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## 95 pc people leave Paikan forest ahead of eviction drive: Govt



**GOALPARA, July 11:** A day before a scheduled eviction drive to clear encroachment on 1,040 bighas of land in the Paikan Reserve Forest in Assam's Goalpara district, about 95 per cent of alleged illegal settlers have already moved out from there, an official said on Friday.

The district administration is

geared up to lend its support to the forest department for a smooth anti-encroachment operation, he said. The eviction drive, which was scheduled to be carried out on Friday, was postponed by a day, keeping in mind the Friday prayer in the Muslim-majority area. Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma had said.

"The district administration will look after ensuring the law and order situation, and we have completed preparations for it," Goalpara district commissioner (DC) Khanindra Choudhury told PTI.

He also said, "Around 90-95 per cent of the illegal settlers have already moved out from the site, dismantling their establishments and carrying away their belongings."

Only the brick structures or structures which cannot be moved are still there, he said.

"Security and other arrangements from our end have been completed to ensure smooth operation," the DC added.

Goalpara Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) Tejas Mariswamy had said earlier that the eviction drive would clear encroachment on around 1,040 bighas of land in the Paikan Reserve Forest of Krishnai Forest Range. "There are 1,080 families (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

## Governor wraps up two-day Karbi Anglong visit Acharya satisfied with KA's law and order scene

HT Bureau

**GUWAHATI, July 11:** Governor Laxman Prasad Acharya concluded his two-day visit to Karbi Anglong on Friday, expressing satisfaction over the pace of development in the region and underlining the economic potential of local sectors such as dairy and coffee.

According to an official statement, the Governor interacted with beneficiaries of welfare schemes, inspected infrastructure projects, and held reviews with officials during the tour, which he described as a testimony to the progress made possible by peace and coordination in the council areas.

During his visit to a milk processing plant in Manja, the Governor emphasised the need for coordinated efforts between the farming community and government agencies to harness the dairy sector's potential as a pillar of the local economy.



He said the Manja plant could significantly enhance household incomes and help achieve economic self-reliance for rural and semi-urban populations in the district.

Highlighting the importance of public service delivery, the Governor also visited a Jal Jeevan Mis-

sion project site at Longnit. He reviewed the grievance redressal mechanisms in place, including the maintenance of beneficiary registers, and interacted with locals to check their access to central welfare schemes such as the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) and PM-Kisan.

The Governor reiterated the importance of ensuring efficient and transparent delivery of all government schemes at the grassroots.

In the health sector, Acharya visited the Mohongdijua Subsidiary Health Centre, where he held interactions with doctors, nurses, and ASHA workers to understand the nature and reach of health services being provided, particularly to women, children and the elderly.

He stressed the need for every eligible citizen to be issued an Ayushman Bharat health card and took stock of staffing levels, medicine availability, and infrastructural bottlenecks at the facility.

The Governor also met with PMAY beneficiaries to assess the ground-level impact of the housing scheme and later visited the Regional Coffee Research Centre at 5th Mile. In his discussions with officials there, he encouraged a focus on (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

## India test fires Astra beyond visual missile

**NEW DELHI, July 11:** India on Friday successfully test fired Astra beyond visual air-to-air missile from Su-30 Mk-1 aircraft off the coast of Odisha, demonstrating its indigenous defence capabilities.

The missile has a range exceeding 100 km and is equipped with state-of-the-art guidance and navigation system, officials said.

"The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and the Indian Air Force (IAF) successfully conducted the flight-test of indigenous beyond visual range air-to-air missile 'Astra' equipped with indigenous radio frequency seeker from Su-30 Mk-1 platform," the defence ministry said.

During the tests, two launches were carried out against high-speed unmanned aerial targets at different ranges, target aspects and launch platform conditions, it said.

"In both the cases, the missiles destroyed the targets with pinpoint accuracy," the ministry said in a statement.

It said all subsystems performed

as per expectations including the radio frequency seeker which has been indigenously designed and developed by the DRDO.

"The flawless performance of the Astra weapon system was validated through flight data captured by range tracking instruments deployed by Integrated Test Range, Chandipur," it added.

These successful flight tests have re-established the accuracy and reliable performance of Astra weapon system with indigenous seeker, the ministry said. In addition to various laboratories of DRDO, more than 50 public and private industries including Hindustan Aeronautics Limited have contributed towards development of the weapon system.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh complimented the DRDO, the IAF and industry partners involved in the design and development of the radio frequency seeker.

The successful testing of the missile with indigenous seeker is a major milestone in critical defence technology, he said. (PTI)

## FM Sitharaman praises Meghalaya's progress, full utilisation of ₹ 5,400 crore SASCI funds

**SHILLONG, July 11:** Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Friday praised Meghalaya's progress under Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma, calling the state a model of effective and purposeful development.

She highlighted the state's exemplary utilisation of its entire allocation of ₹ 5,400 crore under the Special Assistance to States for Capital Investment (SASCI), setting an example for other states to follow.

Speaking at a programme, Sitharaman said, "While some states are unable to fully utilise their shares, Meghalaya has effectively used its entire allocation to build capital assets. I will put on record my appreciation of Meghalaya's efforts."

She reaffirmed the Centre's commitment to the Northeastern region, adding, "The government looks at the region as one to empower, act, strengthen and transform."

The FM also pointed out key development achievements in the

state, including the construction of over 540 km of roads and a five-fold increase in optical fibre coverage since 2014.

She praised the state's performance in centrally sponsored schemes such as the Jal Jeevan Mission, PM Awas Yojana, PM Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana, and the Swachh Bharat Mission.

CM Sangma, while addressing the gathering, said the state government follows a model of purpose-based, target-based, and result-based governance.

He reaffirmed the government's ambition of making Meghalaya one of the top 10 states in India by 2032 and informed her that the state was now on the verge of becoming a \$6-billion economy, with a growth rate nearing 15 per cent, significantly higher than the national average.

The CM also highlighted how the state leveraged a large number of schemes and projects through Externally Aided Projects (EAPs), which have served as a key source of funding for smaller states.

The total funding through EAPs is nearing ₹ 12,000 crore, supporting a wide range of development initiatives across Meghalaya, he said.

A series of important projects were launched during Sitharaman's visit.

Among them was the initiative to establish digital libraries in remote areas of the state, with a total budget of ₹ 162 crore under SASCI.

Implemented by the State Rural Employment Society, the project aims to set up 750 digital libraries across rural areas, connecting youth to the National Digital Library and fostering a reading culture.

The redevelopment of Umiang Lake was another key project inaugurated with a funding of Rs 120.81 crore under SASCI.

The initiative aims to transform the waterbody into a world-class eco-tourism hub, expected to attract over 1.27 lakh tourists annually and create nearly 4,000 jobs.

Sitharaman also laid the foundation for (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

## Himanta discusses issues raised by Karbi conglomerate

**GUWAHATI, July 11:** The Assam government will press for a tripartite meeting involving the Centre and a conglomerate of 21 organisations of Karbi Anglong for resolving their demands, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said on Friday.

Sarma met with representatives of the Forum for Hills Autonomous State Movement (FHASM) Alliance here to discuss the issues raised by it.

The alliance, involving political as well as apolitical organisations, has been pressing for a "state within state" for Karbi Anglong district, among other demands.

"Our tribal sisters and brothers are an intrinsic part of Assam's social fabric. We are committed to empower them and protect their unique heritage," Sarma said in a post on X after the meeting.

The Chief Minister's Office (CMO), in another post, said Sarma discussed the ongoing concerns and aspirations of the forum during the meeting.



"The meeting focused on mutual respect, safeguarding unique identity, inclusive development and adherence to constitutional processes to address the forum's aspirations," it said.

The chief minister stated that "he would impress upon for a tripartite meeting involving the Central Government, State Government and FHASM to find an amicable resolution to their demands", the CMO said.

Sarma also reviewed the implementation of the 2021 Karbi Accord provisions, and reiterated the importance of peaceful engagement and tangible solutions in the interest of the people, it added. (PTI)

## Assam and Bihar face severe inundation: CWC

**NEW DELHI, July 11:** Twenty river sites across India remain under flood risk, with one location in Assam and two in Bihar experiencing severe flood conditions, the Central Water Commission (CWC) said in its daily flood bulletin issued Friday.

The sites under severe flood conditions are located along the Brahmaputra and its tributaries in Assam's Golaghat, and Ganga's tributaries of Bagmati and Gandak in Muzaffarpur and Gopalganj respectively.

Water levels at these sites have crossed the danger mark, the bulletin noted.

Overall, the CWC has flagged flood concerns in 20 locations, primarily in Assam, Bihar, Odisha, Uttar Pradesh, and West Bengal.

The Brahmaputra and Ganga river (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

## Tourists, commuters advised to avoid travel to Dawki via Pynursla due to landslide risks

**SHILLONG, July 11:** Tourists and commuters have been advised to avoid travelling to Dawki via Pynursla due to the high risk of landslides along the Shillong-Dawki road in Meghalaya, which is currently under construction, officials said on Friday.

Dawki, located along the India-Bangladesh border, is one of Meghalaya's most popular tourist destinations, known for the crystal-clear waters of the Umngot River.

Thousands of tourists visit the area annually for boat rides, kayaking, cliff jumping, and to witness the picturesque views of the river and surrounding hills.

The Additional Deputy Commissioner of East Khasi Hills district in charge of Pynursla Civil Sub-Division said that the road stretch be-



tween Laitlyngkot and Lyngkyrdem and the overall Shillong-Dawki route remains highly vulnerable to landslides owing to incessant rainfall.

Authorities have urged the public to refrain from unnecessary travel

along the route in the coming days as a precautionary measure.

The Shillong-Dawki road project, spanning around 85 km, is being implemented by the National Highways and Infrastructure Development (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

## India presents candidature for Int'l Maritime Organisation Council

**LONDON, July 11:** India has presented its candidature for re-election to the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) Council at the organisation's 134th session in London, where the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways highlighted key aspects of maritime safety and gender inclusivity.

At a special India-themed reception at the IMO Headquarters on Thursday evening, Ministry Secretary T K Ramachandran and Indian High Commissioner to the UK Vikram Doraiswami announced the decision to seek re-election in Category B of the Council.

The election for the 2025-26 biennium will take place at the organisation's Assembly later this year and follows India's re-election with the highest tally back in De-

cember 2023.

"India embraces the philosophy of One Earth, One Family, One Future, and we bring this vision to life through fostering robust and collaborative maritime efforts," said Ramachandran in his address at the reception.

"Under our Vision 2047, we see maritime growth as a corner of global progress, and we deeply value a growing engagement with the IMO and its member states... we have several pillars, including shipbuilding, ship recycling, ship financing, ship ownership and ship flagging, the entire ecosystem," he said.

The senior official highlighted the ministry's plans to invest USD 1 trillion in the sector over the next 25 years as he invited representa-

tives from around the world to "partner with India in this quest for us to become one of the leading maritime nations in the world, and I trust that we will continue to receive your support as we seek re-election to the IMO Council".

India's candidature falls under the Category of 10 states with "the largest interest in international seaborne trade", alongside Australia, Brazil, Canada, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden and the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

"I do want to emphasise how much we value the partnerships that we have forged with many delegations here, across the years, and our effort to see the IMO as a central pillar of the international order in the (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

## 'Need to stop oscillating between fears of overpopulation and population collapse'

## India's population at crossroads, not a crisis: Population Foundation of India

**NEW DELHI, July 11:** An NGO, Population Foundation of India, has urged a shift away from fear-driven debates on overpopulation or fertility decline, calling instead for policies that centre on dignity, rights, and opportunities, particularly for women, youth, and the elderly.

The NGO, in a statement on World Population Day 2025 on Friday, asserted that India's population challenges are not about numbers but about justice, equity, and investment in human potential.

"India's population story is not a crisis, it's a crossroads," Poonam Muttreja, Executive Director of the Population Foundation of India, said during a function marking the occasion.

World Population Day is being observed under the global theme: "empowering young people to create the



families they want in a fair and hopeful world".

The NGO asserted that India's pop-

ulation challenges are not about numbers but about justice, equity, and investment in human potential.

"We must stop oscillating between fears of 'overpopulation' and 'population collapse,' and instead focus on what really matters, gender equality, reproductive autonomy, and inclusive public investment," she added.

The foundation's statement focused on three key areas for policymakers.

The first is realising the gender dividend; family planning must move beyond female sterilisation to a range of contraceptives, with both men and women sharing responsibility.

"We need men to be part of the solution as active participants, not merely as supporters. It's men's onus to ensure women's safety at home as well as at the workplace," Muttreja said.

"Family planning has long been seen as a woman's responsibility, but reproductive health is a shared responsibility," she added. (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

## Byrnihat most polluted city in India in first half of 2025: Analysis

**NEW DELHI, July 11:** Byrnihat, located on the Assam-Meghalaya border, ranked as the most polluted city in India in the first half of 2025 while Delhi stood a distant second, according to a new analysis.

According to the analysis by independent research organisation Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air (CREA), Byrnihat recorded an average PM2.5 concentration of 133 micrograms per cubic metre, while Delhi's PM2.5 levels reached twice the national ambient air quality standard at 87 micrograms per cubic metre.

Hajipur (Bihar), Ghaziabad, Gurugram, Sasaram (Bihar), Patna, Talcher (Odisha), Rourkela (Odisha) and Rajgir (Bihar) were the other cities in the top 10 most polluted list.

Aizawl in Mizoram was the cleanest city in the country in the first half of the year.

From January to June, CREA said, particulate matter data was available for over 80 per cent of the days in 239 out of 293 cities with continuous ambient air quality monitoring stations (CAAQMS).

Among the 239 cities, 122 exceeded the annual National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) of 40 micrograms per cubic metre, while 117 cities remained below the annual

limit.

CREA said that while the introduction of vehicle restrictions, such as the end-of-life ban in Delhi, is an important component of air quality management, focusing solely on vehicular emissions risks overlooking other critical year-round sources of pollution.

According to source apportionment studies from the Portal for Regulation of Air Pollution in Non-Attainment Cities (PRANA) and IIT Delhi, in addition to transport (17 per cent-28 per cent) and dust (17 per cent-38 per cent), several other sectors contribute significantly to PM levels, including residential combustion (8 per cent-10 per cent), agricultural burning (4 per cent-7 per cent) and industrial activities and power plants (22 per cent-30 per cent).

These studies consistently show that Delhi-NCR's air quality crisis is not solely due to vehicles or seasonal biomass burning, but is also driven by continuous emissions from multiple sources across sectors.

For example, despite clear Supreme Court directives, critical pollution control technologies such as flue gas desulfurisation (FGD) systems are still absent in most thermal power plants near Delhi, CREA's (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)



# UK joins capital boost in Eutelsat, total investment rises to €1.5 billion

**HT Bureau**  
**GUWAHATI, July 11:** The United Kingdom has announced its decision to participate in the planned capital increase of global satellite communications provider Eutelsat, joining other key investors including France and Bharti Space Limited.

The move pushes the total expected investment to €1.5 billion.

The development was confirmed in an official statement issued by Eutelsat on Friday, which said that His Majesty's Government, through the UK Secretary of State for Science, Innovation and Technology, has committed €163.3 million in total.

This includes participation in both the Reserved Capital Increase and the subsequent Rights Issue, in proportion to its post-transaction shareholding.

The French State, represented

via Agence des Participations de l'État (APE), remains the lead investor, subscribing €551 million to the Reserved Capital Increase.

Bharti Space Limited has committed €30 million, His Majesty's Government €90 million, CMA CGM €100 million, and FSP €57 million.

The total amount for this tranche stands at €828 million, while the planned Rights Issue will raise an additional €672 million.

All commitments are subject to shareholder approval at an extraordinary general meeting expected around the end of Q3 2025, along with regulatory clearances and the finalisation of a revised non-concurring shareholders' agreement reflecting the post-investment ownership structure.

Eutelsat said that following completion of the two transactions—expected by the end of 2025—the

French State would hold 29.65% of the share capital and voting rights. Bharti Space Limited, the UK Government, CMA CGM and FSP would respectively hold 17.88%, 10.89%, 7.46% and 4.99%.

The investors involved in the capital increase would not be in a position to launch a public takeover, the statement clarified.

UK Science, Innovation and Technology Secretary Peter Kyle said the investment affirms the country's commitment to securing critical satellite infrastructure.

"As our adversaries increasingly use space technologies to harm us, resilient satellite connectivity has become essential to our continent's national security," he said.

Bharti Group founder Sunil Bharti Mittal welcomed the UK's participation and said Eutelsat was positioned to meet growing sover-

eign and commercial connectivity needs.

"This new capital injection will allow Eutelsat to go further and faster in developing innovative technologies and services," he said.

Eutelsat CEO Jean-Francois Fal-lacher thanked the UK Government for its continued support and called space a strategic asset.

"We remain committed to the UK, which we consider one of our home markets, and to supporting the development of OneWeb to address the needs of all our sovereign and commercial stakeholders," he said.

French President Emmanuel Macron had earlier called for countries such as India, Canada and Brazil to partner with France in investing in Eutelsat, describing the initiative as a collective strategic effort to support global space capabilities.

## Visitor registration opens for SEMICON India 2025 in New Delhi

**HT Bureau**  
**GUWAHATI, July 11:** SEMI and the India Semiconductor Mission (ISM) have officially opened visitor registrations for SEMICON India 2025, scheduled to be held from September 2 to 4 at Yashobhoomi, the India International Convention and Expo Centre in New Delhi.

According to an official statement, the event is being organised in collaboration with industry partners under the theme "Building the Next Semiconductor Powerhouse" and will highlight India's expanding role in the global microelectronics and semiconductor landscape.

Held under the aegis of the India Semiconductor Mission of the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), SEMICON India 2025 builds on the success of last year's edition and aims to provide a high-impact platform that brings together key stakeholders from the policy, industry, academic, and investor communities.

SEMICON India is one of eight global SEMICON events hosted annually by SEMI, each designed to convene leaders and innovators from across the semiconductor design and manufacturing ecosystem.

The 2025 edition is expected to see participation from over 300 exhibiting companies representing 18 countries and regions.

It will feature a three-day conference with global CXOs and industry experts, as well as international and state government pavilions.

Special focus areas will include a workforce development pavilion, startup pavilion, international roundtables, B2B forums, and training and upskilling programmes aimed at supporting India's growing talent pool in semiconductor manufacturing and design.

SEMI President and CEO Ajit Manocha said the event underscores India's strategic importance in the global chip industry at a time when supply chain resilience and engineering talent are of paramount importance.

*Contd. from Page 1*

## Acharya satisfied with KA's

research, marketing, and value addition. He emphasised that Karbi Anglong Coffee, like Assam Tea, deserves national and international branding and recognition. The Governor assured the Centre of efforts to strengthen the coffee supply chain and promote its products more widely.

Further, Governor Acharya visited the Home for Destitute and Vagrant Children at Birla, run by the Department of Women and Child Development. He spent time with the children, learning about their goals and aspirations, and underscored the importance of creating opportunities for them to realise their potential.

The Governor also reviewed the availability of essential facilities at the home and acknowledged the efforts of the officials managing it. The visit concluded with a high-level review meeting chaired by the Governor at the Kajir Ronghangpi Guest House in Taralango, where he assessed the region's security situation and ongoing measures with senior officials.

Expressing satisfaction over the prevailing peace in Karbi Anglong, he said it had created an environment conducive to development and effective governance across the autonomous council areas.

## 95 pc people leave

who have encroached on forest land, and we had asked them to vacate the area in November-December last year. We again served them notices last month to leave the area by July 10," he added. Since 2023, the administration has cleared encroachments on 650 hectares of land across four forest ranges.

"Of this area, human habitation was in 200 hectares and farming was done in the remaining 450 hectares," Mariswamy had said. Notably, encroachments on about 3,500 bighas of land (around 1,160 acres), affecting around 1,100 families, in Charuwa Bakra, Chirakuta and Santoshpur villages under the Chapar circle in neighbouring Dhubri district were cleared during a drive on Tuesday.

The anti-encroachment exercise was undertaken to hand over land to Adani group to set up a power plant.

Alleged encroachers had damaged excavators and tried to attack police personnel during the eviction drive, prompting security forces to resort to a baton charge to disperse the mob. Last month, Sarma had visited the site for the proposed power plant, and announced that a 3,400 MW thermal power plant would be established there. Sarma, at a press conference in Guwahati on Thursday, had asserted that eviction drives would continue in the state with over 25,000 acres of land having been cleared of encroachment in the last four years.

The CM said that he would hold another press meeting next week and furnish all data related to eviction drives since he became the CM in May 2021.

"We will have another eviction drive on Saturday in Goalpara. The Gauhati High Court has asked us to clear forest land. It only said that we should provide drinking water and other essential items to the evicted people," he added. The Congress, however, has criticised the eviction drives and promised that all Indian citizens, who have been evicted from land during the BJP rule, will be compensated if the opposition party comes to power in the state. (PTI)

## FM Sitharaman praises Meghalaya's

the development of MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions) and tourism infrastructure at Mawkhanu, with a total investment of Rs 103 crore. Spread across 106 acres, the project includes a Meghalayan Experience Theme Park, an open-air amphitheatre, and festival zones designed to boost tourism beyond Shillong. A major highlight of the announcements was the proposed ₹ 732-crore Mawkhanu Football Stadium, a state-of-the-art complex with a residential football academy developed in partnership with NorthEast United FC. The project reinforces Meghalaya's reputation as the football capital of India.

The FM also launched a project to construct working women's hostels with a total investment of Rs 132 crore under SASCI. These hostels will provide safe and affordable accommodation, with 400 beds in Shillong and 200 beds each in Jowai, Byrnihat, and Tura.

In addition, the Union minister inaugurated the office-cum-residential complex for the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) at New Shillong, with a budget of Rs 256.23 crore, to strengthen administrative operations in the state. Another significant project was the launch of the Northeast Regional Campus of the Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs (IICA) at Mawkhanu.

The ₹ 100.95 crore campus, funded under the Prime Minister's Development Initiative for North East Region (PM-DevINE), will serve as a premier centre for corporate governance, economic research, and capacity-building. This marks the first time that the IICA is establishing a presence outside Delhi.

A cheque distribution ceremony was also held, where beneficiaries of schemes such as PM MUDRA, PM SVANidhi, PMEGP, and NPS Vatsalya received financial support.

In a significant boost to Meghalaya's organic farming sector, Sitharaman also flagged off a two-metric-tonne consignment of premium organic pineapples to LULU Retail in Dubai. This consignment, under the IFAD-supported Megha-LAMP initiative, was sourced from farmers of the Jirang Organics Farmer Producer Company in Ri-Bhoi. Speaking to reporters, Sitharaman said 92 villages in the state, located along the India-Bangladesh border, have been selected under the second phase of the Centre's Vibrant Village Programme (VVP) and will be designated as the "first villages of India." (PTI)

## Assam and Bihar face

systems account for most of the high-risk sites. However, no rivers have breached their all-time high flood levels so far. The CWC classified the flood situation at 17 locations as "above normal". The warning level at several sites has been sustained over the past 24 hours. (PTI)

## Tourists, commuters advised

Corporation Limited (NHIDCL). The road, crucial for both tourism and cross-border trade with Bangladesh, is being upgraded at an estimated cost of over ₹ 1,600 crore. It is funded by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) under an Official Development Assistance (ODA) loan agreement.

The project, launched in 2021, was initially scheduled for completion by 2024, but delays due to weather conditions, difficult terrain, and land acquisition issues have pushed the expected completion date further. (PTI)

## India presents candidature

international maritime system, but most of all, as a technocratic body staffed by highly skilled professionals who do so much to ensure that our world functions in the way to which we have gotten used to," said Do-raismami. The IMO is the premier body that oversees the maritime sector, which in turn underpins international trade, transport and all maritime activities. The Council is the executive organ of IMO and is responsible, under the Assembly, for supervising the work of the organisation. The Assembly normally meets once every two years in a regular session. It is responsible for approving the work programme, voting the budget and determining the financial arrangements of the organisation. It also elects the organisation's 40-Member Council at these meetings for the next two-year period. The delegation led by Ramachandran reaffirmed India's continued support to IMO's efforts towards maritime safety, environmental protection, and inclusive development of the global maritime community during the IMO Council session in London.

Earlier in the week, the team jointly hosted an 'India Maritime Investment Meet' with the High Commission of India in London to showcase the country as a fast-growing maritime economy and invite representatives from the UK's shipping industries to India Maritime Week 2025 in Mumbai, scheduled for October. (PTI)

## Byrnihat most polluted city

analyst Manoj Kumar said. As of mid-2025, only two out of eleven plants within a 300-kilometre radius of the capital -- NTPC Dadri and Mahatma Gandhi coal-fired power plants -- have operational FGDS.

This regulatory gap weakens the gains made through stricter vehicle policies and creates an uneven enforcement landscape, where agricultural sources face heavy scrutiny while other sectors continue to pollute unchecked, CREA said. (PTI)

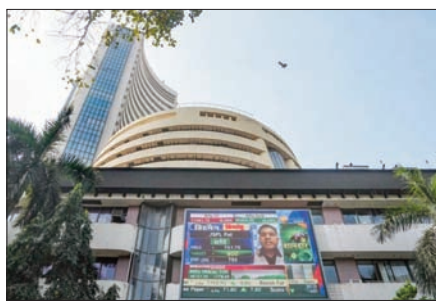
## India's population at crossroads

The second is harnessing the demographic dividend, with over 250 million young people. India has a unique opportunity to drive inclusive growth by investing in education, skill development, reproductive health, and mental well-being, especially for adolescent girls. The third is to prepare for the silver dividend, noting that by 2050, nearly one in five Indians will be over 60, the foundation called for immediate investments in elder care, pensions, healthcare, and age-friendly infrastructure and see older adults as vital contributors and not as dependents. India, now the world's most populous country, reflects the full range of demographic experiences, from high fertility and unmet reproductive needs in states like Bihar and Uttar Pradesh to ageing populations and below-replacement fertility in Kerala and Tamil Nadu, the statement added.

While India's Total Fertility Rate (TFR) stands at 2.0, more than 24 million married women still lack access to contraceptives and early marriages and unsafe abortions further restrict reproductive choices.

The foundation urged policymakers to abandon fear-based narratives and called for strengthened care systems and a rights-based approach to the population. "If we centre people, especially women, youngsters, and the elderly in our policies, population trends will not be a crisis, but a path to a more just and resilient future," the statement concluded. (PTI)

## Markets extend losses for 3<sup>rd</sup> session; Sensex tanks 690 points on selling in IT, auto stocks



**MUMBAI, July 11:** Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty declined for the third session in a row on Friday, dropping nearly 1 per cent, dragged by heavy selling in IT, auto and energy stocks amid a muted start of the earnings season.

Tariff-related uncertainties and mixed global market trends also added to the pressure, analysts said.

The 30-share BSE Sensex tanked 689.81 points or 0.83 per cent to settle at 82,500.47. During the day, it fell 748.03 points or 0.89 per cent to 82,442.25.

As many as 2,450 stocks declined while 1,557 advanced and 158 remained unchanged on the BSE.

Similarly, the 50-share NSE Nifty dropped 205.40 points or 0.81 per cent to 25,149.85.

On the weekly front, the BSE benchmark dropped 932.42 points or 1.11 per cent, and the Nifty tanked 311.15 points or 1.22 per cent.

"While weak European market cues and negative US Dow Futures weighed on sentiment, the disappointing start to earnings season by software major TCS cautioned investors about the sluggish global demand scenario that led to heavy selling in IT, telecom, auto, realty and oil & gas stocks," Prashanth Tapse, Senior VP (Research), Mehta Equities Ltd, said.

From the Sensex firms, Tata Consultancy Services declined 3.46 per cent after reporting its June quarter earnings.

The country's largest IT services company on Thursday reported a 6 per cent growth in June quarter net profit at ₹ 12,760 crore, helped by a jump in non-core income even as revenues grew at a tepid pace.

The rupee revenue grew 1.3 per cent to ₹ 63,437 crore during the quarter. Still, it was down by over 3 per cent on a constant currency basis, as the company faced headwinds in its major markets amid a winding down of the BSNL deal, which helped it in recent quarters.

Mahindra & Mahindra, Bharti Airtel, Tata Motors, Titan, HCL Tech, Bajaj Finance, Reliance Industries, Trent, Infosys and HDFC Bank were among the other major laggards

from the pack.

"Markets traded under pressure on Friday and lost over half a per cent, dragged down by weak cues. The session began on a negative note following disappointing results from IT major TCS, which further worsened due to profit-taking in heavyweight stocks across other sectors. Sentiment remained subdued due to ongoing uncertainty around tariff-related issues and a weak start to the earnings season," Ajit Mishra - SVP, Research, Religare Broking Ltd, said.

Meanwhile, shares of Hindustan Unilever Ltd (HUL) surged 4.61 per cent following the announcement that Priya Nair will become the first woman CEO and MD of the firm, effective August 1, 2025.

Axis Bank, NTPC, Eternal and State Bank of India were also among the gainers.

"The domestic market experienced a negative close due to a sober start to Q1 earnings season and a ramp-up in the tariff threat by the US to impose a 35 per cent tariff on Canada. Investors may continue to be focused on quarterly earnings for a buy-on-dips strategy. However, in the near term, the current premium valuation and the global headwinds like low spending and tariff uncertainties may restrain new inflows.

"The IT index underperformed due to deferment in orders and new investments, which may impact FY26 earnings estimates," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Investments Limited, said.

The BSE smallcap gauge declined 0.70 per cent, and the midcap index dropped 0.65 per cent.

On BSE sectoral indicators, tech tumbled 1.85 per cent, BSE Focused IT tanked 1.77 per cent, IT (1.65 per cent), auto (1.72 per cent), oil & gas (1.28 per cent), consumer discretionary (1.23 per cent), and telecommunication (1.22 per cent).

In contrast, healthcare and FMCG were the gainers.

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

European markets were trading lower in mid-session trade.

The US markets ended in positive territory on Thursday.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude climbed 0.31 per cent to USD 68.85 a barrel.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) bought equities worth ₹ 221.06 crore on Thursday, according to exchange data.

On Thursday, the Sensex dropped 345.80 points or 0.41 per cent to settle at 83,190.28. On similar lines, the Nifty declined 120.85 points or 0.47 per cent to 25,355.25. (PTI)

## Toyota Kirloskar Motor opens new dealership at Dispur

**HT Bureau**  
**GUWAHATI, July 11:** Toyota Kirloskar Motor (TKM) has expanded its footprint in Northeast India with the inauguration of a new dealership, Gargya Toyota, in Guwahati's Dispur.

According to an official statement, the new facility aims to improve accessibility and meet the rising demand for mobility solutions in the region.

The dealership, a dedicated 1S (sales) outlet spread across 5,100 sq ft, was inaugurated in the presence of TKM Vice President Arun G Nair and Dealer Principal Rahul Dev Sharma.

In addition to showcasing Toyota's full product lineup—from the Innova Hycross and Fortuner to the Camry Hybrid and Vellfire—the outlet will also host Toyota U-Trust services for buying, selling, and exchanging used cars.

TKM stated that Guwahati's growing role as a regional hub makes it a strategic location for the new dealership, which will serve both urban customers and those from nearby towns.

With this addition, Toyota's nationwide network now comprises 1,243 touchpoints.

The company reiterated its commitment to strengthening ties with customers in Tier 2 and Tier 3 markets by delivering dependable products and a seamless ownership experience built on trust and transparency.

## Tata Trusts campaign urges early screening to fight cervical cancer delays

**HT Bureau**  
**GUWAHATI, July 11:** Tata Trusts has launched a public health awareness campaign titled 'Khud Se Jeet' to encourage timely cervical cancer screening among Indian women, highlighting emotional and social barriers that contribute to delayed detection.

According to an official statement, the campaign draws attention to the inner conflict many women face—hesitation, stigma, and lack of awareness—that prevents them from seeking help, despite cervical cancer being highly treatable in its early stages.

Cervical cancer is the second most common cancer among women in India, claiming nearly 75,000 lives annually.

Tata Trusts, through its grassroots initiatives and over 26,000 screenings conducted in partnership with state governments across Jharkhand, Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, and Maharashtra last year, identified that fear, shame, and silence remain key reasons for low screening rates.

To address the issue, Tata Trusts organised a panel discussion featuring oncologists and survivors, who stressed the importance of recognising early symptoms and prioritising health.

The Trusts also released a social awareness film portraying a woman's journey from denial to taking action, aiming to inspire more women to seek screening and break the silence around the disease.

Officials said the campaign seeks to shift the conversation from fear to empowerment, urging women to act early and put their health first.

through long press and double tap, and integrates Folax, Infinix's built-in AI assistant.

The device also includes "Circle to Search," a segment-first feature that allows users to conduct visual searches without leaving their current screen.

Infinix has introduced a range of AI-powered tools under its XOS 15 operating system to enhance productivity and personalization.

The suite includes features such as an AI wallpaper generator, AI Notes, AI call translation, AI summarization, and assistants for calls and social media management.

Geared toward mobile gamers, the device supports 90FPS gameplay and features the XArena Game Mode, which optimises system performance by reducing frame drops and background interference.

Image Stabilisation Mode and enhanced game audio settings aim to improve immersion by boosting clarity and responsiveness during intense gaming sessions.

The HOT 60 5G+ is backed by a 5200mAh battery and comes with an 18W charger.

It supports reverse charging and includes Bypass Charging technology, which directs current straight to the motherboard during plugged-in use, reducing heat generation for gamers and media consumers.

## Infinix launches HOT 60 5G+ in India at ₹9,999

**HT Bureau**  
**GUWAHATI, July 11:** Infinix has announced the launch of its latest smartphone, the HOT 60 5G+, in India.

According to an official statement, the device is designed to cater to users seeking high performance, gaming capabilities, and integrated AI tools at an affordable price point.

The phone will go on sale from July 17 on Flipkart and in retail stores, with a special introductory price of ₹9,999 inclusive of prepaid offers.

The HOT 60 5G+ is powered by a MediaTek Dimensity 7020 processor paired with 6GB LPDDR5X RAM and has achieved an AnTuTu benchmark score exceeding 500,000.

Infinix claims this performance combination makes the device one of the fastest in its segment.

It also comes with a 60-month fluency certification from TÜV SÜD, offering users a five-year smooth performance guarantee.

Additionally, the phone carries an IP64 rating for protection against dust and water splashes and has a slim 7.8mm body, making it the slimmest 5G phone in its price tier.

A standout feature of the HOT 60 5G+ is its One Tap AI Button, a customisable interface element designed to give users quick access to over 30 apps and actions.

The button supports dual interaction

## West Bengal gears up for rare earth mining in Purulia

**KOLKATA, July 11:** West Bengal is set to join India's rare earth mining map with the Geological Survey of India (GSI) conducting advanced exploration in Purulia district, a senior official said on Friday.

Although the rare earth deposit in Purulia is relatively small, the development is significant as India looks to reduce dependence on imports of critical minerals essential for electric vehicles (EVs), electronics, and renewable energy technologies.

"G2-level exploration is underway in two blocks - one in Karbi Anglong district of Assam and the other in Purulia, West Bengal," GSI Director General Asit Saha said on the sidelines of the Assocham-organised 3rd edition of Minerals and Mining conclave. (PTI)

No.TE(Ex) Admn-1/2025/415 Dated Guwahati, the 11/07/2025

### CORRIGENDUM

### EDUCATIONAL NOTICE

In continuation of this office earlier notification published through local dailies vide No. DIPR/D/PTDN/506/10-JULY-25 Dated 10<sup>th</sup> July 2025, It is for information to all concerned that the candidates who have already appeared "Combined Entrance Examination [CEE-2025] and registered against NCC and Sports quota at the time of online registration to appear CEE-2025, have to appear before the Selection Committee as per the venue, date and time mentioned below:-

Venue: Assam Engineering Institute, Chandmari, Guwahati-03.

Date: 15/07/2025 Time: 11.30 a.m.

Instated of previous Venue: i.e. Directorate of Technical Education, Assam, Kahilipara, Guwahati-19.

Sd/-

Director of Technical Education, Assam, Kahilipara, Guwahati-19.

DIPR /D/HLT/66/12-Jul-25



## Asam Sahitya Sabha to publish a book based on the historical background of the hills and mountains of Karbi Anglong

### 'Not time to look back': Enazori sparks call for deeper Karbi-Assamese cultural bond



**HT Correspondent**  
**TEZPUR, July 11:** "Mutual harmony is not one-sided; a balanced relationship must be established," said Dr Basanta Kumar Goswami, President of Asam Sahitya Sabha, during the cultural-literary programme Enazori held in Karbi Anglong.

Speaking as the chief guest at the event, jointly organised by the Karbi Lammet Amei (Karbi Sahitya Sabha) and the Asam Sahitya Sabha, Dr Goswami stressed the importance of linguistic and cultural understanding between Karbi and non-Karbi communities.

Dr Goswami underlined that real integration can only be achieved when Karbis make an effort to learn non-Karbi languages and, conversely, non-Karbis also engage with and understand the languages spoken by the Karbi community in daily life.

Announcing that the Asam Sahitya Sabha will soon publish a book based on the historical background of the hills and mountains of Karbi Anglong, he emphasised the Sabha's commitment to regional cultural documentation.

The event was held at the Karbi Lammet Amei office on the Diphu-Lumding Road and was presided

over by KLA President Kamsing Hansei.

It was coordinated by Biswajyoti Hazarika, Secretary of the Diphu Rangina Bhawan branch of the Asam Sahitya Sabha.

According to a statement issued by Sankusiddha Nath, the central publicity secretary of the Asam Sahitya Sabha, the event fostered a deep cultural and intellectual exchange between members of the two literary organisations.

Among the dignitaries present were Vice President of Asam Sahitya Sabha Padum Rajkhowa, General Secretary Debojit Bora, former Karbi Students' Association

President Chandrasing Kro, Padma Shri awardee Dhaneswar Engti, Executive President of the Rajyabhaxa Aru Matribhaxa Prayog Upasamiti Deben Basumatary, and noted writers Ajit Singnar, Khagen Engti, and Joysing Tokbi.

Speaking at the programme, General Secretary Debojit Bora said that the Enazori event carried a powerful message of unity for all ethnic groups across Assam.

He said that through this initiative, the Asam Sahitya Sabha aims to embrace every community to forge a stronger and more inclusive Assamese identity.

Bora also highlighted the need for mutual efforts between the Karbi and Assamese literary bodies to foster language development and cultural cooperation.

"After a long struggle, the Karbi community has now gained constitutional protection. Therefore, this is not the time to look back," he said.

The programme was supported by the Rajyabhaxa Aru Matribhaxa Prayog Upasamiti of the Asam Sahitya Sabha and concluded with the rendition of the state's Jatiya Sangeet.

## Over fifty new members join BPF ahead of BTC elections in Srirampur

**HT Correspondent**  
**GOSSAIGAON, July 11:** In a notable political development ahead of the upcoming Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) elections, more than fifty individuals formally joined the Bodoland People's Front (BPF) during an induction meeting held on Thursday evening at No 3 Bhomorabil village under the No 3 Srirampur BTC Constituency.

According to the party, the meeting was organised by the BPF's Bhomorabil Primary Committee and presided over by its president, Habibur Rahman.

The induction event witnessed the participation of several party leaders, including Rafiqul Islam Bhuiyan, Secretary of the Gossaigaon District Committee, BPF, who addressed the gathering and expressed confidence in the party's prospects.

Bhuiyan stated that the BPF is well-positioned to reclaim power in the BTC and alleged that the incumbent United People's Party

Liberal (UPPL)-Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) coalition government has failed to address the pressing concerns of the people in the Srirampur constituency.

He specifically pointed to the situation in Palashguri, where eleven villages reportedly continue to suffer due to the absence of basic healthcare services, irrigation systems, and functional bridges.

Bhuiyan accused the administration of neglect and failing to implement developmental measures in the region.

Speaking at the event, Advocate Mafizur Rahman launched a scathing critique of the BJP-led state government, accusing it of targeting minority communities through eviction drives.

He highlighted the severe humanitarian impact of the displacements, calling attention to the living conditions of the affected families.

Further addressing the gathering, Nur Hossain Sheikh, Assistant Secretary of the Srirampur Block Committee of the BPF, raised concerns about the acute shortage of teachers in local schools.

He said the deficit has had a serious effect on the education system in the area and linked it to wider socio-economic challenges faced by the constituency.

In his remarks, Advocate Ashraf Alam lauded the efforts of Advocate Mokhesur Rahman, President of the BPF's Srirampur Block Committee, for his contributions to social welfare and organisational revitalisation.

He credited Rahman with rebuilding the party's grassroots network and increasing its visibility in the region.

The meeting drew a large turnout of local residents and party supporters, which the BPF described as a sign of rising public support in the run-up to the elections.

## Veteran Bodo actor and educator Meghnath Muchahary passes away at 70

**HT Correspondent**  
**KOKRAJHAR, July 11:** Meghnath Muchahary, a veteran character actor in Bodo cinema and a retired teacher, passed away at his residence in Kokrajhar town on Thursday around 3 PM.

He was 70 and had been suffering from age-related ailments. Muchahary was widely respected in Bodo cultural circles for his contributions to the arts, education, and community welfare.

He gained recognition for his performances in several Bodo films, including a notable role in Alayaron, the first-ever Bodo feature film, which holds a special place in the history of regional cinema.

A teacher by profession, Muchahary retired from Kokrajhar Government Higher Secondary and Multipurpose School.

Beyond the classroom and the screen, he was deeply involved in social service and community initiatives.

He was a founding member of the Bodo Somaj and played an active role in its activities, contributing significantly to the uplift and welfare of the Bodo society.

Following news of his demise, tributes poured in from across the region.

The Bodo Cultural Society and Bodo Somaj expressed deep sorrow and extended heartfelt condolences, remembering him as a towering figure whose legacy spanned cinema, education, and social reform.

## Diarrhea Prevention Campaign launched in Nagaon dist

**HT Correspondent**  
**NAGAON, July 11:** The Diarrhea Prevention Campaign 2025 was formally launched on Thursday at Pujabari playground under the Kathiatoli Block Primary Health Centre in Nagaon district.

The campaign, which will run from July 10 to August 25, aims to raise public awareness on the prevention and treatment of diarrhea, particularly among children.

According to an official press note, the launch event was attended by key officials from the district health department including Dr Tapan Kumar Saikia, Joint Director of Health Services, and Dr Ranjan Goswami, Medical Officer of Kandali Tea Estate.

Several other dignitaries were present at the ceremony, including Dr Dhatri Patowary, District Immunization Officer; Dr Mukut Deka, District Nodal Officer; Dr Spandan Saikia, District Community Mobilizer; and Rakhi Saikia, President of Aasha Kiran NGO.

As part of the campaign, an Oral Rehydration Therapy (ORT) corner was inaugurated to provide vital information and basic treatment for those affected by diarrhea.

An ASHA worker conducted a live demonstration of correct handwashing techniques and the preparation of Oral Rehydration Solution (ORS).

The speakers emphasized the importance of continued breastfeeding for infants below six months and the timely distribution of ORS and zinc tablets for children aged between six months and five years.

Stressing the significance of community-level awareness, they highlighted the need for educating the general public about preventive hygiene practices and prompt treatment of diarrheal diseases.

Dr Tapan Kumar Saikia, in his address, called upon ASHA workers and health officials to actively engage with local communities and ensure widespread awareness on diarrhea prevention and management throughout the campaign period.

## Man found dead under suspicious circumstances

**HT Correspondent**  
**KHERONI, July 11:** The body of a 45-year-old man, identified as Ayush Akai of Jerikindeng Terang village in West Karbi Anglong district, was recovered under suspicious circumstances on Friday from the banks of Amrit Sarovar, near the Jerikindeng-Makailum road.

According to information received from local authorities, the body bore visible injuries on multiple parts, including the head, suggesting foul play.

Preliminary investigation indicates that the victim may have been assaulted elsewhere before his body was dumped near the site.

## Morigaon holds meeting on Swachh Survekshan Grameen '25

**HT Correspondent**  
**MORIGAON, July 11:** A district-level meeting on the Swachh Survekshan Grameen (SSG) 2025 was organised on Friday at Mayong College under the aegis of Morigaon Zila Parishad.

The event was conducted by the Public Health Engineering Department, Morigaon, as part of the ongoing awareness and preparatory initiatives for the national rural sanitation survey.

The meeting was chaired by District Commissioner Anamika Tiwari and focused on key aspects such as district-level preparedness, enhancing rural awareness, and promoting the importance of sustainable sanitation practices.

Discussions were also held on the constructive steps required for maintaining a long-term cleanliness ecosystem in rural areas.

## GU NSS Cell holds awareness session on cyber security

**HT Bureau**  
**GUWAHATI, July 11:** The National Service Scheme (NSS) Cell of Gauhati University organised a lecture session on cyber security at the Phanidhar Datta Seminar Hall of the university on Friday as part of a national-level initiative to promote cyber safety among students.

The event was held in accordance with directions from the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports and the Directorate of NSS, New Delhi.

According to an official statement, the session formed part of the Cyber Security Internship Course designed by the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C) under the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India.

The course is intended for college and university students, as well as NSS and NCC volunteers, to educate them on essential aspects of cyber hygiene and recent trends in cybercrime.

Dr Ranjan Kumar Kakati, Director of Students' Welfare at Gauhati University, coordinated the pro-

gramme and delivered the welcome address.

He highlighted the importance of imparting cyber safety knowledge to the youth, stating that the initiative aims to create awareness about emerging online threats and foster a culture of cyber responsibility.

The goal, he said, is to build a cybercrime-free India by equipping the younger generation with the necessary tools to protect themselves online.

Serving as the resource person for the session, Narendar Dhillon, Deputy Superintendent of Police with the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), warned of the increasing threat posed by cybercrime in society.

He urged participants to adopt stringent security practices, especially while conducting financial transactions online.

Dhillon shared several real-life instances of cybercrime involving well-known individuals to underscore the seriousness of the issue. Around 150 participants from Gauhati University, affiliated colleges, and NSS volunteers took part in the session.

## Awareness campaign on TB elimination held at Gauhati University

**HT Bureau**  
**GUWAHATI, July 11:** In a bid to intensify the national effort to eliminate tuberculosis (TB) by 2025, an awareness campaign under the Pradhan Mantri TB Mukti Bharat Abhiyan was organised at Gauhati University on Friday.

The event was held at the Phanidhar Datta Seminar Hall as part of a directive from the Governor of Assam and an initiative led by the Vice-Chancellor of the University.

According to an official statement, the programme was inaugurated by Prof Utpal Sarma, Registrar of Gauhati University, who stressed the urgent need to eradicate TB in India.

He called upon the participants

to actively spread awareness on the issue and contribute towards its complete elimination from the country.

The event was coordinated by Dr Ranjan Kumar Kakati, Director of Students' Welfare at GU.

In his welcome address, Dr Kakati noted that the eradication of TB is critical not only for public health but also for ensuring community-wide immunity.

He highlighted that defeating TB is essential for India to achieve its Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) targets, particularly the aim of ending TB by 2025.

Key resource persons at the programme included Dr Mridul Bharati Nath, District TB Officer, Kamrup Metro, and K Maipak

Singha, State Programme Officer for PMTBMB-A-Nikshay Mitra, State TB Cell, Assam.

They delivered talks on the objectives of the Pradhan Mantri TB Mukti Bharat Abhiyan and focused on the importance of community participation in the national movement.

The speakers also discussed the Nikshay Poshan Abhiyaan, which provides nutritional support to TB patients, and urged attendees to enrol as Nikshay Mitras—volunteers who adopt TB patients and support their recovery.

The awareness campaign was attended by around 150 participants, including members of the GU academic fraternity, NSS volunteers, and students from affiliated colleges.

## Ceremonial Mega Oil Palm Plantation Drive held at Rongjangmi in WKA

**HT Correspondent**  
**DONGKAMUKAM, July 11:** A Ceremonial Mega Oil Palm Plantation Drive cum awareness and distribution programme was held on Friday at Rongjangmi, a remote village near Kuthepi in West Karbi Anglong district.

The event was organised by the Department of Agriculture, Hamren, in collaboration with Godrej Agrovet Ltd, Silchar, with the aim of promoting oil palm cultivation among local farmers.

According to officials, the programme drew active participation from farmers and was attended by key officials including District Agriculture Officer (DAO) Gunjon Dutta, State Nodal Head of Godrej Agrovet Ltd Anand Pandey, District Nodal Officer Mirjeng Terang, Agricultural Development Officer (ADO) of Dongkamukam Circle Olivina Katharpi, and District Incharge of West Karbi Anglong and Sribhumi (Karinganji) Shyam Shekhar Singha.

Addressing the gathering, DAO Gunjon Dutta informed the farmers that oil palm cultivation could yield substantial returns, with an estimated income ranging between ₹40,000 to ₹70,000 per bigha starting from the fourth year of plantation.

He added that while oil palm cultivation had already begun in Karbi Anglong through initiatives sponsored by Patanjali, in West Karbi Anglong, 50 saplings have been provided by Godrej Agrovet Ltd as part of a pilot project to be implemented over 500 hectares this year.

Although government agencies are in-



directly involved, the initiative is being executed in close coordination with private sector stakeholders.

Dutta further stated that Goalpara district was the first in Assam to implement oil palm cultivation successfully, while Karbi Anglong and West Karbi Anglong experienced a delay of nearly three years due to unavoidable circumstances.

He assured that a farmers' delegation would be taken to Mizoram to gain practical exposure to the cultivation practices already being followed there.

As part of the initiative, interested farmers were assured of various financial

supports, including ₹3,000 per hectare for land clearing, ₹6,250 per hectare for intercropping, ₹4,000 per hectare for bio-fencing, ₹15,000 per unit for vermicomposting, and ₹10,000 for cattle farming. Encouraging youth participation, Dutta urged local farmers not to seek employment outside the state in places like Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, or Maharashtra.

He expressed confidence that, if successful, oil palm cultivation could lead to the establishment of a processing industry in the district, creating local employment and economic development opportunities.

## Farmer drowns

**HT Correspondent**  
**NAGAON, July 11:** A 50-year-old farmer, identified as Balbir Singh, died in a drowning incident at Borkola village in Nagaon district on Friday, triggering a wave of grief in the local community.

According to sources, Singh had gone to the Shingimari Jan, a water body located near the Borkola-Fulguri road, to graze his cattle in the morning.

While at the site, he reportedly slipped and fell into a deep pit formed after excavation by a JCB machine.

He drowned before help could arrive.

Local residents recovered the body later in the evening.

The sudden demise of Singh, who was the sole breadwinner for his family, has left his wife, two sons, and a daughter in deep mourning.

No. C/S-11 KDA of 2025-26/956

## NOTIFICATION

Ecf No: 639138/12

In the greater interest of the student community and after due consultation with the Core Committee for Admissions and concerned HEIs participating in CUET admissions- Universities, Autonomous Colleges and Colleges affiliated with Assam University, the undersigned is directed to communicate the timelines for CUET UG admissions for the academic session 2025-26 in the Assam State Higher Education Portal (<https://assamadmission.samarth.ac.in/>).

### CUET Admission Timeline - 2025

Dates	Event
14-16 <sup>th</sup> July, 2025	Registration and Programme selection by applicants and simultaneous scrutiny of applications by HEIs
17-18 <sup>th</sup> July, 2025	Correction window
19 <sup>th</sup> July, 2025	Scrutiny of applications by HEIs of "corrected applications" if any.
21 <sup>st</sup> July, 2025	Preparation and publication of merit list
22-23 <sup>rd</sup> July, 2025	Admissions of applicants in merit list
24 <sup>th</sup> July, 2025	Registration and applications, if any, for CUET based spot admission
25 <sup>th</sup> July, 2025	Spot Admissions (CUET)
28-30 July, 2025	Final Spot Admission (Non CUET)
1st August, 2025	Commencement of Academic session 2025-26.

DIPR /D/HLT/67/12-Jul-25

Sd/-  
Director of Higher Education, Assam  
Kahilipara, Guwahati

## NOTICE INVITING TENDER

The Administrator, Kokrajhar Development Authority invites sealed tender in the prescribed TENDER DOCUMENT for the work(s) mentioned below with validity period of 3(Three) months affixing court fee stamp of Rs. 8.25 (rupees eight and twenty-five paise) only from A.P.W.D. registered contractor(s) of appropriate class having required credentials as mentioned against each work below.

Name of the work	Bid Cost	Tender Value	Time of completion
Construction of R.C.C Drain at Boro Bhatmari from Kumuna house to Derha Brahma paddy fields W/No. - 3, Kokrajhar, BTC, Assam.	Rs. 400,000/-	Rs. 10,00,000.00/-	3(Three) months.

Details of the terms and conditions of the tender may be seen in the TENDER DOCUMENT.

Sd/-Administrator  
Kokrajhar Development Authority  
Kokrajhar  
IPR(BTC)/C/2025-26/1589

Dated- 11<sup>th</sup> June 2025.

## NAME CORRECTION

My actual and correct name

Abul Hussain  
Father name -  
Basarat Ali  
Mother name-  
Laila Begum  
Spouse name -  
Lilima Begum  
Vill-Tarkata, PO-Nilabagan, Ps- Murajhar, District -  
Hojai (Assam) wrongly  
recorded in my passport  
Mohammed Abul Hussain  
Father - Mohammed  
Bosarat Ali  
Mother - Layla Begum  
Passport No- N9392813



*You are remembered for the rules you break*  
—Douglas MacArthur

## Is America ready for 3-party system?

The United States is moving to a 3-party system as rest of the world of multiple political parties, in its 250th year of independence celebrations. US has two parties – the Democrats who are called as socialists or liberals for favouring an egalitarian society where the under privileged get their due share and the Republicans who are tilting far too right to give benefits only to the super rich calling them enterprising to grow wealth of the country without caring whether it is leading to inequality. Now the richest man of the world Elon Musk has announced his decision to float his own Party “America Party”. Tech billionaire Elon Musk, after his tiff with US President Donald Trump on whom he spent a good \$280m million to make him win the polls in 2024 after his being down in the dumps, has now decided to launch his own party called the America Party, which only seeks to correct what he thinks is President Trump’s faulty policy in giving huge tax breaks to the rich but not raising enough revenues to balance the budget, which is hitting a whopping \$3.3 trillion and ballooning the debt limit to \$5 trillion in the next 10 years. Musk thinks Trump will bankrupt the nation. Musk is not too concerned about 11.8 million being pushed out of the health care net by slashes in Medicaid. – Food Credits, by saving \$1 trillion, still not enough to plug the hole in the budget deficit. Is America ready for a three-party system?

What is the potential of Musk’s proposed party to disrupt the two-party system? While third parties traditionally struggle in the US, Musk’s financial resources and visibility could give his party a platform to challenge the dominance of the Democrats and Republicans. Now that is easier said than done, because it has taken 250 years for the two parties to win the election cycles. The third parties before having fallen by the wayside. The greens never had it. The libertines never made it. The America Party could focus on a select number of Senate and House seats to act as a “deciding vote” on key legislation, impacting the balance of power in Congress. Some experts suggest that the America Party could attract voters who might otherwise support Republican candidates, potentially leading to Democrats winning seats. But it all depends on whether democratic vote banks, fooled by Trump voted him in 2024 on promises of lower prices and healthy economy and more jobs and relief for the middle classes will shift to the democratic vote base again or split with one half going for the Musk party and the other for the democratic traditional strongholds.

In 2025 Trump has established that the Republican Party is him and anyone challenging him is out of the party. It’s not the 2017 GOP election cycle where the Republicans let Trump into White House. Trump is now setting his own agenda and that is becoming the agenda of the Republican Party as a whole. The dissenting Republicans also know that the MAGA base is with Trump and he is the one who can take the GOP to victory against the Democrats.

## Trump's return and the global fire of trade war: Alarm bells for the world

By: Dr. Satyawan Saurabh

While the world is grappling with crises like climate change, war and inflation, the sound of a global trade war has once again started to be heard with the possibility of the return of former US President Donald Trump. The letters sent by Trump to many countries recently and his statements about tough trade policy are an indication that if he comes to power again, he will not hold back from shaking the world trade system under the policy of ‘America First’.

This is not just a part of American electoral politics, but a thinking that can affect the economic stability, trade agreements and diplomatic balance of the whole world. Trump had made it clear in his first term itself that he does not consider trade as a diplomatic tool, but a means of exerting pressure. China, Mexico, European Union, India - he spared no one. He used import duty as a weapon to pursue his interests and forcefully impose his conditions. Now once again, Trump has warned in his statements that if other countries do not enter into ‘fair’ trade agreements with America, they will have to pay heavy duties. His recent letters clearly warn of imposing duties ranging from 10 percent to 60 percent. This is not just a threat, but a strategy that turns global trade cooperation into competition and fear. India can get dual results from these policies of Trump. On the one hand, America can distance itself from China and turn towards countries like India, which can provide trade opportunities to India. On the other hand, Trump’s ‘strict conditions’ trade policy can bring India under American pressure. India has already been a victim of tariff hike on some products during the Trump administration - like steel and aluminum. If Trump returns to power again, this pressure can increase further. India may have to face new challenges, especially in sectors like pharmaceutical industry, information technology services, and textile industry. A trade war is not a country’s problem — it affects the entire global economy. When the US raises tariffs, other countries retaliate. This disrupts the global supply chain, increases inflation, and threatens a recession. The trade war between Trump and China during 2018-19 caused instability in international markets. The World Trade Organization also suffered a setback, and international trade growth declined. The same situation could arise again now.

Trump’s letters clearly state - “Either you make a trade deal, or pay 60 percent tariffs.” This language is not that of civilized diplomatic dialogue, but of trade pressure. He considers America as the ‘best hub of trade’ and other countries as mere customers. His style seems like ‘diplomatic terrorism’ - where trade is a weapon, and opposition means punishment. This policy not only affects the trade bal-

ance, but can also strain international relations. There is no place for long-term cooperation in his approach, only immediate benefits are paramount.

Trump has also targeted high-tech industries and the semiconductor manufacturing sector. He wants to impose heavy duties on advanced technology products made outside the US, so that companies produce in the US. This could also hit India’s information technology-based companies, which provide services to American technology companies. If Trump tightens the work visa policy again, Indian tech experts will have difficulties in getting jobs in the US.

Trump’s ‘America First’ slogan is contrary to the spirit of globalisation. It puts nationalism at the centre of trade and values competition over cooperation. But in today’s interconnected global economy, no country can progress alone. Today’s world demands partnership-based development - where technology, trade and innovation go hand in hand. Trump’s policy could break this fabric.

This policy of Trump can increase distrust between America and other countries. China and Russia are already maintaining distance from America. Now if Trump puts similar pressure on South Asian and European countries, then a new diplomatic division can be seen. This trade war can gradually become a new global polarization - where countries will be divided into different groups.

India should neither be completely dependent on the US in this trade war, nor should it lean towards China or Russia. It should strengthen alternative trade relations with Europe, Africa, and South-East Asian countries while strengthening the ‘Atmanirbhar Bharat’ campaign. Along with this, India should also logically oppose Trump’s trade policy on international forums like the World Trade Organization. The duties imposed by America have a direct impact on India’s exports. This makes Indian products expensive and reduces their competitiveness. The profits of Indian companies decrease, which reduces production and leads to loss of jobs. At the same time, consumers in America also have to buy the same products at a higher price. Thus, this situation is fatal for the common people of both countries. Not only industrialists but also workers, farmers, small entrepreneurs and consumers are affected by the trade war.

Trump’s return and the threat of a trade war should not be taken lightly by India and the world. This is not just a policy of one person, but an ideology that challenges the entire global trade structure. India must find a solution to this crisis through foresight, alternative partnerships, self-reliant economic structure and active participation in global forums.

If trade is turned into war, no nation will be the winner—only the world will lose.

# Jane street’s fall and SEBI’s fight for market integrity



In a dramatic escalation that has rippled through India’s financial corridors, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has taken a decisive step against the US-based proprietary trading powerhouse, Jane Street Group LLC. Known globally for its high-frequency, algorithm-driven trading strategies and influential presence in derivative markets, Jane Street now finds itself accused of deploying manipulative tactics that challenge the very foundations of market integrity in India.

At the heart of this regulatory storm lies a sophisticated scheme involving “marking the close” strategies—where trades are deliberately timed to influence the closing prices of stocks and indices. SEBI’s exhaustive investigation uncovered a pattern that points not to market participation, but to market orchestration. Jane Street’s operations, while appearing legitimate on the surface, were in fact part of a calculated strategy to skew prices, especially around expiry dates in the futures and options (F&O) segment.

### A Masterstroke of Market Engineering

Jane Street is not your average market participant. Unlike mutual funds or asset managers, it is a proprietary trading firm—meaning it trades using its own capital rather than that of clients. This allows it a wide latitude in decision-making and risk-taking. Globally, Jane Street has carved a reputation for leveraging technology, mathematical models, and speed to capitalise on market inefficiencies. But in India, SEBI alleges, it crossed a critical line—from exploiting inefficiencies to creating them.

The primary arena of contention is the NIFTY and BANKNIFTY index futures market. SEBI’s findings suggest that Jane Street executed a large number of trades near or at prices above the last traded price (LTP), particularly in the final hours of market activity. These were not reactive trades but premeditated moves—aggressive buys and sells timed with surgical precision to influence end-of-day prices. The strategy was textbook market manipulation: driving up prices during the day and reversing positions toward the close to reap disproportionate gains. This was most evident in the “marking the close”

pattern, where large-volume trades are made in the final minutes to tilt the closing price in a desired direction.

A striking instance involved the BANKNIFTY index. Early in the day, Jane Street aggressively accumulated positions, creating upward momentum in the index. Later, these positions were offloaded with equal force, impacting the closing level and, by extension, the final settlement price of associated futures contracts. This push-pull maneuver, while subtle to the untrained eye, allowed the firm to engineer the expiry value of the derivatives in its favour—a move that brought enormous profits, but at a heavy cost to market trust.

### Repatriating Profits, Evading Scrutiny

According to SEBI, the scale of Jane Street’s profiteering was staggering. Over the examination period—primarily between January and May 2025—the firm allegedly booked Rs 32,681 crore in profits, most of which were repatriated abroad. The magnitude of this figure far exceeded the average asset base held by its Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) during the same period, hinting at unusually high turnover and aggressive position-taking.

While SEBI has so far ordered the impounding of Rs 4,843.57 crore—marking the unlawful gains identified—the full scope of the financial windfall remains a point of scrutiny. What is even more troubling is the regulatory circumvention. Indian rules prevent FPIs from certain forms of intra-day cash market trading. Jane Street’s workaround? Use its Indian entity, JSI Investments Private Limited, as a buffer. While JSI’s trades consistently resulted in losses, their very presence allowed the firm to oper-

ate under the radar, using cash market trades to obscure the manipulation underway in the derivatives market. The cash segment losses created a facade of compliance, especially after a caution notice was issued by the National Stock Exchange (NSE) in February 2025.

### Regulatory Warnings Ignored

This is not a case of ignorance or accidental overreach. Jane Street was formally warned by the NSE in February 2025 to refrain from engaging in high-risk activity that could be construed as manipulation. In response, the firm assured compliance and continued trading. But the SEBI order reveals that by May, the same suspect trading strategies were back in full swing—aggressive positions in index options were again deployed around expiry, pointing to a blatant disregard for both the caution and the spirit of the regulations.

For a firm that operates in over 200 trading venues across 45 countries, this represents not just regulatory defiance but reputational risk of the highest order. SEBI’s charges underline this by invoking “non-neutral trading behaviour,” an explicit accusation that the trades were designed not to reflect market conditions but to alter them.

### The Broader Debate: Prop Trading in Emerging Markets

The crackdown on Jane Street has ignited a broader debate within India’s financial community. Is proprietary trading—especially of the high-frequency, algorithm-driven kind—compatible with the structure and regulatory frameworks of emerging markets like India? The Indian equity derivatives market, particularly the NSE, has become the largest in the world by volume, driven in part by a surge in retail investor activity. From a mere 2% in 2018, retail participation in derivatives has ballooned to over 40% in 2025. This influx has created a fertile environ-

ment for volatility, which is often a goldmine for proprietary trading firms.

Yet, as Dinesh Thakkar, Chairman of Angel One, pointed out, India’s market strength lies not in individual firms but in its structural opportunity. “When one player exits, others step in and often, very fast,” Thakkar noted. He also stressed that SEBI’s enforcement action will lead to sharper compliance, better governance, and ultimately, a healthier marketplace. In this view, the Jane Street episode, while unsettling, is also a milestone in India’s evolution as a mature market.

Global trading firms are still bullish on India. Despite this regulatory blow, the long-term allure of India’s large and deepening investor base, its expanding regulatory clarity, and its growing integration with global financial systems remains intact. However, this episode may well reshape how foreign entities approach compliance in India.

### Cracks in the Compliance Wall

This scandal also exposes the vulnerabilities in cross-border trading oversight. Jane Street’s decisions were likely made outside India, even though their impact was felt on Indian exchanges. SEBI’s response, therefore, carries a dual purpose—it’s both a reprimand and a warning to other foreign trading entities. There is a growing consensus that India needs to strengthen its ability to scrutinise not just local execution, but the broader strategy and intent of offshore firms operating within its jurisdiction.

Experts have also questioned why SEBI waited until NSE’s formal warning was violated to act, despite persistent market rumours about Jane Street’s aggressive trading tactics since early 2024. The delay underscores the challenges in monitoring high-frequency trades that often camouflage manipulation under layers of technical complexity and speed.

### Distorting the Market Fabric

At a foundational level, derivatives markets are designed to be efficient mirrors of the cash market. The futures price, in theory, remains closely tethered to the spot price through the principle of arbitrage. If a future trades above its fair value, arbitrageurs sell the future and buy the underlying asset, profiting from the price convergence. Conversely, when the future

is undervalued, they buy the future and short the underlying stock.

But Jane Street, SEBI asserts, distorted this delicate balance. Rather than passively allowing market forces to correct disparities, the firm’s trades actively engineered those disparities. This not only created artificial volatility but also undermined the core principle of price discovery in both cash and derivative markets. By disrupting this synchronisation, Jane Street turned a systemic safeguard into a profit-making tool.

### A Global Giant Under Scrutiny

Founded in 2000 in a modest New York office by a small team of traders and technologists, Jane Street has grown into one of the most formidable names in modern finance. With over 3,000 employees and five major global offices, it trades a diverse portfolio of assets—equities, bonds, options, ETFs, and more—on exchanges around the world. Its model thrives on speed, data, and scale. But that same model, unchecked, can become a tool for manipulation—as this latest episode shows.

The firm’s reputation, once synonymous with innovation and efficiency, now carries the taint of market manipulation in one of the world’s fastest-growing economies. And though the full extent of legal consequences remains to be seen, the episode serves as a wake-up call for regulators worldwide. In a globalised trading environment, misconduct in one jurisdiction can ripple across borders, leaving regulators scrambling to patch systemic loopholes.

### The End of the Beginning

As Jane Street faces restrictions on its trading activities in India and prepares for legal proceedings that may yet unfold, one thing is clear: SEBI’s action is not merely punitive—it is precedent-setting. It signals India’s determination to protect its markets, even if it means taking on global titans.

Whether Jane Street’s downfall in India marks a new regulatory era or just an isolated enforcement event will depend on how the financial ecosystem, both domestic and global, responds. But for now, the message is unequivocal: in India’s markets, no player—no matter how sophisticated, powerful, or global—is beyond the reach of accountability. *(The writer can be reached at dipakkurmigpltd@gmail.com)*

## Can Joha Rice of Assam and other native varieties break Basmati’s Dominance?

By Mowsam Hazarika

In the rich and diverse culinary landscape of India, Basmati rice has long enjoyed a place of privilege. Its long grains, enchanting aroma, and ability to absorb spices have made it an essential ingredient in biryanis and festive meals across the country and beyond. From luxury hotels in Hyderabad to grocery shelves in Europe and the Middle East, Basmati has become a symbol of Indian premium rice. But while Basmati basks in the spotlight, a quiet and fragrant movement is emerging from the fields of Assam, Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, and Bihar—home to equally aromatic but under-recognised rice varieties like Joha, Gobindobhog, Kalanamak, Tulaipanji, and Katarni.

These traditional varieties, with their unique regional flavors, textures, and cultural associations, have remained largely confined to local markets. They carry with them centuries of history, ritual, and regional pride. Yet their presence in the larger national or global food conversation remains limited. The question that arises now is whether these traditional varieties can emerge from Basmati’s shadow and establish a firm identity of their own, both within India and globally.

The story of Basmati is one of systematic support and sustained visibility. Since the 1960s, the government has taken steps in a mission mode to promote Basmati. The grain’s export potential was recognised early, with regulatory measures, branding support, minimum export pricing (MEP), and Geographical Indication (GI) recognition helping it become a global product. Even a major patent dispute in the late 1990s involving a US company attempting to register Basmati hybrids led to India enacting the GI Act in 1999—signaling the centrality of Basmati to India’s agri-export strategy.

In 2023–24, India exported over 5.24 million tonnes of Basmati rice, earning Rs 48,389 crore. Despite making up less than 7% of India’s rice output, Basmati contributed over 60% of rice export value. Today, Basmati is not just a festive grain—it features in daily meals, restaurant menus, and ready-to-eat kits. The biryani boom has further cemented its place, with food delivery platforms like Swiggy and Zomato recording millions of biryani orders annually, almost all made with Basmati rice.

In contrast, aromatic rice varieties like Gobindobhog, Joha, and Kalanamak tell a different story—one of cultural richness, resilience, and untapped promise. Take Gobindobhog for instance. This short-grain rice from West Bengal has been an indispensable part of traditional Bengali sweets like payesh (rice pudding) made during Makar Sankranti and other festivals. Its natural stickiness and fragrant aroma also make it ideal for khichdi and pulao. In New Delhi’s CR Park, known as the capital’s “Mini Bengal,” shopkeepers like Basudev Chowdhury have seen a surge in non-Bengali customers seeking Gobindobhog. Many try it out of curiosity and return as loyal patrons.

Similarly, Joha rice from Assam holds a cherished place in Assamese cuisine. Known for its soft texture and sweet aroma, Joha is used in dishes like pitha and payas during Bihu and other cultural festivities. It pairs especially well with traditional meats like pigeon or duck, making it more than just a staple—it is a symbol of identity and community. However, despite its popularity in Assam, Joha has yet to make inroads into the national market due to a lack of systematic branding and logistical support.

Kalanamak rice from eastern Uttar Pradesh is perhaps the most dramatic example of revival. Once on the verge of extinction, it has made a comeback, thanks to its GI tag (granted in 2013) and the One District One Product (ODOP) scheme. Acreage under Kalanamak cultivation has increased significantly—from just 10,000–15,000 hectares in 2018 to nearly 50,000 hectares in 2024. Its strong nutritional profile—with higher protein, iron, and zinc content than Basmati—makes it a natural fit for health-conscious consumers. It is sugar-free and rich in micronutrients, giving it an edge in premium international markets where it sells for as high as Rs 300 per kilo, compared to Basmati’s Rs 100–150.

Despite this potential, these aromatic varieties face formidable challenges. There is still no separate Harmonized System of Nomenclature (HSN) code for most non-Basmati aromatic rice varieties. This means they are grouped under generic non-Basmati categories, making their export tracking and branding difficult. Market access, pricing transparency, and international recognition all remain hampered by the lack of basic infrastructure, grading systems, and quality



control.

Although the Ministry of Agriculture introduced the Non-Basmati Aromatic Rice Classification and Marking Rules in January 2024 to address this issue, progress has been slow. Experts argue that unless these varieties receive sustained attention—much like Basmati did—they may never reach their full potential. Simply put, GI tags and folklore are not enough. What’s needed is institutional commitment across the value chain—from farming and post-harvest management to packaging, pricing, storage, and global marketing.

Farmers cultivating these varieties also need better price assurance. A higher Minimum Support Price (MSP) tailored for traditional aromatic varieties can incentivise their cultivation and preservation. Additionally, support for research and development, aroma retention technology, organic certification, and modern packaging can help these grains compete in both domestic and international premium markets.

These grains are not merely food—they are part of India’s intangible cultural heritage. From the rituals associated with Gobindobhog in Bengal, to the folklore surrounding Kalanamak’s origin, said to be gifted by Lord Buddha, each rice variety carries a story that deserves to be told and preserved. Promoting them means preserving the biodiversity of India’s rice gene pool,

sustaining agroecological knowledge systems, and reviving culinary traditions that are at risk of being forgotten.

There are hopeful signs. Food vloggers, culinary influencers, and regional chefs are beginning to showcase these lesser-known grains in social media posts and gourmet menus. In some export markets, niche interest is growing. Kalanamak, for example, is finding new customers in the US, the UAE, and the UK. Similarly, Joha and Gobindobhog are slowly gaining attention among India’s diaspora and wellness-focused consumers.

These initial steps need to be consolidated through coordinated government support, public-private partnerships, and awareness campaigns. India’s aromatic rice landscape is far richer than just Basmati. With the right push, it is entirely possible for Gobindobhog, Joha, Kalanamak, and other native grains to find a place on kitchen shelves across the globe.

Basmati may continue to rule the biryani bowl, but the full story of India’s aromatic rice should be about more than just one variety. It should be a celebration of diversity—of regional flavors, local traditions, and the quiet brilliance of indigenous grains that have nourished generations. The time has come to give these hidden gems their rightful place in India’s agricultural and culinary narrative.



# Serving Society or Serving the Self?

Dr. Buljit Buragohain

A noticeable trend in recent times is that some individuals begin their journey in "social service" with sincere intentions, often using their own time, effort, and financial resources. However, once they gain a measure of recognition, the nature of their work gradually shifts. They start seeking donations and financial support from others — still under the noble banner of serving society. Over time, what may have started as a selfless mission quietly transforms into a source of personal income.

True social service, at its core, is a selfless act — driven by compassion, empathy, and a deep commitment to the public good. Those who genuinely wish to serve must begin with their own resources, whether that means offering their time, knowledge, money, or physical effort. This foundation ensures that their actions are grounded in authenticity and moral integrity. When individuals rely primarily on others' donations to fund their initiatives and then go on to receive awards, media

attention, or social prestige, an important ethical question arises:

"Am I truly serving society, or am I cultivating a personal brand funded by the generosity of others?"

Turning social service into a full-fledged profession or business — without transparency and accountability — goes against the very spirit of service. If the driving force behind social work becomes personal benefit rather than public welfare, the credibility and intent of the effort become questionable. It is, therefore, vital that those who aspire to work for the betterment of society do so with sincerity, humility, and honesty. Accepting praise and recognition without having made a personal contribution dishonors the very principle of social service. Those who operate on funds raised from others should maintain the humility to refrain from seeking accolades for themselves.

Only when social service is rooted in genuine intent — and not in self-interest — can it contribute to building a more compassionate, ethical, and responsible society.



## Indian Air Force Recruitment 2025 – Agniveer Vayu Online Application

Indian Air Force.  
Last Date: 31/07/2025.

Indian Air Force has released the official notification for the recruitment of Agniveer Vayu vacancy for Agniveer Vayu Intake 02/2026 under Agnipath Scheme or Agneepath Scheme across the country. Interested and eligible candidates who want to enter Indian Air Force as a soldier may apply online here.

Name of post: Agniveer Vayu  
No of posts: To be updated later  
Name of batch: Agniveer Vayu Intake 02/2026  
Name of scheme: Agnipath Scheme  
Duration of service: 4 Years  
Name of department: Indian Air Force  
Name of ministry: Ministry of Defence, India  
Date of launch of the scheme: 14th June 2022  
Job location: All India

Mode of application: Online

Helpline: For queries pertaining to filling up of online application form, candidates may also contact on Telephone No. 020-25503105/25503106.

Age Limit: Candidates born between 02nd July 2005 and 02nd January 2009 (both days inclusive) are eligible to apply for Agniveer Vayu posts. In case, a candidate clears all the stages of the Selection Procedure, then the upper age limit as on date of enrollment is 21 years.

Educational Qualification:

Science Subjects: Candidates should have passed Intermediate/ 10+2/ Equivalent examination with Mathematics, Physics and English from an Education Board recognised by Central, State and UT with minimum 50% marks in aggregate and 50% marks in English.

OR

Passed Three years Diploma Course in Engineering (Mechanical/ Electrical/ Electronics/ Automobile/ Computer Science/ Instrumentation Technology/ Information Technology) from a Central, State and UT recognized Polytechnic institute with 50% marks in aggregate and 50% marks in English in diploma course (or in Intermediate/Matriculation, if English is not a subject in Diploma Course).

OR

Passed Two years Vocational Course with non-vocational subject viz. Physics and Maths from State Education Boards recognised by Central, State and UT with 50% marks in aggregate and 50% marks in English in vocational course (or in Intermediate/ Matriculation, if English is not a subject in Vocational Course).

Other Than Science Subjects: Candidates should have passed Intermediate/ 10+2/ Equivalent examination in any subject approved by Education Boards recognised by Central, State and UT with minimum 50% marks in aggregate and 50% marks in English.

OR

Passed two years vocational course from Education Boards recognised by Central, State and UT with minimum 50% marks in aggregate and 50% marks in English in vocational course or in Intermediate/Matriculation if English is not a subject in Vocational Course.

General Medical Standards for Agniveer Vayu are as follows:-

# Height: Minimum acceptable height is 152 cms (For Male candidates) and 152 cms (For Female candidates). For candidates belonging to North East or hilly regions of Uttarakhand, a lower minimum height of 147 cms will be accepted. In case of candidates from Lakshadweep, the minimum height will be 150 cms.

# Chest:

Male Candidates: The chest wall should be well proportioned and well developed. Minimum chest circumference should be 77 cms and the chest expansion should be atleast 05 cms.

Female Candidates: The chest wall should be well proportioned and should be with minimum range of expansion of 05 cms.

# Weight: Proportionate to height and age.

# Gynaecological Examination (For female candidates): The examination covers external genitalia, hernia orifices and the perineum, any evidence of stress urinary incontinence or genital prolapse outside introitus.

# Pregnancy (For female candidates): Any candidate, if found pregnant shall be disqualified and her candidature will be rejected.

# Hearing: Candidate should have normal hearing i.e. able to hear forced whisper from a distance of 6 meters with each ear separately.

# Dental: Should have healthy gums, good set of teeth and minimum 14 dental points.

# General Health: Candidate should be of normal anatomy without loss of any appendages. He should be free from any active or latent, acute or chronic, medical or surgical disability or infection and skin ailments. Candidate shall be physically and mentally FIT to perform duty in any part of the world, in any climate and terrain.

# Body Tattoo: Permanent body tattoos are not permitted. However, tattoos only on inner face of the fore arms (inside of elbow to the wrist), back (dorsal) part of the hand/reverse side of palm and Tribals with tattoos which are as per custom and traditions of their tribes may be considered. Offensive, obscene, indecent, sexist or racist tattoos are prohibited regardless of location on the Body.

However, right to consider a tattoo acceptable or unacceptable will rest with the Selection Centre. Candidates with permanent body tattoos are to submit two postcard size photographs (close up and distant view) with details of size and type of the Tattoo.

More details about medical standard requirements can be viewed in official notification.

Pay Scale of Air Force Agniveer Post

Year

Customized Package In Hand (70%)

1st Year	Rs 30,000/-	Rs 21,000/-
2nd Year	Rs 33,000/-	Rs 23,100/-
3rd Year	Rs 36,500/-	Rs 25,550/-
4th Year	Rs 40,000/-	Rs 28,000/-
Exit after 4 year		Rs 10.04 lakhs plus accrued interest
Life Insurance Cover		Rs 48 lakhs

Examination Fee: Examination fee of Rs.550/- plus GST is to be paid by the candidate while registering for the online examination. The payment can be made by using Debit Cards/ Credit Cards/ Internet Banking through payment gateway. The examination fee can also be paid by Challan payment at any Axis Bank Branch.

The application mode for Agnipath Recruitment is online. Interested and eligible candidates must apply online here.

Candidates may follow below mentioned steps to apply online.

# Scroll down, go to Important Web-Links section .

# Click on the "Online Application Form" and complete the registration process by clicking "New User? Register".

# In the next stage, click on "Online Application Form" Link and Login.

# Fill your all personal and educational details and upload necessary documents.

# Next, pay the examination fee and submit the form.

# At the end, take a print out of the application form .

Important Dates of Indian Air Force Agniveer Vayu Recruitment 2025

1 Starting date of submission of online application: 11th July 2025

1 Last date of submission of online application: 31st July 2025

1 Date of issue of Admit Card: 23th September 2025 onwards

1 Date of exam: 25th September 2025 onwards

1 Release of provisional select list: To be updated

1 Release of final enrollment list: To be updated

Important Web-Links of Indian Air Force Recruitment

Online Test of Agniveer Vayu Recruitment

Candidates who applied for Agniveer Vayu posts will have to appear in an Online Test. Provisional admit cards will be send to eligible candidates for Phase - I of testing on their registered e-mail IDs between 48-72 hrs prior to the examination. Candidates have to report on the stipulated date and time at the designated center along with colour print out of the Admit Card. Candidates are to bring one blue / black pen and original AADHAAR card along with them for Phase - I testing. Name of city & exam date will be intimated to candidates at an earlier date to enable them to plan their movement.

Type of questions: Objective type

Language of questions: Bilingual (English & Hindi) except for English paper.

Marking pattern: One mark for every correct answer.

Negative marking: 0.25 marks shall be deducted for each wrong answer.

Science Subjects

The exam pattern for the category of Science Subjects is as mentioned below.

Type of exam: Online Test

Duration of exam: 60 Minutes

Syllabus of exam: English, Physics and Mathematics as per 10+2 CBSE syllabus.

The exam pattern for the category of Other Than Science Subjects is as mentioned below.

Type of exam: Online Test

Duration of exam: 45 Minutes

Syllabus of exam: English as per 10+2 CBSE syllabus and Reasoning & General Awareness (RAGA).

The exam pattern for the category of both Science Subjects & Other than Science Subjects is as mentioned below.

Type of exam: Online Test

Duration of exam: 85 Minutes

Syllabus of exam: Physics, Mathematics and English as per 10+2 CBSE syllabus and Reasoning & General Awareness (RAGA).

Names of the shortlisted candidates, who qualify the online test, shall be displayed on the CASB Web Portal <https://agnipathvayu.cdac.in> and on a stipulated date shall be called at designated ASC for Physical Fitness Test (PFT) and Adaptability Test-II. PFT consists of two parts i.e. PFT-I and PFT-II.

PFT- I

Candidates have to complete 1.6 Kms run as per the following timings to qualify for PFT- II

Test	Male	Female
1.6 Kms run	Within 07 minutes	Within 08 minutes

PFT- II

Candidates who qualify PFT-I will go for PFT-II after 10 minutes of recuperation time. The sequence of exercises and maximum time period for male and female candidates are as follows:-

Male Candidates Test	Max Time Period	Remarks
10 Push-ups completion of run	01 minute Test will be conducted after	10 minutes break on
10 Sit-ups completion of 10 Push-ups	01 minute Test will be conducted after	02 minutes break on
20 Squats 01 minute Sit-ups	01 minute Test will be conducted after 02 minutes break on completion of 10 Sit-ups	

Test Max Time Period Remarks  
10 Sit-ups 01 minute and 30 seconds Test will be conducted after 10 minutes break on completion of run

15 Squats 01 minute Test will be conducted after 02 minutes break on completion of 10 Sit-ups

Note: Candidates are advised to bring their sports shoes and shorts/ track pants. Detailed procedure on expected technique for Push-ups, Sit-ups and Squats is available on CASB Web Portal <https://agnipathvayu.cdac.in>.

Here is a list of important guides for Indian Air Force Agniveer Vayu Exam.

## Indian Coast Guard Asst. Commandant Recruitment – 170 Posts

Indian Coast Guard.

Last Date: 23/07/2025.

Indian Coast Guard has released an employment notification for the recruitment of 170 posts of Assistant Commandant ( Group 'A' Gazetted Officer) for Assistant Commandant 2027 batch. Interested and eligible candidates may apply online here.

1. Assistant Commandant General Duty (GD) [Male]

No of posts: 140 [SC:25, ST:24, OBC:35, EWS:10, UR:46]

Age Limit: 21-25 years as on 01 Jul 2026 i.e. born between 01 Jul 2001 & 30 Jun 2005 (Both dates inclusive). 05 Years relaxation for personnel serving in Coast Guard or equivalent personnel in Army/Navy/Air Force .

Essential Qualification:

# Should hold a Graduate Degree from a recognised university

# Mathematics and Physics as subject upto Intermediate or class XII of 10+2+3 scheme of education or equivalent. The candidates who have completed graduation after diploma, are also eligible, provided they should possess a diploma with physics and mathematics in its curriculum.

2. Assistant Commandant Technical (Mechanical/ Electrical/ Electronics) [Male]

No of posts: 30 [SC:3, ST:4, OBC:8, EWS:2, UR:13]

Age Limit: 21-25 years as on 01 Jul 2026 i.e. born between 01 Jul 2001 & 30 Jun 2005 (Both dates inclusive). 05 Years relaxation for personnel serving in Coast Guard or equivalent personnel in Army/Navy/Air Force.

Essential Qualification:

(i) Should hold an Engineering degree from a recognized university in Naval Architecture or Mechanical or Marine or Automotive or Mechatronics or Industrial and Production or Metallurgy or Design or Aeronautical or Aerospace.

OR

Equivalent qualification in any of the above disciplines recognised by the Institutes of the Engineers (India) as exempted from section "A" and "B" and their associate membership examination (AMIE).

(ii) Should hold an Engineering degree from a recognized university in Electrical or Electronics or Telecommunication or Instrumentation or Instrumentation and Con-

trol or Electronics and Communication or Power Engineering or Power Electronics. OR

Equivalent qualification in any of the above disciplines recognised by the Institutes of the Engineers (India) as exempted from section "A" and "B" and their associate membership examination (AMIE).

(iii) Mathematics and Physics as subject upto intermediate or class XII of 10+2+3 scheme of education or equivalent. The candidates who have completed graduation after diploma, are also eligible, provided they should possess a diploma with physics and mathematics in its curriculum.

Examination Fee: All candidates (except SC/ST candidates, who are exempted from payment of fee) are required to pay a fee of Rs. 300/- (Rupees Three Hundred Only) through online mode by using net banking or by using Visa/Master/Maestro/RuPay/Credit/Debit Card/UPI.

Interested and eligible candidates may apply online for these vacancy by visiting official Recruitment Portal. Candidates may follow below mentioned steps to apply online.

# Scroll down, go to Important Web-Links section .

# Click on the "Online Application Form" and complete the registration process by clicking "New Registration".

# In the next stage, click on "Online Application Form" Link and Login.

# Fill your all personal and educational details and upload necessary documents.

# At the end, pay the examination fee and submit the form.

# Don't forget to take a print out of the application form .

## NHPC Apprentice Recruitment 2025 – 361 Posts, Online Apply

NHPC Limited.

Last Date: 11/08/2025

NHPC Limited has released an employment notification for the recruitment of 361 Graduate/Diploma/ ITI Apprentice posts for its Corporate Office (Faridabad) and various other locations. Interested and eligible candidates may apply online here.

1. Graduate Apprentice

No of posts: 129

Stipend: 15,000/- monthly

2. Diploma Apprentice

No of posts: 76

Stipend: 13,500/- monthly

3. ITI trade Apprentice

No of posts: 156

Stipend: 12,000/- monthly

Age Limit: The apprentice should not be less than 18 years of age and the maximum age shall not be more than 30 years. However, the relaxations to the reserved category shall be given

as per the Govt. guidelines.

Educational Qualification: PI check official notification given below in Important Web-Links section.

Step 1:

Interested candidates should first REGISTER themselves (as a candidate/student) on the following website and complete/update their profile by uploading all the required documents:

# For ITI trades: NAPS at <https://apprenticeshipindia.gov.in>

# For Graduate/Degree/ Diploma Trades: NATS at <https://nats.education.gov.in>.

Step 2:

After getting the NAPS/NATS registration/enrolment number, candidates should correspondingly apply on the NHPC website :  
Go to [www.nhpcindia.com](http://www.nhpcindia.com) -> Career Section -> Engagement of Apprentice -> Apply Now

Application must be submitted online through NHPC official website only. Applications made through any other mode will not be accepted.

Required Documents online application:

# Copy of completed Apprenticeship Registration/Enrolment Form done at NATS/ NAPS portal.

# Scanned copies of educational certificates and mark sheets (clear and legible).

# Proof of Age (Matriculation Certificate).

# SC/ ST/ latest OBC(NCL) Caste certificate as per Govt of India formats (as applicable)

# Recent colour passport-sized photograph and signature.

## South Salmara Mankachar Judiciary Recruitment – 6 Posts

O/o District & Sessions Judge, South Salmara Mankachar.

Last Date: 08/08/2025.

District & Sessions Judge, South Salmara Mankachar has released an employment notification for the recruitment of 06 Peon and Process Server Posts in the establishment of District & Sessions Judge, South Salmara Mankachar. Interested and eligible candidates may apply here.

1. Peon

No of posts: 05 Posts [UR: 3, ST(P): 01, SC: 01]

Scale of Pay: Rs. 12,000/- to 37,500/- + G.P. Rs. 3,900/-(PB-1).

Essential Qualification: Minimum Class VIII standard, those who have passed HSSLC(10+2) or above shall be ineligible to apply.

2. Process Server

No of posts: 01 Posts [UR: 1]

Scale of Pay: Rs. 14000- 70000+ GP Rs. 5200 (PB-2)

Essential Qualification: Graduate (in any discipline) with knowledge of Assamese language.

Age Limit: The candidates should not be less than 18 years of age and not more than 40 years of age as on 30.06.2025.

Age Relaxation: The upper age limit is relaxable by 5 years for ST and SC candidates i.e upto 45 years.

# Candidates who will fulfill the requisite eligibility Criteria must submit their applications in the standard form of application published in the Assam Gazette Part — IX and fill the form with Block Letters using Black/Blue ball pen only. Paste one recent Passport size Colour Photograph in the specified box and submit another two pass port size photograph with the application form. Put applicant's signature in the box specified for signature. All passport photos should be signed by the applicants on the backside.

# The filled up "Application Form" alongwith the copy of age certificate ,Educational Qualification Certificate, Caste Certificate from competent authority, Employment Exchange Registration Certificate, forwarding documents in case applying through proper Channel, Experience certificate if any must send it by post to the Office of the District & Sessions Judge, South Salmara Mankachar, P.O:- Fekamari, PIN:- 783135, Dist: South Salmara Mankachar, Assam or may be dropped in the "Drop Box for applications" to be kept in the Office. The documents furnished with the application must be self attested by the Candidates himself/herself.



## GUJARAT BRIDGE COLLAPSE

## Death toll rises to 19 as injured man dies in hospital; search operation on

**VADODARA, July 11:** The death toll in the Mahisagar river bridge collapse in Gujarat's Vadodara district climbed to 19 on Friday after one of the injured persons succumbed to injuries at a hospital, officials said. The search for the two missing persons is still underway, they said.

Several vehicles plunged into the river after a segment of the four-decade-old bridge, connecting Anand and Vadodara districts, collapsed near Gambhira village close to Padra town on Wednesday morning.

"Forty five-year-old Narendrasinh Parmar, a resident of Dahevan, who was one of the five injured persons undergoing treatment at the SSG Hospital died on Friday," an official said.

Eighteen bodies were recovered till Thursday night, and the operation resumed on the third day with efforts being made by the teams engaged at the site to trace two more persons, who are missing, Vadodara Collector Anil Dhameliya said.

On Thursday, Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel suspended four engineers of the state's Roads and Buildings Department in connection with



the bridge collapse.

State minister Rushikesh Patel visited the site of the tragedy and informed the media that action has been taken on the basis of a preliminary report submitted by a committee set up by Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel.

A high-level probe committee of the state's roads and buildings department will submit a detailed report in 30 days, he said.

Out of the 7,000 bridges in the state that have been surveyed, the government has identified those that need repairs or require construction of a new one. Action is taken on them accordingly, he said after

the visit.

"As per the preliminary report of this investigation committee, it has been recorded that the bridge collapsed due to pedestal and articulation crushing. A detailed report will be given by this committee of the Roads and Buildings Department within 30 days," he said.

The investigation report with its technical and administrative reasons will be submitted to the CM and other decisions will be taken on the basis of it, he added. "The state government placed four roads and buildings department officials under suspension," said Patel who also later visited the injured persons at the SSG Hospital and en-

quired about their health.

Collector Dhameliya earlier told the media that the primary objective of the ongoing search and rescue operation was to recover a body trapped under a slab in the river, and trace the missing driver of a truck stuck in the water.

A list of eight missing persons was compiled on Thursday, and the bodies of six of them were recovered, he said.

The operation is being carried out by the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) and other agencies, with locals joining the efforts.

Dhameliya said the rescue teams continue to work amid challenges, including muddy terrain, release of soda ash in water and a tanker filled with a highly corrosive substance.

A tanker that fell into the river was carrying sulphuric acid, and care is being taken to ensure that it does not leak, he said. There is a presence of soda ash in the water, which is causing irritation and itching for the rescuers, he said.

Earlier in the day, some trucks and two-wheelers were pulled out of water during the operation. (PTI)

## Gurugram tennis player murder: Uncle says victim's mother on same floor when shooting happened

**GURUGRAM, July 11:** Police here on Friday said they were investigating all possible angles in the murder of former tennis player Radhika Yadav, including what her mother was doing when the incident occurred. According to an FIR registered based on the complaint of the deceased's uncle, Kuldeep Yadav, Radhika's mother Manju Yadav was present on the first floor of the house when the shooting took place.

The 25-year-old former player was shot dead by her father at the family's double-storey home in the upscale Sushant Lok area of Gurugram on Thursday. Deepak Yadav (49) later confessed to killing his daughter and was arrested.

Radhika Yadav featured in a music video last year alongside an independent artist. With many claiming that the music video might have triggered tensions at home, police said all angles were being looked into. According to officials, Deepak Yadav confessed that he shot at Radhika because he was often taunted for living off her income. Police, in a statement, claimed that the tennis academy Radhika ran was the bone of contention between the father and the daughter. "Her father was not happy with it," Gurugram police spokesperson Sandeep Singh said,

adding that Deepak has disclosed that his objection was to her daughter running the tennis academy, over which there had been altercations between the two. "On many occasions, he had told her to shut it, but she did not agree. Angered, he shot her thrice," the spokesperson added. The accused felt that he was financially well off and also earned from rental income, so there was no need for his daughter to run an academy, the police claimed. A court here on Friday sent Deepak Yadav to police custody for a day. Outside the court, a police official told reporters that they had sought a two-day remand of the accused.

"We have to recover the ammunition of his licensed revolver (used in the crime). We have to verify how much ammunition he had procured," he said.

Asked from where the recovery has to be made, the official said, "The accused owns land in Kasam village near Rewari. We have to get the ammunition from there." The 49-year-old accused, wearing a T-shirt and trousers, had his head covered with a towel as he stepped out of the vehicle near the court complex under police escort for a court appearance.

He faced a volley of questions from a battery of mediapersons, wanting to know why he killed his daughter. However, he

was quickly taken inside the court premises. When he came out of court after the hearing, the towel was off. He faced the same question, and again, he was quickly escorted by the police to the vehicle.

In the FIR, Kuldeep Yadav said Deepak, his wife Manju and daughter Radhika lived on the first floor of the house in Sector 57 while he lived on the ground floor along with his family.

On Thursday, around 10.30 am, he suddenly heard a "loud explosion" and rushed to the first floor, the FIR stated.

"I saw my niece Radhika lying in a pool of blood in the kitchen, and the revolver was found in the drawing room. My son, Piyush Yadav, also rushed to the first floor. Both of us picked up Radhika and rushed her in our car to Asia Maringo Hospital in Sector 56, where doctors declared her dead," the uncle said in his statement.

Earlier, police said the incident occurred around 2 pm when Radhika was on the first floor, cooking food in the kitchen.

Kuldeep Yadav said only Deepak, his wife and daughter were on the first floor of the house when the incident occurred. Their son Dheeraj was not present there at the time of the incident, the deceased's uncle told the police, which was recorded in the FIR. (PTI)

## No stay asked for by petitioners, SC order to save Bihar voters from disenfranchisement: Cong

**NEW DELHI, July 11:** The Congress on Friday said the Supreme Court order on pleas challenging the Election Commission's special intensive revision of electoral rolls in Bihar makes it clear that "no stay was asked for by any of the petitioners", and hoped the ruling will save a vast majority of voters from being disenfranchised.

The Supreme Court on Thursday asked the Election Commission to consider Aadhaar, voter ID and ration cards as valid documents during its ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in Bihar, set to go to polls later this year.

Calling SIR a "constitutional mandate", Justices Sudhanshu Dhulia and Joydip Bagchi considered the submissions of senior advocate Rakesh Dwivedi, appearing for the EC, and permitted the poll panel to continue with the exercise in Bihar with over 7 crore voters.

In a post on X, Congress general secretary in-charge communications Jairam Ramesh said, "Following the Honble Supreme Court's order that has just come out officially, the Election Commission

now has to include the EPIC, Aadhar cards, and Ration Cards in the Special Intensive Revision of the electoral rolls in Bihar. This will save a vast majority of voters from being disenfranchised," Ramesh said on X.

"Moreover the EC's spin on the no stay being given has been clearly exposed. Page 7 of the order makes it clear that no stay was asked for by any of the petitioners yesterday. Such deliberately misleading headline management does not befit a Constitutional authority," he said.

Hitting back at Ramesh, the BJP accused him of misinterpreting the Supreme Court observations.

"Stop misinterpreting the Supreme Court. The Court has not mandated the acceptance of any additional documents—it has merely said it may consider them. Justice Dhulia clearly stated that the Election Commission of India (ECI) is free to record valid reasons for excluding any document. The discretion lies with the ECI," BJP's IT department head Amit Malviya said in his post on X.

"Deliberately misrepresenting court observations is dangerous -- you could be held in contempt for attributing to the Court what it never said. Just ask Rahul Gandhi, who faced the consequences for a similar offence not long ago," he said.

Ramesh also tagged screenshots of the court order with his post.

"Since these cases will come up before the appropriate Court prior to August 1, 2025 which is the scheduled date for notification of Draft Electoral Rolls there is no occasion presently to pass any order on the ad interim stay applications, and the petitioners in any case do not press for a stay at this stage," the order said.

Depending on the reply of the Election Commission the petitioners would always be at liberty to press their plea for stay on the next date of listing, it said.

Terming the right to vote as an important right in a democratic country, the bench said, "We cannot stop a constitutional body from doing what it is supposed to do. Simultaneously, we will not let them do what they are not supposed to do." (PTI)

## Nitish disburses first instalment of hiked pension amount to over 1 crore beneficiaries

**PATNA, July 11:** Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar on Friday disbursed the first instalment of the hiked pension amount of ₹ 1,100 per month to the bank accounts of 1.11 crore beneficiaries, including senior citizens, widows and people with disabilities. Over ₹ 1,227 crore was credited under six different pension schemes during a function here, officials said.

The Bihar government had on June 24 increased the pension amount from ₹ 400 per month to ₹ 1,100.

"The elderly are an important part of society and ensuring a dignified life for them is top priority of our government. It will continue to make efforts in this direction. We will ensure that this amount is disbursed on the 10th of every month," Kumar said on the occasion.

The Bihar government is also committed to the overall development of women in the state, he said. "Our government has been consistently working towards the empowerment and welfare of women. We have set an example in terms

of women's empowerment by prioritising their education, security and employment. Before 2005, the earlier dispensation did nothing for women. It was only after we assumed office that the real change started," the CM asserted. Noting that he had "made mistakes" in the past by joining hands with the opposition in Bihar, Kumar added: "I strayed 'idhar udhar' (here and there) twice. But now, I am with the NDA and will remain with the alliance forever, and work for the development of the state." (PTI)

## We hit 9 terror targets in Pak with precision in Operation Sindoor, missed none: NSA Ajit Doval

**CHENNAI, July 11:** India hit nine terror targets crisscrossing Pakistan with precision and missed none of them during Operation Sindoor, National Security Advisor Ajit Doval said on Friday, taking pride in India's capability and technological prowess in neutralising the threats from across the border.

The precision was to the point where India knew who was where, and the entire operation lasted hardly 23 minutes past 1 am on May 7, he said.

"Thereafter, they said Pakistan did this and so on. Can you tell me of one image or photograph that shows any damage to India," Doval asked while speaking at the 62nd convocation ceremony of IIT, Madras.

India launched Operation Sindoor on terror targets in Pakistan and Pakistan Occupied Kashmir, post the April 22 Pahalgaon terror attack in which 26 persons, mostly tourists, were killed.

Addressing the students, Doval also said the link between technology and warfare was very important, and that the country should develop indigenous technology to meet its requirements.

Referring to the earlier speaker, Padma Subrahmanyam—Padma Vibhushan awardee and legendary danseuse—congratulating him for the success of Operation Sindoor and evoking thunderous



applause from the students and graduates, the NSA said, "I am really proud of it (Operation Sindoor). Much of it was driven by indigenous content."

"We are proud of it—that some of our best systems worked, whether it was BrahMos (missiles), the integrated air control and command system, or battlefield surveillance. We decided on nine terrorist targets, not in the border areas but in the crisscross of Pakistan, and we missed none."

No unintended site was struck, and the strike was precise to the point where "we knew who was where. And the entire operation lasted for 23 minutes," he said.

In a subtle rebuttal to international

media coverage questioning the operation's effectiveness, the NSA said, "They wrote what they wanted. But satellite images tell the real story—that 13 Pakistan airbases, before and after May 10, show exactly what happened."


Earlier, speaking at the convocation, Padma Subrahmanyam said the historic victory of Operation Sindoor was a manifestation of adherence to the valour that the Bhagavad Gita preaches.

"As a proud Indian, I have always offered my salutations to our jawans, who are our national guardian angels," she said, congratulating Doval for his role in the operation.

At the event, Doval said the country could not afford to lose the technology battle and remain behind or fall decades behind others.

He acknowledged the role of IIT, Madras and the private sector in developing 5G in two-and-a-half years' time, whereas the Chinese took over 12 years and spent 300 billion dollars to develop 5G technology.

"Even a screw that deals with anything related to data or security protection must come from a trusted source. It is either made in India or by somebody who is very close to India," he added, emphasising the need to totally insulate our system from the enemy. (PTI)



## অসম লোকসেৱা আয়োগ

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No. 41PSC/DR-56/2/2024-25

ADVT. NO. 26 /2025

Assam Public Service Commission invites application from Indian Citizens as defined in Articles 5 to 8 of the Constitution of India for the under-mentioned posts under Assam Government in the scale of pay as indicated below and carrying usual allowances as admissible under Rules of the Govt. of Assam.

(1) **Name of the Post** : Junior Engineer under Soil Conservation Department.

(2) **No of posts** : 18 (Eighteen) nos.

(3) **Reservation of posts** :

Name of the Service/Post	Open Category		Reserved for OBC/MOBC		Reserved for TT & Adivasi		Reserved for SC		Reserved for STP		Reserved for STH		Grand Total		Post reserved for PwBD & Type of Disability	Post reserved for Ex-Servicemen
	Total	R/W	Total	R/W	Total	R/W	Total	R/W	Total	R/W	Total	R/W				
Junior Engineer under Soil Conservation Department	08	02	06	02	01	00	02	01	01	00	00	00	18	05	HI = 01	00

**\* PwBD - Persons with Benchmark Disabilities; R/W - Reserved for Women.**  
**\* Reservation as per draft advertisement received from Government against total numbers of posts in the cadre.**

**NB: The Ex-Servicemen must upload Ex-Servicemen Identity Card issued by Zila Sainik Welfare Office of the state of Assam and Discharge Book while applying for the reserved post.**

**4. Scale of Pay:** Pay scale + Grade Pay + Other allowances as admissible to the Assam State Government employees from time to time (per month).

Pay scale	Grade Pay	Pay Band
Rs. 14,000/- to Rs. 70,000/-	Rs. 8,700/-	Pay Band - 2

**BEFORE FILLING UP THE APPLICATION FORM, CANDIDATES MUST NOTE THAT THE REQUIRED CERTIFICATES RELATING TO AGE, CASTE AND MINIMUM EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION WILL BE FETCHED FROM THE OTR PROFILE. CANDIDATES ARE TO UPDATE THE OTR PROFILE IF ANY ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS ARE TO BE UPLOADED IN SUPPORT OF THE ADVERTISED POST.**

**5. Eligibility Criteria:**  
 The candidate must be an Indian Citizen as defined in Article 5 to 8 of the Constitution of India and must be a permanent resident of Assam. As a domicile proof of the candidate, he/she must upload a copy of the valid Permanent Resident Certificate issued in Assam for educational purpose/Employment Exchange Registration Certificate will be treated as proof of residency.

(Upload necessary documents)

**6. Education Qualification:**  
 a. The candidate must possess a 3 (three) year Diploma Course either in Civil Engineering or Agriculture Engineering from a Government recognized Institution. No other diploma holder shall be eligible to apply.  
 b. The Diploma Course must be a regular course. Diploma Course obtained through distance mode of Education, by whatever name called, will not be considered.

(Upload relevant all semester/year mark sheet/certificate reflecting the subjects)

**7. Age:**  
 The candidate should not be less than 18 years of age and not more than 40 years of age as on 01-01-2025. The upper age limit is relaxable:

- By 5 years for SC/ST candidates, i.e. upto 45 years.
- By 3 years for OBC/MOBC/Tea Tribes & Adivasi Community candidates i.e. upto 43 years as per Govt. Notification No. ABP. 6/2016/9 dated Dispur the 25th April 2018.
- For Ex-Servicemen, the maximum age shall be 42 years as on 01-01-2025 for Unreserved category, relaxable further by 3 (Three) years for OBC/MOBC candidates and 5 (Five) years for SC/ST candidates.
- Persons with benchmark disability (PwBD) 10 years irrespective of SC/ST/OBC and UR Category of candidates as per Govt. Memorandum No. ABP 144/95/121 dated Dispur the 28th October, 2015.

The age limit of the candidates will be calculated on the basis of the **Class-X/Class-XII Examination Admit Card/Pass Certificate/Marksheet** issued by a recognized Central/State Board/Council where Age/Date of Birth (DOB) is clearly reflected.  
 No other document shall be accepted in lieu of the above mentioned documents for age proof.

(Upload relevant documents)

**8. For PwBD Category Candidate:**  
 To be eligible for consideration under PwBD category, a candidate must possess Benchmark Disability and must produce necessary certificate issued by the competent authority.

(Upload relevant documents)

**9. For Government Employees of the state of Assam:**  
 Candidates, already in regular Government service, whether in permanent or temporary capacity other than casual/ad-hoc/daily wages/hourly paid/contract basis, in order to prove their employment, must upload a certificate against the applied post, issued by the competent authority under which he/she is working.  
 However, candidates, seeking pay protection, continuation in service etc., must upload 'NO OBJECTION CERTIFICATE (NOC)' against the applied post, issued by the competent authority under which he/she is working.

(Upload relevant documents)

**10. The Small Family Norms:**  
 As per Govt. notification No. ABP.69/2019/17, dated Dispur, the 6th November/2019, candidates have to submit a declaration regarding "The Small Family Norms" in Form - A at the time of applying for the post.

(Upload necessary documents)

The advertisement has been issued as per draft advertisement furnished by the Government.

- STARTING DATE FOR ONLINE APPLICATION: 16-07-2025**
- CLOSING DATE FOR ONLINE APPLICATION: 15-08-2025**
- LAST DATE FOR PAYMENT OF APPLICATION FEE: 17-08-2025**

**NB: For detail advertisement please visit APSC's official website [www.apsc.nic.in](http://www.apsc.nic.in) (Recruitment Advertisement link).**

Sd/-  
Deputy Secretary  
Assam Public Service Commission  
Jawaharnagar, Khanapara, Guwahati-22

**DIPR /D/HLT/65/12-Jul-25**



## Governor urges SHG-led bazaars, brand building and market linkages to power rural women's economic rise

### Guv Parnaik honours Self-Help Groups, calls for SHG product marketing hubs in Arunachal

**HT Correspondent**

**ITANAGAR, July 11:** Arunachal Pradesh Governor Lt General K T Parnaik (Retd) on Friday interacted with Self-Help Groups (SHGs) from across the state at a special event held at Raj Bhavan, Itanagar, organised in collaboration with the Arunachal State Rural Livelihood Mission under the Department of Rural Development.

According to an official statement, the Governor lauded the contribution of SHGs, especially the 'Lakhpati Didis', and called them pillars of a Viksit Arunachal.

During the event, the Governor and the First Lady of the State, Anagha Parnaik, visited SHG exhibitions showcasing traditional crafts, organic produce, and innovative products.

Expressing appreciation for the entrepreneurship on display, they purchased several items, which will be distributed to underprivileged individuals in the districts, reinforcing the value of every purchase in empowering rural women.

Addressing the gathering, the Governor

nor stressed the need for setting up dedicated SHG Product Marketing Hubs in key towns such as Itanagar, Ziro, Tezu, Pasighat, Namsai, Aalo, Bomdila, and Tawang.

While the Government can provide the infrastructure, he said, the leadership and ownership must come from the SHGs themselves.

He envisioned these hubs as vibrant SHG Bazaars that reflect the strength, creativity, and enterprise of rural women.

Drawing from his experiences during district visits, the Governor urged SHG members to embrace modern technology, digital marketing, and branding while remaining rooted in traditional knowledge.

He encouraged the women to formally register their ventures, build identifiable group brands, and participate in exhibitions to take Arunachal's products beyond state borders.

The Governor called upon SHGs to coordinate with cooperative societies to identify potential markets, both within



and outside Arunachal.

He assured support in terms of providing working offices and market spaces at the district level in coordination with Deputy Commissioners and the administration.

Underscoring the need to build institutional capacities, the Governor urged

SHGs to launch a 'Train the Trainers' initiative to develop Master Didis who can guide other groups in key areas such as business management, accounting, hygiene, packaging, and customer service.

He also encouraged the documentation of SHG journeys for a proposed

'Voices of Change' series to inspire others and celebrate grassroots achievements.

Recognising the pivotal role women play in society, the Governor urged SHG members to actively participate in social causes such as the fight against drug abuse and tuberculosis, promoting sanitation, and ensuring children complete basic education.

He said that their engagement would significantly contribute to the vision of Viksit Bharat.

Responding to issues raised by the SHG members, the Governor assured that he would recommend improved transport facilities, greater CSR participation by business houses, and the establishment of SHG product outlets at airports and in metropolitan cities to enhance market access.

The Governor stated that Arunachal's SHGs exemplify the transformation envisioned by Prime Minister Narendra Modi under the Lakhpati Didi initiative.

He said these groups are demonstrating how women can generate wealth

with dignity, reshape the rural economy, and contribute to building a developed Arunachal and India.

He also reiterated that Raj Bhavan will remain a committed partner in their journey, providing support and recognition.

The Governor felicitated three exemplary SHGs—Mete Dene Cluster Level Federation from Papum Pare, Namker Kiyer Mother's Kitchen Unit from Kurung Kumey, and Engo Kojie SHG from Pasighat—for their innovation and impact. Secretary of Rural Development Dr Sonal Swaroop briefed attendees on the Lakhpati Didi initiative, and the programme saw participation from 69 SHGs representing 22 districts.

Commissioner (Agriculture Production) Vivek Pandey, Commissioner to the Governor Pawan Kumar Sain, and CEO of the Arunachal State Rural Livelihoods Mission Sangeeta Yirang were also present.

The event concluded with a High Tea hosted by the Governor and the First Lady to celebrate the spirit of women-led development in the state.

## Three-day programme on millet processing and women's empowerment held at Dadam village



**HT Correspondent**

**DADAM, July 11:** A three-day programme titled "Inauguration of the Women Technology Park (WTP) Millet Processing Unit and Workshop cum Hands-on Training on Millet Processing and Value Addition" was held successfully from July 9 to 11 at Dadam village in Arunachal Pradesh's Tirap district.

The programme was organised as part of the project titled "Capacity Building of Rural Women on Processing and Value Addition of Millets/Underutilised Crops Through Technology Adoption and Awareness for Nutritional Security in Dadam Village," sanctioned by the Science for Equity, Empowerment and Development (SEED) Division of the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India.

According to an official statement, the project is being implemented by the DBT-APSCS&T Centre of Excellence (CoE) for Bioresources and Sustainable Development at Kimin under the Arunachal Pradesh State Council for Science & Technology, Department of Science & Technology, Government of Arunachal Pradesh, in collaboration with the

Kindle Foundation, Khonsa.

The Women Technology Park Millet Processing Unit was formally inaugurated on July 9 by Chakat Aboh, MLA of 56 Khonsa-West Assembly Constituency and Advisor to the Minister of Transport, Government of Arunachal Pradesh.

The inaugural event was attended by Deputy Commissioner of Tirap Techu Aran, Circle Officer of Dadam Dr Mekong Taku, Agriculture Development Officer Nowang Wangnow, the Chief of Dadam village, and members of local Self-Help Groups (SHGs), among others.

Project Investigator Dr Joram Aku, Scientist-B at the CoE for BRSD, welcomed the gathering and provided an overview of the Centre's rural bioresource initiatives.

She underlined the role of millets in ensuring food security, promoting nutrition, and enhancing climate-resilient agriculture.

Highlighting the utility of the newly inaugurated processing unit, she stated that it would enable women in Dadam village to acquire practical skills in post-harvest processing, packaging, and value addition of millets, while

also paving the way for grassroots entrepreneurship.

Addressing the gathering, ADO Nowang Wangnow spoke on the rising significance of millet cultivation and urged SHG members to adopt sustainable agricultural methods.

He encouraged them to explore viable market linkages to position millet-based products as nutritious and health-conscious alternatives.

Deputy Commissioner Techu Aran reiterated the nutritional and medicinal importance of millets and encouraged the women to incorporate them into their daily diets.

He described millet processing as a viable avenue for small-scale, home-based enterprise development, capable of improving household income and promoting women's financial self-reliance.

In her address, MLA Chakat Aboh expressed appreciation for the establishment of the processing unit and encouraged the local women to make full use of the facility.

She described the project as a key step toward women's empowerment, skill development, and improved nutritional outcomes, and

voiced hope that the Women Technology Park would become a model for community-led progress in the region.

The inaugural session concluded with a vote of thanks delivered by Er Sourav Kr Pathak, Scientist-C at the CoE for BRSD, who thanked all officials, trainers, and SHG members for their participation.

He noted that the WTP had the potential to become a platform not just for millet processing, but also for sustained socio-economic development, entrepreneurship, and women-led innovation in the district.

Following the inaugural event, a hands-on workshop and training session on millet processing and value addition was conducted over the three days.

A total of 23 participants from different SHGs took part in the training, which was conducted by Juri Sonowal, Project Coordinator, and Dulumoni Regon, Trainer, from Ayang Trust, Majuli, Assam. Participants were given practical demonstrations on millet processing and the preparation of value-added products including foxtail millet cakes, laddoos, and cookies.

They were also trained in hygienic food handling, basic packaging techniques, and effective product presentation for local market sales.

The programme concluded on July 11 with a short valedictory function, during which certificates were distributed to both participants and trainers.

The event marked a significant step forward in advancing rural livelihoods and promoting nutritional security through technology-enabled millet processing and community capacity building.

The successful implementation of the programme was made possible with the support and guidance of Er C D Mungyak, Director-cum-Member Secretary, Arunachal Pradesh State Council for Science & Technology, and Dr Debajit Mahanta, Joint Director of the same council and Project Director of the DBT-APSCS&T CoE for BRSD, Kimin.

Their oversight and facilitation were instrumental in aligning the initiative with the broader goals of promoting science and technology for rural development in the state.

## Arunachal minister holds meetings with Centre for tourism, cultural projects, welfare schemes

**ITANAGAR, July 11:** Arunachal Pradesh Women and Child Development Minister Dasanglu Pul held a series of meetings with union ministers in Delhi to accelerate key development projects focused on culture, tourism, and welfare schemes in the state, an official release said on Friday.

Pul, who is currently on a tour to the national capital, discussed with Union Culture and Tourism Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat on Thursday.

The minister proposed the establishment of a regional cultural centre of the North East Zone Cultural Centre (NEZCC) at Jote near here to serve as a hub for preserving and promoting indigenous art, music, and traditions.

"We are committed to preserving and promoting our rich cultural legacy. The proposed centre at Jote will serve as a vibrant hub for indigenous art, music, and tradi-

tions," the official statement quoted Pul as saying.

The minister also emphasised the need to upgrade multi-purpose cultural complexes (MPCCs) across the state to create more inclusive community spaces.

"Upgraded cultural complexes will provide inclusive spaces for youth and artisans to engage, perform, and grow," she pointed out.

The union minister assured full support of the Centre in implementing these proposals, expressing appreciation for the state's proactive cultural initiatives.

Later in the day, Pul met Union Women and Child Development Minister Annapurna Devi to review the implementation of central schemes in Arunachal Pradesh.

The discussion focused on infrastructure deficits, delivery bottlenecks, and coordination gaps, affecting welfare programmes for women and children, the statement

said.

"The union minister was very receptive and appreciated Arunachal's progressive approach in empowering women and protecting child rights," Pul said.

She added that the union minister reaffirmed her support for closer Centre-state coordination to ensure the smooth rollout of schemes.

Calling for a collective push towards inclusive growth, Pul added, "Together with the Centre, we remain focused on building a stronger and more inclusive future for our women and children."

Pul also visited the BJP central library at the party headquarters, where she met Prof Dr Aseervatham Zachary, the national coordinator of the party.

Calling the interaction insightful, Pul said she appreciated his contributions to the party's intellectual ecosystem. (PTI)

## AUS distributes laptops to 37 students under upgrade programme

**HT Bureau**

**NAMSAL, July 11:** The Faculty of Library & Information Sciences of Arunachal University of Studies (AUS) has distributed laptops to 37 students under its "Students and Alumni Upgrade Programme" as part of a continuing initiative to promote digital empowerment in higher education. According to an official statement issued by the university, the laptops were handed over by Vishva Lochan, Pro-Chancellor and Managing Director of AUS, during a distribution ceremony held on campus.

The move, the university said, aims to equip deserving students with vital digital tools to support their academic journey and strengthen online learning access.

Addressing the students at the event, Lochan said the laptops would help beneficiaries access digital resources, participate in virtual learning platforms, and acquire essential technological skills that are becoming increasingly crucial in the modern academic and professional landscape. "This initiative is a step towards ensuring our students are well-prepared for the digital future. Through this programme, we aim to make education more inclusive, effective, and aligned with contemporary learning demands," he said.

The laptop distribution is part of the university's broader strategy to integrate technology into education and build a robust academic ecosystem that enables students to thrive both inside and beyond the classroom.

The university highlighted that the initiative is designed not only to bridge the digital divide but also to promote equitable access to learning infrastructure. The statement further noted that AUS has made arrangements to distribute laptops equipped with licensed software and key learning tools to a total of 500 students this year under the same programme.



## WCD department conducts awareness campaign on social issues in Yingkiong schools

**HT Correspondent**

**YINGKIONG, July 11:** The Department of Women and Child Development (WCD) in Yingkiong, Upper Siang district, has launched a wide-ranging sensitisation and awareness campaign across government schools in the region to educate students and teachers on key social issues and centrally sponsored welfare schemes. According to an official statement issued by the department, the programme began on July 9 and has so far covered five schools, reaching over 1,800 students and 100 teachers.

The campaign is being conducted under the ambit of national flagship schemes including the Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyaan (NMB), Mission Shakti, and Mission Vatsalya.

The primary focus of the campaign is to address substance and drug abuse among adolescents.

Students were sensitised about the harmful effects of drug use through interactive discussions and awareness sessions.

Pledge-taking ceremonies were also organised during the sessions to encourage students to commit themselves to a drug-free lifestyle.

In addition to substance abuse, the programme also aimed to raise awareness about child protection laws and safeguards available for women and children.

Sessions conducted under Mission Shakti and Mission Vatsalya informed participants about the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, the legal consequences of child marriage, and other protective legal provisions.

The campaign has so far been held at Government Secondary School, Parsing; Government Town Secondary School; Government Upper Primary School, Daggong; Government Higher Secondary School; and Vivekananda Kendra Vidyalaya (VKV), Yingkiong.

## Annual Smoke Offering Ceremony reaffirms sacred traditions in Arunachal's Gelling village

### Ceremony at Kepangla Pass blends faith, ecology, and cultural resilience in remote Himalayan village



**HT Correspondent**

**GELLING, July 11:** The serene frontier village of Gelling in Arunachal Pradesh

came alive with spiritual fervour as members of the Mema Buddhist community gathered at the sacred Kepangla Pass for

the annual Smoke Offering Ceremony, known traditionally as Riwo Sangchö. The event, observed on the 15th day of the 5th month of the Tibetan lunar calendar, drew monks, lay practitioners, local officials, and community members in a collective expression of devotion and cultural continuity.

According to an official statement, the ceremony was conducted with solemnity and celebration, reflecting the enduring bond of the Mema people with their ancestral faith and Himalayan homeland. Participants assembled at the revered Kepangla Stupa, where aromatic herbal substances were offered in sacred fires. As smoke spiralled into the mountain air, Buddhist chants filled the valley, imbuing the landscape with a deep spiritual resonance.

The rising smoke was offered to guardian deities, enlightened beings, and all sentient life. It symbolised the purification of the environment, protection of the borderlands, and the invocation of

blessings for universal well-being. The ritual, considered one of the most profound in the Himalayan Buddhist tradition, embodies a spiritual call for the removal of obstacles, negative energies, and karmic afflictions.

The event, steeped in centuries-old custom, has continued to serve as a powerful symbol of cultural resilience for the Mema community, who have preserved their traditions across generations. The annual observance is not only a spiritual practice but also a reaffirmation of identity and harmonious coexistence with nature.

The official statement noted that the ceremony is increasingly drawing wider attention for its potential to inspire models of spiritual ecology among remote Himalayan communities. The presence of scholars, local administrators, and well-wishers at this year's observance underlined a collective commitment to safeguarding and promoting such vital indigenous traditions.



# Indian women eye strong finish after sealing maiden T20I series win over England

**BIRMINGHAM, July 11:** With the series already in bag, a confident India will look to further assert their dominance and end the five-match women's T20I rubber on a high when they face England in the inconsequential fifth and final game here on Saturday.

While the bat and ball did the talking in the initial games, it was India's electric fielding that stood out in the fourth T20I, helping them seal a historic maiden series win over England in the shortest format.

Arundhati Reddy's three sharp catches in the deep and Radha Yadav's brilliance in the field helped India restrict England to 126 for 7, setting up a six-wicket win and a decisive 3-1 lead.

The victory not only marked India's first T20I series triumph over England but also provided a morale-boosting edge ahead of the upcoming three-match ODI series.

A win in the final game would give Harmanpreet Kaur and Co. a commanding 4-1 result and dent England's confidence going forward. The Indian men's team had produced a memorable victory at Edgbaston last week in the second Test, and the women's side will be keen to keep the winning momentum going at the same venue.

India's bowling attack, built around four spinners and two



seamers, has paid rich dividends as the England batters have visibly struggled against spin, losing 22 wickets to spinners so far in the series.

While Radha Yadav emerged as the Player of the Match for her two wickets and fielding exploits, it is young N Shree Charani who emerged as the leading wicket-taker after making her T20I debut at the start of this series.

With the most successful spinner in women's T20Is Deepti Sharma

anchoring the attack, India's spin dominance has been hard to counter.

In the batting department, Smriti Mandhana has been the top scorer, while Shafali Verma's aggressive approach has given India rapid starts.

Her 19-ball 31 in the fourth T20I set the tone for the chase and helped her earn a recall to the ODI squad for India A's tour of Australia.

Shafali, however, will be eager

to convert her starts into more substantial contributions.

Jemimah Rodrigues, with 107 runs in the series, has been a steady presence in the middle order and hit the winning runs in the previous match. Harmanpreet, despite a 48-run stand with Rodrigues, looked short of her best and will aim to fine-tune her game before the ODI leg. For England, the absence of skipper Nat Sciver-Brunt, ruled out with a left groin injury after the second T20I, has hurt their bal-

ance.

Their batting has lacked direction, with Sophia Dunkley the only batter showing any consistency.

Openers Dunkley and Danni Wyatt-Hodge have failed to provide solid starts, and the middle-order has not stepped up either. A total of 126 was never going to trouble India's powerful batting unit. In the bowling department, pacer Lauren Bell has stood out with six wickets, but apart from her, no other bowler has been able to stop the Indian batting line-up, with the next best being Sophie Ecclestone and Lauren Filer with just three wickets each.

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

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

Match starts at 11:05 PM IST. (PTI)

## India should persist with Nitish, avoid temptation to chop and change: Kumble

**LONDON, July 11:** Former India captain Anil Kumble says all-rounder Nitish Kumar Reddy should be a regular fixture in the national Test team as he has proved himself to be a fine mix of discipline and talent.

Reddy, playing his second game in the ongoing tour of England, was the most successful Indian bowler, picking up two wickets, on the opening day of the third Test here on Thursday.

"I was surprised at how well Nitish Kumar Reddy bowled. He consistently hit the right areas. That short ball down leg side was a gift, but otherwise, he was disciplined," Kumble said of the seven-Test-old player on JioStar's 'Match Centre Live'. "I thought he did quite well in Australia - got a hundred with the bat and bowled decently even if he didn't take many wickets. What you need from someone like him is to break partnerships and give the fast bowlers a breather while still maintaining control. He bowled nearly 14 overs in a spell - that shows fitness and control. He's young, he's a capable batter with a century under his belt, and he's a sharp fielder. India should persist with him and avoid the temptation to chop and change," added the leg-spin great.

Kumble said the Lord's pitch was evidently tough for the batters as England were forced to abandon their aggressive style for a more reserved approach which yielded 251/4 on the opening day.

"It was evident right from the start that it was going to be a grind for the batters. The openers struggled to score off the new ball, and this was the kind of pitch where you had to work hard for your runs," Kumble said.

"I thought the Indian bowlers bowled really good areas consistently and that's one of the reasons India managed to restrict England to 251. England will be fairly satisfied with just four wickets down. India will probably reflect tonight and feel that one or two more wickets could have put the match firmly in their favour. As it stands, it's evenly poised," he added. Former England player Jonathan Trott also noted the home team's change in strategy. "It was an interesting day, starting right from the toss. England took a different approach compared to the first two Tests. I thought Ollie Pope (44) came out in typical 'Bazball' style -- attacking early -- but quickly realised that this wasn't that kind of pitch. Credit to him for adjusting his game. (PTI)



## AIFF charts roadmap for Indian women's national team after Asian Cup qualification

**NEW DELHI, July 11:** All India Football Federation (AIFF) president Kalyan Chaubey on Friday held discussions with his colleagues to chart a roadmap for the national women's team's preparation plans for next year's AFC Asian Cup in Australia.

It was decided to organise the 2025-26 Indian Women's League season, featuring eight teams playing 14 matches each, from September 2025 to January 2026.

The Indian U20 women's team will also participate in the IWL. The AIFF said the earlier than usual scheduling would allow for ample preparation time in the lead-up to the Women's Asian Cup, scheduled from March 1 to



21. In addition, the Blue Tigresses will undergo 83 days of preparatory camps, conducted in three phases. This will include 10-12 international friendlies and five to seven matches with domestic teams.

To effectively manage this calendar, the AIFF said it will engage

with all IWL club owners to seek their support and cooperation in releasing players for the camps and when required for the national interest. With this plan, the AIFF said each player is projected to play at least 30 matches between August and February, combining both club and international commitments.

To facilitate uninterrupted national team preparation in the lead-up to the Asian Cup, it was also suggested that the senior women's national football championship for the Rajmata Jijabai Trophy 2025-26 be scheduled after the conclusion of the continental tournament.

India secured a memorable

qualification in the continental tournament finals with a thrilling 2-1 victory over hosts Thailand last Friday.

The win helped India top Group B of the Qualifiers with a perfect record -- four wins from four matches. For the first time the Blue Tigresses have booked a ticket to the continental championship through the qualification route. Chaubey convened a meeting with the AIFF's deputy secretary general, M. Satyanarayan, technical director Syed Sabir Pasha, director of national teams Subrata Paul, Indian women's national team head coach Crispin Chettri and assistant coach Priya PV. (PTI)

## New artificial volleyball turf ground inaugurated in Seijosa

**HT Correspondent**

**BISWANATH CHARIALI, July 11:** In a significant milestone for sports development in the region, the newly constructed Artificial Volleyball Turf Ground at Niti Darlong, Seijosa, was officially inaugurated on Friday. The ceremony was graced by the presence of Raybam Walhe with senior youth leaders.

The inauguration of this state-of-the-art facility marks a new chapter in youth empowerment and sports development in the region. The Artificial Volleyball Turf Ground is set to nurture local talent and promote a healthy lifestyle among the youth. To

commemorate this occasion, the 1st edition Volleyball Futsal Tournament was flagged off, promising an exciting display of sporting prowess. This tournament is expected to bring together talented players from across the region, fostering a spirit of competition and camaraderie. The construction of this Artificial Volleyball Turf Ground is a big leap towards providing a world-class platform for local talent to flourish. The facility is expected to play a pivotal role in shaping the sporting landscape of the region, encouraging young athletes to pursue their passion for volleyball and other sports.

## I have identified a problem area and working on it: Neeraj Chopra

**GURUGRAM, July 11:** India's star javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra on Friday said he has identified a problem in his game and is looking to address it at the earliest, as he seeks to win a second world championship gold medal later this year.

Chopra, who is the strongest Indian medal hope in the September 13-21 showpiece in Tokyo, will be training in Prague and Nymburk in the Czech Republic for 57 days.

He will be heading out with his physio Ishan Marwah tonight and be based in the European country till September 5 at a total cost of Rs 19 lakh.

"I have already identified the areas I need to work on. While throwing the spear I tend to fall too much on my left side. We need to work on that. In training I don't do that, but in competition, it happens because of the extra effort I put in," Chopra said. The double Olympic medalist said he also needs to work on his consistency to hit the 90-mark more often.

"I have achieved 90m this year. But I need to be more consistent to achieve it more often. I am continuously around 88-89m, and my coach said he is happy, but I need to be more consistent," Chopra said during the launch of Under Armour store here. Needless to say, his next big target is to finish on top of the podium at the World Athletics Championships. (PTI)

## Wasn't the surface to come out swinging; Indian attack made it hard to score: Pope

**LONDON, July 11:** "This wasn't a surface where you could come out swinging," said Ollie Pope as he defended England abandoning 'Bazball' for a more conservative style of batting on the opening day of the third Test against India here.

England were 251/4 at stumps on Thursday after an uncharacteristically defensive performance that required plenty of patience, a far cry from their usually aggressive rate of scoring in the format.

"This wasn't a surface where you could come out swinging. The Indian attack held their lengths and made it hard to score," Pope said at the post-play press conference, referring to the tight spells bowled by the Indian attack that was bolstered by the return of pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah (1/35). Nitish Kumar Reddy (2/46) was most successful while

Akash Deep and Mohammed Siraj did their bit to maintain a tight grip on the scoring rate. "...not necessarily the way we're used to kind of going about, putting together a first innings, but I think 250 for four is a pretty, pretty good score...obviously would have liked some more runs..." Pope, who made a dogged 104-ball 44 before falling to Ravindra Jadeja, said. "...but I think the nature of the surface and I think the way the Indian attack bowled as well was pretty good throughout," he added.

Pope said the opening day's play was all about respecting the conditions and adapting to the needs of the team. "I think it's a day that we'll take, obviously we've had to adapt...I think for us, yeah, it's just about getting better as a team and reading situations.

"...sometimes it might be that you

see some more aggressive shots on a pitch that's really moving around and nipping around.

"(That's) because that's your best way of putting some pressure back on the bowlers and trying to get them to sort of stop doing what they want to do," he explained.

Talking about his own batting, Pope said building an innings was his priority. "...it's something that we're trying to get better and better as a team and obviously (it's) a Test against India. They're always going to test you in in those kind of situations. So yeah, it's just trying to adapt," asserted.

Pope, who is the vice captain of the team, was also quizzed about skipper Ben Stokes, who was unbeaten on 39 along side Joe Root (99) but left the side concerned with a groin niggle during his 102-ball stay. (PTI)

## FC Goa, captain Odei Ona India part ways

**PANAJI, July 11:** FC Goa and their captain Odei Ona India have parted ways after a fruitful partnership, the Indian Super League (ISL) club announced on Friday.

The 35-year-old Spanish centre-back has appeared in the vast majority of the club's ISL matches in 2024/2025.

Known for his exceptional ability to read the game and composure under pressure, Ona India joined the Gaur ahead of the 2023-24 season, reuniting with head coach Manolo

Marquez, under whom he previously played at Hyderabad FC.

"Our Captain gave everything, every tackle, every drop of sweat for our badge. He wore the orange with pride, played with heart, and led us to glory," FC Goa said on X.

"For two unforgettable years, he showed us what it truly means to be a Gaur on and off the pitch. Thank You Odei. We would like to wish you all the best for your next chapter, once a Gaur, always a Gaur. (PTI)

## I have learned to handle pressure from MS Dhoni sir: Deepti Sharma

**BIRMINGHAM, July 11:** Seasoned India Women all-rounder Deepti Sharma says she has learned to stay unruffled in the most difficult of circumstances by religiously watching video clips of MS Dhoni, one of the best in the business when it came to handling pressure. The 27-year-old Deepti recently joined the legendary Jhulan Goswami in the coveted 300-wicket club in international cricket, and while she has sizzled with her off-spin bowling and lower-order batting, what sets her apart is her ability to deliver under pressure.

"I have learnt to handle pressure from MS Dhoni sir. I used to be glued to the TV whenever there was a match featuring him and watch them," Deepti told BCCI TV on Friday.

"It never seemed like he (Dhoni) was under pressure at any moment, he would calmly handle the situation and finish the game at last. That is exactly what I have also developed in my game," she added.

Deepti has been one of the team's most consistent performers over the past



few years and is often called upon to get a breakthrough with the ball or bail the team out of a tricky situation with the bat. "I keep things simple, for example in every match when I get the chance to bowl, be it in the powerplay or slog overs, I handle that task very calmly. "I love challenges, and whenever a tough situation arises, the team management feels that we have Deepti in our ranks and she can get the job done."

Deepti's wicket of Alice Capsey in the 4th T20 International against England brought up her 300th international wicket across formats. "Obviously feeling great, and it's a very proud moment for me as well as my family. The team has also praised me a lot for this achievement.

"When I started playing cricket, I did not think on these lines. The only goal was to find a way to play for India.

Practice accordingly, with hard work and dedication.

"I was not thinking about records etc. It was never in the back of my mind but it feels good when we reach a milestone."

She added, "When I picked my first wicket, I mean I got two wickets in that match, I was feeling very good about it, my maiden wickets. I have had some good memories, right from my first wickets, including the encouragement and high fives from my teammates."

Deepti made her international debut for India's Women's team in an ODI against South Africa in November 2014, and she was just 17 at the time.

"I have not set any targets, like I want to take these many wickets or score these many runs."

"What matters to me is in how many matches can I contribute to the team as an all-rounder and help them win matches. How much impact can I make and how can I take the team out of difficult situations... that is more important to me, and not milestones." (PTI)



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