. They delivered briefings on a wide array of centrally and state-sponsored schemes, aimed at boosting agricultural productivity and improving rural livelihoods. Farmers were encouraged to avail the financial incentives, inputs, and training opportunities provided under these schemes, which include support for seeds, equipment, irrigation, animal husbandry, and fisheries.

The programme concluded with the playing of the VKSA theme song, resonating with a strong message of unity and collective effort in achieving agricultural progress and a Viksit Bharat. The theme underscored the need for collaboration among farmers, scientists, and government officials to build a future-ready, prosperous agricultural sector in the country.

As the campaign moves forward, the momentum generated in Namsai is expected to fuel greater awareness and adoption of progressive farming practices across the region, fulfilling the core vision of Viksit Krishi Sankalp Abhiyan — to empower farmers, promote innovation, and pave the way for a developed and self-reliant agricultural India.

8th edition of Hangpan Dada Memorial Trophy concludes with thrilling finale at Pasighat

Natali Yamdo of East Kameng was adjudged the Best Player in the girls' category

HT Bureau

NAMSAL, June 3: The 8th Edition of the Hangpan Dada Memorial Trophy (HDMT) for Under-16 Boys' and Girls' Football and Volleyball concluded on Monday at the Pasighat Outdoor Stadium with grandeur, excitement, and a spirit of sportsmanship. The prestigious tournament, named in honour of the late martyr Hangpan Dada, came to a close after several days of intense competition among some of the most promising young athletes from across the state.

The closing ceremony was marked by the presence of several distinguished guests. Kento Jini, Minister of Law, Legislative & Justice, Social Justice, Empowerment & Tribal Affairs, and Sports & Youth Affairs, Government of Arunachal Pradesh, graced the event as the Chief Guest. Retired Major General Pankaj Saxena (VSM) was the Guest of Honour, while 39-Mebo Assembly Constituency MLA Oken Tayeng attended as Special Guest. Other notable dignitaries included Local MLA Tapi Darang, 37-West MLA Ninong Ering, East Siang Deputy Commissioner Tayi Taggu, Superintendent of Police Pankaj Lamba, Chief Councilor of Pasighat Municipal Council Okiam Moyong Borang, Sports Director Tadar Apa, DMO Incharge Nidak Angu, Deputy Director ICDS M. Gao, and Labour Officer-cum-Incharge DIPRO Tore Ete, along with other senior officers and officials from East Siang district.

The highlight of the closing day was the final boys' football match, a spectac-

ular showdown between the host team East Siang and Leparada. In what turned out to be a heart-pounding, high-stakes encounter, East Siang edged past Leparada with a 4-3 victory in a match that kept the audience on the edge of their seats. Thousands of spectators packed the stadium, with roars and cheers echoing across the field as both teams displayed extraordinary skill, stamina, and determination.

The match began with a bang, as East Siang's Panam Tasung scored an early goal just six minutes into the game, setting the tone for what would be a high-energy contest. Shortly after, at the 15-minute mark, Karsing Yirang maneuvered past the Leparada defense to net a second goal for the host team. The pressure on Leparada mounted when an own goal by their defender at the 20-minute mark pushed East Siang's tally to three.

Despite the setback, Leparada showed commendable resilience. At the 35-minute mark, Teri Kamdak struck back with a powerful header that landed the ball squarely into East Siang's net. The second half saw continued intensity from both sides. Leparada's Tori Basar converted a penalty into a goal in the 47th minute, narrowing the deficit and reigniting hopes for a comeback.

However, East Siang responded with another brilliant play. In the 70th minute, Geni Tayeng received a long-range pass and skillfully directed the ball into the net, extending East Siang's lead once more. Leparada, determined not to give



up, managed a spectacular long-distance goal in injury time (70+1 minute), bringing the score to 4-3. Despite the late push, Leparada could not find the equalizer. As the final whistle blew, East Siang was crowned champions of the HDMT-2025, to the resounding applause and cheers of the jubilant home crowd.

Speaking at the closing ceremony, Chief Guest Kento Jini expressed pride in the young athletes and the tournament's growing impact on youth em-

powerment and community building. He emphasized the importance of incorporating sports into daily life, not just as a form of recreation but as a key to maintaining physical and mental health. "Engaging in sports helps improve internal organ function and overall well-being. The age-old notion that studies are more important than sports is outdated. In today's era, both must go hand in hand," the minister remarked. He further stressed that under

the leadership of Chief Minister Pema Khandu, the state government is committed to promoting sports at the grassroots level, and announced that several initiatives are in the pipeline to support athletic programs for all age groups.

Guest of Honour, Major General (Retd.) Pankaj Saxena (VSM), took a moment to honor the legacy of Late Hangpan Dada. He spoke about Dada's disciplined life, unwavering commitment, and immense contribution to the

nation. "He was a calm and determined soldier, a fitness enthusiast, and a true patriot who laid down his life in the line of duty. His life is a source of inspiration for all, especially the youth," Saxena stated, urging participants to embody the same discipline and dedication in their pursuits.

Local MLA Tapi Darang, in his address, underlined the significance of the HDMT as more than just a sports competition. "This tournament stands as a symbol of unity, discipline, and honour. It brings together our youth in a shared spirit of camaraderie and healthy competition," he said. Darang also submitted a memorandum to the minister, requesting the upgradation of Pasighat Outdoor Stadium with a synthetic athletic track under the Khelo India Scheme, which would enhance training opportunities and boost local sports infrastructure.

The tournament also celebrated individual excellence. Kenmin Riba of Leparada was declared the Best Player in the boys' category, while Natali Yamdo of East Kameng was adjudged the Best Player in the girls' category, acknowledging their outstanding performances and promising potential.

The 8th Edition of the Hangpan Dada Memorial Trophy concluded not only with spectacular matches but with renewed hope for the growth of sports culture in Arunachal Pradesh. The tournament successfully lived up to its legacy of honoring a national hero while nurturing the spirit of youth, fitness, and unity.

Challenges are more than before, and both states have to work together

Assam, Meghalaya to work on joint satellite mapping, plan to resolve Guwahati's waterlogging

GUWAHATI, June 3: The governments of Assam and Meghalaya on Monday decided to jointly go for satellite mapping of Guwahati and its adjoining areas to find out a solution to the waterlogging problem of the city.

Notably, the Assam government has been blaming illegal hill cutting in the bordering Meghalaya for waterlogging in Guwahati.

The solution would also focus on ways that would "not disrupt economic activities" of the people of Meghalaya, the chief ministers of the two states said at a press conference here after discussing issues of mutual concern.

They will urge the North Eastern Space Applications Centre (NESAC) for the mapping and then approach IIT-Roorkee with the data to find a solution involving the best interests of both sides, Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma and his Meghalaya counterpart Conrad Sangma said.

"The government of Assam gave



a detailed presentation to the Meghalaya team on how we are getting huge quantity of water from Khanapara area in the inter-state border along Guwahati," Sarma said.

Sangma, noting that the floods were a 'major concern', said, "In the last few days and months, we have seen how rain is playing a role in view of climate change. Challenges are more than before, and both states have to work together."

Sarma and Sangma said both states have decided to work on a solution which will minimise the problem of waterlogging in Guwahati and also safeguard the interests of Meghalaya, without impacting the economic activities of the state.

For this purpose, they will jointly approach NESAC to carry out satellite mapping of Guwahati and its adjoining areas, including forest cover, water flow, waterlogging,

etc, and submit the data within three months.

The information will be provided to IIT-Roorkee to analyse it and come up with a solution for the inter-state project, Sarma and Sangma added.

Since last year, Sarma has been blaming hill cutting in Meghalaya for worsening waterlogging problem of Guwahati, which lies in the downstream of Ri-Bhoi district of the hill state.

He had held a privately owned University of Science and Technology, Meghalaya (USTM), responsible for "flood jihad" against Guwahati, claiming that the water flowing down from the varsity campus, which is located on a hill adjacent to the city, leads to massive flooding.

Sarma had also said that his government has approached a Supreme Court committee regarding the hill-cutting issue, and the apex court has already issued notices to both the state in the matter. (PTI)

Resilient Ledo Community unites for a flood-free future

HT Correspondent MARGHERITA, June 3: In an inspiring turn of events, the resilient community of Ledo, nestled in the 83rd Margherita Constituency of Assam's Tinsukia district, is rallying together in the face of adversity after persistent heavy rainfall over the past few days brought temporary disruptions to this historic coal town.

Ledo, a town with deep historical roots dating back over 200 years, gained prominence for its coal mining operations under the then Assam Railway and Trading Company Limited during British colonial rule. Today, while the town's legacy lives on, its people are demonstrating a new kind of strength — community resilience and unity in action.

Residents of Ledo Bazaar, Ledo Railway Station Road, Ledo College Road, and nearby areas have faced temporary flooding, primarily due to outdated and ineffective drainage systems. Despite disruptions to shops, local businesses, and daily life, the spirit of Ledo remains unshaken.

Artificial flooding in the region — long attributed to poor drainage systems — has now sparked a groundswell of local advocacy. Voices across the town are rising with renewed passion, demanding



modern infrastructure to safeguard their future. The call for a comprehensive, long-term drainage solution is gaining momentum, turning concern into collective hope.

"The people of Ledo are ready to work hand-in-hand with local leaders," said Chandra Gautam, a noted social worker from the area. "We look forward to collaborative efforts with the Ledo Gaon Panchayat President and Margherita MLA Bhaskar Sharma, to transform our town into a model of resilience and development."

With strong expectations from the proactive BJP-led State and

Union Governments, the community is hopeful for innovative infrastructure upgrades that will not only address the drainage crisis but also strengthen the town's foundation for future growth.

Rich in history and even richer in spirit, Ledo is prepared to write a new chapter — one where a single day of rain will no longer dim its vibrancy. As Gautam aptly puts it, "The unwavering determination and shared vision of Ledo's residents signal a bright future ahead."

United in purpose and driven by hope, Ledo stands on the brink of transformative change.

Two sentenced to life imprisonment in murder case

KOKRAJHAR, June 3: A court in Assam's Kokrajhar district on Tuesday sentenced two persons to life imprisonment for killing a man and injuring two others in 2008 following a land dispute. Kokrajhar District and Sessions Judge Nirmali Talukdar sentenced the two accused, Aktar Ali and Abbas Ali, to life imprisonment for murder and imposed a fine of Rs 10,000 each. In default of payment, they would have to undergo six more months of rigorous imprisonment. The case dates back to October 26, 2008, when the accused, armed with weapons, attempted to plough a piece of land in Kusumbil under the jurisdiction of Gossaigaon police station in Kokrajhar district. (PTI)

DECLARATION

I, Hironmoyee Nath, D/O Padmadhar Nath, resident of Kharupetia, Ward No. 2, Dist. Darrang (Assam), solemnly affirm that I am a permanent resident of the said address and an Indian citizen by birth.

The National College of Law, offering LLB and BALLB courses under Bodoland University, Kokrajhar (Assam), has been renamed Regional College of Law as per the Trust's resolution no. 02 dated 23/05/2025. The institution, previously known as National College of Law, is now Regional College of Law, located at Kharupetia, Dist. Darrang (Assam). This affidavit serves as documentary evidence for the above facts.

Sd/-

Hironmoyee Nath

Congress committed to politics of equality and inclusiveness : Gaurav Gogoi

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, June 3: In his first remarks after taking charge of president of Assam Pradesh Congress President (APCC), Gaurav Gogoi reaffirmed the Congress's ideological legacy.

"Inspired by the vision of leaders from Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru to Hiteswar Saikia and my father, Tarun Gogoi, we are committed to advancing a politics rooted in equality and inclusiveness," he told reporters here.

"The ideals of Bishnuram Medhi, Hiteswar Saikia, and my father, Tarun Gogoi, will guide our collective journey forward," Gogoi said, acknowledging the overwhelming support he received from grassroots workers during his three-day padyatra leading up to his formal assumption of office. "I am deeply grateful to each of you for your unwavering commitment. Together, with shared determination, we will strengthen the party and accomplish our goals in 2026."

Before taking charge, Gogoi paid homage at Rajiv Bhawan, offering floral tributes before the portrait of his late father, former Chief Minister Tarun Gogoi—a gesture that underscored both personal continuity and political symbolism.

Gogoi's appointment comes at a politically sensitive time, amid allegations from Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma linking his wife to Pakistan's ISI — claims the Congress leader has categorically rejected.

Demonstrating his grassroots connection, Gogoi undertook a symbolic three-day padyatra from Sivasagar to Guwahati in the lead-up to the formal ceremony. His journey included stops in Titabor, Jorhat, Nagaon, Morigaon, and Jagirahat, where enthusiastic crowds of party workers and supporters turned out to greet him.

As Gogoi assumes leadership, the Congress is expected to recalibrate its strategy and organization in the run-up to the high-stakes 2026 state elections.

In a significant political transition ahead of the 2026 Assam Assembly elections, Lok Sabha MP Gaurav Gogoi formally assumed office as the new president of the Assam Pradesh Congress Committee (APCC) on Tuesday.

The ceremonial handover took place at the state Congress headquarters in Guwahati, where Gogoi received the mantle from Bhupen Kumar Borah, who helmed the party for over three years. The event drew the presence of several senior Congress figures, including AICC General Secretary Jitendra Singh and Leader of the Opposition Debabrata Saikia.

Prior to the ceremony, Gogoi offered prayers at the revered Kamakhya Temple, symbolically marking the beginning of his tenure at the helm of the state's principal opposition party.

Key roads closed in Katigorah sub-division amid Barak river deluge

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, June 3: In a significant development impacting daily commuters and transportation services, the Assistant Executive Engineer of the Katigorah Territorial Road Sub-Division under the Public Works (Roads) Department has issued a vital notification announcing the immediate suspension of vehicular and pedestrian movement along two key roadways. The precautionary step has been taken in light of severe flooding triggered by the swelling of the Barak River, which has inundated and overtopped several stretches of these roads, posing a grave risk to public safety.

The first affected route is the crucial TRK Road, extending from Chowranga Point to Noon Nagar. Due to multiple inundated segments, the road has become unsafe for both vehicles and foot traffic. Authorities have advised commuters to use the Siddipur-Noon Nagar Road as an alternative route until further notice.

VACANCY

In pursuance of the approval accorded by the Director of Education BTR, Vide office letter no. DE/BTC/Apptt./11/2017/371, dated Kokrajhar the 2nd June/2025, applications are invited from the intending candidates to fill up the following vacant sanctioned post at Girls' College, Kokrajhar.

Sl. No.	Name of the Post	No. of post	Department	Scale of Pay	Category
1	Assistant Professor	01	Bodo	UGC Scale of pay	STP

Qualification for Asstt. Prof. : As per latest UGC Guideline.

Age Limit : As per UGC and Assam Govt. Rule.

Preference shall be given to the candidates belonging to BTC.

Application with full Bio-Data, 2 copies of recent passport size photo, self-attested copies of all relevant documents along with a demand draft of Rs. 1500/- must reach to the undersigned on or before 13-06-2025. No TA/DA will be admissible.

Demand Draft Payable

in favour of : Principal, Girls' College, Kokrajhar, General Fund.
Name of Bank : Assam Gramin Vikas Bank
Branch : Kokrajhar Branch
A/C No : 7137010013675
IFSC Code : PUNBORRBAGB

Sd/-

Principal
Girls' College, Kokrajhar

APDCL Nagaon applauded for swift power restoration amid storm damage

HT Correspondent

NAGAON, June 3: While many districts across Assam continue to struggle with prolonged power outages following days of incessant rainfall and severe thunderstorms since May 30, the Assam Power Distribution Company Limited (APDCL) in Nagaon has earned widespread praise for its exceptional response.

In a remarkable display of efficiency and dedication, APDCL Nagaon managed to restore power supply across the entire district within just 24 hours — an achievement that has set a new benchmark in emergency service delivery.

Heavy rains and thunderstorms caused widespread damage across Nagaon, including the destruction of hundreds of transformers and extensive harm to power lines. The hardest-hit areas included sub-divisions such as Dhing, Juria, Raha, Samaguri, and Nagaon itself. Initial estimates suggested that full restoration could take over a week.

However, under the proactive leadership of CEO Pranjal Katoki, AGM Division I Swapan Kumar Das, AGM Division II Pallab Das, and the tireless efforts of other APDCL officials and ground staff, the restoration process was completed in record time — within 24

hours. Residents of the district have expressed deep gratitude to the APDCL team for their commitment and swift action in the face of adversity. Several organizations and prominent individuals have publicly applauded the department's dedication and have called on APDCL Nagaon to continue demonstrating such exemplary service during future emergencies and natural calamities.

This outstanding effort has not only brought relief to thousands of households and businesses but also reinforced public confidence in APDCL's ability to respond efficiently during crises.

Flood situation worsens in Dibrugarh, over 24,000 affected

HT Correspondent

DIBRUGARH, June 3: The flood situation in Dibrugarh district has turned grim, with widespread inundation reported across seven revenue circles — Dibrugarh East, Dibrugarh West, Chabua, Moran, Tengakhat, Naharkatia, and Tingkhong.

According to report, 96 villages have been affected, impacting a total of 24,432 people. The highest numbers are reported from Chabua (8,179), Tengakhat (4,932), and Dibrugarh West (3,362).

Meanwhile, three relief camps have been opened — one in Dibrugarh West and two in Naharkatia — sheltering 158 inmates.

Additionally, 40 relief distribution centres are operating, providing aid to 13,645 non-camp residents.

The highest number of non-camp beneficiaries is in Chabua (5,705), followed by Dibrugarh East and West. Floodwaters have submerged 1,622.86 hectares of cropland, with Dibrugarh West being the worst-hit (1,402.13 hectares).

Viksit Krishi Sankalp Abhiyan in Shoraibil and Janali villages

HT Correspondent

GOSHAIGAON, June 3: In alignment with the nationwide initiative, the Viksit Krishi Sankalp Abhiyan was successfully conducted today in Shoraibil and Janali villages under Gossaigaon subdivision, Kokrajhar district. The event was organized by Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Kokrajhar, in collaboration with the Departments of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry, and Veterinary Services. The program was led by KVK scientist Shantanu Kaushik Barai, who provided valuable insights on pre-kharif cultivation practices, emphasizing the importance of high-quality seeds, balanced fertilizer use, and soil fertility management. The events, held in both villages, were conducted under the supervision of KVK subject-matter specialist Parna Sharma, with the participation of multiple department officials and prominent community members.

19 appointed as Karbi language teachers to promote indigenous language in schools

Letters were formally handed over by Chief Executive Member (CEM) Tuliram Ronghang

HT Bureau

DIPHU, June 3: In a significant step towards the promotion and preservation of the Karbi language within the school education system of Karbi Anglong, the Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council (KAAC) appointed 19 Karbi Language Teachers (KLTs) for recognized Middle English (ME) and High Schools across the hill district.

The ceremonial appointment letter distribution was held on Tuesday at the KAAC Old Secretariat Conference Hall in Diphu. The letters were formally handed over by Chief Executive Member (CEM) Tuliram Ronghang.

Addressing the gathering, CEM Ronghang reiterated the KAAC's commitment to filling all vacant posts of Karbi Language Teachers, underscoring the pivotal role these educators

will play in preserving and promoting the indigenous language.

"My best wishes to you as you take on the crucial responsibility of preserving and promoting the Karbi language. Your efforts will be truly meaningful," said the CEM, encouraging the newly appointed teachers to contribute passionately toward cultural preservation through education.

The event was graced by several dignitaries, including Member of Parliament Amarsing Tisso, Diphu MLA Bidyasingh Englang, Howraghat MLA Darsing Ronghang, along with Executive Members and Members of the Autonomous Council of KAAC. This initiative marks a vital milestone in the region's efforts to safeguard its linguistic heritage and ensure its transmission to future generations through formal education.

No. AESRB/064/2024/996

NOTICE

This is for information of all the candidates who have applied online for recruitment to the posts of Assistant Professor (Technical) and Assistant Professor (Non Technical) in the Government Engineering Colleges of Assam as per the advertisements issued vide no. AESRB-02/2025 and AESRB-03/2025 that the date of the OMR-MCQ based Written Tests have been finalized, details of which is available in the official website of AESRB: www.aesrb.in.

Sd/-

Member Secretary
Assam Engineering Service
Recruitment Board

DIPR /D/HLT/24/4-Jun-25

ASSAM PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION Jawaharnagar, Kamrupa, Guwahati-781022			
No.15 PSC/Estt.-14/2024-2025			
NOTIFICATION			
This is for information to all concerned that the Assam Public Service Commission will hold the Screening Test (OMR Based) for recruitment to the post of Junior Administrative Assistant under the Establishment of Assam Public Service Commission (Adv. No. 24/2024, dated 13/12/2024 as per programme given below:			
Name of Post	Date & Day	Time	Subject
Junior Administrative Assistant under the Establishment of A.P.S.C.	06-07-2025 (Sunday)	10:00 A.M. to 12:00 Noon	General Studies (OMR Based)
No intimation letter to the eligible candidates shall be sent separately by post. The list of candidates shall be uploaded on 17-06-2025 and e-Admission Certificate on 27-06-2025 in the Commission's official website (www.apsc.nic.in). The candidates shall have to download their own e-Admission Certificate from the aforesaid website.			
The Commission would like to clarify that the Commission reserves the right to cancel the candidature of any candidate on verification of their application form at any time or stage even after the Screening Test, if it is found that they do not fulfill any of the eligibility criteria/conditions as per terms of the aforementioned advertisement.			
PwBD candidates willing to apply for scribe for the said Screening Test may inform in writing with supporting documents to the Commission or send mail to apsc-asm@nic.in on or before 21-06-2025.			
Sd/- Secretary, Assam Public Service Commission Jawaharnagar, Kamrupa, Guwahati - 781022			
DIPR /D/HLT/22/4-Jun-25			

Interaction with internally displaced persons at two relief camps in Churachandpur Union Home sec discusses border fencing, law & order situation with Manipur Gov

IMPHAL, June 3: Union Home secretary Govind Mohan called on Manipur Governor Ajay Kumar Bhalla and discussed with him border fencing, relief measures for internally displaced persons and the overall law and order situation in the state, an official statement said.

The meeting between the Union Home secretary and the Manipur governor took place on Monday in which Intelligence Bureau Director Tapan Kumar Deka, Manipur chief secretary, Security Advisor to Manipur government and senior officials were present, it said.

"The meetings focused on key issues concerning the state including relief and rehabilitation efforts for internally displaced persons (IDPs), border fencing and the overall law and order situation" it said.

During the meeting, the ongoing relief measures for IDPs in both the hills and the valley were reviewed and a detailed assessment was made of the current fa-



cilities being provided to displaced persons, the status of rehabilitation efforts, and the long-term plan for their permanent resettlement, it said.

The meeting also deliberated on the progress of the border fencing along the Indo-Myanmar Border, and the law and order situation in the state.

Earlier on Monday, the Central team led by Union Home secretary and Intelligence Bu-

reau Director interacted with internally displaced persons at two relief camps in Churachandpur and oversaw the conditions of the two camps.

The team visited the relief centre at Dorcas Veng where the Union Home secretary inaugurated a creche facility for children and a women's tailoring programme.

The team also visited a relief camp at Sadhbhavna Mandap at

Tuibong where Govind Mohan inaugurated a creche-cum-children's library, to further strengthen child-focused support at the camp.

At both the camps, the officials interacted with the IDPs, reviewed the available infrastructure, inspected relief materials and facilities, assessed the overall condition of the camps and listened to the concerns and suggestions of the caretakers of the IDPs and assured them of continued government support, the statement said.

Fifteen students who passed the HSLC and Higher Secondary Examinations 2025 from the two camps including 5 from Dorcas Veng and 10 from Sadhbhavna Mandap, Tuibong were felicitated and certificates of appreciation were given by the Union Home secretary.

The team was accompanied by Manipur Chief Secretary PK Singh, Director General of Police Rajiv Singh, Deputy Commissioner of Churachandpur Dharun Kumar S and other officials. (PTI)

34 people evacuated from landslide hit Chhaten by helicopters

GANGTOK, June 3: Thirty-four people were evacuated from landslide hit Chhaten in North Sikkim on Tuesday, officials said.

Two Mi-17 V5 helicopters completed the evacuation mission landing safely at Pakyong Airport near here with 34 people on board, officials said.

Among those rescued were injured army personnel currently undergoing medical treatment, their family members and tourists stranded in the area, they added.

Earlier, a team of 23 NDRF personnel were rushed to Chhaten in North Sikkim from here on helicopter on Tuesday for rescue and search operations for six soldiers missing after a landslide hit an army camp, officials said.

Three army personnel were killed and six soldiers went missing after a landslide hit a military camp at Chhaten. The landslide, which occurred at 7 pm on Sunday near Lachen town in Mangan district, was triggered by heavy rain-



fall in the area.

"...A catastrophic landslide occurred following intense and continuous rainfall in the region causing the death of three combatants, identified as Havaldar Lakhwinder Singh, Lance Naik Munish Thakur, and Porter Abhishek Lakhada," an official statement said.

Bodies of the personnel have been recovered, while four other

soldiers were rescued with minor injuries, the official said in a statement. The NDRF team will aid in evacuation, rescue and the establishment of temporary communication lines.

The authorities have issued directives to explore alternate foot-access routes and assess the feasibility of helipad operations, depending on prevailing weather conditions. (PTI)

NDRF team rushed to Chhaten for search operations for missing soldiers

GANGTOK, June 3: A team of 23 NDRF personnel were rushed to Chhaten in North Sikkim from here on Tuesday for rescue and search operations for six soldiers missing after a landslide hit an army camp, officials said.

The NDRF team is equipped with satellite phones and essential emergency equipment, the official said.

A helicopter carrying the NDRF team left for Chhaten on Tuesday from Pakyong Airport here.

Three army personnel were killed and six soldiers went missing after a landslide hit a military camp at Chhaten. The landslide, which occurred at 7 pm on Sunday near Lachen town in Mangan district, was triggered by heavy rainfall in the area.

"...A catastrophic landslide occurred following intense and continuous rainfall in the region causing the death of three combatants, identified as Havaldar Lakhwinder Singh, Lance Naik Munish Thakur, and Porter Abhishek Lakhada," an official statement said. (PTI)

Search continues in Sikkim for 8 missing tourists

GANGTOK, June 3: The eight tourists who went missing after their car plunged into the Teesta river in Sikkim are yet to be found, with the search operation entering its fifth day on Tuesday, officials said.

They were among the 11 people travelling in the vehicle that plunged more than 1,000 feet into the river near Munsithang along the Lachen-Lachung highway in Mangan district on the night of May 29. Two people were rescued alive, while the body of one was recovered immediately after the accident.

The search for the missing eight tourists is being carried out by personnel of the NDRF, Fire and Emergency Services, Forest Department, Tourism Department, TAAS (Travel Agents Association of Sikkim), and police. (PTI)

Mizoram: 8 BJP members of Chakma council defect to ZPM

AIZAWL, June 3: Eight BJP members of the Chakma Autonomous District Council (CADC) in south Mizoram's Lawngtlai district defected to the state's ruling party Zoram People's Movement (ZPM), an official said on Monday.

The development has threatened to unseat from power a four-month-old BJP-led executive committee.

Seven members, including sitting council chairman Lakhhan Chakma, resigned from the BJP and joined the ZPM on Sunday, the CADC official told PTI.

They were joined by another BJP member Santosh Chakma on Monday, he said.

The party now has only six members, losing majority in the 20-member council.

The present council headed by BJP leader Molin Kumar Chakma as Chief Executive Member (CEM) was formed on February 4 as the first BJP-led council since the formation of the CADC in 1972.

In the council, the ZPM now has 12 members, BJP six and the MNF one, the official said.

One seat remains vacant due to the death of a BJP member from Kamalanagar West constituency in

Meghalaya: Day after Indore tourist's body found, NDRF joins search for his wife

SHILLONG, June 3: NDRF personnel on Tuesday joined the search for a missing tourist from Indore a day after her husband's body was found in a gorge in Sohra area of Meghalaya's East Khasi Hills district, police said. Raja Raghuvanshi (29) and his wife Sonam had gone missing on May 23 hours after they checked out of a homestay at Nongriat village, 20 km from where his body was found on Monday.

"A team of 17 rescuers from the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) joined the search and rescue operations at Sohra today," district Superintendent of Police Vivek Syiem told PTI.

He said NDRF will expedite the search even as rescuers are already using drones, mountaineers and special police forces to search for the woman.

Raja's brother identified his body through a distinctive tattoo on the deceased's right hand which read 'Raja', the officer said.

A woman's white shirt, a strip of medicine, a part of the LCD screen of a mobile phone and a smartwatch were also seized at the spot, he said, adding that a homicide case was registered.

At the North Eastern Indira Gandhi Regional Institute of Health and Medical Sciences, where post-mortem examination was being conducted, Raja's brother demanded a thorough inquiry into the disappearance of the couple.

"Since my brother's gold rings, a golden chain and his wallet were missing, we suspect it to be a murder. We urge the authorities to let the Central Bureau of Investigation probe the matter," he said.

The SP, however, said a murder case has already been registered and a special investigation team (SIT) formed to probe the matter.

Extremely heavy rainfall and low visibility had on May 30 stalled the search and rescue operations, which was launched by the police on May 24.

Sohra area recorded the maximum amount of rainfall in the state on May 29, 30 and 31, recording around 500 mm of rainfall, equalling the annual



rainfall record of Mysore, a Met official told PTI.

Movement of traffic was also affected across the eastern Khasi and Jaintia Hills region with many places reporting landslides and flash floods that killed six persons and left over 10 people injured.

The couple, hailing from Indore in Madhya Pradesh, arrived at Mawlakhiat village on May 22 on a rented scooter.

They parked their scooter and trekked 3,000 steps down the gorge to visit the famous living rootbridges at Nongriat village, where they stayed the night and left the homestay the following morning.

On May 24, their scooter was found abandoned at a cafe along the road from Shillong to Sohra following which the police were informed and by Sunday, the initial search operation was planned with the help of the local villagers, police said.

Indore MPs -- Shankar Lalwani and Sumer Singh Solanki -- had held reviews of the rescue operations with Director General of Police I Nongrang and Chief Secretary DP Wahlang, expressing satisfaction over the efforts of the rescue teams.

Earlier this year, a Hungarian tourist -- Puskas Zsolt -- went missing soon after he started his trek to the living rootbridge and he was found dead 12 days later.

While the police have ruled out any foul play in his death, medical reports indicated he died due to a fall. (PTI)

Schools in 10 Mizoram districts remain shut due to rain

AIZAWL, June 3: All schools in 10 districts of Mizoram remained closed for the fourth day on Tuesday due to heavy rain that triggered landslides, mud-flows, and rock falls in different parts of the state, officials said.

They said that all district administrations barring Saitual declared the closure of schools on Tuesday as a precautionary measure for the safety of students due to continuous rainfall.

A notification issued by Aizawl deputy commissioner and district disaster management authority chairman Lahriatpuia said that all schools within Aizawl district are advised to suspend attendance of

school students to ensure the safety and well-being of the students on June 3. State capital Aizawl experienced heavy rainfall on Tuesday morning.

Earlier, all schools across the state were closed due to rain for three days on May 29, 30 and June 2. Saitual deputy commissioner Lalngura Tlau told PTI that schools were opened on Tuesday within the district following improvement in the weather. Unlike other districts, the calamities caused by monsoon are negligible and did not pose great danger in the district, he said.

The current wave of landslides, floods and other calamities trig-

gered by heavy rains across Mizoram has claimed the lives of five people, including three Myanmarese refugees, so far. Mizoram has been experiencing incessant rains since May 24 and heavy downpour from May 30 leaving a trail of destruction at several places.

Intra-state, inter-localities roads and highways have been blocked in 190 locations due to landslides, over 200 families evacuated due to floods and cracks caused by rain and more than 190 houses have collapsed or have been damaged in the current monsoon, according to state Disaster Management and Rehabilitation department. (PTI)

Tipra Motha's youth wing threatens 'lockdown' in Tripura

'If no action taken against Gomati DM'



AGARTALA, June 3: Youth Tipra Federation (YTF), the youth wing of Tipra Motha party on Tuesday threatened to go for a "Covid-like lockdown" in Tripura if the government fails to take action against the district magistrate of Gomati in the next seven days for disrespecting party chief.

Tipra Motha party is an ally of the BJP-led coalition government in the state.

The ultimatum came a day after the YTF staged a protest in front of the Gomati district magistrate's (DM) office.

The YTF activists had locked the main entrance of the office demanding action against DM Tariat Kanti Chakma for disrespecting the Tipra Motha supreme Pradyot Kishore Manikya Debbarma.

"Our leaders and supporters staged a massive protest in front of the DM's office at Udaipur on Monday. The YTF also organised agitation in the SDM offices at Amarapur and Korbook in Gomati district protesting the disrespect shown by the district magistrate," YTF president Suraj Debbarma told the reporters.

He said Tipra Motha's youth organisation will go for lockdown across the state like it witnessed during the COVID-19 pandemic if the government doesn't take action against the DM within a week.

He said, disrespecting the Maharaja (Pradyot Kishore Manikya Debbarma) is a serious issue.

If the government can transfer an IAS officer for creating a ruckus at a wedding hall in Agartala during the COVID-19 pandemic, why is there a hesitation to remove the DM of Gomati district? he asked.

"Now, we want the DM to be suspended for disrespecting the Maharaja," he said.

"We request Chief Minister Manik Saha to consider the issue as very serious, and take action. If something untoward happens in the state, the onus will be on you. We don't want the public to suffer," he said.

The opposition CPI(M) condemned how Tipra Motha's youth brigade staged the agitation at the Gomati DM office on Monday. "We criticised the Gomati DM for not meeting with Tipra Motha supreme Pradyot Kishore Manikya and chief of Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council (TTAADC) Purna Chandra Jamatia on May 25," the Leader of Opposition in Tripura Assembly, Jitendra Chaudhury, posted on Facebook on Monday.

"The party also condemned the way YTF supporters staged the protest rally at the DM office in Udaipur by locking the main entrance to the office and raising slogans," Chaudhury said. (PTI)

'Over 70% of Nagaland's population reliant on agriculture for their livelihoods'

FOCUS project sees successful completion in Nagaland

HT Correspondent

DIMAPUR, June 3: The Fostering Climate Resilient Upland Farming System in the Northeast (FOCUS), Nagaland project, has been successfully completed.

Addressing the project completion workshop in Kohima on Tuesday, agriculture production commissioner and mission director, FOCUS, Wezope Keney, termed the successful completion of the project in Nagaland a significant milestone. He said this achievement is the result of a shared vision, collaborative spirit, and the determination of all stakeholders who have contributed to the project's success.

Keney said the FOCUS represents the first externally aided project in the agriculture sector of Nagaland implemented in partnership with the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).

"It marks a pioneering step in



our efforts to strengthen farming systems and improve agricultural incomes across the state, which has laid a strong foundation for further sectoral development and institutional growth," Keney.

He noted that with over 70% of Nagaland's population reliant on agriculture for their livelihoods, this project has been instrumental in initiating transformative

challenges brought by the COVID-19 pandemic necessitated an extension.

"Yet the project reached an impressive 645 villages across nine districts, directly benefiting approximately 1,18,000 households, covering nearly 89% of the target group," he said.

He added that it led to the creation and strengthening of vital agricultural and allied infrastructure, improved market access, and played a transformative role in enhancing rural livelihoods and local economies.

Keney said the project invested in key infrastructure such as market access facilities, community seed banks, and crucial logistical assets like refrigerated vans, ensuring long-term support to farming communities.

Country programme analyst, IFAD CO, Piyush Kanal, highlighted the activities and achievements of the project.

REPLACEMENT OF OLD AGED QUARTERS

E-TENDER NOTICE NO. TSK/Engg/24 of 2025; dated 30-05-2025. E-tenders are invited by the undersigned for the following work. **Item No.1: Brief Description of item:** At Mariani Jn.- Replacement of old aged quarters by Type-II Qtrs=12 units. **Tender Value:** ₹3,84,65,650/-; **Earnest Money:** ₹3,42,300/-; E-tenders will be closed at 15:00 hrs. on 20-06-2025 and opened at 16:00 hrs. on 20-06-2025. The complete information with the tender document of above e-tender will be available upto 15:00 hrs. of 20-06-2025 in website www.irps.gov.in.

DRM (Work)/Tinsukia
NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY
Serving Customers with a Smile

YARD IMPROVEMENT OF FURKATING TO SELENGHAT YARD-05 NOS.

E-Tender Notice No.: TSK/Engg/25 of 2025 Dated: 30-05-2025. E-Tenders are invited by the undersigned for the following works: **Brief Description of item:** Yard Improvement of Furkating to Selenghat yard-5 Nos. under jurisdiction of ADEN/Mariani Jn. **Tender Value:** ₹5,81,92,368/-; **Earnest Money:** ₹4,41,000/-; **Date & Time of closing of E-Tender:** 15:00 hrs. of 20-06-2025 & opening at 16:00 hrs. of 20-06-2025. The complete information with the tender documents of above e-tender will be available upto 15:00 hrs. of 20-06-2025 in the website www.irps.gov.in.

DRM (W), Tinsukia
NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY
Serving Customers With A Smile

AFFIDAVIT

Sworn before the Executive Magistrate at Diphu on 02/06/2025 that my actual and correct name is JORNI TERONPI but in my class XII educational documents viz. Admit card bearing Roll 0634 No.10515, Marks Sheet and pass Certificate recorded as JARNI TERONPI. Both the name represents the same and one identical person i.e. Myself JORNI TERONPI, D/O. Cheni Ram Teron, Village - Haja Rongpi Gaon, Dengaon, P.O.- Duarbamuni, Pin. - 782441, P.S. - Dokmoka, Dist. - Karbi Anglong (Assam)

ED SHEERAN SHARES THROWBACK VIDEO WITH SHAH RUKH KHAN: LOVE THIS GUY SO MUCH

NEW DELHI, June 3: British singer Ed Sheeran, known for tracks like "Shape of You", "Bad Habits" and "Thinking Out Loud", shared a throwback post from his visit to India and his meeting with Bollywood superstar Shah Rukh Khan and other celebrities.

Sheeran, who visited India earlier this year as part of his (+==x) Mathematics Tour, shared a post where he is hanging out with SRK. He tagged the clip with the caption, "@iamsrk, love the guy so much."

During his tour between January to February, Sheeran travelled to perform across six cities, including Pune, Hyderabad, Chennai, Bengaluru, Shillong, and Delhi NCR.

On Monday, Sheeran uploaded a series of pictures and videos on his Instagram, ahead of the release of his song "Sapphire".

Another slide features Sheeran and Bollywood singer Arijit Singh having coffee. "Sapphire" will release on June

5. It is a part of Sheeran's album "Play". Besides Khan and Singh, the "Bad Habits" singer also met music maestro A R Rahman, with whom he performed at his Chennai concert in February. Sheeran visited India for the first time in 2015. He returned to the country for another show in 2017 and later in 2019. (PTI)



JAMES CAMERON TO CO-WRITE 'THE DEVIL' MOVIE ADAPTATION



LOS ANGELES, June 3: Filmmaker James Cameron, whose credits include "Titanic", "The Terminator", and the "Avatar" franchise, is set to write a script for the movie adaptation of the best-selling novel "The Devils" by Joe Abercrombie.

He shared the news of acquiring the rights to the novel on his Facebook account on Monday. The director said he has admired Abercrombie's writings for years. Both will write the script for the upcoming project. Cameron will begin work on the project once he is done with his upcoming film "Avatar: Fire and Ash", which is the third installment in the "Avatar" franchise.

"I've loved Joe's writing for years, cherishing each new read, throughout the epic cycle of the 'First Law' books, especially 'Best Served Cold' (LOVE IT!) and the 'Age of Madness' trilogy. But the freshness of the world and the characters in

'The Devils' finally got me to buy one of his books and partner with him to bring it to the screen," Cameron said. "I'm looking forward to the writing process with him, though I'm certain this adaptation will practically write itself because Joe writes very visually, almost in scenes, and with a very cinematic structure. I can't wait to dig into this as I wind down on 'Avatar: Fire and Ash'. It will be a joyful new challenge for me to bring these indelible characters to life." The book revolves around an alternate medieval Europe threatened by an imminent elvish invasion, who are hungry for human flesh.

Abercrombie said he couldn't think of anyone better than Cameron to bring the story to the screen. "James Cameron has been thrilling audiences, including me, by putting the impossible on film for over four decades. No one can balance mind-blowing action and spectacle with gut-wrenching personal stakes and story the way he does. I can't think of anyone better to bring this weird and wonderful monster of a book to the screen," he said.

Cameron's "Avatar: Fire and Ash" is slated to release in theatres on December 19. (PTI)

Actor Urmila Matondkar inaugurates Soul Aesthetics and Academy in Guwahati



HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, June 3: SOUL Aesthetics and Academy proudly announces the grand opening of its state-of-the-art aesthetics and wellness clinic at 5th Floor, Fort Complex, G S Road, Ward No 25, here at Kachari Basti, Ulubari. Founded by visionary entrepreneur Vikas Aggarwal and co-owned by esteemed expert Dr. Namrata Agarwal, the clinic sets a new standard for beauty, health, and wellness in Northeast India. The launch was announced by none other than the Bollywood legend Urmila Matondkar. She was at her radiant best and was adorned by Jewels of Guwahati's best Jewellery atelier, Jewellery house by Harshitah.

Speaking on the occasion, Urmila Matondkar said, "I am truly proud to be inaugurating Soul Aesthetics & Academy in Guwahati that will be a 360° heaven for solving issues that go beyond skincare and hair and wellness. Their idea of providing everything under one roof and with the expertise of doctors speaks volumes about the kind of services they are committed to give. Wishing them all the very best on this beautiful journey."

SOUL Aesthetics and Academy offers an extensive range of cutting-edge services, including aesthetics and wellness treatments, hair restoration, plastic surgery headed by the top most Plastic surgeon Dr. Deepanjali Brahma and her team, weight management, cryotherapy, hydrogen therapy, and exclusive 15 steps Korean scalp therapy. Combining advanced technology with personalized care, the clinic is dedicated to empowering clients to look and feel their best.

"Our mission is to redefine aesthetics by blending innovation, expertise, and holistic wellness," said Vikas Aggarwal. Dr. Namrata Agarwal added, "We aim to provide transformative experiences tailored to each client's unique needs." The clinic also features an academy to train aspiring professionals, fostering excellence in the aesthetics industry.

'Picture House' cinema in Pak's Peshawar city demolished to make way for commercial plaza

PESHAWAR, June 3: The historic 'Picture House' cinema, once a cultural landmark of Peshawar, has been demolished, marking the symbolic end of once-thriving movie culture in this city of Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province.

The theatre at once-vibrant "Cinema Road" near the historic Qissa Khwani Bazaar in Peshawar was established in 1931, before the partition of India and Pakistan, by Sikh trader Daswat Singh. The grandfather of Tayyab Raza, the current owner of the cinema, acquired it in 1947 from Singh.

The 'Picture House', demolished to make way for a commercial plaza, remained a key cultural and entertainment hub in Peshawar for over eight decades and regularly hosted three shows a day.

The cinema, which showcased films in Pashto, Urdu, and Punjabi, gained immense popularity in the 1940s with the screening of Sohrab Modi's film Pukar in 1940 and Sikandar in 1941.

The 'Picture House', a part of the once bustling, famous entertainment city, drew audiences from across Peshawar and its surrounding areas.

The city also had Novelty Cinema and Tasveer Mahal on the same lane, earning the area the nickname "Cinema Road". These cinemas kept the Qissa Khwani Bazaar alive late into the night, with the final shows ending as late as 2 a.m. Crowds made way to the bazaar afterwards, where stalls selling tikka, lassi, and other traditional foods catered to filmgoers.

However, in the past five months, thirteen cinemas in Peshawar have been permanently closed, with most making way for commercial plazas.

The closures have left dozens of employees jobless and raised concerns among artists and film enthusiasts alike. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Heritage Council General Secretary Shakil Waheedullah lamented the lack of government attention towards preserving such his-

toric institutions and warned that Peshawar's rich cultural identity was steadily fading into obscurity.

He expressed concern over the negligence of the archaeological and culture department for their failure to protect the demolition of historic structures of the pre-partition era.

Due to deteriorating economic conditions, cinema culture is declining across the province, he said, adding that employees were left unemployed because of the closures.

Waheedullah said that although the COVID-19 pandemic played a role in reducing public gatherings, the growing popularity of Indian films and streaming applications lured audiences away from traditional cinema houses.

Picture House Cinema manager Wasim Khan said the cinema industry had suffered a huge loss due to moviegoers moving away from theatres.

Khan maintained that many filmgoers shifted to online streaming or watching

Indian films at home, resulting in significant financial losses for local cinema owners. He also said the new films were not drawing in audiences, and the few cinemas still running were struggling to cover expenses.

"The few cinemas that are still running can barely cover operational costs," said Picture House accountant Haris Sharif. He noted that expenses continued to rise while ticket sales dwindled. Many cinema halls that once bustled with life now stand abandoned, he said, adding that areas like Cinema Road and Shoba Bazaar previously came alive after market hours as crowds flocked to evening shows.

"There was a time when the streets were packed after sunset. Families and youth gathered for film screenings," he said. Arbab Waheed, a cultural activist, said a significant part of Peshawar's cultural identity could soon be lost unless concrete steps were taken to revive local cinema. (PTI)

I'm interested in writing about power: 'Succession' creator Jesse Armstrong on new film 'Mountainhead'

NEW DELHI, June 3: "Succession" creator Jesse Armstrong says his film "Mountainhead", much like his critically-acclaimed HBO show about media mogul Logan Roy, is an exploration of power and how a group of people control the quality and quantity of information that goes out in the world.

In his directorial debut, currently streaming on JioHotstar, the multiple Emmy and Golden Globe-winner Armstrong once again trains his lens on the ultra rich.

In the movie, four tech billionaires come together for a weekend retreat as a global crisis unfolds thanks to the deep-fake videos of a social media app owned by one of them. The real world filters through videos and images on their screens, but they are more concerned about their net worth and how the crisis can help multiply it.

Asked why he is so focused on exploring the lives of the rich in his stories, Armstrong said it may be because he thinks a lot about "income distribution and how very unbalanced it is".

"A writer doesn't always know why they choose the subjects they do or why they're drawn to certain areas.

Maybe I'm more angry than I know (about the rich-poor divide), but I think I'm writing about power." Armstrong responded to a question posed by PTI during an international media round-table.

"In 'Succession', he said, it was the power of Logan Roy's family and their control over the media.

"In this story ('Mountainhead'), it's not that they're rich guys -- although it's important that they are rich guys and are constantly ranking themselves and thinking about their wealth -- but it's their power that's the centre of the story. It's their ability to change how most of the people in the world receive information and the quality and quantity of information that they're receiving."

In "Mountainhead", the eldest of the group is Randall (Steve Carell), he is also the group's leader. Jeff (Ramy Youssef) is the founder of an AI tech company that's on the upswing thanks to crisis created by Venis (Cory Michael Smith) social media app and Hugo (Jason Schwartzman) is the owner of the mountain top villa whose name is a play on Ayn Rand's novel "Fountainhead".

For much of the movie's duration, they remain in the mansion. And when they go out, they write their net worths on their chests during a hike in what seems to be among the many absurd rituals the four have for their poker weekend.

Armstrong, 54, said he did not want his first movie to be "too expensive", which is why he thought of the story "much like a chamber piece" where everyone is locked in a house.

"I like that feeling of pressure cooker... But I also knew that we are on TV and most TV now is big screens in people's homes. So, I needed some sense of scope and to let some air in. I normally don't do this, but it was kind of back engineered like why do these guys go out? Maybe they have a ritual during their poker weekends where they do this ranking."

Armstrong, also known for "Down-hill", "Peep Show", and "In the Loop", said he did not have any particular actors in mind while writing the movie, but he knew that "Office" star Carell would be brilliant as Randall.

On a question about what went through his mind when he saw tech CEOs at president Donald Trump's in-

auguration and Elon Musk's involvement with DOGE, Armstrong said "it didn't feel good as a human being watching that stuff".

"...but it did feel like, 'Yeah, this was the bubble of time that I was trying to write about and how I thought it feels in the world'... You get these weird coincidences of real stuff in the real world. And it feels spooky when it's very close."

"...The tech billionaires in my film are actually outside government, so it wasn't like DOGE was part of the film, but certainly that interconnectedness between political power and tech power at the moment did feel like 'Okay, the film is still writing about this world, which is happening in front of our face'."

Armstrong said during his research, he started listening to podcasts of "some of these tech world figures talking to each other" and was struck by their tone.

"Sometimes you could feel the level of confidence tipping into a certain haughty arrogance. And that is a very rich vein for a comedy writer to hit. So I think it was that tone of voice, which I was attracted to." (PTI)

Rescheduled Neeraj Chopra Classic to be held on July 5 in Bengaluru

BENGALURU, June 3: The inaugural Neeraj Chopra Classic international javelin throw event, which was postponed due to the India-Pakistan military conflict last month, will be held on July 5 here, the organisers announced on Tuesday.

India's first-ever international javelin throw competition, which was originally scheduled for May 24, is being organised by double Olympic-medallist Chopra in collaboration with JSW Sports and sanctioned by the Athletics Federation of India (AFI).

The star-studded 12-man event, to be held at the Sree Kanteerava Stadium, will feature seven of the best javelin throwers in the world and five Indians, including Chopra.

The other four Indians are Asian championships silver-medallist Sachin Yadav, Kishore Jena, Rohit Yadav and Sahil Silwal.

The foreign competitors for the event are two-time world champion Anderson Peters (PB: 93.07m) of Grenada, 2016 Olympics gold winner Thomas Rohler (PB: 93.90m) of Germany, 2015 world champion Julius Yego (92.72m) of Kenya, American Curtis Thompson (PB: 87.76m), Asian Games bronze medallist Genki Dean (PB: 84.28m) of Japan, Ramesh Pathiraj (PB: 85.45m) of Sri Lanka, Luiz Mauricio da Silva (PB: 86.34m) of Brazil.

"Bringing the Neeraj Chopra Classic back this quickly has taken an enormous collective effort, and we're happy to confirm its return on July 5," said JSW Sports Chief Commercial Officer Karan Yadav. "...the unwavering support from the AFI, the Karnataka Olympic Association, the Government of Karnataka, and our partners made this possible. The energy around this event is bigger than ever, and we're set to deliver a celebration of javelin that's bolder, better, and even more unforgettable."

The event, which was granted category A status by World Athletics, was shifted to the Kanteerava Stadium in Bengaluru from the original venue of Panchkula due to inadequate lighting for live telecast. (PTI)

SEN, PRANNOY BOW OUT INDONESIA OPEN: SINDHU ADVANCES TO SECOND ROUND



JAKARTA, June 3: Two-time Olympic medallist PV Sindhu battled her way into the second round of the Indonesia Open Super 1000 badminton tournament but it was curtains for Lakshya Sen, who went down fighting against world number two Shi Yu Qi, here Tuesday.

Sindhu overcame long-time rival Nozomi Okuhara of Japan 22-20, 21-23, 21-15 in an absorbing one-hour and 19-minute clash in the women's singles.

Sen, the 2021 World Championships bronze medallist, battled valiantly before falling 11-21 22-20 15-21 to his formidable Chinese rival in a gripping first round men's singles contest that lasted 65 minutes.

The 23-year-old Sen, returning from a back injury that had ruled him out last week's tournament in Malaysia, showed remarkable resilience. Trailing 11-17 in the second game, he mounted a spirited comeback, saving a match point

and clinching the game 22-20 to force a decider.

However, the momentum proved short-lived as Shi grabbed control in the third game to seal the match.

HS Prannoy also bowed out from the USD 1,450,000 tournament. The 2023 World Championships bronze medallist lost 17-21, 18-21 to Indonesia's Alwi Farhan.

Both Sindhu had Okuhara, former world champions, have struggled in recent time. While Sindhu's best performance this season was a quarterfinal finish at the India Open in January, Okuhara hasn't made it past the second round in six events. The two stars added another chapter to their rivalry story, engaging in a war of attrition in an error-marred match that had plenty of game points and match points.

Sindhu edged a tense first game 22-20, saving a game point and producing attacking shots at

clutch moments.

In the second game, Sindhu held a slender two-point lead early on but trailed 7-11 at the mid-game interval. She clawed her way back, earning two match points with a thunderous cross-court smash.

But unforced errors continued to creep in, allowing Okuhara to level at 20-20. The Japanese eventually took the second game 23-21.

The decider followed a familiar pattern of conservative play, with neither of the two taking undue risks.

Sindhu led 11-9 at the break and then unleashed a series of winners to surge to 20-12. The Indian star earned eight match points and sealed the win by converting the fifth to book her spot in the round of 16.

The win helped Sindhu improve her head-to-head to 11-9 against Okuhara, who had defeated the Indian in the 2017

World Championships.

"14 years. 20 matches. From my longest to the shortest World Championship finals — always with her. We've shared wins, losses, and a rivalry only we understand. Keep fighting, Nozomi. The court's never quite the same without you," Sindhu tweeted after the game.

Sindhu was the lone Indian women's singles player who advanced to the next round, where she will take on sixth seed Pornpawee Chochiwong of Thailand.

Malvika Bansod retired midway through her women's singles match against Putri Kusuma Wardani of Indonesia. The Indian was leading 21-16 16-15 before she slipped on the court and clutched her knee in pain before retiring.

Anupama Upadhyaya went down in straight games 15-21, 9-21 to Korea's Kim Ga Eun while Rakshit Ramraj too lost her opener 21-14, 15-21, 12-21 to Thailand's Supanida. (PTI)

Salunkhe's rise fuels Indian hopes at Archery World Cup Stage 3

ANTALYA (TURKEY), June 3: The Shanghai Archery World Cup last month marked the emergence of Parth Salunkhe, and the 21-year-old former youth world champion will look to shine again when India begin their campaign in the third stage of the showpiece, here on Wednesday.

The youngster from Satara, Maharashtra, stunned the archery world by knocking out two big names -- Tokyo Olympics champion Mete Gazoz of Turkey in a shoot-off in the opening round, and then two-time Olympics team gold medallist Kim Je-Deok of South Korea in the quarterfinals, without dropping a set.

Salunkhe then went on to claim his maiden World Cup medal -- a bronze -- in just his second appearance, edging out Paris Games team silver medallist Baptiste Addis of France in the playoff.

What stood out was not just his achievement, but also his temperament and age-defying maturity, especially against the dominant South Koreans, long considered India's arch-rivals in the sport.

Against all-time great Kim Woojin in the semifinals, Salunkhe rallied from a 0-4 deficit to level the match 4-4, only to lose narrowly in the deciding set in a thrilling five-setter.

Historically, Indian archers have crumbled under pressure, and they are still chasing that elusive Olympic medal. But in his short stint so far, Salunkhe has shown how to thrive under pressure.

"My focus wasn't really on a medal; it was more on if I could deliver what I practised for," Salunkhe said about his key to success.

"That's what mattered most to me and in the last end I couldn't do it. It's all mental. I lagged there, but it's a part of game, you go up, you go down. It's all right. I'll work on it," he said after winning the bronze.

Incidentally, Salunkhe had finished lowest among the four Indians in the qualification round -- placed 60th, far behind Dhiraj Bommadevara (9th), Tarundeep Rai (28th), and Atanu Das (57th).

His ability to rise and deliver in the knockouts reflected his mental

strength.

"I was surprised to shoot bad in qualifications. I was happy with what I did (in matches) and right now I did many good things, but also really bad things but I'll work on it. That's all that matters."

Buoyed by Salunkhe's performance, the Indian men's recurve team, boasting 41-year-old veteran Tarundeep Rai, Atanu Das, and Bommadevara, will also look to return to the podium after narrowly missing out in Shanghai, losing the bronze playoff to the USA.

Individually, this stage offers an opportunity for the experienced duo of Rai and Das, who have seven Olympic appearances between them, to redeem themselves.

Rai, the 2010 Asian Games silver medallist with four Olympic appearances, is still chasing his first individual World Cup medal.

Das, who has made a comeback this year, last won a World Cup medal -- a gold -- in Guatemala City in 2021.

In the women's section, Deepika Kumari continues to script a remarkable comeback post-motherhood. The 30-year-old former world number one and four-time Olympian won a bronze in Shanghai, falling in the semifinals to her familiar Korean rival, Lim Sihyeon.

Deepika had lost to Nam Suhyeon of Korea in the quarterfinals of the Paris Olympics.

If she can find a way past the Korean wall, she could be unstoppable in her quest for her first World Cup gold since 2021.

India had finished second in the overall medal standings in Shanghai with two gold, one silver and four bronze medals -- behind Korea, who won five gold and two silver.

Much of India's success came in the compound section.

Madhura Dhamangaonkar led the charge with a stellar comeback to claim individual gold, while the men's team comprising Ojas Deotale, Rishav Yadav, and veteran Abhishek Verma also reigned supreme.

The compound archers will once again look to sustain their strong form in Antalya and keep India's medal tally ticking. (PTI)

UTT: U Mumba thrash Ahmedabad SG Pipers, Kolkata Thunder Blades also win

AHMEDABAD, June 3: U Mumba bounced back from the initial loss to outwit Ahmedabad SG Pipers 10-5 at the Ultimate Table Tennis Season 6 here on Monday.

It was Ahmedabad SG Pipers' second consecutive defeat in the league. U Mumba lost 6-9 against PBG Pune Jaguars in their first match on Sunday, while Ahmedabad SG Pipers were beaten 5-10 by two-time defending champions Goa Challengers.

France's Lilian Bardet opened U Mumba's account with a 2-1 (11-4 11-9 4-11) win over Snehit Suravajula of Ahmedabad SG Pipers.

Young Yashaswini Ghorpade, playing her first match of the league, then beat country-mate Ayhika Mukherjee 2-1 (8-11 11-7 11-4) in women's singles. Romanian Bernadette Szocs and Akash Pal then joined hands for U Mumba to beat the

11) win over Gerassimenko, an opponent 10 years and 104 spots ahead of him in the first men's single match. Ankur's dominance was clear from the start. His lethal backhand, statistically the most effective in the league last season, delivered nine winners in Game 1 alone. He edged a tense second game with a Golden Point and sealed the match with a clinical 11-7 finish.

World no. 36 Fan Sqi of China brought Chennai Lions back into the contest with a 3-0 (11-8 11-10 11-6) win over National Games gold edallist Selena Selvakumar of Kolkata in women's singles.

Ankur and Adriana Diaz of Puerto Rico gave Kolkata Thunder Blades a valuable point by winning the last game even though they lost the mixed doubles match 1-2 to Payas Jain and Fan Sqi of the Lions.

In the reverse men's singles match, world no. 27 Aruna Quadri of Nigeria had to face strong fight from lower ranked Payas Jain before registering a tough 2-1 (11-3 8-11 11-9) win to level the tie 6-6 and take it to the decider. In the deciding second women's singles match, Diaz produced her best display as she used her booming top-spin smashes to outplay Poymantee Baisya of Chennai Lions 2-1 (11-6 7-11 11-6) and pocket the humdinger for Kolkata Thunder Blades.

According to the format of the tournament, a game is won when a player scores first 11 points, with a golden point used for deciding games that are tied at 10-10, in the league stage.

A team wins a tie by winning the most games. At the league stage, a team bags a tie by winning at least eight out of the 15 total games. (PTI)

STAVANGER (NORWAY), June 3: Reigning world champion D Gukesh continued to turn adversity into opportunity as he wriggled out of a virtually intractable position to beat compatriot Arjun Erigaisi for the first time ever in a classical game and jump to sole second position after round 7 of the Norway Chess. As has been the trend in Gukesh's campaign in this elite six-payer double round-robin tournament, the teenager, playing with white, showed nerves of steel to secure his second consecutive win, without going through the rigmarole of an Armageddon tie-break, to take sweet revenge for his loss to Erigaisi earlier in Round 2.

The win, which came after a nerve-racking victory against defending champion and world No.1 Magnus Carlsen, saw Gukesh, 19, overtake the 34-year-old Norwegian on the points table with 11.5 points. This was also Gukesh's first win in three attempts against Erigaisi, who had beaten the world

champion at the Tata Steel Chess tournament in Wijk Aan Zee to spoil his title-winning chances, and then again in Round 2 here.

With three more rounds to go, pole sitter American Grandmaster Fabiano Caruana, who defeated Wei Yi of China, is on 12.5 points.

Carlsen is third with 11 points following his Armageddon win against another American Grandmaster and world No. 2 Hikaru Nakamura, who is fourth with 8.5 points. Erigaisi dropped to fifth position with 7.5 points following the loss, while Wei Yi is placed sixth with 6.5 points.

For the first three-and-a-half hours of the game, Gukesh was on the defensive but finally managed to up his game to earn a win, tying down his opponent in time trouble. Erigaisi faltered that wee bit, which gave Gukesh an opening that he exploited and forced his opponent to resign after some intense play.

"Probably I was just losing it at some point. I was just slowly get-



ting nothing went. From the opening nothing went my way but once I got to this position I just had to keep making moves which doesn't lose on the spot and in the time scrambles things happen," Gukesh told the broadcaster after the match.

Analysing the game, Gukesh's Polish coach Grzegorz Gajewski said, though it was not the best game played by the reigning world

India seek inspiration from last two wins in another friendly face-off with Thailand

PATHUM THANI (THAILAND), June 3: India will take inspiration from their last two wins and talismanic Sunil Chhetri's good form when they face Asian rivals Thailand in an international friendly football match here on Wednesday.

For India, Thailand have been one of the most familiar continental rivals outside of South Asian countries. Both are among middle-rung Asian countries in the FIFA charts.

From the Asian Games to the Asian Cup, from the King's Cup to the Nehru Cup, the history of India versus Thailand clashes in men's football is a long one.

Since the first meeting at the 1962 Asian Games in Jakarta, when India won 4-1, the two teams have played 26 times. India have won seven matches, while Thailand emerged victorious 12 times, and seven were draws.

The previous two matches, how-



ever, were both won by India in 2019. A sensational 4-1 win at the 2019 AFC Asian Cup in Abu Dhabi, before a narrow 1-0 victory to win bronze at the King's Cup on Thai soil.

Chhetri, who scored the first two goals in the Asian Cup victory, reminisced about the performance

that ended India's 55-year wait for a win at the continental showpiece.

"That was a long time back. What I remember of the game was that the team was outstanding in that game. That's also a marker for us to know that on a good day, if we work hard, that's what we can achieve," said Chhetri in a press re-

lease issued by the All India Football Federation (AIFF).

"That game was special because a lot of young people did really well. So, we are taking a lot of positivity and inspiration from the game. "At that time, Thailand were probably better than us on paper by a mile. We were underdogs in that game, and to win the game the way we did — it wasn't just four goals but the way we held ourselves and dominated the game — was really fantastic."

The Indian team will need the 40-year-old talismanic striker's goal-scoring prowess and his inspirational leadership to notch a hat-trick of wins against the Thais. A win on Wednesday at the Thammasat Stadium will also be a big confidence booster before the crucial AFC Asian Cup qualifying round match against Hong Kong on June 10 in Kowloon.

While India are currently placed

127th in the FIFA Rankings, Thailand are 99th. The Thais has risen 14 places since Japanese coach Masatada Ishii took charge in December 2023 and led them to the round of 16 of the Asian Cup a month later.

Though they failed to make it to third round of the FIFA World Cup Qualifiers, 2024 was a fairly successful year for Thailand. They won the King's Cup and finished runners-up in the ASEAN Championship.

The friendly against India serves as preparation for their AFC Asian Cup Final Round Qualifier against Turkmenistan.

Thailand have players who ply their trade abroad like mid-fielder Jaroensak Wonggorn (Cerezo Osaka in Japanese top tier), midfielder Ekanit Panya (Ehime FC in Japanese second tier) and defender Elias Dolah (Bali United in Indonesian top tier). (PTI)

Virat's 43 off 35 paves the way for the Royal Challengers

Punjab Kings restrict RCB to below par 190 for 9



AHMEDABAD, June 3: Punjab Kings bowlers did more than a decent job to restrict Royal Challengers Bengaluru to a below par 190 for 9 in the IPL final here on Tuesday.

For RCB, Virat Kohli top-scored with 43 off 35 balls while skipper Rajat Patidar couldn't build on a good start managing 26

off 16 balls.

For Punjab Kings, Yuzvendra Chahal was brilliant with figures of 1/37 in 4 overs while Kyle Jamieson had the figures of 3 for 48.

The prize wicket of Kohli was taken by Afghanistan all-rounder Azmatullah Omarzai (1/35). However, the best figures were of

India's premier T20 bowler Arshdeep Singh (3/40), who got three wickets in the final over.

Brief Scores: RCB: 190/9 in 20 overs (Virat Kohli 43, Rajat Patidar 26; Arshdeep Singh 3/40, Kyle Jamieson 3/48, Yuzvendra Chahal 1/37) vs Punjab Kings. (PTI)

Cricket back in Olympics after 100 years because of India: Former UK PM Sunak

AHMEDABAD, June 3: Former Prime Minister of the United Kingdom Rishi Sunak connected the return of cricket to the Olympics after a century-long hiatus to India's growing global impact, while lauding the transformative abilities of the IPL and BCCI.

Cricket has been added to the list of competitions of the Los Angeles Games 2028, a first for the sport since 1900.

"It's a sign of the influence India now has in the 21st century. India's passions, India's tastes — they now have a global impact. Why is cricket back in the Olympics for the first time in 100 years? Because of India," said Sunak, who is here to attend the IPL final between Royal Challengers Bengaluru and Punjab Kings at Ahmedabad on Tuesday.

An ardent cricket lover, Sunak touched upon the landscape-changing effect the Indian Premier League (IPL) has had over the years.

"The IPL has transformed cricket. I think every cricketer, everywhere, wants to play in the IPL at some point in their career now. It's also been great for the women's game, getting more girls into the sport (through the Women's Premier League)," he added.

Sunak then traced the impact the IPL had on English cricket, using the recent performances of players like Jacob Bethell as an example.

"And just look at the English players who've been involved and they're getting better. I was at Edgbaston last week watching the England vs West Indies ODI. Jacob Bethell played a brilliant innings. The IPL has improved him as a cricketer," he said.

Bethell, who plays for Royal Chal-



lengers Bengaluru in the IPL, made a 53-ball 82 in England's massive 238-run victory over the Windies in the opening one-dayer of the three-match series.

The 45-year-old politician did not conceal his affinity towards legendary Virat Kohli and his IPL side Royal Challengers. He backed RCB to end their 18-year wait for an IPL trophy.

"I'll give you a clue — Ee Sala Cup Namde! Hopefully, my pronunciation has improved since I proposed to Akshata 16 years ago in Kannada where, truth be told, I'm not entirely sure she knew what I was talking about!"

"But obviously, I'm married into a Bangalore family, so RCB is my team. We went to matches together a long time ago, and actually, Akshata's mother and father got me this shirt when we got married, which is great," he said.

Sunak's Bengaluru connection is through his wife Akshata, who is the daughter of Infosys founder NR Narayana Murthy and entrepreneur Sudha Murty, hails from the Gar-

den City.

"Now, in terms of my favourite players obviously, I'm a massive Virat Kohli fan. He's a total legend. One of my prized possessions is a signed bat of his that (India's External Affairs) Minister S. Jaishankar brought me when I was Prime Minister, as a Diwali gift, to Downing Street — which is amazing," he added.

Sunak also identified cricket as a capable diplomatic tool.

"Cricket is such a helpful diplomatic tool. Prime Minister Anthony Albanese (of Australia) and I have always had great cricket banter, especially during the Ashes series — at one point, it even got a tiny bit heated, but all in a very friendly way."

"(India's) Prime Minister (Narendra) Modi and I also always had great cricket chats before getting down to business. India are coming to England this summer. It's going to be a great tour, and I know it will strengthen the partnership and friendship between our two countries," he hoped. (PTI)

Kane Williamson again turns down a central contract with New Zealand Cricket



WELLINGTON, June 3: Ex-captain Kane Williamson has again rejected a central contract with New Zealand Cricket and likely will miss the Black Caps two test tour to Zimbabwe next month.

Williamson also decided not to accept a central contract last year, to leave himself free to play in Twenty20 and other leagues around the world. He instead signed a casual contract last year and still played in nine of New

Zealand's 13 tests in 2024, scoring more than 1,000 runs.

Williamson was absent from the list of 20 contracted players released by New Zealand Cricket on Tuesday, along with Devon Conway, Finn Allen, Tim Seifert and Lockie Ferguson who also are playing in T20 leagues overseas. He is expected again to sign a casual contract.

Allrounders Muhammad Abbas and Zak Foulkes, wicketkeeper Mitch Hay and spinner Adi Ashok

are contracted for the first time in the absence of Tim Southee, who has retired, Ish Sodhi, Ajaz Patel and Josh Clarkson.

Williamson currently is playing for Middlesex in the English County Championship and T20 Blast and for the London Spirit in The Hundred. He is expected to have county commitments while New Zealand plays Zimbabwe in late July and early August.

In a news conference in London last month, Williamson said that his future on a casual contract is "just a work in progress and New Zealand Cricket have been great with working with that and I've been fortunate throughout."

The 20 contracted players were ranked on domestic and international performances over the past year.

"The contracts with Mitch, Muhammad, Adi and Zak reflect the incredible talent coming through our system," New Zealand Cricket chief executive Scott Weinink said. (AP)

CANTERBURY, June 3: India A batters enjoyed their time on a placid batting track with all the top four batters helping themselves to half-centuries as the first unofficial 'Test' against England Lions ended in a draw here on Monday. After England Lions ended their first essay on a healthy 587, 30 runs more than India A's first innings score of 557, Yashasvi Jaiswal (64 off 60 balls), skipper Abhimanyu Easwaran (68 off 87 balls), Dhruv Jurel (53 not out) and Nitish Kumar Reddy (52 not out off 47 balls) got some runs and confidence before the second 'Test' in Northampton, starting June 6.

The match was called off after India A raced to 241 for 2 in 41 overs with 25 overs remaining on the final day.

India A coach Hrishikesh Kanitkar rightly promoted Reddy to No. 4 and allowed him to belt a few blows as he is almost certain to play at Leeds in the first Test

against England.

Similarly, Jurel, who scored 94 in the first innings did his cause no harm by scoring his second half-century of the match. Jurel has the technique to play purely as a batter if the team management thinks on those lines.

The second innings started with Jaiswal hooking left-arm seamer Josh Hull for a six and in the post lunch session, Jaiswal and Easwaran matched each other stroke for stroke with both hitting eight boundaries.

The pitch had nothing in it and the Lions bowling was as mediocre as the Indian attack with none looking to put the batters in any sort of trouble.

It was important for the Test squad members to get a decent hit in the middle and hence the team management would feel satisfied with the outcome. Reddy enjoyed his time as he chanced his arms and hit three big sixes. Jurel also cut and

drove well and also pulled for good measure.

Sarfraz Khan, who scored 92 or first innings double centurion Karun Nair, who is a part of the Test squad didn't bat at their usual numbers as they had got enough match time in the first dig.

Although the second innings runs when the match as a contest was as good as dead counts for little but the four half-centurions can look at it as a glorified extended net session that won't do them any harm.

However, the bowling effort left a lot to be desired but it had a lot to do with the flat track that was on offer here.

Brief Scores: India A 557 and 241/2 in 41 overs (Yashasvi Jaiswal 64, Abhimanyu Easwaran 68, Dhruv Jurel 53 not out, Nitish Kumar Reddy 52 not out), England Lions 587 (Tom Haines 171, Max Holden 101, Dan Mousley 113, Mukesh Kumar 3/92). Match Drawn. (PTI)

drove well and also pulled for good measure.

Australia likely to tour Pakistan for white-ball series early next year

KARACHI, June 3: Cricket Australia has agreed to send its team to Pakistan early next year for a white ball series, its CEO Todd Greenburg has said.

Speaking during an online media interaction, Greenburg said that Cricket Australia was keen to visit Pakistan for more tours and discussions were ongoing between the two boards.

"We are trying to schedule a red-ball and white ball series in our program with Pakistan where the window is available. I think the tour early next year will be a success for both boards," he said.

Greenburg said based on their experience of visiting Pakistan in 2022 and then for Champions Trophy, they wanted more exchanges where possible.

"We went to Pakistan in 2022 after a long time and it was a good experience for our team hospitality and security wise."

He said that even in the Big Bash, it would be a boost if leading Pakistani players could be available when it is held this year. (PTI)

Gukesh was blindly pushing but his energy, fighting qualities earned him the win: Carlsen

STAVANGER (NORWAY), June 3: A day after his stunning defeat to D Gukesh in Norway Chess, Magnus Carlsen said the reigning world champion's "energy" and "fighting qualities" earned him the triumph and that on a "normal day" he would have won the contest.

Carlsen, 34, lost to 19-year-old Gukesh in Round 6, vented his frustration by banging his fist on the table which threw the pieces in disarray.

Disbelief and frustration writ large on his face as he shook hands with Gukesh before placing the pieces back on the board and walked away patting the winner.

"I think, like, I remember being that age myself, and sometimes kind of your energy, like fighting qualities, and just the optimism is sometimes, you know, bigger than the quality of your moves," said Carlsen here on Monday.

But the Norwegian was far more composed after winning the Armageddon tie-break against American World No. 2 Hikaru Nakamura but the effects of Sunday night were still clearly visible on his face.

"So, I think, for a long time he (Gukesh) was just more or less blindly pushing. And then, yeah, on a normal day, of course, I win that game, and things look quite differently," the five-time world champion added.

Carlsen, however, praised Gukesh's fighting qualities, saying the Indian was always game for grabbing his chances, which he did despite being in a disadvantageous situation for most part of the Round 6 game.

"What he (Gukesh) does well, as I alluded to, is he really fights very, very



well, and he was there to take his chance, so he deserves credit for that.

"But that's the kind of chance that I really, really have to put away. Otherwise, I have no chance," the Norwegian world No.1 opined.

Carlsen also indicated that he just might be having a re-think on playing the Norway Chess next season.

"I think I'll play the last three games (in Norway Chess), and then I will have to make some decisions about next year here or potential other tournaments later, because, yeah... I just don't enjoy (Classical chess) that much," said Carlsen.

He also hinted that Classical chess for him might be on its way out.

"It's possible, yeah. I'm not going to sit here and say that I'm not going to play Classical events ever again, but right now it doesn't," said

Carlsen, when asked if he was thinking about the possibility of concentrating on Freestyle or blitz chess in future.

"The thing is that, you know, losses are painful no matter what, but at least if I can lose doing something that I really enjoy (Blitz, Rapid or Freestyle), then that's much easier."

"It's not that I cannot play (Classical chess), it's just situations like yesterday (loss to Gukesh)... I'm just wondering, like, why am I doing this? What's the point?"

"But I will do my best in the last three games here, then we'll see, I suppose. I guess there's a lot of pain being a top sportsman," he added.

"I would have loved for the situation in the tournament to be different, but I had no desire whatsoever to play classical today," he noted.

Carlsen and Nakamura agreed to a quick 21-move draw in Round 7 to play Armageddon tie-break, where the Norwegian won hands down.

"So, winning the Armageddon was kind of the best scenario for me, and I managed to do that, so I'm happy. (PTI)

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