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Eviction drive launched to clear encroached village in Nalbari dist



NALBARI, June 30: The Assam government launched an eviction drive on Monday morning to clear encroachments from 82 bighas of village grazing reserve (VGR) land in Assam's Nalbari district, officials said.

The eviction drive began at

Bakrikuchi village under Borkhetry revenue circle early in the morning amid tight security. No untoward incidents have been reported so far, District Commissioner Nibedan Das Patowary told reporters here.

Through a notice, the circle of-

fice on June 3 asked the encroachers at VGR to clear the land but the residents approached the Gauhati High Court which ruled that all VGR lands across the state must be cleared.

VGR land is designated for the specific purpose of cattle grazing in villages.

"The people residing on the encroached land cooperated with the district administration and over 70 per cent of them had moved out with their belongings," Patowary said. Around 300 families had settled on the VGR and they are co-operating with the administration, he said.

Around 500 security personnel have been deployed in the area and more have been kept on standby to prevent any untoward incidents, IGP (Law and Order) Akhilesh Kumar Singh, who is also camping at the site, said. "The eviction has been peaceful so far and we have not faced (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

DC-led verification committee to be formed

Time's up for fake Aadhaar cards in Assam: CM

State tightens Aadhaar rules to curb illegal infiltration

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, June 30: In a significant move to strengthen identity verification, the Assam government on Monday announced stricter measures to prevent the alleged misuse of Aadhaar cards by illegal immigrants.

Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said the state will soon implement a district administration-led process for issuing Aadhaar cards to adults to curb fraudulent enrollments.

"Time's up for fake Aadhaar cards in Assam!" Sarma posted on X. "We are making the process stricter to ensure no infiltrator secures the document illegally and disrupts national harmony."

Under the new policy, only Deputy Commissioners (DCs) will be authorized to issue Aadhaar cards to adults, replacing the cur-



rent system to eliminate loopholes. The CM said the move aligns with Assam's broader goal of becoming "Infiltrator Mukti" (free of illegal immigrants), vowing, "We will not

stop until this is achieved."

The decision follows rising concerns over fake Aadhaar cards being used to access government welfare schemes, jobs, and voter

registration, which officials say threatens national security and demographic balance.

A senior official stated that fraudulent documents have enabled illegal residents to avail benefits, skewing resource distribution.

"Assam is now the first state to centralize Aadhaar issuance for adults under district magistrates, adding an extra layer of scrutiny. The move is expected to intensify verification, especially in border areas and regions with sensitive demographics," he added.

Authorities have urged citizens to report suspected cases of fake Aadhaar usage, emphasizing that the crackdown is crucial to maintaining law and order while ensuring rightful access to state resources. The new system is likely to be rolled out in the coming days.

CM reviews Bio-Ethanol Project at NRL, inaugurates Dhansiri Nagar Township PM to dedicate India's first bamboo-based bio-refinery on September 8

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, June 30: Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Monday visited the Numaligarh Refinery Limited (NRL) in Golaghat district to review the ongoing construction of India's first bamboo-based bio-refinery and assess the overall progress of the refinery's expansion projects.

The Chief Minister's visit comes in the lead-up to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's scheduled tour of Assam on September 8, during which he is expected to inaugurate the bio-refinery and dedicate the facility to the nation.

According to an official statement, chief minister Sarma chaired a high-level review meeting with senior NRL officials, state ministers, Members of Parliament, and local MLAs to evaluate the pace and quality of work underway at the site.

The bamboo-based ethanol plant, currently under construction with an investment of ₹4,000 crore, will mark a milestone as the country's first dedicated bamboo bio-refinery.

During the meeting, the Chief Minister examined key progress indicators related to the plant's construction, technological installations, supply chain systems for bamboo procurement, and readiness for commissioning. (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Following Raja Raghuvanshi's murder, tourists visiting Meghalaya must hire guides



SHILLONG, June 30: In a move aimed at enhancing the safety of tourists, the authorities in Meghalaya have made it compulsory for visitors to hire guides while participating in outdoor activities within the East Khasi Hills district, officials said on Monday.

The orders came a month after Indore businessman Raja Raghuvanshi's murder, planned by his wife during their honeymoon in

the Sohra region of the state.

"In view of safety reasons, it is now mandatory for all tourists to take the services of a registered tourist guide while undertaking treks (and outdoor activities) in the area," East Khasi Hills Deputy Commissioner Rosetta M Kurba said in an order.

Mandatory guide services will not only ensure better safety for visitors but also help prevent incidents such as getting lost, sus-

taining injuries, or being vulnerable to criminal activities in isolated areas, she said.

Kurba who is also the Chairperson of the District Tourism Promotion Society (DTPS) cited safety and security concerns following the Raja Raghuvanshi murder case that shook the state which also led to the arrest of eight people from Indore.

Tourism officials said the order would be strictly enforced, and violators may face penalties or be denied access to trekking routes.

The administration also plans to deploy more trained guides and work with local communities to implement the directive effectively. The East Khasi Hills District has popular trekking destinations such as the double-decker living root bridge, waterfalls and meadows. The tourism department has emphasised the need for better safety measures to protect the region's reputation as a safe and serene tourist destination. (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Trade talks with US enters crucial phase

India toughens stance on agri issues

NEW DELHI, June 30: India has hardened its position on issues related to agriculture as negotiations with the US team in Washington have entered a crucial stage, an official said on Monday. The official also said that the stay of the Indian team, headed by special secretary in the department of commerce Rajesh Agrawal, is expected to be extended further.

The team is in Washington for negotiations on an interim trade agreement with the US. Both sides are rushing to close a deal ahead of the July 9 deadline for the full implementation of a 26 per cent reciprocal tariff which has been suspended since April.

"If the proposed trade talks fail, the 26 per cent tariffs will come into force again," the official added. The stay of the Indian officials has already been extended for three days until June 30. Initially, the delegation was scheduled to stay for two days with the talks having commenced on June 26.

Another official said that the commerce ministry has informed domestic exporters and industry that the talks are on for the first phase of the proposed bilateral trade agreement.

There would be more phases. These talks are significant as both countries are engaged in negotiations for an interim trade deal and are trying to finalise the pact before July 9, the deadline for the expiry of the sus-



pensions of reciprocal tariffs imposed by the Donald Trump administration on April 2.

On April 2, the US imposed an additional 26 per cent reciprocal tariff on Indian goods but suspended it for 90 days. However, the 10 per cent baseline tariff imposed by America remains in place. India is seeking full exemption from the additional 26 per cent tariff.

The US is demanding duty concessions in both agriculture and dairy sectors.

But these segments are difficult and challenging areas for India to give duty concessions to the US as Indian farmers are into sustenance farming and have small land holdings. Therefore, these sectors are politically very sensitive. India has not opened up dairy sectors for any of its trading partners in any free trade pacts the country has signed so far. (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

1,500 cows sacrificed in Dhubri during Eid: Himanta

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, June 30: Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Monday alleged that approximately 1,500 cows were sacrificed during Eid al-Adha celebrations in Dhubri district, expressing dismay over what he called a lack of media and public attention to the incident.

"I have received reports that around 1,450 cows were slaughtered in Dhubri in the name of Qurbani (ritual sacrifice). This is deeply painful and unacceptable. What's more concerning is that this mass sacrifice went largely unreported," Sarma told journalists.

He questioned why the scale of animal slaughter hadn't sparked significant (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

CM inaugurates Natghar at Sri Sri Athkhelia Namghar

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, June 30: Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Monday inaugurated the newly constructed Natghar (main prayer hall) of the historic Sri Sri Athkhelia Namghar in Golaghat district, marking a significant milestone in the preservation and promotion of Assam's cultural and spiritual heritage.

The occasion also witnessed the Chief Minister offering prayers for the peace, prosperity, and collective well-being of the people of Assam.

According to an official statement, the redevelopment of the Namghar was made possible through financial assistance from the Government of Assam.

The project included the construction of key facilities such as a Natghar, guest accommodation, a designated complex for the cleaning and preparation of mah-prasad, and other essential infrastructural additions to enhance the convenience of devotees and visitors.

Addressing a gathering at the site, Chief Minister Sarma reflected on his earlier visit in 2021, during which he had assured support from the state government for the development of the Namghar.

He commended the dedicated efforts of the Athkhelia Namghar management committee and their successful coordination with local MLA and Minister of Finance Ajanta Neog, which he said led to the effective execution of the renovation work.

Sarma encouraged the bhakats (devotees) and followers of the Athkhelia Namghar to continue their spiritual practices and collective prayers for the overall development of the state. He also invited the management committee to put forward any new proposals for further improvement of the Namghar premises, assuring full support and cooperation from the state government in the future as well.

The chief minister was joined by several dignitaries during the event, including Minister of Agriculture Atul Bora, Minister of Tea Tribes & Adivasi Welfare Rupesh Gowala, MP Kamakhya Prasad Tasa, MLA Biswajit Phukan, and Golaghat Deputy Commissioner Pulak Mahanta, along with devotees and local community members. Following the inauguration, Sarma visited the Trishul Mandir located at Kacharihat, also in Golaghat district. (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

India pavilion inaugurated in New York to celebrate 200 Years of Assam Tea

GUWAHATI, June 30: Assam's Chief Secretary Ravi Kota has inaugurated an India pavilion at the Summer Fancy Food Show 2025 in New York to celebrate 200 years of Assam Tea.

Assam Tea is a global symbol of strength, flavour, and heritage that has shaped livelihoods, cultures, and economies since its discovery in 1823 along the banks of the Brahmaputra River, the chief secretary was quoted as saying in an official statement.

"As we celebrate 200 years of Assam Tea, we do so not only with pride in our legacy but with a clear vision for the future," he said during the inauguration on Sunday.

For Assam, the pavilion serves as both a celebratory and strategic platform as Assam Tea stands as a bridge between tradition and innovation, Kota said.

He pointed out four startups -- Aromica Tea, Woolah Tea, Dorei Tea, and Earth Tea -- "provide a

flavour of tea startups brewing innovation in Assam and so we wanted to bring these brands here".

"They are innovating new blends of exotic tea, and I am confident that these innovations will gain global visibility from this event," he added.

He also highlighted the vital role played by Assam's small tea growers, who contribute to 40 per cent of the state's production, and also pointed out the transformative impact of bought-leaf factories in the ecosystem. Kota said that a key enabler of this thriving industry is the Guwahati Tea Auction Centre, the largest in India by volume.

Trading over 250 million kg annually, it provides buyers worldwide with access to a diverse array of Assam teas through a digital, transparent, and highly regulated platform. In 2024-25, more than 100 million kg of Assam tea were shipped to over 90 countries, generating nearly USD 285 (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

BRICS summit expected to denounce Pahalgam terror attack; call for fight against terrorism

NEW DELHI, June 30: The BRICS leaders' declaration to be unveiled at the grouping's annual summit in Rio de Janeiro is set to forcefully denounce the Pahalgam terror attack and call for a firm approach to unitedly confront terrorism in line with India's expectation.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will attend the summit in the Brazilian city on July 6 and 7. India will be the grouping's chair for the next year. The prime minister is travelling to Brazil as part of his five-nation tour from July 2 to 9. The other countries that the prime minister is visiting are Ghana, Trinidad and Tobago, Argentina and Namibia.

Dammu Ravi, secretary (economic relations) in the external affairs ministry, told a media briefing that Modi's participation in the summit will be an expression of India's solidarity with the bloc and it will be a great opportunity for him to connect with the leaders of the Global South.

Ravi suggested that the BRICS leaders' declaration will have reference to the challenge of terrorism that will be much to the satisfaction of India.

"There is no contradiction in the way the members have come out with their understanding, sympathy and solidarity with India on Pahalgam. I think this has been very well captured in the (leaders) declaration and all the members are very sensitive to this matter," he said.

"There is also a broader understanding on how to deal with this menace of terrorism and no one should be spared in dealing with it. I think that is very well captured." "When you get the declaration, you will see the language is much to our satisfaction," Ravi added. BRICS brings together 11 major emerging economies of the world, representing around 49.5 per cent of the global population, around 40 per cent of the global GDP and around 26 per cent of the global trade. (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

President Murmu highlights animal welfare, biodiversity loss, and the cultural bond between humans and animals

Animals are 'jeevan dhan', term 'pashu' inappropriate: Murmu

BAREILLY, June 30: President Droupadi Murmu on Monday said she feels that using the word 'pashu' for animals was "inappropriate" and referred to them as "jeevan dhan" or wealth of life.

Speaking at the 11th convocation ceremony of the Indian Veterinary Research Institute (IVRI), Murmu said life without animals cannot be imagined.

ICAR-IVRI in Izatnagar is dedicated to research and development in the field of veterinary and animal sciences.

"When you work as a (veterinary) doctor, you should always have the welfare of animals in mind. The environment that I come from is close to nature. Humans have a relationship with forests and wild animals," Murmu said.

"Today, we have technology, but in the past, they (animals) were our 'saadhan' (for transportation) and 'bal' (strength) for the farmers. Hence, I do not find the word 'pashu' appropriate for animals as they are 'jeevan dhan'. We cannot



think of life without them," she added.

She said in the Indian culture, the presence of God is seen in all creatures. "The belief that our Gods and sages communicated with animals is also based on the same philosophy," she said.

Murmu noted that several species of animals have either be-

come extinct or are on the verge of extinction and emphasised that their conservation is crucial for biodiversity and the health of the Earth. She said the power of thinking and understanding that God has given to humans should be used for the welfare of all living beings.

Citing an example, Murmu said during her childhood days, vul-

tures were a common sight, but that is not the case today.

The chemical drugs used in veterinary medicines could be behind the dwindling numbers of some species of the bird. Banning such drugs is a commendable step towards the conservation of vultures, she said.

"The Covid pandemic warned us that a culture based on consumption can cause unimaginable damage not only to mankind but also to other living beings and the environment," she asserted.

She also appealed to the IVRI and other institutes to play a leading role in increasing biodiversity, prevention and control of zoonotic diseases, and finding indigenous and low-cost treatments and nutrition for animals.

The President lauded the students of the IVRI for choosing a career that involves treating animals and urged them to establish start-ups in various fields of animal science so that they can generate employment and contribute to the

country's economy.

Murmu pointed out that the concept of 'one health' -- that humans, domestic and wild animals, flora and the wider environment are all interdependent -- is gaining importance across the world.

The President said technology, like other fields, has the potential to bring revolutionary changes in veterinary medicine and care. The use of technologies like genome editing, embryo transfer technologies, artificial intelligence, and big data analytics can bring revolutionary changes in this field, she said.

Murmu arrived in Bareilly earlier in the day and was welcomed by Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and Governor Anandiben Patel.

In a post in Hindi on X, Adityanath said, "Heartily welcome and felicitation to Hon'ble President Droupadi Murmu ji in 'Nath Nagri' Bareilly." The President's Secretariat said on X, "Governor of Uttar Pradesh Smt Anandiben Patel, (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Fin stability key for growth; global economic shifts make policy interventions challenging: RBI Gov

MUMBAI, June 30: RBI Governor Sanjay Malhotra on Monday said financial stability, like price stability, is a necessary condition for boosting economic growth even as he flagged that structural shifts in the global economy are making policy interventions challenging.

"Financial sector regulators remain committed to protecting customers, promoting competition and fostering innovation as they strike the right balance between improving efficiency and growth, and safety and soundness," he said in the foreword to the Financial Stability Report (FSR) for June.

According to the governor, there are many structural shifts that are reshaping the global economy, including growing fragmentation in trade, rapid technological disruption, ongoing climate change and protracted geopolitical hostilities.

"They make economic forecasts difficult and policy interventions challenging. Therefore, even as they navigate through the fog of uncertainty, it is imperative for central banks and financial sector regulators to remain vigilant, prudent and agile in safeguarding their economies and financial systems," he said.

Malhotra also highlighted that



"financial stability, like price stability, is a necessary condition, and not a sufficient one to boost India's potential growth".

As custodians of financial stability, he said, the efforts are to develop a well-functioning financial system that not only promotes macroeconomic stability but also provides financial services efficiently.

Amid global uncertainties, he said, the Indian economy remains a key driver of global growth.

"Growth momentum is buoyed by strong domestic growth drivers, sound macroeconomic fundamentals and prudent policies. Nonetheless, external spillovers and

weather-related events could pose downside risks to growth," he said.

The outlook for inflation, on the other hand, is benign and there is greater confidence in the durable alignment of inflation with the Reserve Bank's target, he said.

As this edition of the FSR highlights, the resilience of the domestic financial system is continuously improving, bolstered by strong capital buffers, low non-performing loans and robust profitability, he said.

Results of stress tests reaffirm the strength of the banking and non-banking sectors with capital levels projected to remain well above the regulatory minimum

even under adverse shock scenarios, he said, adding that the healthy balance sheets of corporates, banks and non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) augur well for the economy.

Observing that the announcement of higher tariffs by the US administration in April has set in motion a new paradigm in trade and economic policy, he said geopolitical risks remain elevated.

The ensuing policy uncertainty and unpredictability will influence global growth, he said, adding, international agencies, including the IMF, the OECD and the World Bank, have revised growth downwards.

Against this backdrop, near-term global financial stability risks have increased and the market turbulence in April was a stark reminder of how existing vulnerabilities in the global financial system are amplified by sudden shocks.

Though financial markets have stabilised after this episode, he said they remain volatile and highly sensitive to economic and geopolitical developments.

Globally, he said, risks associated with elevated public debt and possibilities of further corrections in asset prices remain high. (PTI)

Industrial output growth slows to 9-month low of 1.2 pc in May

NEW DELHI, June 30: India's industrial production growth slowed to a nine-month low of 1.2 per cent in May 2025 due to poor performance of manufacturing, mining and power sectors caused by the early onset of Monsoon, according to official data released on Monday.

The factory output, measured in terms of the Index of Industrial Production (IIP), had expanded by 6.3 per cent in May 2024.

The National Statistics Office also revised downward the industrial production growth for April to 2.6 per cent from the earlier estimate of 2.7 per cent released last month.

The previous low was observed in August 2024 when IIP remained unchanged.

The NSO data showed that the manufacturing sector's output growth decelerated to 2.6 per cent in May 2025 from 5.1 per cent in the year-ago month.

Mining production contracted by 0.1 per cent against a growth of 6.6 per cent a year ago. Power production declined by 5.8 per cent in May 2025 against 13.7 per cent growth in the year-ago period.

During the April-May period of FY26, industrial production grew by 1.8 per cent compared to 5.7 per

cent a year ago.

Aditi Nayar Chief Economist, Head - Research & Outreach, ICRA said, "The early onset of the monsoon doused activity in mining and the demand for electricity, with both these sub-sectors of the IIP reporting a contraction in May 2025, amidst an anaemic growth of manufacturing."

Moreover, the underlying trends were uneven, with three of the use-based categories displaying a contraction, amidst a continued high 14.1 per cent expansion in capital goods, boosted by a low base, Nayar said.

Tepid industrial volume growth in the first two months of the quarter does not augur well for industrial GVA (gross value added) growth in Q1 FY2026, she added.

As per use-based classification, the capital goods segment growth accelerated to 14.1 per cent in May 2025 from 2.6 per cent in the year-ago period. Consumer durables (or white goods production) contracted by 0.7 per cent during the reporting month against a growth of 12.6 per cent in May 2024.

In May 2025, consumer non-durables output contracted 2.4 per cent compared to a growth of 2.8 per cent a year ago. (PTI)

Contd. from Page 1...

Eviction drive launched to clear

any resistance. A total of 452 bighas have been encroached. But people have built houses only on 82 bighas. They use the remaining area for fisheries and agriculture. A report is being prepared and action will be taken accordingly, a circle official said. There are also schools, mosques and Anganwadi centres in the village.

Altogether 12 bulldozers have been pressed into service to demolish the unauthorised structures. Many of the encroachers were seen camping with their belongings on the main road leading to the village and they demanded that they should be adequately rehabilitated. This is the second eviction drive in June. The earlier drive was carried out on June 15 and 16, when 667 families in Hasilabel village in Goalpara district were evicted.

Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma had recently said that eviction drives to clear encroached land will continue. Many eviction drives have been carried out over the last four years, and his government has ensured that the cleared land is not encroached upon again, Sarma said. "We have conducted at least one eviction drive in each district, and our biggest achievement is that now people are afraid to settle on encroached land," Sarma had said. (PTI)

CM reviews Bio-Ethanol Project

The chief minister stressed the strategic importance of the project, both in terms of India's push toward green energy and for the economic upliftment of bamboo farmers across the Northeast. Sarma also reviewed preparations for Prime Minister Modi's proposed visit to the refinery site in September.

He emphasised that the Prime Minister's inauguration of the ethanol facility would be a landmark moment for Assam and the country's renewable energy journey.

In addition to the review, the Chief Minister formally inaugurated the Dhansiri Nagar Township, a newly developed residential complex built to accommodate refinery staff and their families. The township is equipped with modern amenities, designed to provide a comfortable and efficient living environment for NRL employees. Ministers present during the visit included Agriculture Minister Atul Bora, Finance Minister Ajanta Neog, Public Health Engineering Minister Jayanta Mallabarua, and Minister for Tea Tribes and Adivasi Welfare Rupesh Gowala.

MP Kamakhya Prasad Tasa, MLAs Bhabendra Nath Bharali, Mrinal Saikia, and Biswajit Phukan also participated in the deliberations alongside senior officials from the state government and NRL. Meanwhile, the chief minister visited Bokakhat Circuit House later in the day to meet security personnel injured in the recent grenade blast incident at Bokakhat.

He enquired about the medical condition of the injured personnel—Siddhartha Borbora, Sushil Bhowmick, and Mintu Hazarika—and conveyed his wishes for their speedy recovery. The visit underscored the government's focus on industrial development, sustainable energy, and the welfare of both frontline workers and the refinery's workforce, as per the official statement.

Following Raja Raghuvanshi's murder

Tourism Minister Paul Lyngdoh has projected a significant growth of around two million footfalls this year and the department has lined up several programs, including the Cherry Blossom Festival, in which international artists will perform in the state capital. (PTI)

Trade talks with US enters

The US wants duty concessions on certain industrial goods, automobiles - especially electric vehicles, wines, petrochemical products, dairy, and agricultural items like apples, tree nuts, and genetically modified crops. India is seeking duty concessions for labour-intensive sectors like textiles, gems and jewellery, leather goods, garments, plastics, chemicals, shrimp, oil seeds, grapes, and bananas in the proposed trade pact.

The two countries are also looking to conclude talks for the first tranche of the proposed bilateral trade agreement (BTA) by fall (September-October) this year. The pact is aimed at more than doubling bilateral trade to USD 500 billion by 2030 from the current USD 191 billion. Before the first tranche, they are trying for an interim trade pact.

The US team was here from June 5 to June 11 for the talks. The negotiations will continue both virtually and physically in the days to come. India's merchandise exports to the US rose by 21.78 per cent to USD 17.25 billion in April-May this fiscal, while imports rose by 25.8 per cent to USD 8.87 billion. (PTI)

1,500 cows sacrificed in Dhubri

discussion on social media platforms. The CM's remarks come amid ongoing tensions in Dhubri, where over 150 people have been arrested following communal clashes triggered by the discovery of cattle remains near a temple during Eid. Sarma confirmed that the "mastermind" behind the unrest had been identified and investigations were progressing.

Highlighting security measures, the CM reiterated that shoot-at-sight orders during night curfew remain active, reflecting the government's hardline approach to maintaining order. In a long-term security move, he revealed discussions with the Indian Army to establish a permanent military base in Dhubri, a sensitive border district.

"We're in talks with relevant authorities. A permanent army presence will bolster security and ensure lasting peace in the region," Sarma said, underscoring the administration's focus on preventing future disturbances. The developments follow recent communal violence in Assam, where the government has taken a stringent stance against what it perceives as threats to public harmony.

CM inaugurates Natghar

At the temple, he participated in traditional Vedic rituals and prayers, offering special pujas for the continued welfare, unity, and prosperity of the people of Assam. The visit to Trishul Mandir was also attended by Ministers Atul Bora, Ajanta Neog, and Rupesh Gowala; MP Kamakhya Prasad Tasa; MLAs Bhabendra Nath Bharali and Biswajit Phukan; and other senior administrative officials and dignitaries.

The twin visits underscore the state government's continued focus on preserving Assam's spiritual and cultural institutions while fostering regional development.

India pavilion inaugurated in

million in exports. Major destinations include the United Kingdom, Russia, the UAE, Germany, Iraq, and China, underscoring Assam's position as a trusted supplier to both traditional and emerging tea markets.

"The Assam government is committed to deepening India-US relations through strategic initiatives involving AI, blockchain, and specialised summits," Kota said. "We are also planning to host the 'Heritage to Wellness' Tea Showcase across the US and sign MoUs with American universities, retailers, and innovation platforms to enhance traceability and promote sustainable partnerships," he added. Consul General of India in New York Binaya S Pradhan was also present on the occasion. (PTI)

BRICS summit expected to

The BRICS declaration is also expected to feature a reference to the Iran-Israel conflict. The senior diplomat said four concrete "deliverables" are expected from the BRICS summit that include global governance and artificial intelligence, a framework declaration on climate finance and a partnership for the elimination of socially determined diseases.

Asked about Chinese President Xi Jinping and Russian President Vladimir Putin deciding to skip the summit, Ravi only said it will be a key forum for India to continue to push for the interests of the Global South. Xi indicated that the BRICS summit could also deliberate on the issue of carrying out trade settlements in national currencies. "Countries in the Global South are also looking at alternatives. It is not a de-dollarisation issue. Countries are also doing trade settlements in national currencies. This has been going on for quite sometime," he said. Ravi said BRICS is bringing some understanding of how important it is to have alternative mechanisms to do trade and projects in national currencies.

"It is a process and we are confident that it will get traction in days to come," he said. BRICS, originally comprising Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa, expanded in 2024 to include Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran and the United Arab Emirates, with Indonesia joining in 2025. (PTI)

Animals are 'jeevan dhan', term

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and Union Minister for Agriculture & Farmers Welfare and Rural Development, Shri Shrivraj Singh Chouhan, received President Droupadi Murmu on her arrival at Bareilly." (PTI)

Markets snap 4-day rally; Sensex ends 452 points lower as banking stocks drag

MUMBAI, June 30: Benchmark equity indices Sensex and Nifty tumbled on Monday after a four-day rally amid emergence of profit-taking, mainly in bank stocks.

After staying in the negative territory throughout the day, the 30-share BSE Sensex later dropped 452.44 points or 0.54 per cent to settle at 83,606.46. During the day, it tanked 576.77 points or 0.68 per cent to 83,482.13.

The 50-share NSE Nifty declined 120.75 points or 0.47 per cent to 25,517.05.

From the Sensex firms, Axis Bank, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Maruti, UltraTech Cement, Bajaj Finance, ICICI Bank, Reliance Industries, Tata Steel, Bharti Airtel and HDFC Bank were among the major laggards.

However, Trent, State Bank of India, Bharat Electronics, Titan and Bajaj Finserv were among the gainers.

The BSE smallcap gauge climbed 0.81 per cent and midcap index went up by 0.67 per cent.

Among BSE sectoral indices, realty dropped 0.87 per cent, bankex (0.59 per cent), auto (0.49 per cent), metal (0.49 per cent), oil & gas (0.19 per cent) and financial services (0.17 per cent).

Capital goods jumped 1.10 per cent, services (1.08 per cent), industrials (0.66 per cent), healthcare (0.56 per cent) and consumer durables (0.42 per cent).

"Last week, the market had seen a sharp upsurge on the back of strong global cues and domestic institution buying, however, profit-taking came to the fore which pulled down benchmark indices.

"The focus will be on tariff settlement with the US government, as the due date is nearing and India is yet to conclude the agreement which could create uncertainty amongst the investors. While volatility will continue, India's strong growth prospects going forward would temper the fall," Prashanth Tapse, Senior VP (Research), Mehta Equities Ltd, said.

In the past four trading days, the Sensex jumped 2,162.11 points or 2.64 per cent and the Nifty surged 665.9 points or 2.66 per cent.

"The global market sentiment is moving in favour of equities on account of easing risk in the Middle East and the US trade deal hopes. However, the main domestic indices witnessed profit-booking after the recent rally.

"Investors are now turning their attention to quarterly earnings and will refocus the markets on fundamentals for valuation support," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Investments Limited, said.

In Asian markets, South Korea's Kospi, Japan's Nikkei 225 index and Shanghai's SSE Composite index settled in the positive territory while Hong Kong's Hang Seng ended lower. European markets were quoting lower.

The US markets ended higher on Friday. Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) bought equities worth Rs 1,397.02 crore on Friday, according to exchange data.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude dipped 0.15 per cent to USD 67.67 a barrel. On Friday, the Sensex climbed 303.03 points or 0.36 per cent to reclaim the 84,000 level and settle at 84,058.90. On the similar lines, the Nifty rose 88.80 points or 0.35 per cent to 25,637.80. (PTI)

FM to embark on 5-day official visit to three nations, to attend meeting of BRICS finance ministers

NEW DELHI, June 30: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman will

lead an Indian delegation to Spain, Portugal and Brazil to attend a host of events including the BRICS Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors Meeting (FMCBG).

The minister will be leaving later in the day and will conclude her three-nation visit on July 5.

As part of her visit to Seville, Spain, the Finance Minister will attend the 4th International Conference on Financing for Development (FFD4) organised by the United Nations, and deliver a statement on behalf of India.

She will also participate and deliver a keynote address at the International Business Forum Leadership Summit on "From FFD4 Outcome to Implementation: Unlocking the Potential of Private Capital for Sustainable Development", in Seville, the finance ministry said in a statement.

On the sidelines of the FFD4, she will meet senior ministers from Germany, Peru and New Zealand, and President, European Investment Bank (EIB).

In her next leg, she will visit Lisbon, Portugal, where she is ex-



pected to have a bilateral meeting with the Minister of Finance, Portugal. Besides, she would interact with prominent investors and members of the Indian diaspora.

At Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, the Finance Minister will address the 10th Annual Meeting of New Development Bank (NDB) as India's Governor and also attend the BRICS Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors Meeting (FMCBG), it said.

As part of the NDB meetings,

Sitharaman will also deliver an address during the NDB Flagship Governors Seminar on 'Building a Premier Multilateral Development Bank for the Global South'.

On the sidelines of the NDB meetings, it said, she will hold bilateral meetings with her counterparts from Brazil, China, Indonesia and Russia.

BRICS is a grouping of five major emerging economies -- Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa. (PTI)

AFFIDAVIT

I, Sri Samir Barua son of Late Mohini Ranjan Barua r/o no. 1 Golai PO & PS Digboi Co-District Margherita, Assam hereby declare before the Notary Public/ Magistrate Margherita that I am Co- Pattadar of two plots of land measuring OB-1K-4L covered by P.P no.340, Dag no.923 and OB-2K-0L covered by P.P no. 339, Dag no. 922 situated at Golai no. 1 PO & PS Digboi Co-District Margherita, Assam.

That my name has been wrongly recorded as Samit Barua instead of Samir Barua and I swear this affidavit for correction of my name in the said two land pattas as Samir Barua instead of Samit Barua.

New sports infrastructure and drinking water scheme mark major boost for district development

CM inaugurates stadiums, lays stone for ₹130-cr water project in Golaghat

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, June 30: Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Monday inaugurated the newly constructed stadium of Golaghat Government Bezbaruah Higher Secondary School and the newly built indoor stadium of the Golaghat District Sports Association.

He also laid the foundation stone for a ₹130-crore drinking water supply project aimed at providing clean and uninterrupted water to residents of Golaghat town.

The information was provided in an official statement.

Addressing a gathering at the inauguration ceremony, Chief Minister Sarma lauded the efforts of the school's faculty and students, noting the institution's historical contribution to Assam's educational and cultural development.

He said the school has played a key role in promoting education in the mother tongue and has produced many distinguished alumni who have earned acclaim at the national and international levels.

He also praised the efforts of local MLA and Finance Minister Ajanta Neog and the school's management committee for their initiative to revitalise the institution's infrastructure.

The school's old hostel campus, spread over approximately 12 bighas, has been transformed into a modern stadium complex, thanks to financial assistance of around ₹3.5 crore provided by Numaligarh Refinery Limited (NRL)



under its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiative.

The stadium complex also houses a newly established sports museum showcasing medals, jerseys, and equipment donated by several renowned sportspersons from Assam.

The Chief Minister expressed confidence that the facility will nurture emerging sporting talent in the region and contribute to the preservation and promotion of traditional Assamese sports.

Sarma further announced that the construction of a new building for the school is already underway with an allocation of ₹8 crore.

He also responded positively to suggestions from the school authorities for the preservation of the institution's historic building and

urged local representatives to ensure necessary steps are taken in this regard.

Highlighting the state government's commitment to the holistic development of Golaghat district, Sarma laid the foundation for a ₹130-crore project to supply clean drinking water to around 55,000 residents of Golaghat town from the Dhansiri River.

He stated that the project will ensure round-the-clock access to potable water, marking a major improvement in public utility services in the region.

He also pointed to major ongoing infrastructure developments including the Golaghat Engineering College, Medical College, Cancer Hospital, the new District Commissioner's Office, and extensive

road connectivity upgrades under the Asom Mala Programme as evidence of the district's rapid progress across various sectors.

Later in the day, the Chief Minister inaugurated the new indoor stadium of the Golaghat District Sports Association.

The double-storey stadium, developed under the City Infrastructure Development Fund (CIDF) of the Department of Housing & Urban Affairs, Government of Assam, was constructed at an approximate cost of ₹7.94 crore.

It includes six table tennis boards and five badminton courts, designed to meet the needs of athletes and sports enthusiasts in the district.

The inauguration ceremonies were attended by several high-ranking officials and dignitaries, including Minister of Agriculture Atul Bora, Finance Minister Ajanta Neog, Public Health Engineering Minister Jayanta Malabarua, Minister of Tea Tribes & Adivasi Welfare Rupesh Gowala, Member of Parliament Kamakhya Prasad Tasa, MLAs Bhabendra Nath Bhargava, Mrinal Saikia and Biswajit Phukan, Golaghat District Commissioner Pulak Mahanta, Vice Chancellor of Birangana Sati Sadhani Rajyik Vishwavidyalaya Prof. G. Singaiah, NRL GM (Operations) Sobhan Konwar, Chairperson of the Golaghat Municipal Board Dulmoni Borbora, and former international footballer Swadhin Dekaraja.

AJYCP lodges FIR for abusive remarks on Karbi community

HT Correspondent

BOKAJAN, June 30: The Assam Jatiyatadhi Chitra Parishad, Karbi Anglong District Committee (AJYCP-KA) has lodged an FIR with Bokajan police against Md Samsuddin, son of Abdul Malik, for allegedly using abusive language against the Karbi tribe.

According to the FIR filed on June 29, Samsuddin, a resident of Ward No. 7, Udali in Doboka under Hojai district, has been posting abusive and inflammatory communal content on social media targeting the Karbi community, which the AJYCP-KA claims could incite communal disturbances.

The organisation has demanded his immediate arrest and a thorough investigation into the matter. "Abusing the indigenous Karbis will not be tolerated," said AJYCP Central Committee member Jitu Phukan.

School van turns turtle after collision in Jorhat

HT Correspondent

JORHAT, June 30: A Maruti van carrying school children overturned after being hit by a Bolero vehicle near the Ajanta bypass while turning into Bohotia Gaon on Monday morning. Two children inside the van sustained minor injuries in the incident.

According to sources, the van was en route to pick up more children when the collision occurred. Local residents rushed to the scene and managed to rescue the children by breaking open the van's window.

Police arrived shortly after the accident and the injured children were sent to Jorhat Medical College and Hospital (JMCH) for treatment.

CEM Boro inaugurates Tikendrajit Narzary Digital Cinema Hall

HT Correspondent

KOKRAJHAR, June 30: Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR) Chief Executive Member Pramod Boro on Monday inaugurated the newly constructed Late Tikendrajit Narzary Memorial Digital Cinema Hall at Serfanguiri in Kokrajhar district.

Built at a cost of nearly ₹2.5 crore under the Department of Cinema, Government of BTR, the cinema hall aims to promote art, culture, and community entertainment in the region.

The hall is named after Late Tikendrajit Narzary, a celebrated actor in Bodo cinema.

Speaking at the inauguration, CEM Boro said the event marks a significant moment in the history of Bodo cinema.

He highlighted that construction of five more digital cinema halls is currently underway across various subdivisions of BTR and ex-



pressed hope that all projects would be completed within the current financial year.

Boro also announced that senior artists of Bodo cinema are being felicitated by the BTR government, which will also extend financial assistance to film directors and producers to encourage more Bodo-language film production.

Two held with heroin worth ₹5 lakh in Karbi Anglong

HT Correspondent

BOKAJAN, June 30: In a routine check at Lahorijan on Monday morning, Khatkhati police in Karbi Anglong arrested two individuals and seized heroin worth approximately ₹5 lakh.

The police intercepted a Bolero SUV (registration number AS 01 DV 5575) and during frisking, recovered five plastic containers filled with a powdery substance suspected to be heroin.

A preliminary test confirmed the substance, weighing 60 grams, as heroin.

The arrested individuals were identified as Karaiba Zeliang and his wife Kina Zeliang (49), along with Krichangdin Thimo (50), all residents of Oklang Senapati, Manipur.

The vehicle was reportedly coming from Imphal. The operation was led by Bokajan SDPO Rustom Raj Brama, along with Khatkhati OC Nitul Saikia, SI Biman Chetia, SI Jitmoni Saikia, CI Bipul Saikia, lady constable Kache Beypi, and other personnel.

The accused are currently in custody at Khatkhati police station, and further investigation is underway.

GU concludes career readiness programme for final-year students

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, June 30: Gauhati University successfully concluded its "30-Hour Career Readiness and Personality Development Programme" on Monday with a valedictory ceremony held at the Vice-Chancellor's Office. The eight-day initiative, conducted from June 23 to 30 under the university's Finishing School banner, aimed to equip final-year undergraduate and postgraduate students with key employability and life skills.

According to an official statement, the programme was coordinated by the Soft Skill Committee and saw active participation from 15 academic departments and affiliating colleges.

Sessions were conducted by expert trainers and professionals, covering topics such as self-discovery, communication skills, English for employability, resume and LinkedIn profile building, digital etiquette, group discussion, and interview preparation.

The valedictory event was attended by Gauhati University Vice-Chancellor Prof Nani Gopal Mahanta as chief guest and Registrar Prof Utpal Sarma as guest of honour.

Addressing the students, the Vice-Chancellor highlighted the importance of communication in shaping careers and society, citing poet Kalidasa to illustrate the transformative power of words.

He described communication skills as "the currency of influence and leadership" in the modern world. In his address, the Registrar encouraged students to embrace change, work with discipline, and prioritise continuous self-improvement. He underscored the equal importance of soft skills and academic performance in achieving long-term success.

The idea for the career readiness programme was mooted by the Vice-Chancellor himself, who had expressed concern over the professional preparedness of graduates despite strong academic records.

Certificates of Appreciation were presented to resource persons and faculty members, especially those in the Soft Skill Committee and nodal officers who helped design and conduct the programme.

Participating students also received completion certificates, distributed by the Registrar during the event.

Congress farmers' wing protests in Jorhat

HT Correspondent

JORHAT, June 30: The Jorhat district unit of the Krishak Congress Committee, the farmers' wing of the Indian National Congress, staged a protest on Monday against the alleged misuse of a government dairy scheme by families of a Cabinet Minister and an MLA from the ruling party. The protesters, holding banners and placards, raised slogans accusing the government of depriving genuine dairy farmers by allowing those in power to benefit from the subsidy scheme meant for the public. They also condemned a derogatory remark reportedly made by a Cabinet Minister when questioned about his family's alleged involvement in availing benefits from the scheme.

The demonstration was conducted in line with directives from the Assam Pradesh Krishak Congress.

Congress launches 'Assam Justice Portal' to amplify public grievances

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, June 30: In a bid to strengthen public engagement and hold the state government accountable, the Assam Pradesh Congress Committee (APCC) on Monday launched the 'Assam Justice Portal'—a digital platform to address citizen grievances.

The portal was unveiled at Rajiv Bhawan, the party's state headquarters, by Leader of Opposition Debabrata Saikia, alongside senior leaders including MLA Jakir Hussain Sikdar and Assam Mahila Congress President Mira Borthakur.

Designed as an interactive interface, the platform enables citizens to report issues related to local governance, healthcare, education, infrastructure, and public services.

The Congress party will then escalate these concerns to the relevant authorities for resolution.

Saikia emphasized the portal's role in ensuring transparency and accountability.

"This initiative amplifies public voices and keeps the government informed about ground realities," he said.

The APCC stated that complaints lodged on the portal will be scrutinized before being raised with officials, with a focus on systemic failures, particularly in Panchayati Raj institutions.

Beyond grievance redressal, the portal will also serve as a tool to monitor governance lapses, especially in rural and semi-urban areas.

The launch aligns with the Congress's efforts to revive its grassroots connect in Assam under state chief Gaurav Gogoi, who noted renewed enthusiasm among party workers.

"Block-level meetings have drawn unexpectedly large crowds, reflecting public support," Gogoi said.

The initiative marks the Opposition's push to bridge the gap between citizens and policymakers while positioning itself as a proactive watchdog in the state.

Chah Janagusti Mahasabha forms Demow committee

HT Correspondent

DEMOW, June 30: A public meeting was held on Sunday at the auditorium of Athabari Tea Estate to constitute the Assam Chah Janagusti Jatiya Mahasabha Demow Regional Committee. The meeting was presided over by Horeesh Bagti, Founder Secretary of ATSA, Demow Branch.

Bijoy Bhumij of the Chah Janagusti Jatiya Mahasabha Sivasagar District Committee attended the event as an observer. Among the prominent guests were Siba Prasad Bodra, Founder Secretary of the Chah Janagusti Jatiya Mahasabha; Biswanath Nag, Secretary of ATSA, Demow Branch; Anupam Telenga, former Zilla Parishad member; and leaders from the 40 Samaj Kendriya, District, and Regional Committees. Sabiram Bauri was elected President and Deepjyoti Gowala was elected Secretary of the newly formed 45-member Demow Regional Committee.

Two held for illegal fishing of rare Peepli Chang in Orang National Park

HT Correspondent

MANGALDALI, June 30: Two fishermen were arrested on Sunday for illegally catching the rare Peepli Chang (China Burkhia) fish within the protected boundaries of Orang National Park and its adjoining project area. The duo, residents near the Chandrapur Forest Protection Camp, were sent to judicial custody on Monday.

According to an official statement from forest officer Pranjit Deka, the forest department had received reports about attempts by villagers to capture the endangered Peepli Chang species.

In response, patrols were intensified in the area.

The two individuals were apprehended red-handed while fishing in a drain near the Chandrapur camp. Authorities seized 50 fishing hooks and a plastic bag from the spot.

During questioning, the accused



admitted to their involvement, revealing that they had previously caught a Peepli Chang fish on June 17 and sold it to a smuggler identified as "Kalam" for ₹17,000.

Both expressed regret and pledged not to repeat the offence.

The incident has raised serious concerns over illegal fishing practices in the region, which pose a threat to the fragile ecosystem of Orang National Park.

The forest department has reaffirmed its commitment to strict surveillance and enforcement to prevent such activities and protect the park's biodiversity.

China's Tsangpo dam poses major risk to Assam, warns expert at Dibrugarh lecture

HT Correspondent

DIBRUGARH, June 30: As part of its Golden Jubilee celebrations, the Dibrugarh Press Club on Monday organised a lecture under its "Aamar Alohi" series at Jagriti Hall on the topic "Mega Dam on Yarlung Tsangpo and Its Possible Impact: From Dibrugarh to Guwahati and Bangladesh."

Delivering the lecture, eminent geologist and retired Dibrugarh University professor Dr Jogenendranath Sharma warned that China's proposed Medog Hydropower Project could trigger severe natural disasters downstream in Assam. Approved in December 2024, the 60,000-MW project—60 times larger than India's biggest dams—is being constructed in the seismically active and ecologically sensitive Medog County.

Dr Sharma highlighted threats such as erosion from "hungry water," groundwater disruption, altered monsoon patterns, and risks to biodiversity and the livelihoods of over two million



fishermen.

He called for a joint Indo-China Environmental Impact Assessment and cautioned that a dam collapse during an earthquake could lead to devastation akin to the 1950 Assam earthquake.

While noting that the Yarlung Tsangpo contributes only around five percent of the Brahmaputra's flow in

Bangladesh, Sharma emphasised that the potential risks of the dam remain significant.

He also referred to India's proposed 11,000-MW Siang project as a possible countermeasure, though it too raises environmental concerns.

A delegation from the Siang Indigenous Farmers Forum (SIFF),

Arunachal Pradesh, also participated in the programme and voiced their opposition to the Siang Upper Multi-Purpose Project, to be implemented by NHPC on the Siang river.

The event was anchored by Dibrugarh Press Club General Secretary Ripunjyoti Das and attended by several distinguished guests, including All India Radio and Doordarshan Programme Head Lohit Deka, senior journalists Iqbal Ahmed, Ron Dowerah, Lakhikanta Majindar Baruah, Lalit Sharma, Anil Poddar, Prabir Chakraborty, Ajoy Dutta, Sourav Dowerah, and journalists from Dibrugarh and Tinsukia, along with Gandhapaty Chungkrang, Director of the NE Fire Services Academy.

Dr Jogenendranath Sharma was honoured by the Dibrugarh Press Club with a phulam gamocha, memento, and citation in recognition of his contributions. The Press Club also expressed its gratitude to NEFA for sponsoring the programme.

TAYPA warns of anti-BJP vote over ST status demand

HT Correspondent

SIVASAGAR, June 30: Activists of the Bijay Rajkonwar-led Tai Ahom Yuba Parishad Asom (TAYPA) on Monday warned that 60 lakh members of the Ahom community would vote against the BJP in the 2026 Assembly elections if the government fails to fulfil its commitment to grant Scheduled Tribe (ST) status to the community.

Raising slogans, the TAYPA members took

out a procession from the Boarding Field to the office of the Sivasagar Deputy Commissioner, where they submitted a memorandum pressing for their longstanding demand.

Addressing the gathering, the activists said that the Ahom community had already given the BJP a lesson in the Jorhat Parliamentary elections and would do the same in the upcoming Assembly polls if their demand continues to be ignored.

NO. TECH/U&BDTD/BLDG/AFB/2025-26/1144
Date 27/06/2025

PRESS NOTICE INVITING FOR BID

The Executive Engineer, PWD (B&NH) Udalguri & Baksa District Territorial Building Division, Udalguri on behalf of Governor of Assam invites bids from approved and eligible Contractors registered with Public Works Department (Buildings), Assam/Contractors registered with Bodoland Territorial Council in the category of Class-I (A, B&C), Class-II, Class-III for 05 (Five) nos. of work for bids amounting to Rs. 1,40,16,317.00 (approx) (Rupees One Crore Forty Lakhs Sixteen Thousand Three Hundred Seventeen) only.

Details may be seen at in the office of the undersigned during office hours and PWD portal assamtenders.gov.in

Sd/- Executive Engineer, P.W.D. (B&NH),
Udalguri and Baksa District
Territorial Building Division, Udalguri

IPR(BTC)/C/2025-26/1287

Introspection into the service of Hills Academy, Bakalia



By Dilip Rongpi

“Hills Academy, Bakalia” is an English medium co-education school that was established on October 17, 2004 and the normal classes were started from the month of January, 2005. The course of education comprises the branch of education prescribed by the Government of Assam since the school has been affiliated to erstwhile Secondary Education Board of Assam (SEBA) and now Assam State School Education Board (ASSEB) Division – I. The institution is primarily meant for such students those who want to acquire education through English medium with the vision of moulding sound mind based on the principle of service to man and is open to all regardless of community, caste, creed and religion. The school has mainly focused on the students of rural areas who are not capable of going to town areas especially like the places of Diphu, Lumding, Hojai, Nagaon, Guwahati etc. for receiving quality education. Most of the parents from rural areas are underprivileged guardians but they want to be educated their children through English medium. They thought themselves whatever their lives had become, they would not want to repeat the same plight of their children’s fate. They are strongly determined to send their children in English medium school for education. Probably,

it is the reflection of parents, guardians’ wish that Hills Academy, Bakalia has not faced any short of their cooperation and supportive attitude until now. The school is situated in the heart of Bakalia Municipal Board area (still under developed stage) with having basic amenities like toilet, drinking water facility, electricity and semi pucca school building. It is an individually run private school with the philosophy of Hemphu, Mukrang and Rasinja who were the supreme deities in the Karbi Society. Because Hemphu, Mukrang and Rasinja were such deities who have been protecting for the well being of Karbis since the days of the creation of earth. The Karbi people’s traditional faith, known as Barithe Anam centers on the belief in a supreme deity, Hemphu and his associates Mukrang and Rasinja. This trinity represents the core of their religious beliefs and is revered as the creators and protectors of the Karbi world. Rasinja is considered the female counterpart while Hemphu and Mukrang are male deities and the Karbis consider themselves as Hemphu Mukrang aso (sons of Hemphu and Mukrang).

The constant effort of staff under the supervision of Semson Sing Terang, Managing Director, Hills Academy, Bakalia, Dilip Rongpi principal, Hills Academy, Bakalia and Padma Teronpi, vice – Principal, Hills Academy, Bakalia, is to develop the individually personality of each pupil and to bring out those qual-

ities which are the best and noblest in him/her. So, the track records of the institution are as follows :-

Track records, Hills Academy, Bakalia

Sl. No.	Batch No.	H.S.L.C. Exam. No. of appeared candidates	H.S.L.C. Exam. No. of successful students	Year
1.	1st	9	1	2009
2.	2nd	15	10	2010
3.	3rd	27	20	2011
4.	4th	23	21	2012
5.	5th	23	23	2013
6.	6th	38	31	2014
7.	7th	49	40	2015
8.	8th	36	29	2016
9.	9th	56	48	2017
10.	10th	56	51	2018
11.	11th	51	49	2019
12.	12th	36	32	2020
13.	13th	50	40	2021
14.	14th	37	37	2022
15.	15th	52	49	2023
16.	16th	37	37	2024
17.	17th	51	47	2025
		Total = 646	Total = 565	

The teaching staff of the school plays a very important role in the matter of providing a good and quality education to students. Every teacher of Hills Academy, Bakalia is committed to impart

The school is situated in the heart of Bakalia Municipal Board area (still under developed stage) with having basic amenities like toilet, drinking water facility, electricity and semi pucca school building. It is an individually run private school with the philosophy of Hemphu, Mukrang and Rasinja who were the supreme deities in the Karbi Society....

comprehensive and functional education to students of the school. The teachers always observe discipline of the students during general assembly or in the class room itself. Maintaining discipline is mandatory to all students and teachers as well. A school will come out with success in the field of providing education is mostly dependent on the sincerity of teachers. They should render their services diligently. But in the name of teachers if they perform the role of a proxy teacher, we may not be able to extract the inner quality of students. In the summer-time, we generally squeeze lemon for having lemon juice but at the same time if we do not squeeze the lemon properly, we may not get enough juice. Similarly, extraction of inner quality of students is very important that will help to build a comfortable zone of society. The teachers

olent services in the school. There are some notable individual run-private schools which are situated in and around Bakalia. Municipal Board and these are :- 1. All Saint English High School 2. J.S Academy Senior Secondary School. 3. National Academy, Bakalia. 4. Daffodil English High School. 5. Riverdale English High School. 6. Sermount English High School.

Most of the private schools are giving excellent result in the H.S.L.C as well as H.S examination every year which is the reflection of the awareness and sensitivity about education in the Langphor M.A.C constituency. The parents and guardians also play a pivotal role in the field of education by which their children are capable of receiving a good education. Hills Academy, Bakalia is a symbol of unity and pride among different people living in Langphor M.A.C constituency with different cultures and rituals. They profess different religious beliefs but are conscious enough perceiving the value of education. It makes an individual civilized, socialized and adaptable in all kinds of situation.

Hills Academy, Bakalia truly upholds the principle of real value of education for the sake of human being living in the society. So, it is grateful to cooperation and participation of the esteemed parents and guardians whose role are important in running a successful private school in the rural area. But the parents believe that education is accessible to everywhere. There is no different between urban and rural education.

There may be sophisticated way of teaching with modern technology system in the urban area school. But it is not possible for every guardian to send their children in a higher cost private school due to their economic status. As a significant development of Hills Academy, 5 (five) nos. of teachers of the school had been selected at a time as qualified for becoming TET teachers in the year of 2013 who had been appointed in different L.P school in Karbi Anglong and the dignified teachers are –

1. Sailendra Sing Terang,
2. Longram Engti
3. Dalyn Kramsa
4. Lovinglo Terang and
5. Jari Phangcho.

The contributions of the teachers have been still remaining as a source of inspiration for the teachers appointed after their departure from the school and as a result, it had a bit of trouble in running the classes due to lack of an experienced teacher.

Later the problem has been gradually solved. To create a healthy educational atmosphere is a prime concern of Hills Academy, Bakalia. Additionally, having a good command of English is another feature of the school where all students are required to have fluent English. Parents and guardians are seen happy when they come to know the talent of their children. It is our privilege to explore the inner quality of each pupil. Nowa-days, our society is filled with various social diseases that may bring about the deviation of society. Some students are prone to drugs consumption without knowing their future impact. This kind of student does not know the importance of life and why it is needed to be protected from evil elements. The parents, guardians and well-wishers are also responsible for having such a shattered society around us. But as a human being everybody wants to live with a peaceful journey throughout life. The most beloved teachers in the past and the present who have been igniting the success of the school until now have shouldered the responsibility as Headmaster of Hills Academy, Bakalia and their names are mentioned below:-

Sl.No. Name of Headmaster

Period

1. Sailendra Sing Terang, B.A 2005-2006
2. Longram Engti, B.A 2007-2013
3. Longbi Engti, B.Sc. 2014-2017
4. Mohan Engti Kathar, M.A 2018 - March, 2024
5. Mundesh Ronghang, M.A April 2024 - July 2024
6. Rowelson Engti Kathar, M.A. August 2024 - till now

The imperative to regulate social media War, tech and the future of our world

By: Himangshu Ranjan Bhuvan

Social media platforms have reshaped the very fabric of society, influencing how we communicate, learn, and participate in civic life. These digital spaces have ushered in unparalleled opportunities: from instant sharing of information and fostering global friendships to mobilizing social causes and expanding educational horizons. Yet, as their influence grows, so too do the challenges that threaten individual privacy, social harmony, and democratic processes. The urgent question arises—how can society regulate social media effectively without compromising its foundational freedoms?

Social media’s arrival heralded a new era of communication. Compared to traditional forms such as newspapers, television, and radio, the speed and reach of social media are staggering. Today, an event happening in one corner of the world can be seen instantly by millions on the other side of the globe. This rapid exchange of information has empowered social movements, enhanced access to education, and broadened cultural awareness in unprecedented ways. Students from remote areas can now access free online courses and learning materials, breaking down barriers that once limited education to privileged few. Social causes such as environmental conservation, gender equality, and human rights have found new champions and audiences through these platforms, inspiring collective action across continents.

However, the same power that fuels progress can also propagate misinformation at alarming rates. The open nature of social media means anyone can publish content without rigorous fact-checking, leading to the viral spread of rumors and falsehoods. This has proved especially harmful in critical areas like public health, where misinformation about vaccines during pandemics has directly impacted disease control efforts. Misleading claims, often amplified by social media, can erode public trust and result in real-world harm. The consequences extend beyond health to political discourse and economic decision-making, where fabricated stories and manipulated narratives distort public understanding and undermine rational debate. This highlights the pressing need for regulatory frameworks that enforce transparency and authenticity without stifling free speech.

Personal privacy has also become a major casualty in the age of social media. These platforms collect vast amounts of user data, including preferences, locations, and behaviors, primarily to serve targeted advertisements and generate revenue. While this has made advertising more efficient, it has also raised serious concerns about data misuse. Numerous high-profile incidents of data breaches and unauthorized sharing have undermined user trust and exposed vulnerabilities. Data, when exploited for political campaigns or commercial gains without consent, threatens not just individual rights but the very foundations of democratic engagement. Ensuring robust data protection policies, user consent, and accountability of social media companies is essential to safeguard privacy in this digital era. The impact of social media extends deeply into the social fabric. The platforms can unwittingly fuel societal divisions through the proliferation of hateful content based on religion, race, gender, and political ideology. During sensitive times, such as elections, this has sometimes led to communal tensions and even violence, threatening peace and social cohesion. Addressing hate speech is vital, but this task is complicated by differing cultural norms and the challenge of distinguishing harmful content from legitimate expression. Technology alone cannot resolve these nuances; a combination of artificial intelligence tools and human oversight is necessary to balance protection and freedom. Moreover, regulatory efforts must be mindful not to infringe on democratic rights to free speech, requiring delicate and culturally sensitive approaches.

The political influence of social media is equally profound. Platforms often face accusations of biased content promotion and manipulation, including foreign interference in democratic processes. Algorithms designed to maximize engagement tend to create echo chambers, where users are exposed mainly to viewpoints that reinforce their own beliefs, exacerbating polarization. This dynamic reduces opportunities for meaningful dialogue and fuels hostility between communi-

ties. The opaque nature of these algorithms has prompted calls for greater transparency and regulation to ensure that social media serves as a forum for constructive discourse rather than division. Economically, social media has become a powerful force shaping markets. While these platforms provide advertising avenues, their dominance also disadvantages smaller businesses that lack resources to compete effectively. The concentration of advertising revenue and user attention in the hands of a few giant platforms raises concerns about fair competition and market health. Regulatory measures promoting transparency in advertising and supporting equitable opportunities for small enterprises are necessary to foster a diverse and competitive digital economy.

Formulating effective regulation for social media is a complex task. The global scale of these platforms challenges the development of uniform policies due to vast differences in legal frameworks, cultural values, and political systems worldwide. While some countries adopt strict controls, others maintain more relaxed approaches, leading to inconsistencies and enforcement difficulties. Heavy-handed regulations risk suppressing dissent and undermining democratic freedoms, whereas lax oversight allows harmful content to flourish. Thus, any regulatory strategy must strike a careful balance, respecting human rights, freedom of expression, and access to information while protecting societal interests.

Technological and administrative challenges further complicate regulation. With millions of posts created every day, monitoring content effectively demands sophisticated tools. Although artificial intelligence can assist in filtering inappropriate material, it lacks the ability to grasp context, satire, or cultural subtleties, sometimes resulting in erroneous censorship or oversight. Human moderators remain indispensable but face limitations in scale and subjectivity. Smaller platforms may struggle to implement costly monitoring systems, which could increase the dominance of larger corporations. Additionally, many countries lack the administrative capacity to enforce regulations consistently, highlighting the need for strengthened institutional frameworks.

To address these challenges, several measures merit consideration. Transparency by social media companies regarding their content moderation, data practices, and algorithmic operations can foster accountability and build user trust. Users should have greater control over their personal data and advertising preferences. The establishment of independent regulatory bodies, composed of technologists, legal experts, sociologists, ethicists, and human rights advocates, can provide impartial oversight, ensuring fair and balanced policies. These bodies could oversee content guidelines, review compliance, and manage public grievances. Meanwhile, enhancing content monitoring systems that combine AI capabilities with human judgment, designed to be culturally sensitive, can improve efficacy. Public education is an equally crucial element. Empowering individuals to critically assess information, recognize misinformation, and engage responsibly online will mitigate social media’s adverse impacts. Educational institutions and community initiatives should integrate digital literacy programs emphasizing fact-checking, privacy protection, and respectful discourse. Public campaigns highlighting both the benefits and risks of social media use can raise awareness and foster a culture of responsible digital citizenship.

International cooperation is vital given the borderless nature of social media. Countries must collaborate to share information, harmonize policies, and tackle cross-border challenges such as cybercrime, extremist propaganda, and misinformation. In conclusion, social media is an indispensable feature of contemporary life, offering extraordinary possibilities for communication, learning, and social engagement. Yet, unchecked, it harbors risks that can disrupt social cohesion, undermine privacy, and distort democratic values. A thoughtful, balanced approach to regulation—rooted in collaboration among individuals, platforms, governments, and international bodies—is essential. By doing so, society can harness the immense potential of social media while safeguarding the principles of justice, safety, and freedom that underpin a healthy and vibrant democratic world. (The writer can be reached at himangshur1989@gmail.com or 9954812261, 9864000260)

By: Satyabrata Borah

The relentless march of technological advancement has propelled humanity to unprecedented heights. From landing on the moon to sending rovers to Mars, from revolutionizing communication through the internet to transforming healthcare with cutting-edge innovations, science and technology have reshaped the human experience. Artificial intelligence, biotechnology, and renewable energy systems have opened doors to possibilities once confined to the realm of science fiction. Yet, paradoxically, as humanity scales these peaks of progress, it seems to be hurtling toward a precipice of destruction. The world today is scarred by conflicts, wars, and terrorism, with news headlines dominated by reports of violence and unrest. The Russia-Ukraine conflict, the India-Pakistan tensions, and the recent escalations between Iran and Israel are stark reminders of a world teetering on the edge of chaos. Terrorism continues to cast a dark shadow, amplifying fear and instability. The question looms large: Where is the world headed? What does the future hold? These concerns demand a deep exploration of the forces driving this turmoil and the potential paths forward.

The double-edged nature of technological progress lies at the heart of this paradox. On one hand, technology has simplified and enriched lives, enabling instant global communication, improving medical outcomes, and enhancing productivity. On the other, it has empowered destruction on an unimaginable scale. The development of nuclear weapons, AI-controlled drones, and biological weapons has transformed warfare, making it more lethal and far-reaching. In earlier eras, wars were fought with swords, guns, and tanks, where the scale of destruction was limited by the number of soldiers and the power of their weapons. Today, a single decision perhaps the press of a button could annihilate entire populations. The Russia-Ukraine conflict exemplifies this, with advanced weaponry, including hypersonic missiles and cyberattacks, amplifying the devastation. Cyber warfare has emerged as a new frontier, where nations and non-state actors can cripple economies, disrupt critical infrastructure, or manipulate information without firing a single shot. Hacking into government databases, targeting financial systems, or spreading disinformation through social media has become a potent tool in modern conflicts, expanding the battlefield into the digital realm.

The root causes of these conflicts are multifaceted, often intertwining political, economic, and ideological motives. The Russia-Ukraine war, for instance, stems from geopolitical ambitions and territorial disputes, with Russia seeking to assert dominance in its sphere of influence. The India-Pakistan rivalry is fueled by historical animosities, territorial claims over Kashmir, and differing national identities. Similarly, the Iran-Israel conflict is rooted in religious and ideological differences, compounded by regional power struggles. These conflicts have far-reaching consequences, displacing millions, disrupting

global supply chains, and destabilizing economies. The Russia-Ukraine war, for example, has triggered a global food crisis by disrupting grain exports, leading to skyrocketing prices and food shortages in vulnerable regions like Africa and the Middle East. The ripple effects of these conflicts underscore the interconnectedness of the modern world, where a single war can destabilize far-flung regions.

Terrorism adds another layer of complexity to this volatile landscape. Terrorist organizations have harnessed technology to amplify their reach and impact. The internet has become a tool for recruitment, propaganda, and coordination of attacks. Groups like ISIS and Al-Qaeda have used social media to radicalize individuals, plan operations, and inspire lone-wolf attacks across the globe. The accessibility of advanced technology, such as encrypted communication platforms and drone technology, has enabled these groups to operate with greater sophistication. The fight against terrorism has drained resources, diverted attention from development, and eroded trust in global security systems. Countries have spent billions on counterterrorism measures, yet the threat persists, morphing into new forms as technology evolves. The trajectory of the world, if unchanged, paints a grim picture. The specter of nuclear war looms, with major powers maintaining arsenals capable of obliterating humanity. The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, coupled with the unpredictability of non-state actors, heightens this risk. Beyond warfare, other existential threats compound the crisis. Climate change, driven by decades of industrialization and environmental neglect, is reshaping the planet. Rising sea levels, extreme weather events, and resource scarcity are already displacing populations and fueling conflicts over water, arable land, and energy resources. For instance, disputes over water rights in regions like the Middle East and South Asia could escalate into full-scale conflicts if left unresolved. Economic inequality, another byproduct of rapid development, breeds resentment and unrest, providing fertile ground for extremism and violence. If these trends continue unchecked, the future could see an escalation of conflicts, mass migrations, and societal collapse on a scale never witnessed before.

Yet, the future is not irrevocably doomed. History demonstrates humanity’s resilience in overcoming crises, from the devastation of World War II to the Cold War’s nuclear brinkmanship. The key to averting a catastrophic future lies in collective action and a reorientation of priorities. International cooperation must take center stage, with organizations like the United Nations playing a pivotal role in mediating disputes and fostering dialogue. Diplomacy, though often slow and fraught with challenges, remains the most effective tool for resolving conflicts. The Camp David Accords, which brokered peace between Egypt and Israel, and the Good Friday Agreement in Northern Ireland are testament to the power of negotiation. Strengthening multilateral frameworks, such as arms control treaties

and climate agreements, can mitigate the risks of war and environmental collapse.

Technology, the very force enabling destruction, can also be harnessed for peace. Artificial intelligence, for instance, could be used to predict conflict zones, enabling preemptive interventions. Satellite imagery and data analytics can monitor resource distribution, helping to address shortages before they escalate into disputes. Renewable energy technologies offer a path to reducing dependence on fossil fuels, which often fuel geopolitical tensions. The development of green economies could create jobs, reduce inequality, and mitigate climate change, addressing some of the root causes of conflict. Education and awareness are equally critical. By fostering a culture of tolerance, mutual respect, and understanding, societies can dismantle the ideological barriers that fuel hatred and division. Educational systems must emphasize critical thinking, cultural sensitivity, and the value of diversity. Grassroots movements, empowered by social media, have shown their potential to drive change, as seen in global campaigns for climate action and human rights. Engaging young people, who will inherit this world, is vital. Programs that promote intercultural dialogue and peacebuilding can cultivate a generation committed to cooperation rather than confrontation.

Economic equity is another cornerstone of a peaceful future. Poverty and unemployment are breeding grounds for discontent, often exploited by extremist groups. Addressing these issues requires targeted investments in education, healthcare, and infrastructure, particularly in developing nations. Initiatives like microfinance, vocational training, and fair trade can empower communities, reducing the appeal of radical ideologies. Global efforts to close the wealth gap, such as progressive taxation and debt relief for poorer nations, could stabilize societies and reduce the conditions that lead to conflict. The path forward hinges on humanity’s ability to learn from its past and act decisively in the present. The world stands at a crossroads, where the choices made today will shape the future for generations. The advancements that have brought humanity to this point can be redirected toward building a world where peace and prosperity coexist. The challenges are immense, but so is the potential for change. By prioritizing shared humanity over narrow interests, the world can move toward a future where technology serves as a force for unity rather than division, and where conflicts give way to collaboration.

The world’s current trajectory is fraught with peril, driven by the misuse of technology, geopolitical rivalries, and systemic inequalities. Yet, the future is not set in stone. Through international cooperation, responsible use of technology, education, and economic reform, humanity can chart a new course. The stakes could not be higher, but neither could the opportunities. By choosing peace over war, sustainability over destruction, and unity over division, humanity can build a world that reflects its highest aspirations rather

China says Sino-India border dispute complicated, takes time; Ready to discuss delimitation



BEIJING, June 30: China on Monday said that the boundary dispute with India is complicated and will take time to settle but at the same time, it expressed its readiness to hold discussions on the delimitation of the border and keep it peaceful.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh in his meeting with Chinese counterpart Dong Jun in Qingdao on June 26 proposed that India and China should solve the “complex issues” under a structured roadmap comprising steps to de-escalate tensions along the frontiers and rejuvenate the existing mechanism to demarcate the borders.

Singh and Dong held bilateral talks on the sidelines of a conclave of the Shanghai Co-operation Organisation (SCO) in the Chinese port city of Qingdao, with a focus on maintaining peace and tranquillity along the Line of Actual Control (LAC).

Asked for China’s reaction to Singh’s remarks, Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning said, “What I can tell you is that China and India have established the Special Representatives (SRs) mechanism on the boundary question and reached the Agreement on the Political Parameters and Guiding Principles for the Settlement of the China-India Boundary Question”.

The two sides have diplomatic and military communication mechanisms at various levels, she said.

China stands ready to maintain communication with India on issues including delimitation negotiation and border management, jointly keep the border areas peaceful and tranquil, and promote cross-border exchange and cooperation, she said.

Questioned about the prolonged delay in resolving the border issue despite 23 rounds

of the SR-level talks, Mao said, “The boundary question is complicated, and it takes time to settle it”.

The positive side is that the two countries have already established mechanisms at various levels for thorough communication. We hope that India will work with China in the same direction, continue to stay in communication on relevant issue and jointly keep the border areas peaceful and tranquil, she said.

The 23rd round of the meeting of the SRs, National Security Advisor Ajit Doval and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, was held here in December last year. It was the first meeting of the SRs since frictions had emerged in the Western Sector of the India-China border areas in 2020.

The SRs in their meeting positively affirmed the implementation of the latest dis-

engagement agreement of October 2024, resulting in patrolling and grazing in relevant areas.

In his meeting with Dong, Singh had emphasised the need to create “good neighbourly conditions” to achieve the best mutual benefits and called for “taking action on the ground” to bridge the “trust deficit” resulting from the 2020 eastern Ladakh border standoff, according to an Indian readout.

Singh also briefed Dong on the Pahalgam terror attack targeting innocent civilians, and India’s Operation Sindoor to dismantle the terrorist networks in Pakistan.

The Singh-Dong meeting came amid efforts by both New Delhi and Beijing to reset their ties following an understanding last October to end the military standoff along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh. (PTI)

2 killed, 1 wounded in sniper ambush as Idaho firefighters come under siege from rifle fire

BOISE, June 30: Two firefighters were killed Sunday and another was wounded when they were ambushed by sniper fire while responding to a blaze in a northern Idaho mountain community, as crews endured a barrage of gunfire over several hours that the governor called a “heinous” assault.

A shelter-in-place order was lifted Sunday night after a tactical response team discovered the body of a man with a firearm nearby, the Kootenai County Sheriff’s Office said. Officials did not release his name, nor did they say what kind of gun was found.

Authorities planned a news conference later Sunday to provide more information.

Sheriff’s officials said crews responded to a fire at Canfield Mountain just north of Coeur d’Alene around 1:30 pm, and gunshots were reported about a half hour later.

Sheriff Bob Norris earlier said officials weren’t immediately sure how many people were shot and deputies were “actively taking sniper fire as we speak.”

Three victims were brought to Kootenai Health, said hospital spokesperson Kim Anderson. Two were dead on arrival and the third was being treated for injuries, Anderson said. The wounded firefighter’s condition wasn’t known.

The scene was sheer pandemonium as the brush fire burned and firefighters rushed to the scene only to come under heavy fire.

First responders made urgent calls for help on their radios: “Everybody’s shot up here ... send law enforcement now,” according to one dispatch.

Gov. Brad Little said “multiple” firefighting personnel were attacked.

“This is a heinous direct

assault on our brave firefighters,” Little said on X. “I ask all Idahoans to pray for them and their families as we wait to learn more.”

Norris said it appeared the sniper was hiding in the rugged terrain and using a high-powered rifle. He said he instructed deputies to fire back. “I’m hoping that somebody has a clear shot and is able to neutralize, because they’re not at this point in time showing any evidence of wanting to surrender,” the sheriff said.

An alert by the Kootenai County Emergency Management Office asked people to avoid the area around Canfield Mountain Trailhead and Nettleton Gulch Road, about 6.5 km north of downtown Coeur d’Alene. Though the shelter-in-place order was lifted, the sheriff’s office cautioned residents to be prepared because the fire was still burning.

The FBI responded to the scene with technical teams and tactical support, Deputy Director Dan Bongino said.

The Idaho House Republican Leadership said in a statement: “We are horrified by the murder of two firefighters in Coeur d’Alene, and shocked by such a vicious attack on our first responders. We are praying for them, the injured, their families and their colleagues.”

Coeur d’Alene is a city of 55,000 residents near the border with Washington. Canfield Mountain is a popular hiking and biking area on the city’s outskirts, covered with trees and heavy brush and crisscrossed with trails that lead into a national forest. Fire is always a big concern for the region, said Bruce Deming, whose property abuts the trail system. When he noticed smoke on the ridge Sunday afternoon, he wondered why no firefighting helicopters were responding. (AP)

Death toll in rain related incidents rises to 45 in Pak

ISLAMABAD, June 30: Another seven people were killed in the past 24 hours in rain related incidents in Pakistan, bringing the death toll to 45, according to official data released on Monday.

The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) in its latest update said seven more people died, including four in Balochistan, two in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, and one in Punjab.

It said 68 people have been injured since the pre-monsoon spell of rains began on June 26.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province in northwest Pakistan was the worst hit with 21 casualties, according to the NDMA website.

It said another 13 people were killed in Punjab, seven in Sindh, and four died in Balochistan province.

At least 39 people have been injured in Punjab, 16 in Sindh, 11 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and two in Balochistan, it said.

As many as 50 houses have been fully damaged and 39 partially damaged while 55 animals killed as rains wreak havoc in different parts of the country. (PTI)

Chinese Communist Party membership crosses 100 million: Report

BEIJING, June 30: China’s ruling Communist Party’s membership has crossed the 100 million mark, a report said on Monday.

The CPC, founded in 1921, had more than 100.27 million members at the end of 2024, up by nearly 1.09 million from 2023, the report released by the Central Organisation Department (COD) of the CPC said. The CPC had 5.25 million primary-level organisations at the end of 2024, an increase of 74,000 compared with the previous year.

Headed by Chinese President Xi Jinping, the CPC is one of the few Communist parties in power.

Vietnam, Laos, Cuba and North Korea are governed by the parties claiming ideological affiliation to Marxism and Socialism.

Analysts say the growth of the CPC membership was slow due to stricter screening by the COD, the party’s top personnel office, the Hong Kong based South China Post reported. (PTI)

Scorching temperatures grip Europe, putting regions on high alert

ANKARA (Turkiye), June 30: Forest fires fanned by high winds and hot, dry weather damaged some holiday homes in Turkiye as a lingering heat wave that has cooked much of Europe led authorities to raise warnings and tourists to find ways to beat the heat on Monday.

A heat dome hovered over an arc from France, Portugal and Spain to Turkiye, while data from European forecasters suggested other countries were set to broil further in coming days. New highs are expected on Wednesday before rain is forecast to bring respite to some areas later this week.

“Extreme heat is no longer a rare event — it has become the new normal,” tweeted UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres from Seville, Spain, where temperatures were expected to hit 42 Celsius (nearly 108 Fahrenheit) on Monday afternoon. Reiterating his frequent calls for action to fight climate change, Guterres added: “The planet is getting hotter and more dangerous — no country is immune.”

In France, which was almost entirely sweltering in the heat-wave on Monday and where air conditioning remains relatively rare, local and national authorities were taking extra effort to care for homeless and elderly people and people working outside. Some tourists were putting off plans for some rigorous



outdoor activities.

“We were going to do a bike tour today actually, but we decided because it was gonna be so warm not to do the bike tour,” said Andrea Tyson, 46, who was visiting Paris from New Philadelphia, Ohio.

Authorities in Portugal issued a red heat warning for seven of 18 districts as temperatures were forecast to hit 43 degrees Celsius, a day after logging a record June temperature of 46.6 degrees C. Almost all inland areas were at high risk of wildfires.

In Turkiye, forest fires fanned by strong winds damaged some holiday homes in Izmir’s Doganbey region and forced the temporary closure of the airport in Izmir, the state-run Anadolu Agency reported. Authorities evacuated four villages as a precaution, the Forestry Ministry said.

In Italy, the Health Ministry put 21 cities under its level three “red” alert, which indicates “emergency conditions with possible negative effects” on healthy, active people as well as at-risk old people, children and chronically ill people.

Regional governments in northwestern Liguria and southern Sicily in Italy put restrictions on outdoor work, such as construction and agricultural labour, during the peak heat hours.

In southern Germany, temperatures of up to 35 degrees Celsius (95 Fahrenheit) were expected on Monday, and they were forecast to creep higher until midweek — going as high as 39 degrees (102F) on Wednesday.

Some German towns and regions imposed limits on how much water can be taken from rivers and lakes. (AP)

GOVT. OF ASSAM.

OFFICE OF THE JT. DIRECTOR OF HEALTH SERVICES, KARBI ANGLONG DIST.

DIPHU

E-mail: jtdhs.as.karbianglong@gmail.com

No. Jt. DHS/Works/2025-26/

/Dated Diphu, the

June' 2025

SHORT TENDER NOTICE

Sealed Tender/Quotation in format affixing with KAAC stamp worth Rs. 10.00 (Rupees Ten) only are invited from reputed Govt. registered and resourceful Contractors for Construction/ Repairing/ Renovation of the following works and will be received by the undersigned up to 3:00 pm of 11/07/2025 and opened on the same day at 3:00 pm. In case there is a Govt. holiday/ bandh etc. the Tender/ Quotation will be opened in the next working day at the same time for the F.Y. 2025-26.

Intending Contractors/ Suppliers of their authorized agent may be present at the time of opening of the Tender/ Quotations etc.

Contractors will have to deposit 2% (two) for General and 1% (One) in case of ST/SC/OBC of the Tender/ Quotations amount as Earnest Money in the form of Call Deposit/ Demand Draft from any Govt. recognized bank in the name of the Jt. Director of Health Services, Karbi Anglong, Diphu.

Civil Works for F.Y. 2025-26:-

Sl. No.	Name of Work	Estimated Amount (In Rupees)	Tender Amount (In Rupees)	Time of Completion	Remarks
1	Const. of Kalibheti Sub- Centre under Socheng Dhentha Constituency.	11,31,000.00	11,31,000.00	60 days	
2	Completion of half wall RCC building at Dolamara PHC under Duar- Bagori Constituency.	20,00,000.00	20,00,000.00	90 days	
3	Construction of Phuloni Model Hospital rooms partition.	17,00,000.00	17,00,000.00	60 days	
4	Rep. / Renovation of 2 nos. of Staff Quarter for residential accommodation and class room for final year student from DMCH, Diphu for Rural Health Training Centre at Mania BPHC.	20,00,000.00	20,00,000.00	60 days	
5	Const. of boundary wall of Nambor Nadi Bagan Hospital, under No. 24 Deopani Constituency.	15,00,000.00	15,00,000.00	60 days	
6	Construction of Boundary Wall with Iron Gate at Bokajan CHC.	20,00,000.00	20,00,000.00	60 days	

Terms & Conditions:

1. The lender should be accompanied with the following documents:-

- Govt. Contract Registration.
- P. Tax Clearance.
- Income Tax Clearance Certificate.
- Certificate of Financial Ability from Gazetted Officer/ Local MAC/ BOO.
- Caste Certificate.
- Earnest Money deposit in the form of Call Deposit/ Demand Draft etc.
- GST Registration and GST Clearance Certificate.

2. The rate shall be quoted in flat percentage i.e. above or below as per estimated.

3. The unsuccessful Tenderer will get back their earnest money after allotment of work.

4. The undersigned reserves the right to accept or reject any or all Tender without assigning any reason thereof.

5. Schedule of Rate will not be changed or revised in any circumstances.

6. For details information please contact the undersigned during office hours.

N.B.- 1. No Tender will be accepted failing to furnish the above documents.

2. Payment will be made subject to the availability of fund.

Sd/-

Jt. Director of Health Services,
Karbi Anglong District, Diphu

Memo No. Jt. DHS/Works/2025-26/1006-A

/Dated Diphu, the 30th June' 2025

Arunachal becomes 'performer' in sustainable development goal Index for quality education: CM



ITANAGAR, June 30: Arunachal Pradesh has made significant strides in improving access to quality education by reducing the dropout rate at the secondary level to 11.7 per cent and achieving 100 per cent adjusted net enrolment at the elementary level, Chief Minister Pema Khandu has said.

Highlighting key education sector achievements under his administration's "PEMA 3.0 Year of Reforms and Growth", Khandu said the state has also recorded a substantial improvement in the pupil-teacher ratio, now standing at 11:1, far better than the national average of 24:1.

"These milestones reflect our commitment to ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education for all," Khandu said in a social media post on Sunday.

He announced that Arunachal Pradesh has officially transitioned from an "Aspirant" to a "Per-

former" state in the NITI Aayog's SDG India Index 2024 under Sustainable Development Goal 4 (Quality Education).

The SDG India Index, developed by NITI Aayog, serves as the country's primary tool for tracking national and sub-national progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

It evaluates the performance of states and union territories across 113 indicators, spanning 16 goals, and offers a comprehensive snapshot of their SDG achievements.

The index plays a pivotal role in identifying strengths and gaps, facilitating data-driven policy interventions, and fostering inter-state collaboration to accelerate SDG implementation across India.

The chief minister attributed the improvement in key education indicators to sustained reforms and grassroots implementation. (PTI)

MG Study Hub inaugurated in Itanagar

HT Correspondent

ITANAGAR, June 30: In a significant initiative to support academic excellence and lifelong learning, MG Study Hub, a modern private library and study centre, was formally inaugurated on Sunday at Lower Niti Vihar, opposite Kingcup School, near IG Park Gate No. 1 in Itanagar.

According to an official statement, the facility is designed to cater to students, competitive exam aspirants, and working professionals by offering a peaceful and distraction-free environment for focused study. The centre operates 24x7 and provides individual study desks, high-speed internet, continuous power backup, and essential amenities such as charging points, making it an ideal choice for those seeking a dedicated and reliable study space.

The founder of MG Study Hub, Yarda Naren, speaking at the inauguration ceremony, stated, "Our aim is to create a place where minds grow — a quiet, cozy environment where learners can focus and succeed. In a time when attention is often divided, we hope this space can help students stay committed to their goals." She added that the facility had been conceptualised to promote self-discipline, productivity, and academic consistency, especially in the face of growing digital distractions and limited access to quiet spaces.

MG Study Hub has been equipped with features including



well-lit and ergonomic study desks, seamless internet connectivity, and a clean, calm ambience under constant CCTV surveillance to ensure security. Membership plans are designed to be accessible, with options available for daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly usage. The flexible pricing and quality infrastructure make it particularly attractive for aspirants preparing for civil services, bank exams, and

other competitive fields.

The inauguration ceremony was attended by members of the local community, well-wishers, and dignitaries, including Yarda Nikki, President of the All Arunachal Pradesh Amateur Karate Do Association (APAKA), who graced the occasion as a special guest.

With its official opening, MG Study Hub has also announced special launch offers for early sub-

scribers. The management encourages interested individuals to visit the facility and explore the membership plans available.

The opening of MG Study Hub marks a positive step in fostering a learning-centric ecosystem in the capital city, providing students and professionals with the resources and environment they need to thrive academically and intellectually.

Sensitisation programme on hallmarking and jewellery conducted for ICR Jewelers in Naharlagun



HT Correspondent

NAHARLAGUN, June 30: In a bid to promote awareness and compliance with regulatory standards in the bullion sector, the Department of Legal Metrology & Consumer Affairs, Government of Arunachal Pradesh, through its Publicity & Propaganda branch, conducted a one-day "Sensitisation Programme on Hallmarking and Jewellery Products" on Monday.

The event was held at the Conference Hall of the Controller's Office at C-Sector, Naharlagun.

According to an official statement, more than 60 registered and licensed jewellers from across the Itanagar Capital Region (ICR) participated in the sensitisation initiative, which aimed at enhancing industry knowledge, regulatory compliance, and consumer welfare through hallmarking practices.

Welcoming the participants, Minte Siga, Controller of Legal Metrology & Consumer Affairs, emphasised the importance of ethical practices in the jewellery business.

He encouraged jewellers to embrace best practices in the bullion market despite its com-

petitive nature and urged unregistered jewellers to get registered under the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) through the online portal for the betterment of their businesses.

Siga also underlined the need for responsible business conduct, considering the high social and economic value associated with gold and silver ornaments.

Resource persons from BIS Guwahati — Adane Khrasi, Scientist-E, and Biswajyoti Kalita, Hallmarking Monitoring Authority (HMA) — were present to lead the technical sessions.

Khrasi provided a detailed overview of BIS operations, outreach initiatives, and strategic partnerships with technological institutions to enhance consumer protection and quality assurance.

In his session, Kalita elaborated on the hallmarking procedures for gold and silver, steps for BIS registration of jewellers, and the correct usage of the BIS Care mobile application.

He also addressed various queries raised by participating jewellers regarding regulatory procedures and hallmarking norms.

Tasso Gurro, Deputy Controller (HQ), urged the jew-

ellery community to abstain from malpractices and underscored the cultural and economic significance of bullion products in the state and the country at large.

A key issue that emerged during the programme was the non-uniformity in per gram rates of gold and silver across jewellers in the Itanagar Capital Region.

Participants highlighted the confusion and pricing disparities caused by this lack of standardisation.

Addressing this concern, department officials encouraged stakeholders—including jewellers, market committees, and the district administration—to convene on a common platform to discuss and resolve the matter in a collaborative manner.

The programme concluded with a vote of thanks delivered by Sangio Toru, Publicity Assistant, Department of Legal Metrology & Consumer Affairs, Government of Arunachal Pradesh.

The department reaffirmed its commitment to supporting the bullion industry while ensuring consumer interests are protected through transparency, education, and regulatory compliance.

Arunachal BJP president launches book on emergency

ITANAGAR, June 30:

Arunachal Pradesh BJP president Kaling Moyong on Monday formally launched the book "The Emergency Diaries: Years That Forge a Leader" at the party's office here.

"This book is more than a historical record, it is a tribute to the indomitable spirit of resistance, the strength of conviction, and the courage that defines real leader-

ship," said Moyong at the launch event.

The memoir revisits one of the most turbulent periods in Indian democracy, the Emergency from 1975 to 1977, offering a powerful account of courage and resilience during a time of political repression.

It highlights the underground resistance of a 25-year-old RSS Pracharak, who operated in dis-

guise, circulated banned literature, and extended support to the families of jailed activists.

Moyong described the memoir as essential reading for understanding the value of freedom and the need to protect democratic ideals.

Also present at the event were programme convener Tarh Tarak and several other state BJP office bearers. (PTI)

Man held for 'raping' domestic help in Arunachal

ITANAGAR, June 30: A man has been arrested for allegedly raping a 20-year-old domestic worker over a span of two years at his residence here, police said on Monday.

The woman had filed an FIR on June 13 at Bordumsa Police Station in Changlang district,

based on which the man was apprehended on Sunday, they said. The case was later transferred to the Itanagar Women Police Station, SP (Itanagar Capital Region) Jummar Basar said.

The woman, a native of Goju village, had been employed as a domestic help at the ac-

cused's home in 2023.

She has alleged repeated sexual assault and harassment by the accused, despite her resistance, police said, quoting the complaint.

Further investigation is underway, the SP said. (PTI)

Event organised by BMMU Yingkiong under ArSRLM

Udyami Panjikanan Mela organised to empower rural women entrepreneurs in Upper Siang

HT Correspondent

YINGKIONG, June 30: In a significant effort to bolster rural entrepreneurship and empower women at the grassroots level, the Block Mission Management Unit (BMMU), Upper Siang, under the Arunachal State Rural Livelihoods Mission (ArSRLM), organised a one-day "Udyami Panjikanan Mela" at the premises of Pahu Jino Rural Mart in Yingkiong on Monday.

According to an official statement, the mela was aimed at registering Self Help Group (SHG) entrepreneurs and extending critical support including pop-up stalls, product registration, marketing advice, and on-the-spot Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) registration.

The event saw the participation of 47 SHGs affiliated with the Mori Bango Cluster Level Federation.

Deputy Commissioner Talo Jerang graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. In his address, he underscored that the National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM) is a transformative flagship programme of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, designed to uplift rural women through socio-economic empowerment.

He added that millions of women across the country have benefitted from NRLM and initiatives like ArSRLM are playing a crucial role in extending these benefits to the remotest areas.

Encouraging SHG members to aspire to become "Lakhpati Didis"—a government initiative focused on making rural women

economically self-reliant—DC Jerang said financial assistance and skill development opportunities are available for women to pursue entrepreneurial ventures.

He also advocated for the formation of Farmers Producer Companies (FPCs), explaining how collective enterprise through multiple SHGs can enhance market visibility and improve profitability through streamlined marketing strategies.

In a notable development, DC Jerang informed the gathering about ongoing discussions with the Indian Army regarding the procurement and promotion of locally grown organic produce from Upper Siang's SHGs and farmers.

He directed the Block Mission Unit to begin necessary processes to integrate local SHG products into this initiative, potentially opening new market avenues for rural producers.

Additional Deputy Commissioner Naatek Nonaag, District Horticulture Officer Oter Gao, and District Agriculture Officer Dana Moyong also addressed the gathering.

All three officials stressed the importance of moving away from chemical-intensive agriculture and adopting organic farming methods for better health and environmental outcomes.

They particularly warned against the use of harmful substances like Roundup and urged farmers to safeguard both consumer safety and soil health.

Food Safety Officer Karun Nobeng

spoke about the crucial role of food certification in market acceptance. He provided guidance on FSSAI registration procedures and encouraged all SHG entrepreneurs to register their products to ensure food quality, hygiene, and consumer trust.

District Information and Public Relations Officer (DIPRO) Y Jerang praised the positive impact of ArSRLM on women across Upper Siang district.

She urged SHG members to remain proactive by participating in similar programmes in the future, which she said would help them stay informed about government welfare schemes tailored for women's empowerment.

Earlier, Block Mission Manager Rani Doye delivered the welcome address and elaborated on the objectives of the Udyami Panjikanan Mela.

She said the event was part of a broader initiative to strengthen grassroots entrepreneurship and provide women with practical tools and platforms to scale up their economic activities.

The event was attended by former Adi Baane Kebang (ABK) President Tadam Libang, various Heads of Departments, administrative officers, SHG members, representatives from Cluster Level Federations, and members of the general public.

The mela concluded on a high note, with several participants expressing appreciation for the platform and committing to take forward the learnings and support received during the event.



Tribals in Great Nicobar not against development but lack info about infra project: NCST member

NEW DELHI, June 30: Tribal communities in Great Nicobar are not opposed to development but lack sufficient information about a proposed mega infrastructure project on the island, National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST) member Asha Lakra has said.

The project, titled Holistic Development of Great Nicobar, involves the construction of a transshipment port, an international airport, a township and a power plant over more than 160 square km of land. This includes around 130 square km of pristine forest inhabited by the Nicobarese, a Scheduled Tribe (ST), and the Shompens, a Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG), whose population is estimated to be between 200 and 300.

In an interview with PTI, Lakra said she led an NCST team to the Andaman and Nicobar Islands from June 5 to 7 to review the issues faced by the tribal communities. She said the commission held a detailed meeting with representatives of all tribal groups, including the Great Andamanese, Jarawa, Nicobarese and Shompens.

"We met everyone... We also



had talks with both Shompen and Nicobarese people living on Great Nicobar Island. Most of the people have no idea about the project. They are busy with their own lives... They demand more ferries to travel between islands," Lakra said. Asked about her interaction with the residents of Great Nicobar, she said, "They have no other problems. All they need is development... Better transport, education and health facilities. This is what they told us. Everyone, barring the Sentinelese, said the same thing. They are in favour of development."

"They want employment and their financial situation to improve," Lakra added.

She, however, stressed the need for a stakeholders' meeting with educated people from the island regarding "such a big project" and said all necessary information should be shared with them.

However, Barnabas Manju, chairman of the Little and Great Nicobar Tribal Council, told PTI over the phone that the council was not invited to the meeting and came to know about it through the local media.

The council had written to the

Union environment ministry and the Andaman and Nicobar administration in November 2022, withdrawing the no-objection certificate (NOC) it issued in August that year for the denotification of 84.1 sq. km of tribal reserve and the diversion of 130 sq. km of forest for the project. It alleged that crucial information was withheld while seeking the NOC.

The tribal council had expressed shock on learning that parts of their pre-tsunami villages would be "denotified and diverted" under the project.

During a public hearing held at Campbell Bay in January 2021, the council's chairman had said that although they support the development plan, "we want to go back to our ancestral villages".

Tribal councils in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands are statutory bodies established under the Andaman and Nicobar Islands (Tribal Councils) Regulation, 2009. They have limited advisory and executive powers, unlike autonomous councils under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution, which have legislative, executive and limited judicial powers and enjoy greater autonomy. (PTI)

12 dead, 34 injured in blast in pharma plant near Hyderabad

SANGAREDDY (TELANGANA), June 30: Twelve people were killed and 34 others suffered injuries in a blast in a pharma plant in Telangana's Sangareddy district, about 50 km away from Hyderabad, on Monday.

About 90 people were working at around 9.30 AM in the plant of Sigachi Industries at Pashamylaram when the tragedy occurred, state Health Minister C Damodar Rajanarasimha, who visited the accident site along with Labour Minister G Vivek Venkatswamy, told reporters.

The cause of the mishap would be known after examination by the technical experts, he said.

Venkatswamy said 12 of the 34 injured people were critical and put on ventilator support in the hospitals. Because of the burns, their respiratory system was under stress, he said.

The government is hopeful that the remaining 22 people who received burns recover soon, he said.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed grief over the fire tragedy and conveyed condolences to those who lost their loved ones in the incident. He wished an early recovery to the injured.

In a post on 'X', he announced an ex-gratia of Rs 2 lakh from the Prime Minister's National Relief Fund for the next of kin of the deceased and Rs 50,000 for the injured.

Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy expressed anguish over the incident and directed officials to take all steps to save the trapped workers and provide them advanced medical care, an official release said.

The company said it deeply mourns the loss of lives and extends heartfelt condolences to the families of the deceased. The firm is extending all possible support to those affected, it added. Y Nagi Reddy, Director General of the Telangana State Disaster Response and Fire Services, said a blast was being suspected in the drying unit of a plant.

"Industrial experts are saying that during the drying process, or a handling process the pressure could have built up followed by the blasting of the material which led to the blasting of the entire handling unit as well as the industrial building," Reddy told reporters.

He said the removal of debris was still ongoing at the blast site and that search was on for any people trapped in the collapsed three-storeyed building. (PTI)

Garib Nawaz Express upgraded with modern LHB coaches: NFR

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, June 30: The Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) has announced a significant upgrade to its long-distance passenger service, the Garib Nawaz Express, with the introduction of modern Linke Hofmann Busch (LHB) coaches. The information was provided in an official statement issued by NFR. With effect from June 29, 2025, Train No 15715/15716 (Kishanganj-Ajmer-Kishanganj) Garib Nawaz Express has been converted from conventional ICF (Integral Coach Factory) coaches to LHB coaches.

This move is part of Indian Railways' ongoing efforts to enhance passenger comfort, improve safety standards, and increase overall capacity across its network.

The tri-weekly Garib Nawaz Express serves as an important rail link between the eastern state of Bihar and the western state of Rajasthan, traversing key destinations in Uttar Pradesh and other regions.

Train No 15715 departs from Kishanganj at 05:50 hrs every Tuesday, Friday, and Sunday, and reaches Ajmer at 21:30 hrs on the second day of its journey.

In the return direction, Train No 15716 departs from Ajmer at 12:05 hrs every Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday, arriving at Kishanganj at 03:00 hrs on the third day.

According to the statement, the newly introduced LHB coaches are built with modern technology that ensures a smoother and safer ride for passengers. Unlike the traditional ICF coaches, LHB coaches are designed with anti-telescopic features that reduce the risk of derailment and improve overall passenger safety. These coaches also offer enhanced riding comfort, lower noise levels, and increased carrying capacity, making them more suitable for long-distance journeys.

Cong high command will decide on matters like changing CM, says Kharge

BENGALURU, June 30: Amid Congress leaders in Karnataka openly discussing possible change of Chief Minister in the state, AICC President Mallikarjun Kharge on Monday said it is up to the party high command to decide on such matters and that one should not create any unnecessary problem.

Kharge was responding to media queries about some Congress leaders in the state claiming about a change in the post of chief minister in October.

"See, that is in the hands of the high command. Nobody can say here what is going on in the high command. This is left to the high command, and the high command has got power to take further action. But unnecessarily, one should not create a problem," he told reporters here. In 2023, when the Congress assumed power in the southern state, there were speculations that Siddaramaiah and D K Shivakumar would helm the state for 2.5 years each, as per a rotational formula, claims the party has neither confirmed nor rejected so far. (PTI)

BJP slams Tejashwi's stand on Waqf Act, says his 'samajwaad' cover for 'namazwaad'

NEW DELHI, June 30: The BJP on Monday accused opposition parties of seeking to turn the Constitution into a "sharia script" and using the garb of "samajwaad" (socialism) to hide its "namazwaad", as it slammed RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav for asserting that his bloc, if elected to power in Bihar, will throw the amended Waqf Act in dustbin.

BJP national spokesperson Sudhanshu Trivedi said the INDIA bloc of the RJD-Congress-Left in Bihar has shown its disrespect for the Constitution, as the Act was passed by Parliament and is being adjudicated in the Supreme Court. They respect neither Parliament nor the judiciary, he said.

Addressing a press conference, he rejected opposition parties' criticism of the Election Commission's special intensive review of electoral rolls, which has started from the poll-bound Bihar, to weed out ineligible voters, as born out of their "defeatist mindset" in the face of their inevitable loss.

These parties want fake voters, while it is imperative to ensure that only eligible Indian citizens get to elect the government of their choice, he said. The EC has said the exercise, a regular mechanism, is aimed at including only eligible voters in the electoral rolls.

Opposition parties have claimed that it can exclude eligible voters willfully, an allegation that is an extension of their attack

on the poll watchdog for working to benefit the ruling alliance. Assembly polls in Bihar are expected to be held in October-November. Targeting opposition leaders for their strident criticism of the Waqf (Amendment) Act at the Patna rally, Trivedi said their alliance is driven by vote bank politics, a euphemism for its outreach to Muslim voters over the opposition to the Act from a large number of them. He alleged that the INDIA bloc wants to enforce Sharia provisions through the back door. States like Telangana and Karnataka are giving reservations to Muslims at the cost of quotas for Hindu OBCs, SCs and STs, and West Bengal is also trying to do it, he said.

He underlined the BJP-led NDA's commitment to the values of the Constitution drafted by B R Ambedkar. He said, "'Samvidhan bachao' is merely a facade of these parties as their true face is 'sharia laa'. If they are in power, they will add 'namazwaad' to the Constitution's preamble. They want to turn the Constitution into a Sharia script, but we will not allow it."

RJD's Tejashwi Yadav on Sunday claimed that the ruling NDA in Bihar was "on its way out", and the new government in the state led by the opposition alliance will "consign to the dustbin" the Waqf Act brought by the Narendra Modi dispensation at the Centre. (PTI)

Govt withdrew language policy GRs to prevent protest: Uddhav

MUMBAI, June 30: Shiv Sena (UBT) chief Uddhav Thackeray on Monday claimed the Maharashtra government withdrew the GRs on the three-language policy to ensure that the joint protest by political parties against "imposition of Hindi" does not take place. Talking to reporters at the Vidhan Bhavan, the former chief minister said heads of Marathi haters were smashed by displaying the unity of the "Marathi mannos", and the united front should be maintained before the "next crisis". He asserted that instead of a protest morcha, victory celebrations will be held on July 5. Following mounting opposition against the introduction of Hindi for Classes 1 to 5 in schools, the state government has withdrawn two government orders (GRs) on the implementation of the three-language policy. Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis announced the formation of a committee headed by educationist Narendra Jadhav to suggest the way forward on the language policy. (PTI)

GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM OFFICE OF THE DY. DIRECTOR OF INFORMATION AND PUBLIC RELATIONS (HILLS) KARBI ANGLONG: DIPHU

No. KAD.5/DDIPR/SOPD/2025-26/5

Dated Diphu, the 30th June, 2025

TENDER NOTICE

Sealed Tenders in the prescribed format, affixed with a non-refundable KAAC Money Receipt of Rs. 10/- (Rupees ten) only for ST/SC/OBC category and Rs. 20/- (Rupees twenty) only for General category, are hereby invited from intending Government-registered contractors and eligible local contractors for the following works/schemes under SOPD for the year 2025-26. The tenders will be received up to 2.00 PM on 7th July, 2025, and will be opened on the same day in the presence of the contractors or their authorized representatives. In case the date of opening happens to be a holiday, the tender will be opened on the next working day at the same time.

Sl.No.	Name of Work/Scheme	Tender Amount	Time of Completion
1.	Renovation of Media Lounge, KPH, Taralangso, Diphu	Rs. 8.00 lakh	60 days
2.	Press Tour to Sikkim	Rs. 10.00 lakh	90 days

Terms and Conditions:

- The rate to be quoted as above/below/reserve rate of % basis as per APWD Building & Sanitary scheduled works for 2020-21.
 - 1% Earnest Money for ST/SC/OBC category and 2% for General category over the value of works in the form of call deposit from any recognized bank in favour of Deputy Director of Information and Public Relations (Hills), Karbi Anglong, Diphu.
 - The undersigned reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason and is not bound to accept the lowest quoted rate.
 - Payment will be made subject to the availability of funds received.
 - The tender will be received at the o/o the Deputy Director of Information and Public Relations (Hills), Karbi Anglong, Diphu.
- ❖ The Tenderer should submit the following documents along with their tender papers-
- Up to date GST document/clearance certificate from competent authority.
 - Up to date Income Tax clearance from competent authority.
 - Up to date Professional Tax clearance from the authority of KAAC, Diphu.
 - Up to date Trading License, if non-tribal.
 - Up to date Contractor License from PWD or other departments.
 - Xerox copy of PAN Card & Aadhaar Card.

NB: No tender will be accepted if the above-mentioned documents are not furnished.

Sd/-

Deputy Director of Information and
Public Relations, Karbi Anglong, Diphu
Dated Diphu, the 30th June, 2025

Memo. No. KAD.5/DDIPR/SOPD/2025-26/5(A)

GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM

OFFICE OF THE ADDITIONAL CHIEF ENGINEER CUM COUNCIL HEAD OF THE DEPARTMENT IRRIGATION: KARBI ANGLONG AUTONOMOUS COUNCIL: DIPHU.

CORRIGENDUM

Dated: 30-06-2025

No. ACEI-CHD/E/Recruitment/1/2024-25/19: In continuation of the earlier notification vide No. ACEI-CHD/E/Recruitment/1/2024-25/18, Dated. 27-06-2025 regarding interview/viva voce & computer test for shortlisted candidates of various Grade-III post in the Department, it has come to my notice that due to technical error, some eligible candidates were inadvertently omitted from the list of shortlisted candidates. Accordingly, the following additional candidates are hereby included in the shortlist:

SL. NO.	NAME OF THE POST (GRADE-III)	ROLL NO. OF SHORTLISTED CANDIDATES	VENUE	DATE & TIME OF INTERVIEW	REPORTING TIME
i	ii	iii	iv	v	vi
1	JUNIOR ASSISTANT	169	Office of the Addl. Chief Engineer cum Council Head of the Department, Irrigation, Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council, Diphu	Date: 08-07-2025 Time: 10.00 AM onwards	09.30 AM
2	SECTION ASSISTANT	156, 1208, 1723			
3	TRACER	39, 148, 197			

N.B: All other terms and conditions mentioned in the original notice remain unchanged.

The inconvenience caused is regretted.

Sd/-

Addl. Chief Engineer & CHD
Cum

Member Secretary, Selection Committee
Irrigation Department

Memo No. ACEI-CHD/E/Recruitment/1/2024-25/19(A) Dated Diphu, the 30th June' 2025

4 shot dead by unidentified gunmen in Manipur

CHURACHANDPUR/IMPHAL, June 30: At least four people, including a 72-year-old woman, were shot dead by unidentified gunmen in Manipur's Churachandpur district on Monday, police said.

The ambush took place near Mongjang village around 2 pm when the victims were travelling in a car, a police officer said.

Mongjang is about five km from Churachandpur town.

Preliminary reports suggest that they were shot from a point-blank range, another official in the Churachandpur district headquarters said.

In a statement issued on Monday evening, the United Kuki National Liberation Army (UKNLA) claimed responsibility for the attack. The deceased were identified as Thenkothang Haokip alias Tahpi (48), Seikhogin (34), Lengouhao (35) and Phalhing (72), sources said.

More than 12 empty bullet shells were also recovered from the spot, police said.

Additional security forces have been rushed to the area, they added. (PTI)

Women unsafe in Bengal, BJP to lead fight for justice: Tripura MP Biplab Deb

HT Correspondent

AGARTALA, June 30: Former Tripura Chief Minister and West Bengal Lok Sabha MP Biplab Kumar Deb on Monday launched a scathing attack on the Trinamool Congress and West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, accusing her government of allegedly failing to ensure the safety of women in the state.

Deb arrived in Kolkata earlier today as a member of the BJP's fact-finding committee, constituted to probe the alleged gang-rape incident at Kolkata's Law College.

The four-member committee, formed under the directive of BJP national president J P Nadda, includes former Union Ministers Satyapal Singh and Meenakshi Lekhi, as well as Rajya Sabha MP Manan Kumar Mishra.

Speaking to reporters at Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose International Airport, Deb expressed grave concern over the state of women's safety in Bengal.



"Fifty percent of the population are women. If even in a Law College — where students are meant to become protectors of justice — women are not safe, it is a matter of deep concern. The Chief Minister herself is a woman, and yet such horrific incidents are taking place under her watch. I strongly condemn this," Deb said.

He further stated that the committee will soon visit the crime scene, interact with the victim, and submit a comprehensive report to BJP president J P Nadda.

"The accused has a criminal background dating back to 2013. His connections with Trinamool Congress leaders are evident from photographs in the public domain. It is clear that individuals involved in this heinous crime are closely associated with TMC," Deb alleged.

Declaring that the BJP will not remain silent, he said, "We will fight to ensure women are protected in West Bengal. Let everyone see the truth for themselves."

The committee's visit comes amid mounting outrage over the incident, which has once again ignited debate over law and order and women's safety in the state.

Sikkim Assembly passes Lokayukta (Amendment) Bill



GANGTOK, June 30: The Sikkim Lokayukta (Amendment) Bill, 2025 was passed in the assembly of the Himalayan state on Monday.

The Scholars University of Skills and Innovation, Sikkim Bill, 2025 was also introduced in the House during a day-long session.

Law Minister Raju Basnet introduced the amendment Bill in the House with permission of Speaker M N Sherpa, proposing to amend Section 5 of the Sikkim Lokayukta Act, 2014 for the extension of tenure of the chairperson and members of the Lokayukta.

He said that an amendment was made in 2018 in the Sikkim Lokayukta Act, 2014, incorporating Section 5 regarding extension of tenure of the chairperson and members of the Lokayukta, but the said provision for extension, however, got omitted by the Sikkim Lokayukta (Amendment) Act, 2019.

Now, to ensure continuity and to allow the chairperson and the members sufficient time to deal with pending matters, the state government deems it expedient to amend Section 5 of the Sikkim Lokayukta Act, 2014 to insert the provision for extension of the tenures of the chairperson and the members of the Lokayukta, the law minister said, while elaborating on the objectives of the Sikkim Lokayukta (Amendment) Bill 2025.

The House subsequently considered and passed the Bill by voice vote.

Basnet, who also holds the education portfolio, further introduced the Scholars University of Skills and Innovation, Sikkim Bill, 2025.

He said that the objective of the Bill is to provide higher education in skilled and entrepreneurial courses in Sikkim through world-class infrastructure and international networking.

The university is proposed to be established at Melli in Namchi district, he said.

The discussion and voting on the Scholars University of Skills and Innovation, Sikkim Bill, shall take place during the next session of the House, the Speaker ruled.

Chief Minister Prem Singh Tamang, who holds the charge of the finance department, presented the Annual Consolidated Audit Report on the accounts of Panchayati Raj Institutions and municipalities for the financial year 2023-24.

Thereafter, the Speaker announced the laying of the Annual Reports of the Agriculture Department (2023-24), Fisheries Department (2024-25), Sikkim Public Service Commission (2023-24), and Civil Supplies Department (2024-25).

At the conclusion of legislative and financial business scheduled for the day, Sherpa adjourned the House sine die. (PTI)

Three militants arrested in Manipur

IMPHAL, June 30: Three militants belonging to different proscribed outfits have been arrested by security forces in Manipur's Imphal West and East districts, police said on Monday.

An insurgent belonging to the banned People's Liberation Army (PLA) was arrested from Lamdeng Awang Leikai in Imphal West district on Sunday, a police statement said. He has been identified as Yumnam Premkumar Singh (31), and was involved in extortion from elected representatives such as panchayat pradhans and members, as well as from private and government schools in the district.

An active cadre of the banned PREPAK (PRO) outfit was arrested from Heirangoithong in Imphal West district on Saturday. He has been identified as Kangabam Raju Singh (42), it said.

Another militant of KCP (NOYON/MFL) was arrested from Nongpok Sanjenbam Khullen in Imphal East district. He has been identified as Manoharmayum Kabichandra Sharma alias Rajo (28). (PTI)

Tripura LoP slams BJP, alleges 'democracy being slaughtered'

HT Correspondent

AGARTALA, June 30: Leader of Opposition and CPI (M) Jitendra Chaudhury on Monday launched a scathing attack on the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in Tripura, alleging that an "undemocratic and abnormal" situation is prevailing in the state, where democracy is being systematically dismantled. Speaking to media, Chaudhury who is also Politburo member accused the BJP of curbing democratic rights—both of the public and within its own party ranks.

"Democracy is being slaughtered in Tripura day by day. The BJP is killing democracy with its own hands," he said. He alleged that the law and order situation in the state has deteriorated to its lowest point, yet Chief Minister Manik Saha has remained indifferent.

"The government is not taking any concrete steps to restore normalcy. Rather, it appears the BJP is trying to capitalise on terrorism and unrest to hold on to power," he claimed. The senior CPI(M) leader further said that a large section of the state's population—including many who had once supported the BJP—are now dissatisfied with the present state of affairs.

Six arrested, narcotics worth over ₹ 1.5 Crore seized in Tripura

HT Correspondent

AGARTALA, June 30: In a series of coordinated anti-narcotics operations, Tripura Police on Monday seized a significant quantity of illegal drugs worth over ₹ 1.5 crore from various parts of the state, resulting in the arrest of six individuals.

In the first operation, Kamalpur Sub-Divisional Police, acting on a tip-off, intercepted a truck with a West Bengal registration plate in Dhalai district during the early hours of the day. During the inspection, police recovered 310 kilograms of dry cannabis, packed in 31 packets, hidden in the vehicle.

"The estimated market value of the seized contraband is approximately ₹1.5 crore. We have detained one person, identified as Rabi Kumar, a resident of Bihar, in connection with the case," said Kamalpur SDPO.

In a separate crackdown, East Agartala Police arrested four alleged drug peddlers during a raid in the Lal Matia area of Maharajganj Market. Acting on specific in-



telligence, the police seized 1,200 vials of brown sugar, ₹ 7,000 in cash, a mobile phone, a scooter, and a motorcycle.

"The estimated street value of the seized brown sugar is over ₹ 1.5 lakh. The arrested individuals have been identified as Rajib Roy, Mithun Das, Rahul Roy, and Bimal Bardhan. Police will seek their remand after producing them in court," said Sadar SDPO Debnarayan Roy.

East Agartala Police Station Officer-in-Charge Rana Chatterjee confirmed that the operation was

based on credible intelligence inputs regarding ongoing drug peddling in the locality.

In another major bust, Tripura Police launched a pre-dawn raid at the residence of Sirajul Islam in Ghanimara, under the Bishalgarh Sub-Division of Sepahijala district. The raid led to the recovery of 170 kilograms of dry cannabis.

Sirajul Islam was arrested at the spot, and a case under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act has been registered at the Bishalgarh Police Station.

Parl standing committee says courtesy call on Sikkim Governor

GANGTOK, June 30: A Parliamentary panel held discussions on the development of national highways in Sikkim during a meeting with Governor Om Prakash Mathur, a Raj Bhavan statement said on Monday.

The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Transport, Tourism, and Culture on a 5-day visit to Sikkim paid a courtesy visit to Governor Om Prakash Mathur, at the Raj Bhavan here.

The delegation was led by Rajya Sabha MP and Committee Chairman, Sanjay Kumar Jha.

According to the statement, discus-



sions were held regarding the development of national highways in the region, with an emphasis on the proposed National Highway-210, which is set to connect Melli to Singtam. The committee members and the governor also deliberated on the need to strengthen tourism infrastructure in Sikkim and focus on the ongoing initiatives dedicated to the preservation, and the promotion of the state's rich local and traditional art, culture, and heritage.

The governor extended a warm welcome to the delegation and expressed confidence that their visit would signif-

icantly contribute to the state's inclusive development, infrastructural advancement, and cultural enrichment, it said.

According to the statement, Sanjay Kumar Jha is accompanied by 31 other Members of Parliament (Rajya Sabha) as part of the visiting delegation who arrived in Sikkim on June 28.

During their stay in Sikkim, the Committee will hold meetings with officials from the Tourism and Civil Aviation Department, Roads and Bridges Department, and the Cultural Affairs and Heritage Department.

Their visit will focus on tourism infrastructure in Sikkim, the development and maintenance of national highways and the promotion of cultural heritage and local and indigenous art. (PTI)

'Buffer zone' imaginary, unconstitutional line: Manipur MP after failing to visit peripheral village

IMPHAL, June 30: Inner Manipur MP Akoijam Bimol Angomcha was prevented by central forces from visiting a village located in the periphery of Imphal Valley, following which he accused the state of "establishing and nurturing an imaginary and unconstitutional line, the so-called 'buffer zone', in support of communal forces".

The Congress MP said he wanted to visit Phougaikhou Ikhai, a peripheral area along the border of Meitei-dominated Bishnupur district and Kuki-dominated Churachandpur, on Sunday as it falls under his constituency.

"I, an elected Member of Lok Sabha, was stopped from visiting Phougaikhou-Ikhai Makha Leikai Keithel (Bazar) in Bishnupur district, which falls within my

parliamentary constituency (Inner Manipur) today, despite the heavy presence of security forces, including the Indian Army, in the area guarding the place," the MP said in a late night post on X.

"Tellingly, civilians belonging to other communities (such as Pangals) are allowed to travel through the same place right in front of me, a Member of Parliament of the largest democracy in the world!" he added.

"It speaks of the clandestine ways through which the state has been nurturing a communally founded division of Manipur, and drawing up and enforcing an imaginary and unconstitutional line, the so-called 'buffer zone', in support of communal forces in the state," the Congress MP said.

Honest and determined efforts will solve the issue, not lies and a cynical approach. Let truth, justice and peace prevail, Akoijam added.

Phougaikhou Ikhai, which was one of the first areas in Manipur to have been affected by ethnic violence which broke out on May 3, 2023, is now heavily guarded by security forces.

Residents of the locality had fled after a violent mob coming from Churachandpur district vandalised and torched several houses in nearby Torbung on May 3, 2023.

The attacks led to retaliation on Kukis in the state capital Imphal on the night of May 3, further spiralling the conflict in which over 260 people have died and thousands have been rendered homeless so far. (PTI)

'Emergency throttled democratic values; youth must remember the dark chapter' Emergency was a direct attack on Constitution, democracy: Tripura CM

HT Correspondent

AGARTALA, June 30: Tripura Chief Minister Manik Saha on Monday criticised the then Congress government for declaring Emergency and said that it was a direct attack on the Indian Constitution and democracy.

Saha said this while addressing the Mock Parliament organised by BJP Mahila Morcha at Mukta Dhara Auditorium.

He said the Emergency from 1975 to 1977 was a black day and the participants here on that day would learn about the history and hold discussions on the matter.

"We forgot so many things. Especially the days of sorrow—we forgot. A person can't live keeping sorrowful days in memories," said Saha. He said that everyone knows in 1971 former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi imposed the Emergency.

"She contested the election in 1971 from Rae Bareilly in Uttar Pradesh and on 10th March, when results were declared, she won. But her nearest opponent candi-



date Raj Narain couldn't accept it and challenged it in Allahabad High Court. Everyone knows about this matter. Raj Narain said that with the help of the Government, Indira Gandhi won the election and appointed a gazetted officer as her election agent. Based on these two matters, Justice Jagmohan Lal Sinha on 12th June 1972 declared the election as null and void," said Saha.

He informed that the then

Prime Minister Indira Gandhi knocked on the door of the Supreme Court, and there Justice Krishna Iyer said that she could remain Prime Minister but couldn't vote or hold any government post.

"Later, the then Chief Minister of West Bengal, Siddhartha Shankar Ray, was summoned—he was a renowned barrister—and Indira Gandhi discussed the matter with him. Then pressure was

mounted on President Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed and Emergency was declared in 1975, which is a black day," said Saha.

He said that this is why the Mock Parliament was arranged—to make the upcoming generations aware of this black day and to discuss it. Later, they will convey it to the people as well.

"It was a direct attack on the Indian Constitution. We have seen how democracy was killed during the Congress regime. In Tripura, the then Chief Minister was Sukhamoy Sengupta and we saw how they used the Maintenance of Internal Security Act (MISA) in a wrongful way and arrested many people, starting from journalists. We saw what kind of situation was created. Many houses were vandalised. Those who protested against Emergency were arrested, and even the press was attacked. Now we are seeing what development truly means. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been working to protect the Constitution," he added.

Sikkim MP submits representation to Parl panel seeking restoration of flight services



GANGTOK, June 30: Sikkim's lone Lok Sabha MP Indra Hang Subba on Monday met Sanjay Kumar Jha, chairperson of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Transport, Tourism, and Culture, and submitted a representation seeking urgent intervention for the restoration of flight operations at Pakyong airport and connectivity in the northern parts of the state.

A statement from the MP's office said that Subba briefed Jha about the ongoing crisis faced by the people and tourism stakeholders in North Sikkim following repeated natural disasters — notably the Glacier Lake Outburst Flood

(GLOF) of October 4, 2023 and the flash flood of June 1 this year.

These events severely damaged infrastructure, particularly the Toong-Naga stretch, cutting off vital destinations such as Lachen, Lachung, Yumthang, Yumesamdong, Katao, Kalapathar, and Gurudongmar Lake, it said.

In the representation, Subba called for immediate support in areas such as the restoration of all damaged roads and bridges leading to key tourist hubs in the state, the development of climate-resilient infrastructure including elevated roads and tunnels, and a special relief package for tourism stakehold-

ers including homestays, tour operators, and transporters and banking assistance, including moratoriums, restructuring of loans, waiver of penal interest, and emergency credit lines, the statement said.

He also highlighted the strategic importance of these roads for national security due to their proximity to the India-China border, it said.

The representation also addressed issues at Pakyong airport, and requested the immediate resumption of SpiceJet flights connecting Pakyong to Delhi and other key cities, the expansion of runway from 1.75 km to 3 km to enable operation of larger aircraft and the procurement of Bombardier Q-400 aircraft by Air India and other carriers, ideal for regional operations at Pakyong.

The MP noted that Sikkim recently celebrated its golden jubilee of statehood, and that strengthening connectivity would support the state's progress.

The parliamentary committee is on a five-day visit to the Himalayan state. (PTI)



NEW DELHI, June 30: Cinema veteran Naseeruddin Shah on Monday defended Punjabi star Diljit Dosanjh amid backlash over Pakistani actor Hania Aamir's role in "Sardaar Ji 3", saying casting is not the actor-musician's responsibility.

The row began last week after Dosanjh shared the trailer of "Sardaar Ji 3", which made its debut in overseas territories on June 27 and skipped release in India.

Many social media users have called for a ban on Dosanjh, while trade unions like the All Indian Cine Workers Association (AICWA) and the Federation of Western India Cine Employees (FWICE) have criticised the Punjabi actor-musician for collaborating with Aamir in the wake of the Pahalgam terror attack.

Shah, who will feature alongside Dosanjh in filmmaker Imtiaz Ali's next film, shared a post on

his official Facebook page, saying that he firmly stands with the actor on the issue.

The veteran actor, known for taking a stand on pertinent issues, said if someone has to be blamed for casting Aamir in the movie, then it should be the film's director.

"I STAND FIRMLY WITH DILJIT. The dirty tricks dept of the Jumla Party has been awaiting a chance to attack him. They think they've got it at last. He was not responsible for the casting of the film; the director was."

"But no one knows who he is, whereas Diljit is known the world over, and he agreed to the cast because his mind is not poisoned," Shah wrote.

"Sardaar Ji 3" is helmed by Amar Hundal and also stars Neeru Bajwa.

Shah further said he has close relatives and friends in Pakistan and no one can stop him from

I stand firmly with Diljit: Naseeruddin Shah on 'Sardaar Ji 3' controversy

meeting them.

What these goons want is to put an end to personal interaction between the people of India and Pakistan. I have close relatives and some dear friends there and no one can stop me from meeting them or sending them love whenever I feel like it. And my response to those who will say 'Go to Pakistan' is 'GO TO KAILASA', he wrote.

Imtiaz Ali, who earlier directed Dosanjh in the critically-acclaimed 2024 movie "Amar Singh Chamkila", came out in support of the actor at an event last week.

"Since I know Diljit, I can say that us mein deshbhakti ka jazbaa pooraa bhara hua hai (He is a patriot at heart). He is a son of the soil. You can see at all his concerts, he shows up with the Indian flag."

"He is not a guy who fakes things... No one asked him to do it. At the end of all his concerts, he says, 'Main hoon Punjab', with the Indian flag. I don't know the details, but cast-

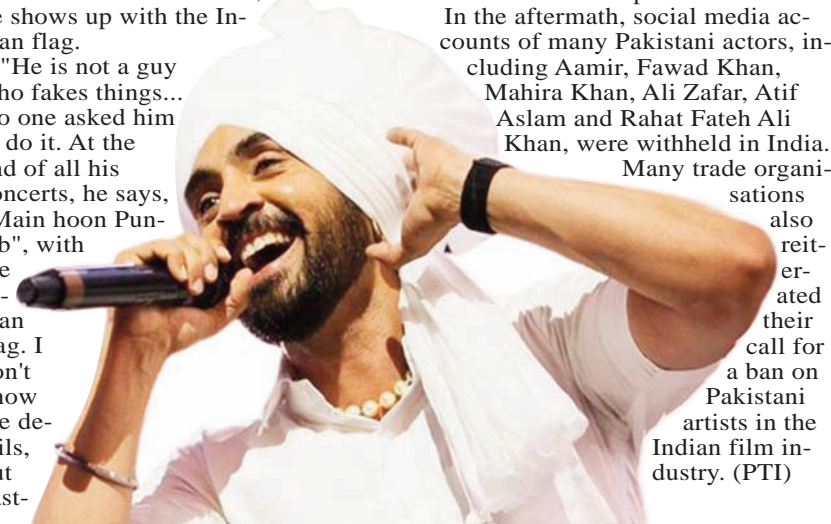
ing someone isn't the decision of the actor. I don't know how it went, but I know that uske andar desh prem bahut zyada hai (He loves his country too much)," Ali said.

In an interview with the BBC Asian Network last week, Dosanjh defended the decision to release "Sardaar Ji 3" in overseas territories. He also said when he signed the movie, there was no trouble between India and Pakistan.

Tensions between India and Pakistan escalated after the Pahalgam terror attack on April 22, which claimed 26 lives. In retaliation, the Indian armed forces carried out strikes on nine terror camps across Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) on May 7, in an operation codenamed Operation Sindoor.

In the aftermath, social media accounts of many Pakistani actors, including Aamir, Fawad Khan, Mahira Khan, Ali Zafar, Atif Aslam and Rahat Fateh Ali Khan, were withheld in India.

Many trade organisations also reiterated their call for a ban on Pakistani artists in the Indian film industry. (PTI)



Harshvardhan Rane's next film with filmmaker Omung Kumar is titled 'Silaa'

NEW DELHI, June 30: "Silaa" is the title of "Mary Kom" director Omung Kumar's next feature film, starring actor Harshvardhan Rane in the lead role. Billed as a romantic-action drama, the film will also feature Sadia Khateeb of "The Diplomat" fame opposite Rane, known for movies such as "Sanam Teri Kasam", "Taish" and "Haseen Dill-ruba".

Rane shared the first look poster of the film on his Instagram handle on Monday and said the movie will commence production on Tuesday.

"The wait ends here. Dive into the hauntingly beautiful world of #SILAA where love meets redemption. Lead actors #HarshvardhanRane & #SadiaKhateeb come together for the first time in this romantic-action drama about a love-story gone wrong, directed by #OmungKumar. Shoot begins Tomorrow," read the caption.

Kumar, whose filmography also includes "Sarbjit" and "Bhoomi", also shared the news on his official Instagram page.

"Silaa" will also star Karan Veer Mehra, who has appeared in shows and movies such as "Ragini MMS 2", "Mere Dad Ki Maruti", "Blood Money" and "Sacred Games".

The movie, which is presented by Zee Studios, is produced by Blue Lotus Pictures, Stark Entertainment, and Innovations India.

Besides "Silaa", Rane will also star in "Ek Deewane Ki Deewaniyat" alongside actor Sonam Bajwa as well as "Sanam Teri Kasam 2", a sequel to his 2016 film.

Khateeb was most recently seen in "The Diplomat", co-starring with John Abraham. She also has an upcoming project alongside Neetu Kapoor and Kapil Sharma, tentatively titled "Dadi Ki Shaadi". (PTI)



Vaani Kapoor's debut OTT series 'Mandala Murders' set for July 25 release on Netflix

MUMBAI, June 30: Streaming platform Netflix and production banner Yash Raj Films (YRF) on Monday announced that their upcoming series "Mandala Murders", headlined by Vaani Kapoor, will premiere on July 25. The show is the second series from Netflix and YRF's creative partnership, following the success of "The Railway Men" in 2023. "Mandala Murders", which marks Kapoor's series debut, is a mythological-crime thriller series that delves into ancient secrets, eerie symbols, and a trail of ritualistic killings.

It is created and directed by Gopi Puthran, known for his work on the "Mardaani" franchise. Manan Rawat serves as the co-director.

"In the eerie stillness of a town called Charandasapur, an unheard, sinister pattern of crime emerges. A series of ritu-

alistic killings linked to a centuries-old secret society sets the stage for a conspiracy driven by fate," the makers said in a press statement. The story follows detectives Rea Thomas (Kapoor) and Vikram Singh (played by "Gullak" actor Vaibhav Raj Gupta), as they are drawn into a web of secrets "as intricate as a mandala," uncovering layers of buried prophecies and dangerous beliefs. "As they decode mysterious symbols and hidden motives, they confront a secret society that has dangerously blurred the line between faith and madness," read the official synopsis. The cast also includes Surveen Chawla and Shriya Pilgaokar in pivotal roles.

"Mandala Murders" is produced by YRF Entertainment, with Aditya Chopra, Uday Chopra, Yogendra Mogre and Akshaye Widhani serving as executive producers. (PTI)

Paresh Rawal returns to 'Hera Pheri 3': It is all resolved now

NEW DELHI, June 30: Veteran actor Paresh Rawal has confirmed his return to the third installment of the comedy franchise "Hera Pheri", saying that everything is resolved now.

In May this year, Rawal had announced his exit from the third part, which would have reunited him with franchise co-stars Akshay Kumar and Suniel Shetty as well as filmmaker Priyadarshan. The news had come as a huge shock to the ardent fanbase of the hit comedy franchise. What followed was a lawsuit filed by Akshay, who is also the producer on the project through his company Cape of Good Films.

Rawal has now joined back the movie, an announcement he made during his recent appearance on a podcast.

"Pehle bhi aane hi waali thi (it was supposed to come before also), but it's just that we had to fine-tune ourselves. After all, all of them are creative, be it Priyadarshan, Akshay or Suniel. They are friends for many, many, many years," Rawal said on Himanshu Mehta's podcast. The veteran actor also said there is no "controversy", referring to Akshay's lawsuit, which sought ₹ 25 crore in damages. "I believe that when people have loved something so much, then you have to be extra careful. It is our responsibility toward the audience. The audience has given you so much adulation. You can't take things for granted. Mehnat karke unko (film) do. So, I was of the opinion that sab saath mein aaye, mehnat kare (everyone should come together and work hard). Aur kuch nahin (Nothing else). It is all resolved now," he added.

Directed by Priyadarshan, "Hera Pheri" released in 2000 and revolved around a quirky, kind-hearted garage owner Baburao Ganpatrao Apte (Rawal), a cunning loafer Raju (Kumar) and a struggling pauper Shyam (Shetty). The trio returned with a sequel "Phir Hera Pheri" in 2006, which was directed by Neeraj Vora. (PTI)



Movies reflect the phase you are in: 'Metro... In Dino' director Anurag Basu

MUMBAI, June 30: Filmmaker Anurag Basu says his growth as a storyteller mirrors the evolution he has witnessed in his personal life where women have been a major source of inspiration.

Over a career spanning more than two decades, Basu has established himself as a versatile director, exploring various genres ranging from the erotic thriller "Murder" and the romantic crime drama "Gangster" to deeply moving stories like "Barfi!" and "Kites", and even ensemble anthologies such as "Life in a... Metro" and "Ludo".

"Movies reflect the phase you are going through in your life. Initially, my films were a little erotic when I was young. After that, I grew older, had a family, matured, and then began to understand the depth of relationships in a much better way. Those depths then began to be reflected in films," Basu told PTI in an interview. "I seek inspiration from everybody, from all the women in my life, like the women who raised me, who loved me, and those who outsmarted me. So, all the stories came from there," he said.

Basu received critical acclaim for his 2007 movie "Life in a... Metro", an anthology exploring stories of love, ambition, and heartbreak in the fast-paced urban landscape of Mumbai.

He is now coming out with the movie's follow-up "Metro... In Dino", which follows the bittersweet relationships of four couples in four different cities.

The director said when he made "Life in a...

Metro", he thought of it as a standalone movie as he had no storyline for a follow-up.

"While making 'Ludo', this idea came to me. Before that, I attempted once or twice to write the film, but it didn't happen. But this time, it came along," he said. "Metro... In Dino" is part of Basu's hyperlink trilogy, which began with "Life in a... Metro" in 2007 and continued with "Ludo" in 2020. All three movies weave together interrelated tales that encapsulate the diversity of love.

"Now the trilogy is complete, and I don't want to do it again. I don't want to do a hyperlink film. I don't want to do it for the next 2-3 films," the 55-year-old director explained.

While writing interlinked stories is a big challenge, shooting the movie was a lot of fun, Basu added. "We have to write four stories, which is equal to writing four films. The audience will see it from the perspective of four stories. For me, it's a movie, and it should have a graph of up and down and everything. In 'Ludo', you felt like you were watching one movie."

"It was the same case with the old 'Metro' film. So, achieving that ease is a little difficult. You don't want to get lost in four stories, and wanting to root for all the characters and be invested in all the characters at the same time is a very tough job," he said.

"Metro... In Dino" features a star-studded cast of Anupam Kher, Neena Gupta, Pankaj Tripathi, Konkana Sen Sharma, Ali Fazal, Fatima Sana Shaikh,

Aditya Roy Kapur, and Sara Ali Khan.

For Basu, he "hit the jackpot" with the star cast of this film. "All my first choices said yes. I was lucky because there was no option B. They trusted me. So, it was a dream cast. If it wasn't there, I don't know what I would have done. Now, when I see the film, I can't see anybody else playing their character as they have played," he added.

Basu has already begun work on his next, a musical romantic drama that was initially titled "Aashiqui 3". The film, which features Kartik Aaryan and South sensation Sreeleela, is poised for its theatrical release on Diwali.

"I don't know if it's going to be called 'Aashiqui 3'. There was a story which I was making, and I didn't write a story for 'Aashiqui 3'. I was going to make this film, no matter what the title was. As of now, I don't know what the title will be. It would be right to say untitled now," the director said.

Basu is equally thrilled about his long-cherished project: a biopic on the legendary Kishore Kumar, which he had announced over a decade ago. Reports have claimed that superstar Aamir Khan will feature in the movie but Basu refused to comment on the speculation. "I've started work on it at full speed. I'll start it (filming) soon. The writing work and all is done, everything is done," Basu said.

"Metro... In Dino" is set for release in theatres on July 4. (PTI)



PSG sets sights on another trophy with a dominating win over Inter Miami



ATLANTA (USA), June 30: Paris Saint-Germain left no doubt it was Europe's top club with a historic victory in the Champions League.

Now, PSG is intent on conquering the world.

Les Rouge-et-Bleu turned in a dominating performance at the Club World Cup on Sunday, brushing aside Lionel Messi and Inter Miami with a first-half blitz that resulted in a 4-0 victory.

While the European powerhouses complained mightily

about having to play in the newly expanded tournament at the end of a grueling season, PSG is taking the 32-team competition seriously.

Outside of a 1-0 loss to Brazilian club Botafogo in group play, PSG has won three games by a cumulative 10-0 since arriving in the United States.

"It's clear that this is a historic season for us. We intend to continue making history with this competition," PSG coach Luis Enrique said

through an interpreter. "We're fighting to claim silverware. This season is very long for all the teams. But we're excited to be here."

PSG advanced to the quarterfinals, where it will face Bayern Munich next Saturday in Atlanta. The German club defeated Flamengo of Brazil 4-2.

There was a huge buildup to the game against Messi, who played two seasons at PSG before making the move to South Florida in the twilight of his brilliant career and

was facing his former coach at Barcelona.

But even with an eight-time Ballon d'Or winner leading the way, the club from Major League Soccer was simply no match for a deep, talented squad that routed Inter Milan 5-0 in the Champions League final a month ago.

João Neves scored a pair of goals for PSG, setting the tone with a header off a free kick just six minutes into the match.

He scored again in the 39th, and

Inter Miami totally fell apart in the closing minutes of the opening half. Tomás Avilés gave up an own-goal on a cross in front of the net, and Achraf Hakimi added to his brilliant campaign with another tally in stoppage time.

With a four-goal cushion at the break, PSG could start looking ahead to its next match.

"We will play our game no matter who is against us," Neves said. "We are confident."

Messi barely touched the ball in the first half as the Herons struggled mightily just to get across the just to get across the halfway line.

The pink-clad fans in the crowd of 65,574 at Mercedes-Benz Stadium tried to stir the underdogs with occasional chants of "Messi! Messi! Messi!" but it did little good.

PSG was simply too good. "With their youthful players and high caliber and an amazing coach, they didn't let us relax for one second," Inter Miami coach Javier Mascherano said through an interpreter. "I feel like this is a team that will be remembered."

In another encouraging sign for PSG, French star Ousmane Dembélé got his first action of the tournament after sustaining a left quadriceps injury while on duty with the national team. He came on as a substitute for Neves in the 62nd minute.

"It is very important for us to have injured players come back into the fold," Enrique said. "We have to focus on our goals and get our players back."

Especially when there's another trophy within reach. (AP)

Harry Kane scores twice as Bayern Munich beat Flamengo 4-2 to advance in Club World Cup



MIAMI GARDENS (USA), June 30: Harry Kane scored twice and Bayern Munich capitalized on a quick start to beat Flamengo 4-2 in the Club World Cup round of 16 on Sunday.

Germany's premier soccer club regrouped quickly from its only loss of the tournament last week against Benfica, jumping out to a 2-0 lead and then holding off Flamengo's comeback attempts to advance to the quarterfinals.

Bayern Munich will face Champions League winner Paris Saint-Germain on Saturday in Atlanta after PSG routed Lionel Messi and Inter Miami 4-0 earlier Sunday. Kane's first goal was a deflected strike nine minutes into the match that put Bayern up by a pair of goals, and the prolific goal scorer found the back of the net again on a feed from Joshua Kimmich that he whipped past goalie Agustín Rossi.

The Bundesliga champion struck early when Flamengo star Erick Pulgar headed the ball into his own net off Kimmich's corner in the sixth.

Even though Flamengo had plenty of opportunities, the Brazilian club failed to capitalize on enough of them and never got closer than a goal.

Luiz Araújo had Flamengo's best chance of the first half with a left-footed shot toward the back post, but Manuel Neuer slid over and knocked the ball away for a brilliant save.

Gerson finally put Flamengo on the board when he beat Neuer

in the 32nd to cut the 2-0 deficit in half before Leon Goretzka restored Bayern's two-goal lead.

Flamengo pulled within a goal again in the second half when Jorginho converted a penalty. Then came Kane again, finishing in the 73rd with his third goal of the tournament.

The 65,000-seat Hard Rock Stadium — home of the NFL's Miami Dolphins — has been one of the more well-attended venues of the tournament and was almost completely full Sunday, with many attendees wearing Flamengo's iconic black and red kit.

Jorginho sent Neuer the wrong way on a penalty in the 54th to cut the deficit to 3-2 and give Flamengo life before Kane put them away with his second goal.

Bayern's win ensured that at least four European clubs will advance to the quarterfinals. It also set up a rematch of the 2020 Champions League final that Bayern won 1-0.

"I know a lot of my game is judged on goals and I've been doing it throughout my career, but what maybe some of the German fans and some of the Bayern fans are realizing is that I'll do anything for the team to help us win." — Kane.

"We had our opportunities, but unfortunately they were the superior team in this fixture. ... The corner kick at the beginning of the match sort of took down our confidence a little bit." — Flamengo coach Filipe Luis through an interpreter. (AP)

South Korean duo win Dow Championship to deny Lexi Thompson a long-sought title

MIDLAND (USA), June 30: Somi Lee poured in an 8-foot birdie putt on the first playoff hole to team with fellow South Korean Jin Hee Im to win the Dow Championship on Sunday, denying Lexi Thompson her first LPGA title in six years.

Thompson's partner, Megan Khang, had a chance to extend the playoff, but she missed a 5-foot birdie putt that was on the low side of the hole from the start.

Thompson made an 8-foot birdie putt on the par-3 18th hole, with Khang still facing a 6-foot birdie attempt, as the American duo closed with a 10-under 60 in the fourballs format. They were the first to post at 20-under 260.

Lee made a 10-foot birdie putt to tie for the lead on the 17th. Im and Lee missed birdie chances on the 18th in regulation for the win.

The playoff switched to four-

somes. Thompson hit the tee shot on the 18th to just 5 feet right of the cup. Im went nearer the pin but 8 feet long, setting up Lee for the winning putt.

"Bummer to miss the last one in the playoff to force another hole, but very happy how we played," Khang said. Thompson has not won since the ShopRite LPGA Classic in 2019 and decided last summer to no longer play a full schedule. The

Dow Championship was her eighth tournament this year.

Im and Lee are in their second year on the LPGA Tour and this was their first title in America, though both were prolific winners on the Korea LPGA. Im has won six times on the KLPGA, while Lee has five KLPGA titles.

"I can't believe it," Lee said after making her winning putt.

Lindy Duncan and Miranda

Wang had a 59 in the better-ball format and tied for third, two shots out of the playoff. They were joined by Manon De Roey and Pauline Roussin-Bouchard, who teamed up for a 64.

Albane Valenzuela and Sarah Schmelzel, who had the 54-hole lead, closed with a 66 and failed to make birdie over the final seven holes. They finished fifth, three shots behind. (AP)

Michelle Kang takes over as president of Ligue 1 team Lyon as John Textor resigns

PARIS, June 30: American businesswoman Michele Kang has taken over as president of seventh-time French champion Lyon after John Textor resigned following the club's relegation over financial irregularities.

The South Korea-born Kang is also majority owner of the Lyon's women's team — OL Lyonnais — and has been on Lyon's board of directors since 2023.

Lyon said in a statement that Kang will play an "active role" in leading the club's appeal against the relegation handed down last Tuesday by the French league's soccer watchdog, known as DNCG. The case is expected to be heard within the next week.

That ruling could also decide whether Crystal Palace will be allowed to play in next season's Europa League, which Lyon also qualified for. Textor also held a 43% stake in Palace — which he has agreed to sell to New York

Jets owner Woody Johnson — and UEFA has rules against clubs with the same owner playing the same competition.

Lyon added that Textor has also resigned from the board of directors. He became Lyon president three years ago, taking over from longstanding incumbent Jean-Michel Aulas, who sold to Textor's Eagle Football Holdings.

The 66-year-old Kang will be supported in her role by Michael Gerlinger, the general manager of Eagle Football Holdings.

"A highly respected figure in European football administration, Michael brings over two decades of experience in governance, regulatory affairs and sports operations," Lyon said in its statement.

Lyon's run of Ligue 1 titles from 2001-08 made it the powerhouse of French soccer. Since Paris Saint-Germain took over at the top, fortunes have steadily dipped for Lyon. (AP)

US get past Costa Rica in Gold Cup quarterfinals on penalty kicks

MINNEAPOLIS (USA), June 30: Damian Downs scored in the sixth round of a shootout after three saves by Matt Freese, sending the U.S. to the semifinals of the CONCACAF Gold Cup with a 4-3 penalty-kicks win over Costa Rica after a 2-2 tie on Sunday night.

The U.S. advanced to a Wednesday matchup in St. Louis against Guatemala, which upset Canada on penalty kicks in the opener of the quarterfinal doubleheader. "They showed today great character," U.S. coach Mauricio Pochettino said.

Freese batted away shootout attempts by Juan Pablo Vargas, Francisco Calvo and Andy Rojas. "Penalties are my thing," Freese said. "On the plane ride over here to Minnesota I was studying the penalties and I've been studying them all week."

Mexico plays Honduras in the other semifinal on Wednesday in Santa Clara, California. The

championship is in Houston on July 6. The U.S. has reached the semifinals in 17 of 18 Gold Cups, including 13 straight since a penalty-kicks loss to Colombia in a 2000 quarterfinal.

Diego Luna and Max Arfsten scored in regulation for the No. 16 U.S., which faced its highest-ranked opponent of the tournament in Costa Rica (54th) after breezing through the group stage with an 8-1 goal differential.

Alonso Martinez scored the tying goal for the Ticos in the 71st minute with a left-footed shot after Carlos Mora split Luca de La Torre and Arfsten to take a shot on Freese and seize the rebound to set up Martinez.

CONCACAF changed the rules for this edition of the biennial championship for North America, Central America and the Caribbean, eliminating extra time except for the championship game. John Tolkin had the first chance to win the shootout for the



U.S. Keylor Navas knocked down his try in the fifth round.

Freese then denied Rojas with a diving hand, climbing to his feet while nodding his head and sticking out his tongue toward his cheering teammates at midfield. That set up the winner by the 20-year-old Downs.

Missing the tournament for the

U.S. are regulars Christian Pulisic, Yunus Musah, Weston McKennie, Tim Weah, Gio Reyna, Antonee Robinson, Folarin Balogun and Sergiño Dest, due to a variety of reasons from injuries to rest to Club World Cup commitments.

The Ticos played without four key players. Forward Manfred

Ugalde, who had three goals in the tournament, and midfielder Carlos Mora were suspended for yellow-card accumulation. Defender Ariel Lassiter (broken left hand) and forward Warren Madrigal (broken left leg) were sidelined by injuries.

Three of Costa Rica's six goals during the group stage came by penalty kick, and Calvo added another one in the 12th minute after a foul by Arfsten. Calvo went low to zip the ball just out of reach of a diving Freese.

Malik Tillman put a 37th-minute penalty kick off a post and Navas knocked away Arfsten's attempt off the rebound. Luna scored his first international goal in the 43rd by rocketing a shot off the chest of defender Alexis Gamboa. Tillman made amends for his miss early in the second half by poking a pass ahead for Arfsten, who surged in from a wing to send the ball into the opposite corner for a 2-1 lead. (AP)

French soccer union blasts Club World Cup over 'massacre' of player welfare

PARIS, June 30: France's union of professional soccer players launched a scathing attack on the Club World Cup on Sunday, saying it is "urgent to stop this massacre" amid ongoing concerns about extreme player workloads.

The UNFP also accused FIFA president Gianni Infantino of living "in an ivory tower" by ignoring the impact congested calendars have on players worldwide.

"The incongruity of the situation is not lost on anyone, except, of course, Gianni Infantino and his flatterers. From the height of his ivory tower, which he parades around the world, the FIFA president is not bothered by the fate that the international calendar reserves for the game's leading players," the UNFP said in a statement early Sunday morning. "His (Infantino's) Club World Cup proves, to the point of absurdity, that it is urgent to stop this massacre game. He

flouts the physical and mental health of players for a few more dollars." The UNFP statement said the Club World Cup comes at the end of an already exhausting season, and thereby ignores "collective bargaining agreements (which) almost everywhere, provide for an incompressible period of three weeks of rest for footballers between two seasons."

FIFA was approached for comment by The Associated Press.

Days before the start of the month-long Club World Cup, which ends on July 13, soccer chiefs faced renewed calls to safeguard players over growing fears of injuries and burnout.

The newly expanded tournament involving 32 of the world's best teams has faced pushback since FIFA announced it would be added to an already saturated calendar. The tournament will be played every four years, sandwiched in



between the men's World Cup, European Championship and Copa America. It went ahead against the backdrop of legal challenges in Europe, strike threats and repeated concerns over players' mental and physical welfare due to too many games. "The UNFP, like FIFPRO and FIFPRO Europe, has been

protesting for years against the drastic increase in workloads," The UNFP added. "But also against the harmful repercussions for domestic football of a calendar that FIFA is still alone in building today."

Last September, Manchester City midfielder Rodri suffered a severe knee injury soon after say-

ing players were close to going on strike over excessive workloads.

Champions League winner Paris Saint-Germain is one of the biggest sides involved in the Club World Cup.

After winning the Champions League on May 31, key PSG players like Ousmane Dembélé and Désiré Doué played for France and then went to the United States soon after for the Club World Cup.

Some French clubs have already resumed training for the upcoming Ligue 1 season, which begins mid-August, while others start next week. PSG was not able to push back its start to the Ligue 1 season.

"We don't see how or why the Parisians should not benefit from the three weeks of complete rest they are entitled to," the UNFP said, adding that the toll of extra games for PSG's players could impact the national team in early September. (AP)

Guatemala upset Canada on penalty kicks in Gold Cup quarterfinal thriller

MINNEAPOLIS (USA), June 30: José Morales sent Guatemala to the semifinals of the CONCACAF Gold Cup with the clincher over Canada in a 6-5 penalty-kick decision after a 1-1 draw on Sunday. Rubio Rubin scored the tying goal with a header in the 69th minute for Guatemala, which is 106th in the FIFA rankings and reached the semifinals for the first time since 1996.

Guatemala will meet the United States in St. Louis on Wednesday, while Mexico plays Honduras in the other semifinal in Santa Clara, California. The championship is in Houston on July 6. The seven-round shootout was a fitting end to a fast-paced and feisty contest that went down as one of the best of this biennial tournament for North America, Central America and the Caribbean. The blue-and-white-clad fans of Guatemala flocked to U.S. Bank Stadium and made the announced crowd of 32,289 sound

almost like a sold-out NFL game inside the home of the Minnesota Vikings with the translucent roof. Jonathan David scored on a penalty kick in the 30th minute for 30th-ranked Canada, which won its group with two wins and one draw but had to play the second half with 10 men. Canada has been bounced from the quarterfinals in four of the last five Gold Cup tournaments. Canada forward Jacob Sheffield was ejected in first-half stoppage time for a second yellow card, after lowering his elbow during a mid-air collision for the ball that knocked Guatemala defender Steven Robles to the ground.

Dayne St. Clair, an MLS All-Star who plays just a few miles away from the Reds in regulation against a consistent if erratic attack as Guatemala had an 11-5 edge in shot attempts and a 58% possession rate. (AP)

Confident India hope for Mandhana encore, Harmanpreet availability in 2nd T20I against England

BRISTOL, June 30: A confident India will aim to capitalise on opener Smriti Mandhana's sublime form and hope for skipper Harmanpreet Kaur's availability to achieve another big win when the second Women's T20I against England is played here on Tuesday.

Mandhana's maiden T20I century in the opening game at Nottingham guided India to a massive 97-run win, and the likely presence of skipper Harmanpreet -- who was rested for the first game as a precautionary measure following a head injury sustained during a warm-up match -- for the second game would only add to the hosts' worries.

Mandhana's stroke-filled century would have rung alarm bells in the English camp as it tries to find answers to the dramatic batting collapse it suffered while chasing a steep 210-run total.

It was a day when Mandhana's entertaining innings brought the hosts under tremendous pressure, which was later exploited by the Indian bowlers.

India struck twice early and the slow bowler, especially left-arm spinner Shree Charani who grabbed four wickets in her maiden T20I, complete the demolition job.

Mandhana, who led the T20I



run-scoring charts last year, seemed to have picked up from where she had left off, smashing all the English bowlers with impunity.

Though the left-handed batter said after the match that the T20I format wasn't her forte, it was a statement the cricket experts would take with a pinch of salt.

The India vice-captain's power-hitting was on full display as she collected most of her boundaries on the off-side, while her three maximums came on the on-side.

The long camp in Bengaluru followed by their early arrival in Eng-

land and a couple of tour matches seem to have helped the Indian players get into the rhythm of the shortest format as they showed no signs of rustiness in Nottingham.

India looked like a well-knit unit despite missing their premier seamers, Renuka Singh Thakur and Pooja Vastrakar, who are injured.

Harleen Deol at No. 3 looked the right call as she forged a 94-run stand for the second wicket with Mandhana to set up the platform for a big total.

While the bilateral white-ball series may not have immediate im-

plications, it will certainly give the young Indian players the look and feel of the things to come when the T20 World Cup is held next year in England.

And, the 20-year-old debutant Shree Charani did really well in her maiden outing, delivering a dream spell of 3.5-0-12-4 to set up India's win by displaying a lot of discipline and focus to strangle the England batters.

England skipper Nat Sciver-Brunt (66) waged a lone battle even as Indian spinners enjoyed a cakewalk, with Deepti Sharma and Radha Yadav too chipping in with a couple of wickets each.

Squads:

India: Harmanpreet Kaur (c), Yastika Bhatia (wk), Harleen Deol, Richa Ghosh (wk), Jemimah Rodrigues, Shafali Verma, Amanjot Kaur, Sneha Rana, Sayali Satghare, Deepti Sharma, Kranti Goud, Arundhati Reddy, Shree Charani, Radha Yadav.

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

Match starts at 11:00pm IST.(PTI)

Lack of variety in India's bowling attack is concerning: Chappell



LONDON, June 30: Australia batting legend Greg Chappell believes India paid the price for a lack of variety in their bowling attack during the first Test against England and has called for the inclusion of Arshdeep Singh and Kuldeep Yadav, whom he hails as the "best wrist-spinner since Shane Warne", in the playing XI.

India lost the opening Test of the five-match series by five wickets at Headingley, where they were also guilty of dropping as many as eight catches.

"As disappointing as the fielding in Headingley was, it was not the main reason India lost the Test. Most of India's problems were self-inflicted. Perhaps the most expensive error was the no-ball that gave Harry Brook an early life in the second innings," Chappell wrote in his column for 'ESPNcricinfo'.

However, the former Australian skipper felt that the sameness of India's right-arm seamers -- Mohammed Siraj, Prasidh Krishna, and Shardul Thakur -- posed a bigger tactical problem than the fielding issue.

"More concerning to me, though, is the lack of variety in the bowling attack. Apart from Jasprit Bumrah, India's seamers are too similar - all right-arm, medium-fast, operating at comparable angles.

"There is a reason why wickets often fall after a

change of bowling. It forces the batter to recalibrate. That variability isn't available to Shubman Gill with his current crop." The 76-year-old former India coach called for the inclusion of left-arm seamer Arshdeep and wrist-spinner Kuldeep to add much-needed contrast to the attack.

"Without Bumrah, I'd like to see left-arter Arshdeep Singh added to the mix and Kuldeep Yadav, possibly the best wrist spinner since Shane Warne, included in the attack."

At Headingley, pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah returned match figures of 5/140 from 43.4 overs. In contrast, Thakur and Krishna ended with 2/89 from 16 overs and 5/220 from 35 overs respectively.

"Even with Bumrah in the mix, the rest of the attack has to be more disciplined. I didn't see two consecutive balls land in a dangerous place. They were either too full, too short or too wide. Bowlers have to work in partnerships as much as batters.

"All England have to do at present is to see off Bumrah and they know the pressure will go with him," Chappell wrote. Chappell also criticised the Indian team management's preference for batting depth over a balanced bowling attack.

"I don't agree that an extra batter who bowls should be selected as insurance against top-order collapses. The top six must be trusted to deliver the runs and that the best combination to secure the requisite 20 wickets is available to the captain," he said. India opted to go with all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja as the lone spinner at Leeds. "Jadeja is not a front-line spinner in English conditions. If his batting is considered good enough, he can be a support spinner; otherwise a rethink is necessary. If India are to reverse their fortunes in this series then a better balanced team is required.

"The selectors are the ones under pressure now. If batters and bowlers have to be prepared to take risks to score runs and take wickets, they too have to have the courage to take bold decisions." (PTI)

Azhar Mahmood appointed Pakistan's acting red-ball head coach



LAHORE, June 30: Former all-rounder Azhar Mahmood was on Monday elevated to the post of Pakistan's acting red-ball head coach until the conclusion of his current contract, which runs until April next year.

Mahmood had signed a two-year contract with the Pakistan Cricket Board in April last year as assistant coach across formats along with Australia's Jason Gillespie (Tests) and South Africa's Gary Kirsten (limited overs), who have both moved on.

"The Pakistan Cricket Board today announces Azhar Mahmood as the acting red-ball head coach of the Pakistan men's team. Azhar will serve in this role until the conclusion of his current contract," the PCB said in a statement.

"A seasoned cricketing mind, Azhar Mahmood steps into the role with an impressive portfolio of experience. Having served as the assistant head coach of the national side, Azhar has long been a pivotal part of the team's strategic core.

"His deep knowledge of the game, combined with hands-on international exposure and proven success in the English county circuit, make him exceptionally well-suited for this position," the PCB added.

PCB highlighted Mahmood's achievements in winning County Championship titles for Surrey as their assistant coach.

"His red-ball pedigree is underscored by two County Championship titles -- an achievement that speaks volumes about his leadership, tactical acumen and unwavering commitment to excellence," it said.

"The PCB is confident that under Azhar's guidance, the red-ball squad will continue to grow in strength, discipline and performance on the global stage," the board added.

The 50-year-old Mahmood played 21 Tests and 143 ODIs for Pakistan between 1996 and 2007. (PTI)

Ayush clinches maiden BWF World Tour title at US Open; Tanvi finishes runner-up

IOWA (US), June 30: Rising shuttler Ayush Shetty notched up his first BWF World Tour title with a commanding straight-games victory over Canada's Brian Yang in the men's singles final of the US Open Super 300, ending India's title drought this season.

The 20-year-old, a 2023 junior world championships bronze winner, defeated the third seeded Yang 21-18, 21-13 in 47 minutes on Sunday to cap off an impressive week, which included a comeback-from-behind win against top seed Chou Tien Chen in the semifinals.

It was Shetty's third victory over Yang, having defeated him twice earlier this year at Malaysia and Taipei Open.

In the women's singles final, 16-year-old Tanvi Sharma finished runner-up after a fighting three-game loss to top seed Beiwen Zhang of the United States.

Playing her first World Tour final, the unseeded teenager went down 11-21, 21-16, 10-21 in 46 minutes.

The men's singles final began evenly with scores tied at 6-6, but Shetty, seeded fourth, surged ahead with a string of winners to lead 11-6 at the interval.

Yang narrowed the gap to 13-11 and drew level at 16-16, but Shetty regained control with well-placed shots to secure the opening game with a decisive jump smash.



The second game saw the Mangalore shuttler race to a 7-2 lead before Yang briefly caught up, but the Indian maintained composure, mixing variations and sharp defence to keep his opponent at bay.

Leading 17-12, Shetty closed out the match with a cross-court punch followed by a powerful smash to seal his maiden World Tour title.

Shetty had reached the finals of 2023 Odisha Masters Super 100 tournament, besides making the summit clash at the 2023 Bahrain International and 2024 Dutch Open.

In the women's singles final,

Sharma struggled to settle early as Zhang built an 11-5 lead in the opening game, which the Indian couldn't breach.

In the second game, Sharma came out attacking, taking a 4-0 lead and maintaining her advantage despite Zhang pushing her with long rallies.

From 11-9 at the interval, Sharma continued her aggressive approach, forcing errors from Zhang and taking the game to force a decider.

However, Sharma ran out of steam in the third game as Zhang surged to an 11-4 lead at the break and closed out the match comfortably to claim the title. (PTI)

Pataudi medal was an afterthought, ECB should have done better: Farokh Engineer

BIRMINGHAM, June 30: A close friend of the late Mansur Ali Khan Pataudi, Farokh Engineer says the ECB erred in handling the renaming of the India-England Test series trophy and its decision to introduce the winning captain's medal after his former teammate's family name was clearly an afterthought to "appease" supporters like him.

The ECB had instituted the Pataudi Trophy for the India-England series in 2007 until renaming it to the Anderson-Tendulkar trophy before the start of the ongoing five-match series. The decision was criticised by the likes of Sunil Gavaskar.

Engineer too was left disappointed but at the same time, he felt the achievements of Sachin Tendulkar and James Anderson were unquestionable. Tendulkar approached the ECB which led to the home board introducing a winning captain's medal after the Pataudi family.

"Well Tiger Pataudi was a great friend of mine. Great colleague of mine. We played a lot of Test cricket. Great heritage, great family. I was most happy when the trophy was named after him back in 2007," the Manchester-based Engineer told PTI.

"On one hand I was very disappointed that the Pataudi name was removed, I would love Tiger's name to go on but instead powers that be decided with Anderson and Sachin who are legends of the game.

"It (introducing Pataudi medal) was obviously an afterthought, they should have announced it in the beginning that would have more credibility but at least



they have done something. Common sense has prevailed and hope the Pataudi name always remains."

The Pataudis have deep ties to the India-England cricketing landscape. Iftekhar Ali Khan Pataudi and his son Mansur both captained India and both played county cricket in England.

On the other hand, Tendulkar is the leading run getter in Test cricket while Anderson has the most wickets in the traditional format as a fast bowler.

"...the achievements of Tendulkar and Anderson can't be argued against. There are two sides to the story. They have named the medal after Pataudis which is a very thoughtful thing.

"That must be a second choice to appease a lot of Pataudi supporters of which I am one but you can't blame them for naming the trophy after Sachin and Anderson," Engineer said.

"The whole issue is debatable but they have kept the name. I hope they invite Sharmila Tagore (Mansur's wife) and his son Saif Ali Khan to present the medal. Last series they didn't do that. Fingers were pointed at ECB for that. Hopefully they give them due credit."

India trail the five-match series 0-1 after losing at Headingley from a commanding position.

Pacer Jasprit Bumrah will only be playing three games out of five due to workload management but Engineer wants him play as many games as possible. There is intense speculation that he would be sitting out of the second Test here, starting July 2.

"He is your trump card. He needs to be mothballed as he is far too precious for the Indian team. Hope he plays majority of the games," the 87-year-old added. (PTI)

Steve Smith trained in a baseball cage for Australia's Caribbean test

ST GEORGE'S (GRENADA), June 30: Charismatic Australian batter Steve Smith's quick recovery from a "compound dislocation" in the little finger of his right hand, and his sooner-than-expected return to the squad for the second Test against West Indies has a baseball twist to it. Smith has suffered an injury to his right little finger while trying to take a difficult catch off South African captain Temba Bavuma at first slip during the World Test Championship final at Lord's earlier this month.

The 36-year-old former Australian skipper immediately left London after his wound was cleaned, stitched and his finger placed in a splint. Instead of waiting for the injury to heal by itself, he decided to hit the "baseball cage" in New York, where he owns an apartment.

The injury forced him to miss the opening game of the three-Test series against the Caribbean in Barbados from June 25 to 27, which Australia won by 159 runs. In New York, he began by facing tennis balls and other soft balls in the nets before facing the hard cricket ball.

"My mate actually told me about it, which was ideal because it was pretty warm there (in New York)," Smith was quoted as saying in ESPNcricinfo.

"Underneath this bridge there was a batting cage, and he was able to throw me a few balls there, so it was good to be in the shade, it was pretty hot there," he said.

A baseball cage is a netted enclosure, quite similar to the cricket nets, used by baseball players to practice hitting. It provides a contained area where batters can safely swing and hit baseballs, without the risk of stray balls leaving the hitting area.

Smith sent the footage of his batting to the Australian medical staff in the Caribbean, who were happy with his progress.

The report added that Smith had his stitches removed on Sunday and his finger now only has a thinner splint as he gears up for his return for the second Test at St George's from July 3.

"For me, it'll just feel like training as normal, I think. I don't really feel any pain or anything. (I'm) just getting used to the splint on and the slight limited movement.

"It's not too bad, I've got a lot of movement there now, so that feels good. Hitting the ball felt completely fine," said Smith

"Fielding some balls in front of the wicket will probably be the strangest thing for me, I don't think I've ever done that in a Test match. Fielding at either probably mid-on or mid-off or fine leg, is a bit different to standing at the second or first slip," he added. (PTI)



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