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'Only 'Miya-muslim' encroachers targeted during eviction drive'

## Demonstrations not to derail govt campaign: CM

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, Aug 11: Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Monday dismissed allegations that the state's ongoing eviction drives are aimed at minority-dominated areas, asserting they specifically target 'Miya-Muslims' who have illegally occupied forest and reserved lands.

Speaking to reporters here in Chirang, Sarma said the operations are confined to encroachments on forest areas, village grazing reserves (VGR), and professional grazing reserves (PGR) by members of the community.

The term 'Miya', often used pejoratively, refers to Bengali-speaking Muslims in Assam, many of whom are perceived by other groups as Bangladeshi immigrants. "Eviction is not in minority areas. It is for 'Miya-Muslims' who have encroached on forest or reserved land," Sarma said, adding that tribal groups like the Bodo or Mising may be eligible for land rights ('patta'), while non-tribals cannot claim forest land.



He claimed that 'Miya-Muslims' already occupy vast stretches of the riverine 'chars' and warned against their migration into districts like Sivasagar, Jorhat, and Golaghat.

"Where will Assamese people stay?" he asked.

On protests by the All Assam Minority Students' Union (AAMSU) in Dhubri, Sarma warned that demonstrations would not derail the campaign.

"If AAMSU creates more noise, more evictions will be carried out," he said. Rejecting speculation that cleared land in Golaghat and Karbi Anglong would be handed to industrial conglomerates, the chief minister said the reclaimed areas are being used for plantations, while adding that companies like Adani and Ambani are welcome if they invest in the region.

Sarma vowed the eviction drives would continue until all encroachments are removed, claiming that of the 29 lakh bighas under encroachment, 1.29 lakh bighas have been cleared in the last four years.

## India committed to contribute in ending Ukraine conflict: Modi to Zelenskyy

NEW DELHI, Aug 11: Days ahead of a much-anticipated US-Russia summit on the Ukraine war, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday conveyed to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in a phone conversation that India remains committed to making every possible contribution for an early and peaceful solution to the conflict.

Zelenskyy complimented Modi's support to the peace efforts, but made an indirect reference to India's procurement of Russian crude oil as he called for limiting the export of Russian energy, particularly oil, to reduce Moscow's ability to "finance" the continuation of the war.

The phone conversation came ahead of the summit talks between US President Donald Trump and his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin in Alaska on August 15 to discuss ways to end the war.

"Glad to speak with President Zelenskyy and hear his perspectives on recent developments. I conveyed India's consistent position on the



need for an early and peaceful resolution of the conflict," Modi said on 'X'.

"India remains committed to making every possible contribution in this regard, as well as to further strengthening bilateral ties with Ukraine," he said.

Last week, India welcomed the Russia-US summit and reaffirmed Prime Minister Modi's consistent position that it is not an "era of war".

Following the phone talks, the Ukrainian president said he discussed "in detail" all important issues with Modi that included both "bilateral cooperation and the over-

all diplomatic situation".

"I am grateful to the Prime Minister for his warm words of support for our people," he said in a social media post.

"It is important that India is supporting our peace efforts and shares the position that everything concerning Ukraine must be decided with Ukraine's participation. Other formats will not deliver results," the Ukrainian president said.

Zelenskyy also noted that it is necessary to "limit the export of Russian energy", particularly oil.

"We also discussed in detail the sanctions against Russia. I noted that it is necessary to limit the export of Russian energy, particularly oil, to reduce its potential and ability to finance the continuation of this war," he said.

"It is important that every leader who has tangible leverage over Russia sends the corresponding signals to Moscow," he added.

The Ukrainian president also dropped hints at PM Modi's possible visit to (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

## CM flags bogus voters in char areas, backs SIR

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, Aug 11: Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Monday alleged that electoral rolls in the state's riverine 'char' areas and other localities contain names of deceased persons and individuals no longer residing there, even as these areas record 100 per cent voter turnout.

He said a special intensive revision (SIR) of the rolls could help

eliminate such anomalies.

Speaking to reporters in Chirang, Sarma said names of married daughters often remain on their parents' voter lists after they have moved away, while entries for deceased persons are rarely removed.

"In 'char' areas and other places, the voter list is filled with names of deceased people. Yet, 100 per cent polling happens in those places," he remarked. (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

## 40 suspected illegal migrants detained in Jorhat

HT Correspondent

JORHAT, Aug 11: An ASTC bus carrying about 40 persons, suspected to be illegal Bangladeshi migrants reportedly coming from lower Assam and going to Majuli, was found on Monday by local people on the Pulibor outskirts here, who informed the police.

Sources stated that an ASTC bus with passengers was found parked at the Dekagaon area of NH 715, formerly NH 37, by local people.

When they enquired, they found that the bus had stopped to carry out a repair for a tyre puncture and the persons, who could not properly speak Assamese, said that they were coming from Jogighopa in Bongaigaon district. As members of several social and regional organisations working for the interests of indigenous people (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

## Op Falcon to eliminate rhino poaching in Assam: Himanta

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, Aug 11: Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Monday lauded the success of "Operation Falcon," a sweeping anti-poaching campaign launched in 2024 to safeguard Kaziranga National Park's famed one-horned rhinoceros.

Besides Kaziranga, the "Operation Falcon" concentrated on other national parks and sanctuaries of the state as well that are home for one horned rhino.

The exercise aimed at eliminating poaching activities in Assam through relentless effort by the state administration.

The coordinated drive, led jointly by the Assam Police and Forest Department, deployed all available resources to track and apprehend poachers operating in and around the UNESCO World Heritage Site.

According to official figures, the crackdown resulted in arrests across multiple districts: Udalguri (1), Darrang (8), Nagaon (6), Biswanath (18), Dibrugarh (1), Sonitpur (2), Karbi Anglong (5) and Cachar (1).

Authorities said the operation relied on a combination of intensive ground-level intelligence and advanced digital surveillance. (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

**NACO**  
National AIDS Control Organisation  
India's Response to HIV & Sexually Transmitted Infections  
Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India

GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM  
Department of Health & Family Welfare

ASSAM STATE AIDS CONTROL SOCIETY

**LAUNCH OF**  
**INTENSIFIED IEC CAMPAIGN**

In order to enhance HIV awareness, a 60-day **Intensified IEC Campaign** will be launched on 25 high priority districts of Assam

State-level launch by:  
**Shri Ashok Singhal**  
 Minister, Health & Family Welfare, etc., Assam

**Venue:** Martyrs' Memorial Park Convention Centre, Dhekiajuli, Sonitpur  
**Date:** 12 August 2025 | **Time:** 3:00 PM

The district level launch will be on 13 August 2025

**#IndiafightsHIVSTI**

**Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma**  
 Chief Minister, Assam

“Youth are the future of our nation. On this International Youth Day, I urge them to believe in their ability to learn, grow, and embrace challenges as opportunities for nation building. May your efforts strengthen our country and overcome issues like drug abuse and HIV.”

|                    |            |
|--------------------|------------|
| Dibrugarh          | Dhemaji    |
| Lakhimpur          | Sivasagar  |
| Charaideo          | Golaghat   |
| Nagaon             | Dima Hasao |
| Hailakandi         | Biswanath  |
| Hojai              | Kamrup     |
| Darrang            | Bongaigaon |
| Goalpara           | Barpeta    |
| Bajali             | Nalbari    |
| South Salmara      | Morigaon   |
| Majuli             | Cachar     |
| Kamrup (M)         | Sonitpur   |
| West Karbi Anglong |            |

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## Sensex jumps 746 pt to close above 80,000 level amid fresh foreign fund inflows

**MUMBAI, Aug 11:** Benchmark BSE Sensex rallied 746 points to close above the 80,000 mark on Monday following buying in oil, auto and banking shares amid fresh foreign fund inflows.

The 30-share Sensex jumped 746.29 points or 0.93 per cent to settle at 80,604.08 with 26 of its constituents ending higher. During the day, it surged 778.26 points or 0.97 per cent to 80,636.05.

The 50-share NSE Nifty jumped by 221.75 points or 0.91 per cent to 24,585.05.

"The market saw a relief rally post a 3-month low; a positive global cue and a gradual return of FIIs supported the sentiment. Investors are positively assessing the upcoming US-Russia Summit this week, which may possibly give way to a de-escalation in geopolitical tensions. "While a near-term caution may still prevail, the more definite assessment of the US trade and growth impact is yet to be assessed fully," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Investments Ltd, said. Among Sensex firms, Tata



Motors, Eternal, Trent, State Bank of India, UltraTech Cement and Larsen & Toubro were the major gainers.

However, Bharat Electronics, Bharti Airtel and Maruti were the laggards.

The BSE midcap gauge climbed 0.79 per cent and the smallcap index rose by 0.35 per cent.

The majority of the BSE sectoral indices ended higher. Realty surged the most by 1.86 per cent,

followed by bankex (1.13 per cent), healthcare (1.12 per cent), auto (1.03 per cent), financial services (1 per cent), utilities (0.92 per cent), services (0.90 per cent) and power (0.85 per cent).

Consumer Durables emerged as the only laggard.

"Markets started the week on an upbeat note, gaining nearly a per cent and providing a breather after the recent decline. The tone was positive from the outset and further

strengthened in the latter half, supported by a noticeable recovery in heavyweights across sectors," Reigate Broking SVP, Research, Ajit Mishra said.

As many as 2,237 stocks advanced while 1,930 declined and 170 remained unchanged on the BSE. In Asian markets, Shanghai's SSE Composite index and Hong Kong's Hang Seng settled in positive territory while South Korea's Kospi ended marginally lower. Markets in Japan were closed due to a holiday.

European markets were trading mostly lower. The US markets ended higher on Friday.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) bought equities worth Rs 1,932.81 crore on Friday, according to exchange data.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude dipped 0.45 per cent to USD 66.29 a barrel.

On Friday, the Sensex tanked 765.47 points or 0.95 per cent to settle at 79,857.79. The Nifty dropped 232.85 points or 0.95 per cent to 24,363.30. (PTI)

## HDFC Bank, VinFast Auto India sign MoU for Auto and inventory financing of electric vehicles

**HT Bureau**

**GUWAHATI, Aug 11:** HDFC Bank, India's leading private sector bank, has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with VinFast Auto India, the Indian subsidiary of Vietnamese electric vehicle manufacturer VinFast, for auto and inventory financing for customers and exclusive dealers in the country, according to an official statement.

This is VinFast's first agreement with a banking institution in India and marks a key step in its preparations to enter the Indian market. VinFast is part of Vingroup, Vietnam's largest private conglomerate, and is recognised globally as a leader in electric vehicle (EV) manufacturing.

The statement said the partnership aims to provide a comprehensive suite of tailored credit solutions for both customers and dealers, thereby offering a convenient and accessible EV buying experience. It will leverage HDFC

Bank's pan-India branch network and digital banking platforms to reach a wide base of consumers across urban and emerging markets.

The collaboration is also aligned with VinFast's larger goal of accelerating the adoption of sustainable transportation solutions in India, which is among the fastest-growing EV markets in the world. Under the arrangement, special financing benefits designed through the MoU will apply to the entire VinFast range, including the soon-to-be-launched VF 6 and VF 7 models.

The MoU was signed by Pham Sanh Chau, CEO of VinFast Asia, and Akhilesh Kumar Roy, Business Head - Auto Loans, Inventory Finance and Two-Wheeler Loans, HDFC Bank, in the presence of senior executives from both organisations.

Arvind Vohra, Group Head - Retail Assets, Rural and SLI Banking Group, HDFC Bank, said fi-

ancing plays a vital role in driving EV adoption and the tie-up with VinFast will help customers access the company's product line through structured financing options. "This is part of the bank's larger effort to support customers in meeting their aspirations in a convenient way," he said.

Pham Sanh Chau said the agreement is a significant milestone in making electric mobility in India more inclusive and convenient. Partnering with a trusted institution like HDFC Bank, he said, ensures the development of the financial ecosystem necessary to support customers and dealer partners "at every step of the journey."

The statement noted that the MoU reflects VinFast's efforts to establish a strong, customer-focused footprint in India. Auto loans remain a key contributor to HDFC Bank's retail assets segment, with its auto loan book standing at over ₹1.48 lakh crore as of June 30, 2025.

## Apple supplies grow 21.5 pc to 5.9 mn units in first half of 2025, Vivo leads market in Q2: IDC



**NEW DELHI, Aug 11:** Apple's supplies in India grew by 21.5 per cent annually to 5.9 million units in the first half of 2025 with iPhone 16 being the highest-shipped model across the country during the period, market research firm IDC said on Monday.

According to International Data Corporation's (IDC) worldwide quarterly mobile phone tracker, India's smartphone market shipped 70 million smartphones in the first half of 2025, with a 0.9 per cent growth YoY (year-over-year) and the second quarter of the year registered a growth of 7.3 per cent YoY, shipping 37 million smartphones. The overall smartphone shipment growth was mitigated by a dip in supplies of Chinese companies -- OnePlus, Poco, Xiaomi and Realme, according to the report. "Apple maintained its strong performance, with shipments growing 21.5 per cent YoY to 5.9

million units in the first half of 2025. The iPhone 16 was the highest-shipped model across India in the first half of 2025, making up 4 per cent of overall India shipments during that period.

During the second quarter Apple's iPhone supplies in India grew 19.7 per cent YoY in 2025 quarter, thereby the company clocking 7.5 market share in the country's smartphone market.

The second quarter recorded 37 million smartphone unit shipments implying Apple supplied 2.7 million units in the India market.

The overall smartphone market during the June quarter was led by Vivo which captured 19 per cent share with 23.5 per cent YoY shipment growth.

Samsung followed Vivo with a 14.5 per cent market share, registering a growth of 21 per cent YoY in smartphone shipments.

"Vivo continues its impressive

run, leading the India smartphone market for the sixth consecutive quarter, with a balanced portfolio across price segments and channels. Samsung, a steady second, registered strong growth of 21 per cent led by new model launches across Galaxy A/M/F series, introducing AI-enabled features to mid-rangers," the report said.

Opportunity shipment grew 25.4 per cent YoY with the brand clocking a 13.4 per cent market share, while Motorola clocked an 8 per cent share rising by 39.4 per cent annually, and iQoo grabbed a 4.3 per cent market share, which was 68.4 per cent higher year-on-year.

OnePlus market share plunged to 2.5 per cent during the reported quarter from 4.4 per cent a year ago with the company's shipment plunging by 39.4 per cent, according to the IDC report.

The market share of Realme slid to 9.7 per cent with the company's smartphone shipment declining by 17.8 YoY in the June 2025 quarter. Xiaomi market share declined to 9.6 per cent with a 23.5 per cent dip in volumes and Poco slipped to 3.8 per cent in terms of market share recording a 28.8 per cent fall in supplies.

The premium segment devices (priced between ₹ 52,000-₹ 70,000) registered the highest growth of 96.4 per cent, and their share increased from 2 to 4 per cent. "iPhone 16/15 together accounted for more than three fifths of the shipments in this segment," the report said. (PTI)

## OPPO launches K13 Turbo Series 5G with built-in cooling fan

**HT Bureau**

**GUWAHATI, Aug 11:** OPPO India has launched the OPPO K13 Turbo Series 5G, comprising the OPPO K13 Turbo Pro 5G and OPPO K13 Turbo 5G — the country's first smartphones to feature a built-in cooling fan, according to an official statement.

Designed for gaming, heavy multitasking, and extended outdoor usage, the series features an advanced active and passive thermal design, high-performance processors, a 7,000mAh battery with 80W SuperVOOC fast charging, and a 120Hz eye-friendly e-sports level flat screen. The statement said the devices aim to deliver sustained, high-performance experiences without overheating or rapid battery drain.

The OPPO K13 Turbo 5G is priced at ₹27,999 for the 8GB+128GB variant and ₹29,999 for the 8GB+256GB variant, available in White Knight, Purple Phantom, and Midnight Maverick. The OPPO K13 Turbo Pro 5G is priced at ₹37,999 for the 8GB+256GB variant and ₹39,999 for the 12GB+256GB variant, available in Silver Knight, Purple Phantom, and Midnight Maverick racing designs. Pre-bookings begin on August 11, with the K13 Turbo Pro 5G available from August 15 and the K13 Turbo 5G from August 18 on Flipkart, OPPO India e-store, and retail outlets. Buyers during the pre-booking and first sale period can avail a ₹3,000 instant discount through select bank offers or exchange bonuses, as well as a nine-month no-cost EMI option, reducing the effective price to ₹24,999 and ₹26,999 for the K13 Turbo 5G, and ₹34,999 and ₹36,999 for the K13 Turbo Pro 5G.

According to OPPO India's Head of Product Communications Savio D'Souza, the K13 Turbo Series is aimed at performance-driven consumers seeking "power, speed, endurance, and clever cooling" in a single handset. Flipkart Vice President — Mobiles Smriti Ravichandran said the devices address the growing demand for high-performance gaming smartphones in India.

## Gold retreats from all-time high, ends ₹ 900 lower at ₹1,02,520/10g

**NEW DELHI, Aug 11:** Snapping a five-day rally, gold prices retreated from record high levels and ended ₹ 900 lower at ₹ 1,02,520 per 10 grams in the national capital on Monday as stockists turned to selling amid easing geopolitical tensions.

According to the All India Sarafa Association, the precious metal of 99.9 per cent purity had climbed ₹ 800 to hit a record peak of ₹ 1,03,420 per 10 grams on Friday.

Gold of 99.5 per cent purity, which also reached the peak of ₹ 1,03,000 per 10 grams in the preceding session, declined ₹ 900 to ₹ 1,02,100 per 10 grams (inclusive of all taxes) on Monday.

In the five sessions until Friday, the yellow metal prices increased by ₹ 5,800 per 10 grams. "Gold resumes trading on a weaker note as the upbeat market mood diminishes demand for traditional safe-haven assets."

"Additionally, a de-escalation in geopolitical tensions, as President Donald Trump agreed to meet Russian President Vladimir Putin in Alaska, later this week to discuss peace efforts surrounding the Russia-Ukraine conflict," Saunil Gandhi, Senior Analyst - Commodities at HDFC Securities, said. Also, the clarification from the White House regarding a 39 per cent tariff on gold bars exerted downward pressure on gold prices, Gandhi said.

According to the All India Sarafa Association, silver prices depreciated by ₹1,000 to ₹ 1,14,000 per kg (inclusive of all taxes) on Monday. The white metal had ended at ₹1,15,000 per kg on Friday.

Silver prices rose by ₹ 5,500 per kg in five straight days to Friday. In the global market, spot gold fell by USD 40.61 or 1.19 per cent to trade at USD 3,358.17 per ounce in New York.

On the multi-commodity exchange, gold futures for October contract depreciated ₹ 1,280 or 1.26 per cent to trade at ₹ 1,00,518 per 10 grams.

"Gold slipped more than 1 per cent, largely erasing last week's gains as markets await clarification after the Trump administration on Friday called reports of tariffs on gold and other specialty products 'misinformation'," Kaynat Chainwala, AVP of Commodity Research at Kotak Securities, said.

According to commodities market experts, the uncertainty over the US-China tariff truce, which is due to expire on Tuesday, lends some support to the precious metal. Adding to this, rising expectations of an interest rate cut by US Federal Reserve and the emergence of fresh US Dollar selling help limit losses for the yellow metal.

Meanwhile, investors this week will monitor the release of US macro-economic data such as the Consumer Price Index (inflation) on Tuesday and the Producer Price Index on Thursday. This, along with speeches from US Fed officials' will provide further guidance on the near-term trajectory for the bullion prices.

Spot silver slipped 1.39 per cent to trade at USD 37.81 per ounce.

Prathamesh Mallia, DVP-Research, Non-Agri Commodities and Currencies at Angel One, said, "The tariff situation has caused chaos across the global world order and if it escalates then traders might see further rally in gold prices in the international markets to move higher towards USD 3,800 per ounce-mark while MCX futures will move higher towards ₹ 1,10,000 per 10 grams mark from a three month perspective." (PTI)

*Contd. from Page 1...*

## India committed to contribute

New York next month to participate in the UN General Assembly. "We agreed to plan a personal meeting in September during the UN General Assembly and to work on an exchange of visits," Zelenskyy said.

India has been consistently calling for ending the Russia-Ukraine conflict through dialogue and diplomacy. Prime Minister Modi had a phone conversation with Russian President Putin on Friday during which both leaders exchanged views on the Ukraine conflict.

"While thanking President Putin for his detailed assessment, the prime minister reiterated India's consistent position for peaceful resolution of the conflict," an Indian readout of the conversation said.

In July last year, PM Modi travelled to Moscow and told Putin that a solution to the Ukraine conflict is not possible on the battlefield and peace efforts do not succeed in the midst of bombs and bullets.

The next month, Modi visited the Ukrainian capital city of Kyiv and conveyed to President Zelenskyy that both Ukraine and Russia should sit together without wasting time to end the war.

The prime minister had said India was on the side of peace since the beginning of the conflict. (PTI)

## CM flags bogus voters

The Chief Minister said linking voter records with Aadhaar during the SIR process would prevent duplication and improve the accuracy of the rolls.

Samra also took aim at Congress leader Rahul Gandhi for opposing a similar revision of voter lists in Bihar ahead of the state's assembly polls. "He is not clear about what he wants. The Congress leader should tell the Election Commission to revise the voter lists and link them with Aadhaar so that a person cannot vote in two places," Samra said.

Questioning Gandhi's criticism of the electoral process, the CM added, "If the voter lists are so erroneous, how did you win in Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, and Telangana? Earlier, you blamed EVMS; now, the voter list is your new ammunition."

## 40 suspected illegal

arrived and asked the bus passengers about their destination, they said that they were on their way to Majuli to be engaged in construction works.

The local people and organisation members, suspecting them to be Bangladeshi migrants as they could not speak Assamese properly and purportedly found their documents to be questionable, informed the police.

Police came to the spot and took away the bus along with the people.

## Op Falcon to eliminate

allowing teams to pinpoint suspects and move in with precision.

Investigations further exposed a larger organised network of six major poaching gangs with links to the illegal wildlife trade funneling rhino horns through Myanmar.

Samra said the findings confirmed the existence of an interstate and cross-border nexus behind rhino poaching in Assam.

The sustained operation has already thwarted nine poaching attempts, preventing harm to the park's rhino population.

"The coordination and spirit of our forces have ensured that these criminals are behind bars," Samra wrote on X, crediting the synergy between police and forest officials for the campaign's success.

Kaziranga, which hosts the world's largest population of one-horned rhinos, has long been a target for poachers seeking to exploit the high black-market value of rhino horns.

In recent years, the state government has stepped up its response, coupling stricter enforcement with technological upgrades.

Samra said Operation Falcon would continue until poaching is eradicated from Assam, reiterating his government's zero-tolerance stance on wildlife crime.

"Our commitment is to ensure the complete safety of Kaziranga's rhinos," he declared.

## Center Fresh launches 'Dimaag pe rakhe lagam' campaign to address overthinking

**HT Bureau**

**GUWAHATI, Aug 11:** Center Fresh, a chewing gum brand from Perfetti Van Melle India, has launched a new campaign aimed at tackling overthinking, according to an official statement.

The campaign, titled "Dimaag pe rakhe lagam", is based on insights from the "India Overthinking Report," developed in partnership with YouGov, which found that 81% of people spend over three hours a day overthinking.

The statement said the brand is positioning itself as a "refreshing pause" in the day, offering a burst of freshness to help quiet the mind and bring people back to the present moment.

Two new television commercials (TVCs) depict humorous situations of everyday overthinking, such as reading too much into a deleted message or wondering if personal cash appears like a bribe. Directed by Nitesh Tiwari and conceptualised by Ogilvy, the ads combine humour with relatability, aiming to resonate especially with younger audiences.

Gunjan Khetan, Director Marketing, Perfetti Van Melle India, said the campaign reflects Center Fresh's long-standing focus on freshness, offering moments of clarity when thoughts spiral. Nikhil Sharma, Managing Director, Perfetti Van Melle India, said the brand's presence in over three million outlets makes such consumer engagement initiatives significant.

## Regaal Resources to double capacity with ₹ 430 cr investment; IPO opens today

**KOLKATA, Aug 11:** Regaal Resources Ltd, one of India's largest maize-based specialty product manufacturers, is doubling production capacity at its Bihar plant with an investment of ₹ 430 crore, a top company official said.

To support the expansion and debt repayment, the Kolkata-headquartered company will launch its ₹ 210-crore initial public offering (IPO) on August 12, which will close on August 14.

The Kishanganj-based facility, which has a current capacity of 825 tonnes per day (TPD), will be expanded to 1,650 TPD. It is expected to be operational in the March quarter of the current fiscal.

"About ₹ 314 crore of the investment will be capitalised in the fourth quarter of the 2025-26 fiscal and another ₹ 116 crore in the first quarter of FY'27. The expansion is being funded through a mix of debt and internal accruals," Chairman and Managing Director Anil Kishorepuria told reporters.

The project qualifies for Bihar government's State Investment



Promotion subsidy, structured as two separate phases to secure up to ₹ 40 crore in interest subsidies.

As of March 2025, the company's total debt stood at around Rs 570 crore. However, post expansion, the projected debt is likely to stay similar, and repayment expected to accelerate from April 2026 onwards as increased capacity boosts turnover and profitability, Kishorepuria said.

Regaal Resources also plans to expand its product basket from the current 10-11 to include four new

derivatives and a full range of modified starches. It is working to deepen the white-label manufacturing business for Pune-based confectionery maker Wakefield, and intends to expand sales to South India and export markets with value-added products.

The IPO comprises a fresh issue of up to ₹ 210 crore and an offer for sale of 94.12 lakh equity shares by the promoters and promoter group. The price band has been fixed at ₹ 96-102 per share of face value ₹ 5 each. Post-issue, the pro-

motors' stake will reduce to about 71 per cent from 100 per cent. Investors can bid for a minimum of 144 shares and in multiples thereafter.

Of the fresh issue proceeds, ₹ 159 crore will go towards repayment or pre-payment of certain borrowings, the company said.

Regaal Resources operates a zero liquid discharge maize milling facility catering to customers in food products, paper, animal feed and adhesives across India, and in export markets such as Nepal and Bangladesh.

The company reported a 52.5 per cent jump in revenue to ₹ 915.16 crore in FY'25 from ₹ 600.02 crore in FY'24, while profit after tax more than doubled to ₹ 47.67 crore from ₹22.14 crore.

However, it has reported negative cash flow in the past two fiscals, which the management attributed to large raw material procurement in the initial months of the year to meet annual requirements, tying up working capital. (PTI)



## Udhorlangso Youth Club conducts cleaning drive

**HT Bureau**

**DIPHU, Aug 11:** As part of ongoing efforts to maintain cleanliness, the Udhorlangso Youth Club of Udhorlangso Ramsing Tisso village under Phuloni MAC Constituency carried out a cleaning drive on Sunday (August 10).

The drive, led by club president Loveson Terang, secretary Sonse Tisso and adviser Jiten Bey, involved clearing overgrown bushes and tall grasses along village roads, collecting discarded plastic bottles and polythene bags for disposal, and repairing bamboo fencing around roadside tree saplings to protect them from cattle and goats. Adviser Bey, who is also president of the Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha – East Karbi Anglong District Committee (BJYM-EKADC), said the club has made the cleaning drive a regular activity, with members taking it upon themselves to keep the village and its surroundings clean. He added that the initiative serves as a reminder to others to avoid dumping garbage indiscriminately.

## Nagaon to roll out city bus service

**HT Correspondent**

**NAGAON, Aug 11:** The Nagaon district administration and transport department will soon introduce a city bus service in the town to ease traffic congestion and regulate rickshaw fares. District Commissioner Debashish Sarma said the service will operate from multiple points along designated routes, while rickshaws will be permitted on specific stretches. The buses will cover key locations, including Nagaon Medical College and Hospital. Initially, six buses will be deployed, with senior citizens allowed to travel free of cost. The move has been welcomed by residents and local organisations, who see it as a step towards safer and more convenient public transport.

## Several, including central president, detained

# Mass AAMSU protest in Chapar against eviction drive



**HT Bureau**

**DHUBRI, Aug 11:** The All Assam Minority Students' Union (AAMSU) staged a massive protest rally in Chirakuta, Chapar, on Monday in strong opposition to the ongoing eviction drives in Assam.

Organised by the Bilasipara district unit of AAMSU, the demonstration drew over 5,000 participants, including numerous families affected by recent evictions.

The protest condemned what the organisation described as the "largest eviction operation" in Charuabakhra, Santoshpur, and Chirakuta, and called for an immediate halt to what it termed "inhuman eviction drives" across several districts of the state.

AAMSU leaders demanded proper rehabilitation for all displaced families.

AAMSU Central President Rezaul Karim Sarkar, along with senior district leaders, addressed

the gathering, urging Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma to stop targeted eviction actions.

Sarkar accused the government of selectively targeting minority communities in violation of constitutional principles, warning that failure to halt such operations would lead to statewide protests and intensified agitation.

Reacting to the Chief Minister's recent comment that "one must carry a gun before visiting South Salmara and Mankachar," Sarkar questioned the administrative absence in the region over the years and said Hindus and Muslims had coexisted peacefully there for generations. He alleged that the Chief Minister was "sowing the seeds of communal division."

Tensions rose after the rally when police detained Rezaul Karim Sarkar and other district AAMSU leaders while they were returning home.

They were taken to Chapar Police Station, triggering anger among supporters and further heightening the charged atmosphere in the area.

## Deputy speaker Numal Momin visits GMCH to support patients from Bokajan LAC

**HT Bureau**

**DIPHU, Aug 11:** Deputy Speaker of the Assam Legislative Assembly, Numal Momin, has once again demonstrated his commitment to public service by personally visiting patients from his Bokajan constituency undergoing treatment at the Gauhati Medical College and Hospital (GMCH).

The visit took place on August 10 during his stay in Guwahati.

Momin, who left behind his medical practice to enter active politics, continues to carry forward his sense of duty as a doctor.

He regularly takes time to meet and interact

with patients from his constituency admitted to GMCH, offering them medical guidance, moral support, and assurance of assistance.

During this visit, Momin met with three patients — Dilip Saikia of Balipathar, Suren Teron of Gandhipur, and Lonki Rongpi of Chowkila — all admitted for various treatments.

He spoke at length with each of them, inquiring about their health conditions, listening to their concerns, and reassuring their families about the availability of necessary help during the recovery process.

"It is my duty to stand by the people of my constituency in times of need. I pray for their

speedy recovery and will ensure they receive the care and assistance they require," Momin said while speaking to the media after his visit.

The gesture was well received by the patients' families as well as GMCH staff, who lauded the Deputy Speaker's dedication to personally reaching out to the people he represents.

Many noted that his continued connection with his medical roots has allowed him to serve in ways that go beyond political responsibility, reinforcing his image as a leader who remains accessible and empathetic to the needs of the public.

## AAMSU protests against mob lynching, moral policing in Hojai

**HT Correspondent**

**HOJAI, Aug 11:** Hundreds of members of the All Assam Minorities Students' Union (AAMSU), Hojai District Committee, staged a protest at the district headquarters, Srimanta Sankardev Nagar, on Monday against incidents of mob lynching and moral policing.

Following the demonstration, the protesters submitted a memorandum to the Deputy Commissioner and Superintendent of Police, Hojai, drawing attention to alleged incidents of mob violence and moral policing targeting Muslim youths in Hojai town.

The memorandum stated that on August 9, two youths — Muzibur Rahman and another individual — were allegedly attacked by a group of miscreants while celebrating a colleague's birthday at Hojai New Market.

Both sustained serious injuries and are undergoing treatment at Hojai Civil Hospital.

While a case has been registered and the main accused arrested, other suspects remain at large.

The incident, captured on video and widely circulated on social media, purportedly shows the attackers.

AAMSU alleged that the attacks took place despite the Supreme



Court's directive in WP(C) No 754/2016 (Tehseen S Poonawalla vs Union of India & ORS) on July 17, 2018, calling for strict action against those involved in mob lynching and violence.

The memorandum also referred to earlier incidents, including an attack on a mentally challenged youth, Taz Uddin, on May 25, 2025, and another attack on a Muslim youth in Bishnupally on July 28, 2025.

The organisation further alleged that groups of youths gather at night in various locations in Hojai, consume alcohol and other intoxicants, and physically attack people, particularly Muslims, as well as harass passengers at the railway

station.

It also alleged harassment of female students outside coaching centres in the evenings, which often goes unreported due to fear of social stigma.

AAMSU demanded that police identify and arrest all accused in the August 9 attack, apprehend those involved in the earlier incidents, curb mob lynching and moral policing in the district, ensure the safety of all citizens, and take action as per the Supreme Court's directive.

Copies of the memorandum were also sent to the Chief Minister of Assam, the Director General of Police, Assam, and the Home Secretary, Government of Assam.

## Workshop in Karbi Anglong highlights flagship govt programmes for youth

**HT Correspondent**

**KHERONI, Aug 11:** A one-day workshop on key flagship programmes of the Government of India was held at Adarsh Senior Secondary School, Kheroni Charali, West Karbi Anglong.

Organised by My Bharat: Mera Yuva Bharat, Diphu, Karbi Anglong, under the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports in collaboration with the Subaltern Development Club (NGO), the programme aimed to raise awareness among youth about government initiatives driving national development.

Around 70 students, teachers and youth leaders participated.

Resource persons and guests, including lecturers Birendra Chauhan and Narayan Chetry, were felicitated with the traditional

Assamese gamosa.

Sessions were held on various schemes, with Dr Surya Newar, HoD of Political Science, and Nayan Bharati, CEO of Deodhani Technologies Pvt. Ltd., speaking on the Skill India Mission; Dr Rajesh Chauhan, Assistant Professor, explaining the Jal Jeevan Mission; Bharat Sahu, Assistant Teacher at PGHT High School, elaborating on the Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana; Chhotelal Chauhan, Assistant Professor at Kapili College, stressing the Swachh Bharat Mission; and Jeetendra Harijan, Vice Principal at Kapili College, discussing the Digital India Initiative. The workshop concluded with an interactive session where students engaged with the speakers on grassroots implementation of the schemes.

## Surya Bora, Hiranya Bora conferred journalism awards

**HT Correspondent**

**DIBRUGARH, Aug 11:** The Dibrugarh Press Club (DPC) honoured the legacy of late journalist Nilim Choudhury during the 14th annual Nilim Choudhury Memorial Lecture and Award ceremony at DHSK Autonomous College here on Monday.

This year, the Nilim Choudhury Memorial Award, carrying a cash prize of ₹ 20,000, was conferred on senior journalist Surya Bora of Asoniya Pratidin from Sonari for his commitment to responsible journalism and significant contribution to the media landscape in Assam.

Bora was presented with a citation and a cheque for ₹ 20,000. Members of DPC and other guests paid rich tributes to Nilim Choudhury, recalling his contributions to journalism. Choudhury, who served as in-charge of the Dibrugarh University Library, had also worked as a reporter for various media houses.

The first Sanjib Nandy Memorial Youth Journalism Award was con-

ferred on Hiranya Bora of NKTV, Dibrugarh. He was presented with a citation and a cheque for ₹ 10,000.

A commemorative book titled Nilim, edited by Jyotish Kumar Patir and Avik Chakraborty, was released during the event. A documentary on the life of late Nilim Choudhury, made by Arnab Sharma and Debojit Chutia, was also screened.

Senior journalist and former eastern India bureau chief Subir Bhattacharya delivered the memorial lecture on "Developments in Bangladesh and Myanmar: Fresh Challenges for Northeast India," highlighting the present crisis in both countries.

Among those present were Prof Subasana Mahanta, HoD of the Assamese Department, Dibrugarh University, and wife of late Nilim Choudhury; tea planter Mrigendra Jalan; DMC Mayor Dr Saikat Patra; DHSK Autonomous College principal Sashi Kanta Saikia; DPC president Manash Jyoti Dutta; DPC secretary Ripunjoy Das; and CA Jyoti Prasad Kanai.

## Congress holds Karbi Anglong convention to gear up for 2026 polls



**HT Correspondent**

**KHERONI, Aug 11:** The Karbi Anglong District Congress Committee (KA-DCC) on Monday held a one-day convention for all Block and Mandal presidents and office bearers at Rajiv Gandhi Bhavan, Diphu, to strengthen the party's grassroots presence in preparation for the 2026 Assam Assembly elections.

The event was attended by Manoj Chauhan, Secretary of the All India Congress Committee (AICC) and Co-in-charge of the Assam Pradesh Congress Committee (APCC), as the chief guest.

Other attendees included APCC office bearers Bitupon Saikia, General Secretary and in-charge of KA-DCC; Ashok Teron, General Secretary; Pallav Chetia, Secretary; Purnima Ronghangpi, Secretary; and

Supratim Kor, Secretary. Former MLA Jagat Sing Engti, former KAAC Deputy Chairman Mahesh Kumar Chauhan, and KA-DCC President Raton Engti were also present.

Addressing the gathering, Chauhan alleged corruption in the Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council (KAAC) under Chief Executive Member Tuliram Ronghang and in the Assam government led by Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma.

He also referred to the Special Inclusive Revision (SIR) recently conducted in Bihar, linking it to the party's organisational strategies.

The convention discussed strategies to mobilise party workers and strengthen the Congress organisation at the grassroots level in Karbi Anglong ahead of the 2026 polls.

## NCC unit launched at Khagarijan College

**HT Correspondent**

**NAGAON, Aug 11:** The NCC Unit of Khagarijan College under 8 Assam Battalion NCC was formally launched on the college campus here on Monday. The event was attended by the Commanding Officer of 8 Assam Battalion NCC, Lieutenant Colonel Akshay Das, who was escorted by a guard of honour.

After the lighting of the lamp, the NCC flag was hoisted by college principal Dr Ramesh Nath, followed by the NCC song sung by students and cadets. A felicitation ceremony was also held to honour the guest and NCC officials. Lieutenant Colonel Das formally raised the NCC Unit by presenting the permission letter to the principal.

This was followed by the inauguration of the NCC Office and a formal session in the conference hall, where Dr Nath, Governing Body president Dr Dilip Sarma, and the Commanding Officer addressed cadets and students. Dr Nath highlighted the college's journey since its establishment in 1972 and thanked the Commanding Officer for granting the opportunity to raise the NCC Unit.

Dr Sarma termed it a significant milestone and spoke about the positive contributions NCC makes to an institution.

Delivering the keynote address, Lieutenant Colonel Das shared his 20-year experience in the Indian Army and his own history as an NCC cadet. He outlined the opportunities and benefits NCC offers, encouraging students to utilise the three-year training to develop their skills, character, and clarity in both personal and professional life.

The programme concluded with a vote of thanks by Maitreyee Dutta, assistant professor in the Department of English, who mentored the session. Over 100 students and 15 faculty members attended the event, along with more than 50 NCC cadets.

Special invitee Lieutenant Jatin Prakash Chetia, ANO NCC ADP College, and NCC officials GCI Gandikota Sirisha, Subedar Major Kejang Tsering, Havaladar Suresh Rambah, Havaladar Amrit Thapa, and NK Binod Ranabhat were also present, a release said.

## Awareness camp held at Kokrajhar District Jail

**HT Correspondent**

**KOKRAJHAR, Aug 11:** An awareness camp on Hepatitis B and C was organised at Kokrajhar District Jail under the National Viral Hepatitis Control Programme (NVHCP) by the District Health Society, Kokrajhar on Monday.

The programme aimed to educate jail inmates and staff about the causes, symptoms, prevention, and treatment of the diseases.



During the session, Dr Kaushik Das, Nodal Officer of NVHCP, Kokrajhar, explained the symptoms, modes of transmission, and available treatments for Hepatitis B and C. Mamoni Baishya, ICTC counsellor from RNB Civil Hospital, Kokrajhar, also addressed the gathering on HIV awareness and prevention.

The programme was attended by jail inmates and staff members, who actively participated in interactive discussions.

A medical screening camp was also conducted, during which inmates were screened for Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, HIV, and tuberculosis (TB) as part of the health outreach initiative.

The event sought to promote health awareness, early detection, and timely treatment among the prison population to improve overall public health outcomes.

## Segunbari Tea Estate first in Assam to declare 20% bonus for workers

**HT Correspondent**

**MARGHERITA, Aug 11:** Segunbari Tea Estate in Margherita, Tinsukia district, has become the first tea estate in Assam to declare a 20% bonus for its workers for the financial year 2024-25.

The decision was reached following a meeting between the Segunbari Tea Estate management and the Assam Chah Mazdoor Sangha (ACMS) Margherita branch, led by its secretary, Hari Nanda Gorh.

The meeting, held on Monday at the manager's office of the Segunbari Tea Estate, focused on ensuring fair and timely compensation for the workers.

After discussions, the management announced that the 20% bonus will be disbursed in two instalments.

The first instalment of 13% will be paid before this year's Durga Puja, while the remaining 7% will be disbursed before the Holi festival in 2026. The announcement has been welcomed by workers and their families.

ACMS Margherita branch expressed satisfaction with the outcome, terming it an important step in fostering harmony and goodwill between management and workers.

The move by Segunbari Tea Estate is expected to inspire other estates across Assam to follow suit, setting a benchmark for worker welfare in the tea industry.

## Rotary Club of Nagaon sets state record with 'Taare Zameen Par 3.0'

**HT Correspondent**

**NAGAON, Aug 11:** Rotary Club of Nagaon has entered the Assam Book of Records for organising one of the largest drawing competitions in the state — "Taare Zameen Par 3.0".

The event, held on Sunday at Nagaon Government Boys' HS School as part of the 79th Independence Day celebrations, featured the theme Independence Day. Over 1,670 students from Classes 1 to 12 participated in three groups — A, B, and C — showcas-

ing their talent and creativity. The Assam Book of Records lauded the Rotary Club of Nagaon for providing a platform that encouraged young minds to express their artistic skills and patriotic spirit.

Club president Aman Dassani, secretary Mamta Agarwal, and project chair Amit More expressed pride in the achievement and extended thanks to club members, volunteers, and assistant governor Birendra Jain for their dedicated efforts in making the event a success.

## Book launch in Gossaigaon highlights need to foster reading habits among youth

**HT Correspondent**

**GOSSAIGAON, Aug 11:** A literary atmosphere filled the air in Gossaigaon as retired senior professor of the Bodo Department at Gossaigaon College, Dhananjay Brahma, unveiled his latest Bodo-language work Phalengnifray Japhungsar Hounnaye Gedemaphour.

The release ceremony, held at the All Bodo Students' Union (ABSU) Anchalik Office, drew noted intellectuals, educationists, and book lovers.

The book was launched by eminent writer, scholar, and Padma Shri awardee Dr Kameswar Brahma.

The event was presided over by Bodo Sahitya Sabha Gossaigaon District Committee president Prasannal Narzary, and attended by Dr. Ajit Boro, Principal of Gossaigaon B.Ed. College; Dr. Harigouri Narzary, Principal of Gossaigaon College; Dr. Niranjana Brahma; Prof. Pradip Kumar Das; and

Bodo Sahitya Sabha vice-president Nilima Basumatary.

Speakers lauded Dhananjay Brahma for his contribution to Bodo literature, calling the book a valuable addition to the community's literary heritage.

They urged him to continue producing works that inspire and inform future generations.

Dr Kameswar Brahma and other guests stressed the importance of developing reading habits among young people, encouraging them to explore books as tools for knowledge, personality development, and creative expression.

Prof Pradip Kumar Das also spoke on the role of publishing and reading in shaping an enlightened and progressive society.

The event concluded with the message that books remain timeless companions, capable of inspiring minds and nurturing a culture of learning for generations to come.





## QUOTE OF THE DAY

*Act as if what you do makes a difference. It does.*  
-William James

## Bangladesh polls in Feb

**B**angladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) the strongest political party in Bangladesh that had fought a running battle against the ruling Awami League (AL)-run Governments for over a decade, has appealed to the Jamaat-e-Islami (JEI) to contest the coming elections in February next year. Shamsuzzaman Duda, Vice Chairman of the BNP urged upon the JEI to contest the 2026 elections, which many observers see as the most important polls ever to be held in Bangladesh. The JEI, which actively opposed the freedom struggle for Bangladesh by siding openly with the ruling Pakistani regime, has remained a somewhat controversial group ever since. It had been accommodated by the BNP earlier on one occasion when it (BNP) had won power, defeating the AL in a general election. On that occasion, the BNP had won a comfortable majority on its own, but it had sought to isolate the AL further. At one level, the BNP and the JEI had a common interest in defeating the AL in the struggle for power in the new country called Bangladesh. Both the BNP and the JEI had consistently pursued a strong pro-Islamist line politically. Both were known for their general antipathy against the Hindu minority. The two parties had opposed the Hindus for different reasons.

In some ways the BNP is a more complex entity than other parties. Most senior officers in the Bangladesh army were initially pro-Pakistan in their outlook and orientation. Ziaur Rahman included. They kept plotting against Mujibur, an impulsive and emotional leader, and were determined to oust him and his AL party from power. However, after Ziaur's takeover and his formation of the BNP, many officers known for their support for the AL and personal loyalty to Mujibur, switched sides and joined the BNP. Ziaur also took care to express his public support and enthusiasm for Bangladesh. But in practice, he adopted a pro-Pakistan, pro-US and anti-Indian approach, and strongly suppressed the AL.

As for JEI, it had actively supported the cause of Pakistan, even helping the Pak army in their ruthless campaign to kill all Bengali-speaking intellectuals, and Hindus in general. It had reacted along religious lines, alleging that the AL was pursuing an anti-Islamic policy by breaking up Pakistan with the help of its arch enemy, India. There was no doubt however, that the comparatively more secular approach followed by the AL, showing more toleration for the minorities and open friendliness for India, helped the AL beat the BNP handily and regularly in elections held during the initial years after Bangladesh's freedom after Pakistan's defeat in December 1971. Even though the BNP sought to ease the JEI's entry into the arena of electoral politics, the latter could win only 17% of the popular votes in the polls, far, far behind the AL or the BNP!

## Latest Developments in India's Trade & Bilateral relations with the USA and the UK

CONTD FROM PREVIOUS ISSUE

By: Diganta Barooah

## Multiple Frictions Strain India-U.S. Trade Relations

While no single incident has soured India-U.S. ties, several points of friction have built up in recent months. President Trump has consistently criticised India's tariff and non-tariff barriers and has also raised concerns about India's continued energy and defense dealings with Russia, accusing it of indirectly financing the Ukraine war. India, however, has defended its energy security strategy, with Russia supplying 35-40% of its oil imports. Additionally, India's refusal to open its agriculture and dairy sectors to foreign competition remains a major sticking point, as it protects vulnerable domestic farmers. Tensions escalated further when Trump claimed credit for the India-Pakistan ceasefire (Operation Sindoor), a claim firmly rejected by India. In response to U.S. tariffs on Indian goods like steel and aluminium, India has informed the WTO of its right to impose retaliatory tariffs. These cumulative issues have set the stage for Trump's recent tariff imposition, reflecting the growing strains in bilateral ties.

## India Faces Imminent Tariffs amid Uncertain Trade Deal Prospects

Despite discussions of a potential "mini-deal" to ease reciprocal tariffs, U.S. President Donald Trump's recent tariff announcement signals that such a deal is unlikely in the near term. Both India and the U.S. remain committed to finalising a broader trade agreement by fall 2025, but progress has been complicated by Trump's decision to link India's Russia engagements to trade negotiations. So far, five rounds of talks have been held, with the next U.S. delegation visit scheduled for late August. Meanwhile, Trump's Executive Order, dated July 31, mandates that tariffs on Indian imports will take effect within 7 days, making the imposition of duties imminent and unavoidable for now.

## Trump's Second Presidency - From Promise to Pressure:

\* Initial expectations vs reality:  
✓ Hope vs hostility: Many in India hoped Trump's return would boost bilateral ties. ✓ Trade war reality: Instead, Trump has used tariffs and trade penalties as tools of coercion.

\* Key tactics used by Trump:  
✓ Weaponisation of trade: Trade is now a geopolitical instrument for the US. ✓ Penalties beyond trade: Threats for India's ties with Russia, Iran, BRICS plus.

## Strategic Autonomy under Threat:

✓ India's long-standing principle:  
Since Independence, India has upheld strategic autonomy in foreign policy. This principle earned India global credibility and leadership among developing nations.

✓ Current challenge:  
Trump's actions attempt to infringe on India's foreign policy decisions, which is unprecedented in scale and directness.

## US Double Standards - China vs India:

\* Trade comparison:  
✓ India-US trade:  
India-US trade volume in goods and services in 2024-25 was \$186 billion, and this represents just over 10% of our total external trade volume.

✓ US-China trade:  
US-China trade in goods was worth \$582.4 billion in 2024, with US exports at \$143.5 billion and imports from China at \$438.9 billion.

✓ Unequal response:  
If the size of the trade surplus a country has with the US and access to the Chinese market are factors, then China should be Trump's number one target. Despite higher stakes, Trump avoids confrontation with China, which resists bullying. This implies selective coercion, with India seen as an easier target.

## India's Strategic Options:

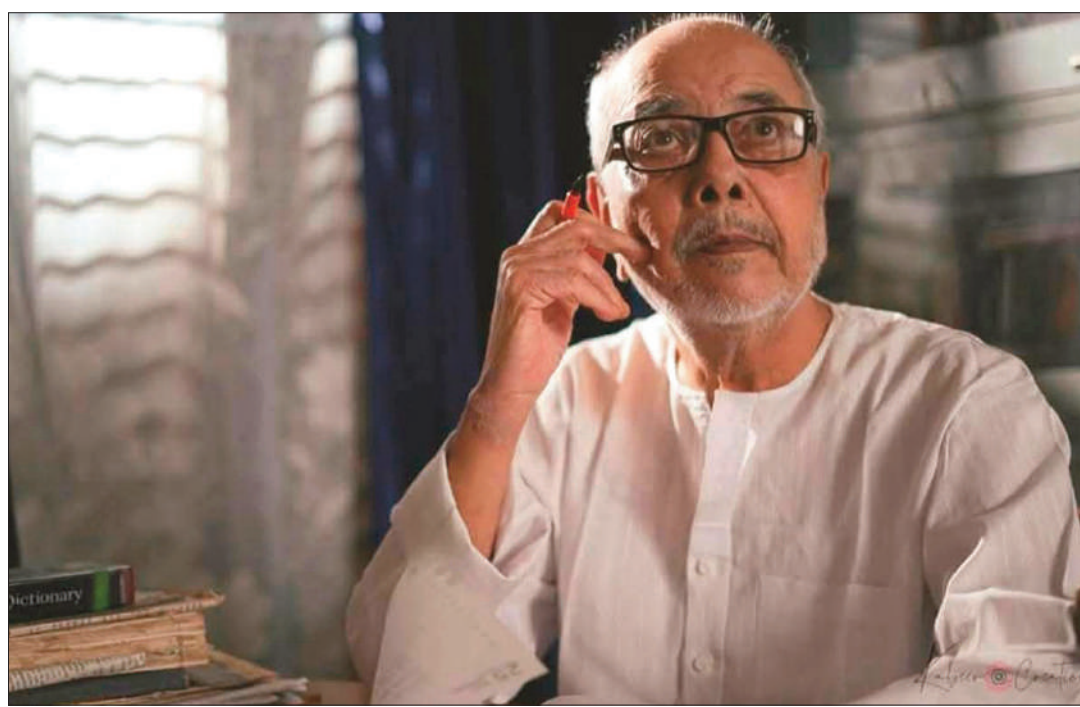
✓ Stand firm on autonomy:  
\* Do not allow external veto on India's global partnerships.  
\* Remain open to balanced trade negotiations, but reject unilateral diktats.  
✓ Safeguard security partnerships: (CONTD TO NEXT ISSUE)

# 'Assam Saurabh' Hemanta Dutta: A Tribute

**T**he passing of Hemanta Dutta, a towering figure in the realm of Assamese music and theater, and a multifaceted genius, has cast a profound shadow of grief over the collective consciousness of Assam. His creative legacy has illuminated Assamese culture for eternity, serving as an enduring source of inspiration for generations to come. Born on September 24, 1941, in a humble family in Kharupetia, Darrang district, this remarkable personality breathed his last at the age of 83 in the ICU of GMCH, Guwahati. With his departure, a vibrant era in Assamese music and theater has drawn to a close.

Hemanta Dutta was born into an unassuming family in Kharupetia, Darrang district. As the fourth child of his father, Haliram Dutta, and mother, Biraja Bala Dutta, his early life was marked by simplicity. However, the depth of his mind, his creative brilliance, and his sensitive perspective on life shaped him into an extraordinary individual. Growing up amidst the verdant landscapes of Kharupetia, Hemanta drew profound inspiration from nature's beauty. The greenery of trees and forests, the gentle murmur of rivers, and the serene simplicity of rural life ignited his imagination. This environment sowed the seeds of subtle sensitivity in his heart, which later found expression through his songs and plays.

The lush fields of Kharupetia, the tranquil riverbanks, and the unpretentious lives of villagers deeply influenced his creative psyche. These childhood memories came alive in the lines of his songs and the scenes of his plays. After completing his schooling in Mangaldoi, he pursued higher education at Kanai College in Dibrugarh. This phase marked a new chapter in his life, as he became deeply engaged with the cultural world. During his time at Kanai College, he forged meaningful connections with friends like Said Chadulla, Rajen Gohain, Hiren Gohain, Bhavesh Goswami, and Prince. These friendships paved the way for his creative journey. Together, they formed a cultural group called 'Quivers Band', which served as the first stepping stone in his cultural pursuits. Through this group, he found opportunities to express his creativity. The first song he composed was performed by Brajen Das at Dibrugarh's 'India Club'. This



event marked a significant milestone in his life, opening the path to his establishment as a legendary figure in Assamese music and theater. The experiences of this period deepened his passion for music and theater, providing him with opportunities to nurture his talents. These early endeavors shaped the trajectory of his future, laying the foundation for his creative

## DEGREE OF THOUGHT

By: Himangshu Ranjan Bhuyan

active brilliance that would later resonate across Assam through his songs and plays. These experiences made him sensitive to the various facets of life, which found expression in his creations, establishing him as an immortal figure in Assamese culture.

Hemanta Dutta's entry into the world of music began in 1977 with the film 'Naton Asha'. His songs reflected the profound philosophy of life and the joys and sorrows of ordinary people. Composing over five hundred songs, each of Hemanta Dutta's creations is a priceless gem in the treasury of Assamese music. Though simple in language, his songs carried deep truths and emotions. They beautifully captured the essence of rural Assamese life, the charm of nature, the tenderness of love, and poignant social messages. His songs possessed a magical quality that connected listeners with the beauty and depth of life.

Renowned vocalists such as Jayanta Hazarika, Charu Gohain, Malabika Bora, Rajen Gohain, Dolly Ghosh, Shanta Uzi, Samar Hazarika, and even contemporary artists like Zubin Garg lent their voices to his compositions, bringing his creations to life. He wrote songs for films like 'Sadari', 'Sonmoina', 'Jivan Surabhi', 'Bahagar Duporia', 'Shewali', 'Iman Maram Kiy Lage', 'Ei Maram Tomar Babe', 'Hiya Diya Niya', and 'Nayak'. The simplicity and depth of his songs won the hearts of audiences across all strata. Through his songs, he crafted a distinct identity for Assamese music, which remains an integral part of Assamese culture to this day. His lyrics continue to resonate with listeners, occupying a special place in their hearts. Notable among his songs are 'Moi Ji Bate Ore Alu Aji Nahu Ubhati', 'Ei Akash Bar Bishal', 'Samay Gatishil', 'Megh Bhara Auschire Rati' ('Jivan Surabhi', sung by Arun Das), 'Jivanar Kathin Baat' ('Yakham'), 'Kateno Asa Mor Kalijar Ai' ('Bahagar Duporia'), 'Moi Ei Mukali Pakhi' ('Jivan Surabhi'), 'Kino Abhaga Kapal' (Bhupen Hazarika), 'Jouban Mane Pasuwar Laga Aha', 'Nayak Hab Khujji, Kharanayak Hali', 'Nahale Parichay Hiyare', 'Gase Bane Seuijiya', 'Laraliye Deo Diya', 'Man Mor Urishi', 'Barasha Tumi Aha', 'Jiri Jiri' (Charu Gohain), 'Shewali Pahiyee Komal Misiki Hahiyee', 'Buku Bhara Ei Trisha Je', 'Jiu Tumi

Maramare Mau', 'Gase Bane Seuijiya' (Rituparna Sharma), 'Baku Duru Duru Lage Kiy Baru', 'Mataliya Batahe Uri Ahi Kale Je', 'Putalare Koina Dara', 'Nadi Tor Bukute', 'Kota Soth Ase Gupute' ('Upapatha'), 'Nijante Gupute Ahi Mor Achina Preyasi', 'A Pasuwa', 'Hiyar Maram Mukuta Hai', and more. The song 'Bandh Kariba Haat, Bandh Kariba Maat' from the film 'Pita-Putra', with 116 lines, is considered the longest Assamese song. Through his songs, he beautifully portrayed the charm of rural Assamese life, the beauty of nature, and the depth of human relationships. His lyrics evoked profound emotions in listeners, enriching the heritage of Assamese music. His songs reflected various aspects of Assamese life, earning a cherished place in the hearts of all listeners. Moreover, Hemanta Dutta was a skilled actor, earning acclaim for his effortless performances in several popular films.

Hemanta Dutta's contributions were not limited to music alone. He left an indelible mark on the Assamese theater scene. His name will forever remain etched in the history of mobile theater in Assam. During its golden era, his plays drew crowds that thronged to the stages of mobile theaters. His unparalleled contribution to mobile theater is epitomized by his play 'Titanic'. Even today, the mere mention of 'Titanic' sends shivers down the spines of audiences. In the 1990s, Hemanta Dutta brought 'Titanic' to life

through mobile theater, creating a landmark in its history. His plays reflected the realities of life, societal issues, and the complexities of human relationships with remarkable sensitivity and depth. The characters in his plays were vivid and relatable, enabling audiences to connect with their own lives. Through his plays, he conveyed profound messages about societal issues, the intricacies of human relationships, and the beauty of life. His directorial style left a lasting impact on audiences. Notable among his plays are 'Eita Nashita Lorar Galpa', 'Path', 'Titanic', 'Sendur', 'Akashar Dare Man', 'Mukti', 'Chakrabeha', and 'Jetuka Paatar Rang'. His plays portrayed the myriad shades of life, delivering deep messages about societal challenges and human connections. Through his theater, he crafted a glorious identity for Assamese culture, reflecting its beauty and complexities. His direction and acting in these plays left an enduring impression on audiences. Additionally, apart from directing plays, he directed the 1980 film 'Upapatha'.

The diversity in Hemanta Dutta's creations is a testament to his extraordinary talent. His songs and plays beautifully reflected various facets of life, blending the beauty of nature, the sweetness of love, the struggles of life, and societal issues. Through his works, he forged a proud identity for Assamese culture, creating an invaluable legacy that remains a cornerstone of Assamese music and theater. His creations continue to be an inseparable part of Assamese life.

In recognition of his contributions, Hemanta Dutta was honored with numerous awards, including the Bhaven Barua Award (2017), the Bhabendra Nath Saikia Award (2018-19), the Moonlight Media Award, the Assam Natya Sammilan Award, the Atul Chandra Hazarika Award, the Natya Sindhu Award, and the Gurji Adya Sharma Award (2018). Most recently, he was conferred the prestigious 'Assam Saurabh' award by the Assam government. The demise of this multifaceted genius is undoubtedly an irreparable loss to Assam's cultural and theatrical landscape. Though he is no longer with us in person, his creative legacy will keep him alive in the hearts of every Assamese for generations to come. May the departed soul of Hemanta Dutta find eternal peace.

## Curtain Falls on a Cultural Colossus

### The life and legacy of dramatist Hemanta Dutta

By: Dipak Kurmi

**T**he world of Assamese art and culture awoke today to the grievous news that Hemanta Dutta, one of its most enduring dramatists, directors, actors, and lyricists, breathed his last on the morning of 11 August 2025. His passing marks not just the end of a remarkable career, but the silencing of a voice that for decades had been a bridge between Assam's storied theatre traditions and the evolving tastes of its people. For those who knew his work, Hemanta Dutta was not merely a name in the credits; he was an institution, a living embodiment of creative versatility whose contributions spanned over half a century.

Born in Kharupetia in Assam's Darrang district, Dutta's earliest years were spent in an environment where tradition, community, and storytelling were integral to daily life. His family later moved to Mangaldai, where his formative years unfolded with the simplicity of small-town life. When his elder brother, Dr. Munin Dutta, travelled to the United States for higher studies, Hemanta shifted to Dibrugarh to continue his education. It was there that his love affair with performance and literature truly began. He first set foot on stage as a schoolboy in Class III, playing the role of the Ahom general Lachit Barphukan in a school production, a portrayal that earned him the first prize for best child actor. By Class VIII, his creative appetite had widened to include writing and directing, leading him to sweep school drama competitions with awards for best script, best director, and best actor. These formative triumphs cemented his conviction that the stage was not just an escape, but a calling.

Dutta would go on to become one of the most prolific dramatists Assam has ever produced, writing more than one hundred plays and penning over five hundred songs. His career was an unbroken continuum of artistic output, both for mobile theatre companies and in film. In 2017, he was honoured with the Nhatyasinidhu, a recognition of his deep and unyielding commitment to the art of drama. The awards did not stop there. In 2024, he was conferred with the Assam Saurabh Award, further underlining his towering stature in the cultural landscape. Earlier this year, in July 2025, he was bestowed with the Samaj Shromoni Award on Darrang Divas, a distinction that reflected his broader social contributions alongside his artistic legacy.

While his oeuvre was rich and diverse, one of Dutta's most ambitious and talked-about works was his adaptation of James Cameron's 'Titanic' for the Assamese mobile theatre format. This was no mere translation of a Hollywood blockbuster; it was a bold act of cultural transposition. Long before 'Titanic' was screened in Indian cinemas, Dutta had already staged it for Assamese audiences. He had first read about the ship's tragic fate in a Bengali magazine and realised how few people in Assam knew the story. In his mind's eye, he began to visualise the scale, the pathos, and the human dimensions of the disaster. When he pitched the idea to mobile theatre producer Ratan Lahkar, it was approved, and the result was a theatrical spectacle that remains legendary in Assam's mobile theatre history.

This adaptation was emblematic of Dutta's philosophy: theatre should not be bound by geography or language, and stories from anywhere could be reimagined to resonate with

local audiences. Over the decades, his plays for mobile theatre became a hallmark of the medium's golden age, and he worked closely with some of Assam's most celebrated theatre troupes, including Kohinoor Theatre. His talent was not restricted to the pen. As an actor, he took on memorable roles such as Captain Smith in 'Titanic' and Shakespeare's Iago, the latter a performance so intense that a heckler in the audience once broke the scene's silence, an incident that remains etched in his memory as one of his most powerful moments on stage.

Dutta also ventured into cinema with his first directorial film, 'Upapath', based on Prafulla Dowarah's play of the same name. Despite the intense demands of mobile theatre schedules, he adapted the story for the screen, taking care to obtain the original playwright's blessing before making changes. This duality between stage and screen was one of Dutta's strengths. He understood the nuances of both forms and often spoke about their differences. In cinema, a fleeting glance or subtle gesture could convey emotion, whereas in theatre, every emotion had to be constructed through dialogue and narration. It was this awareness that made him adept at shifting between mediums without diluting the soul of his storytelling.

Hemanta Dutta was never shy about voicing his concerns regarding the trajectory of modern theatre. In his later years, he lamented the shift towards spectacle-heavy productions, with loud music, dance numbers, and entertainment gimmicks often overshadowing the core of dramatic storytelling. He believed that the true essence of a play lay in its script, plot, and the sincerity of its performances. "The tastes of the new generation are completely different from ours," he once remarked, noting that contemporary plays often felt more like variety shows than dramatic works. Yet even as he criticised these trends, he acknowledged that each generation shapes art in its own image, and perhaps his contemporaries had simply failed to keep pace with the change.

As a lyricist, Dutta brought the same thoughtfulness and craft to his songs as he did to his plays. His first song was written almost by accident, when renowned singer Subir Sen visited Dibrugarh and requested an Assamese song for a performance. Dutta's friends volunteered him for the task, and with a hummed melody as a guide, he wrote a song that Sen performed that very evening. Over the years, Dutta would pen hundreds of songs, often working to melodies provided by music directors but also sometimes crafting lyrics independently. He took pride in melody and meaning, lamenting the sameness he perceived in much of modern popular music. While he admired the work of contemporary Assamese musicians like Zubeen Garg and Diganta Bharati, he worried that lyricists were increasingly overshadowed by singers, with younger audiences often unable to name the writers behind the songs they enjoyed.

In his personal life, Dutta was a family man whose creative pursuits were always supported by his loved ones. He often spoke of how his family encouraged his work from the very beginning, never once opposing his decision to make theatre his life's vocation. His affection for his roots was also evident in his later work on a novel, still unfinished at the time of his death, about the transformations in the place where he was born, grew up, and built his life. Inspired by a suggestion from the late Homen Borgohain, who



urged him to give his dramatic stories a second life as prose, Dutta approached novel writing with the same seriousness he had brought to his plays, though he admitted the form was entirely new terrain for him.

What set Hemanta Dutta apart was his profound connection to his audience. He often compared plays to his children, each one unique and cherished, and his greatest joy came from seeing them embraced by the public. Yet he also believed that the relationship between artist and audience was reciprocal. He wished for theatre-goers to approach plays with the same respect and seriousness that actors brought to their craft. His analogy was simple but telling: in a market full of foods, not all are healthy, and one should choose wisely; the same is true for drama, where not every flashy production nourishes the soul.

The loss of Hemanta Dutta is more than the passing of a single artist. It is the loss of a living archive of Assam's theatrical history, of a man who straddled multiple artistic identities with equal mastery. His career, spanning writing, acting, directing, and songwriting, was marked by an unyielding dedication to quality, authenticity, and cultural relevance. He was a man who could see a universal story in a foreign tragedy, adapt it for local audiences, and infuse it with the rhythms of Assamese life. He was equally capable of portraying timeless Shakespearean villainy, writing songs for legendary singers, and standing at the helm of a mobile theatre troupe as it toured the length and breadth of Assam. On this day, as the news of his passing spreads, there will be tributes and memorials, words of praise and nostalgia, but for those who shared a theatre space with him or listened to his lyrics under a quiet Assamese sky, the loss is deeply personal. Hemanta Dutta has exited the stage, but his voice, his stories, and his songs will continue to echo, long after the curtains have closed. In every line he wrote, every role he embodied, and every lyric he crafted, there is a reminder of the dignity and passion he brought to the arts. The lights may dim tonight, but the glow of his legacy will not fade. (the writer can be reached at dipakkurmipltd@gmail.com)



# The Silent Crisis: Humanity's Nature Deficit

By: Satyabrata Borah

Over the past two centuries, humanity's relationship with the natural world has undergone a profound and troubling transformation. A groundbreaking study by Professor Miles Richardson, a leading expert in nature connectedness at the University of Derby, reveals that human connection to nature has declined by more than 60% since 1800. This decline, which Richardson terms the "extinction of experience," mirrors the disappearance of nature-related words like river, moss, and blossom from literature, signaling a deep cultural and psychological disconnection from the environment. Published in the journal "Earth" The study uses advanced computer modeling to track this erosion over 220 years, attributing it to urbanization, the loss of local wildlife, and a critical failure of parents to pass down an appreciation for nature to their children. Without transformative policy changes and societal shifts, Richardson warns, future generations may grow up in a world where nature is little more than a distant concept, with dire consequences for both human well-being and environmental conservation.

The study's findings are rooted in an agent-based model that integrates data on urbanization, biodiversity loss, and cultural transmission. Since the dawn of the Industrial Revolution, urban environments have expanded dramatically, with over 55% of the global population now living in cities, a figure projected to reach 68% by 2050. This shift has physically distanced people from green spaces, replacing forests and fields with concrete and asphalt. Richardson's research highlights how urban sprawl has reduced access to biodiverse environments, with neighborhood wildlife populations plummeting—global wildlife populations have declined by an average of 60% since 1970, according to a 2018 WWF study. This physical disconnection is compounded by a cultural one: parents, increasingly detached from nature themselves, are less likely to introduce their children to outdoor experiences. The study identifies parental nature connectedness as the strongest predictor of a child's bond with the natural world, yet this intergenerational transfer is fading, creating a self-reinforcing cycle of disconnection.

The linguistic evidence is equally striking. By analyzing books published between 1800 and 2020, Richardson found a 60.6% decline in the use of nature-related words, peaking in the 1990s. Words like stream, fern, and meadow have all but vanished from modern literature, reflecting a broader cultural shift. This linguistic erosion mirrors the physical loss of natural spaces and sug-



gests that nature is no longer a central part of human consciousness. The study's modeling predicts that without intervention, this "extinction of experience" will continue, leaving future generations with little awareness of or emotional connection to the natural world. This is not merely an academic concern—Richardson argues that nature connectedness is a key driver of pro-environmental behaviors and mental health, making its decline a root cause of the ongoing environmental crisis.

The implications of this disconnection are profound. Nature connectedness is closely linked to psychological well-being, with studies showing that time spent in natural environments reduces stress hormones like cortisol and lowers inflammation markers such as CRP and IL-6. Forests, for instance, release phytoncides while simply noticing nature, even in small ways, can foster conservation actions. Yet, as urban environments dominate and digital screens consume more attention, opportunities for meaningful engagement with nature are shrinking. Posts on X highlight a growing sentiment that modern generations, raised with constant access to technology, lack the outdoor experiences of past eras, when children played outside year-round and explored their surroundings. This shift has left many feeling isolated from the natural world, with some users

lamenting the "deathly silence" of habitats depleted by human activity.

The environmental consequences are equally alarming. The decline in nature connectedness undermines efforts to combat climate change and biodiversity loss. A 2019 report by the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) estimated that one million species face extinction due to human actions, with 80,000 acres of forest lost daily and wild mammal biomass down by 82%. As people grow less connected to nature, they are less likely to support conservation initiatives or adopt sustainable practices. Richardson's study underscores that this disconnection is not just a byproduct of environmental degradation but a contributing factor, creating a vicious cycle where apathy toward nature accelerates its destruction.

Reversing this trend requires bold, multifaceted interventions. Richardson's modeling suggests that incremental changes, such as increasing urban green spaces by 30%, are insufficient. To restore nature connectedness to pre-industrial levels, cities may need to become ten times greener, with biodiverse parks, urban forests, and community gardens integrated into daily life. Such transformations would not only provide access to nature but also enhance mental health and foster pro-environmental behaviors. For example, ini-

tiatives like the National Education Nature Park in the UK, led by the Natural History Museum, aim to embed nature in school curricula, exposing children to biodiversity from an early age. Richardson emphasizes that introducing children to nature early through activities like birdwatching, gardening, or simply exploring local parks is one of the most effective ways to rebuild this connection. Parental involvement is critical, as children are more likely to value nature if their caregivers model that appreciation.

Policy changes must also address the root causes of disconnection. Urban planning needs to prioritize green infrastructure, ensuring that even densely populated areas have accessible, biodiverse spaces. Governments could incentivize the creation of urban wetlands, rooftop gardens, and vertical forests, which have proven effective in cities like Singapore and Milan. Education systems should integrate outdoor learning, moving beyond traditional classroom-based models to include hands-on experiences with nature. Programs like India's NIPUN Bharat, which focuses on foundational learning, could serve as a model for incorporating environmental education into early curricula. Additionally, policies should support community-led initiatives, such as local conservation projects, to foster a sense of ownership over natural spaces.

Societal shifts are equally important. The rise of digital media and indoor entertainment has reduced time spent outdoors, particularly among younger generations. Campaigns to promote "noticing nature" can counteract this trend. Research from the Finding Nature initiative shows that noticing nature is a stronger predictor of conservation action than time spent outdoors or academic knowledge of ecosystems. Public awareness campaigns, supported by media and influencers, could encourage families to prioritize outdoor activities, while schools and workplaces could offer structured opportunities for nature engagement, such as green breaks or community gardening days.

The challenges are significant. Urbanization continues to accelerate, with 70% of new urban areas expected to be built in biodiversity hotspots by 2030. Economic pressures often prioritize development over conservation, and in many regions, access to green spaces is inequitable, with marginalized communities least likely to benefit from parks or nature reserves. Posts on X highlight concerns about exclusion in natural spaces, with some arguing that cultural or socioeconomic barriers prevent diverse groups from engaging in activities like hiking or camping. Addressing these disparities requires targeted policies, such as subsidized outdoor programs and community-led green initiatives in underserved areas.

Despite these obstacles, there are signs of hope. Grassroots movements, like those advocating for urban rewilding or school-based nature programs, are gaining traction. Cities like London and Melbourne are experimenting with "pocket parks" and green corridors to bring nature closer to residents. In education, programs like Forest Schools are fostering nature connectedness among children, while citizen science projects engage communities in monitoring local biodiversity. These efforts, though small in scale, demonstrate the potential for change when individuals, communities, and governments work together.

The decline in human connection to nature is a crisis of both heart and mind. It reflects a world where the sights, sounds, and smells of the natural world are fading from human experience, replaced by urban sprawl and digital distractions. Professor Richardson's study is a clarion call for action, warning that without radical changes, the "extinction of experience" will leave future generations estranged from the environment that sustains them. By greening cities, reforming education, and fostering cultural shifts, society can rebuild this vital connection. The stakes are high—restoring our bond with nature is not just about preserving ecosystems but about reclaiming a fundamental part of what it means to be human.

## Goodbye Registered Post - A silent farewell to an era

By: Dr. Priyanka Saurabh

On September 1, 2025, when the registered postal service of India Post will be formally discontinued, it will probably not be printed on the front page of any newspaper, nor will it be discussed on any news channel. As normal as this news seems, it leaves a deep impact on that generation, who for years started their day by listening to the bell of the postman's bicycle. Who lived relationships through letters and waited for communication by standing in queues at the post office.

Registered post was no ordinary service. It was a testimony to the days when we used to pour out our emotions with ink on paper. When an envelope contained many unsaid things, long waits and countless emotions. When a letter, whether it was from a family member or a government document, was not just a piece of paper but a symbol of trust — that it would definitely reach, in the right hands, at the right time.

Registered post was the bridge that connected the village to the city, mother to son, lover to lover, and citizen to the government. It was not only a medium of communication, but also a guard that kept the relations safe. Its specialty was that it did not get lost, it did not wander. Its registration was its security, and the acknowledgement of its receipt was a kind of emotional satisfaction.

There was a time when the postman was not just a messenger but a familiar face in the house. Everyone awaited his voice, his bicycle bell and the envelopes hidden in his bag. Be it a government letter, an uncle's money order, news of a son living far away — everything reached through registered post. And when the letter was received, it was touched before opening it — the thickness of its paper, the depth of its colour and the smell of the ink on it — there was a sense of belonging in everything.

But times have changed. Technological advancement has completely transformed the way we communicate. Today, mobile phones, instant messaging services, social media, and the Internet have almost eliminated the traditional postal system. No one has to wait anymore, everything is sent and received in a jiffy. At such a time, the decision of India Post to formally discontinue registered mail and merge it with speed mail is timely and necessary, but also emotionally painful.

Speed mail is undoubtedly a

better service in line with modern requirements. It has speed, monitoring, technical expertise. But it does not have the intimacy that registered mail had. That intimacy, that slow but reliable communication, that simplicity — will now become history.

The end of registered post is not just the end of a service, it is the end of an era. The era when words were treasured, when one waited for weeks, not days, to get a reply. When a reply had layers of love, respect and emotions. Today, we may be able to communicate in a single click, but that communication lacks permanence and depth. We send messages, but not emotions. We read, but do not understand. Registered post was the last vestige of an era when communication was not just a talk, but an emotion.

Such letters are still found in our old trunks — yellowed paper, letters stained with ink, time-marked edges and everything inside that was once priceless. Those letters are now just memories, but registered post has delivered them safely till today. This is its greatest success — that it has made words immortal.

With the closure of this service, an emotional bond will be broken. This was the service that had made distance a bond. It had connected everyone from a mother's lap to her son, from a lover's eyes to her lover, from a teacher's teachings to his student. Now speed mail will come — fast, convenient, modern. But it will not have that halt, that patience, that waiting which made registered mail special.

Today, as much as we have become technically capable, we have become emotionally hollow. Communication still takes place, but it lacks soul. Registered post was not just a letter, it was a document of the soul. Now that it is bidding adieu, it is not just an administrative decision — it is the closing of a page of our cultural heritage.

Registered post, you didn't just deliver letters, you delivered relationships. You taught us to connect — with words, with emotions, with waiting, and with faith. You may be formally closed now, but you will always live in our memories, in our old boxes, in our hearts.

Today, when we are bidding you farewell, it is not a farewell, it is a salute — to that era, to that simplicity, to that patience, to that affection, which you carried on your shoulders for years. Now even if the post offices change, postmen become digital, letters become history — but you, registered post, will always remain immortal for us.

## India's Economy: Balance or beautiful illusion?

By: Dipak Kurmi

A few weeks ago, the Indian Finance Ministry confidently proclaimed that the nation was in a "Goldilocks situation" — that rare and enviable state in which growth is healthy, inflation is subdued, and monetary conditions are supportive. For policymakers, such a pronouncement offered a narrative of economic composure, an alignment of factors where the country could expand without overheating and where citizens could enjoy the fruits of stability. Analysts, looking narrowly at quarterly indicators, even christened the period a "mini-Goldilocks moment," pointing to 7.6 percent GDP growth, interest rates at their peak and seemingly steady corporate earnings. By the close of FY2024, India had emerged as a \$3.6 trillion economy with a robust underlying growth rate of over 7.6 percent, promising a buoyant macroeconomic backdrop for 2025.

Yet behind this optimistic façade lies a far more complex and less comforting reality. Beneath the headline numbers are layers of structural imbalances, social inequalities and fiscal pressures that undermine the idea of a perfect economic equilibrium. For those willing to probe beneath the surface, the "Goldilocks" narrative is less a sign of stability and more a mirage concealing deep-rooted vulnerabilities.

Inflation is the first crack in the picture of balance. The Consumer Price Index (CPI) data does indeed re-

flect an encouraging trajectory — falling from 4.8 percent in May 2024 to 2.82 percent by May 2025, well within the Reserve Bank of India's comfort zone. But a closer examination reveals that the path to this moderation was neither smooth nor uniform across categories. Throughout much of 2024, the Consumer Food Price Index (CFPI) consistently outpaced general inflation by a troubling margin. In October 2024, CPI (General) stood at 6.21 percent, yet food inflation soared to an alarming 10.87 percent. Even in months of overall moderation, such as August 2024 when CPI was 3.65 percent, food inflation was still significantly higher at 5.66 percent.

This divergence is not a technical curiosity; it is a lived economic strain. Food accounts for nearly half of the spending of an average Indian household, especially among lower-income groups. High and volatile food prices can erode purchasing power swiftly and severely. Factors such as unseasonal rains, supply chain bottlenecks and swings in global commodity prices have all conspired to keep food inflation unpredictable. For families, especially those at the lower end of the income spectrum, 10 percent food inflation does not just mean higher prices; it means cutting back on nutrition, borrowing to meet daily needs or sacrificing other essentials.

Economists like Dr Pronab Sen have long argued that core inflation — which strips out volatile food and fuel prices — offers a truer measure of the sustained price burden. Yet even this measure cannot mask the volatility that has become a defining feature of essential goods. The eventual dip in CFPI to 0.99 percent by May 2025 is certainly welcome, but it cannot erase the months of hardship preceding it. Volatility in essentials destabilises household budgeting, suppresses savings and fuels uncertainty, all of which are inconsistent with the calm promised by a "Goldilocks" economy.

If inflation erodes the value of money, wage dynamics determine how effectively households can fight back. Here too the sheen fades quickly. Nominal salary increases over the years have been consistently undermined by inflation. In 2023, the average salary increase

was a respectable 9.2 percent, yet real wage growth — after adjusting for inflation — was a meagre 2.5 percent. The gap has been even more severe in certain years; in 2020, real wages actually shrank by 0.4 percent despite nominal salaries rising 4.4 percent. Projections for 2025 suggest a 4 percent real wage increase against an 8.8 percent nominal rise, meaning that nearly half of the apparent gain will still be swallowed by inflation.

This is the "silent squeeze" on households. A 9 percent salary hike may look attractive on paper, but if inflation takes away 7 percent of that, the real improvement in living standards is negligible. For middle-class and lower-income families, this means diminished capacity to save, reduced discretionary spending and, increasingly, a turn towards debt to maintain consumption. In industries like IT services, manufacturing, engineering and consumer goods — sectors that often award modest increments — the pinch is even sharper.

The wage stagnation feeds directly into a larger concern: income inequality. The International Labour Organization and several labour economists have warned that without meaningful growth in real wages, aggregate consumption demand will remain constrained, even in a fast-growing economy. Charting the distribution of taxable income over the past decade reveals some fluctuation. The Gini coefficient — a standard measure of inequality — declined from 0.489 in assessment year 2013 to 0.435 in 2016 and is forecast to reach 0.402 in

2025. While this might suggest a narrowing gap, it only captures taxable incomes, thereby excluding the vast informal sector where wages are typically lower and more volatile.

Studies by policy researchers such as Garima Nain and Ria Kasliwal at the Observer Research Foundation describe India's recovery from the pandemic as "K-shaped" — a pattern in which affluent groups and certain industries race ahead while others lag far behind. Billionaire wealth has surged, luxury goods sales have boomed, and urban high-end consumption has shown remarkable resilience. Meanwhile, real wages for millions of workers in agriculture, informal urban services and low-end manufacturing have barely moved. This uneven distribution of economic gains is more than an abstract fairness issue; it can corrode social cohesion, restrict access to health and education for large swathes of the population and ultimately throttle inclusive long-term growth.

Against this social backdrop, the government's fiscal position becomes even more significant. There is a declared commitment to fiscal consolidation, with the fiscal deficit expected to shrink from 6.4 percent of GDP in 2022-23 to 4.4 percent by 2025-26. The revenue deficit is also projected to fall from 4 percent to 1.5 percent over the same period. The primary deficit — which excludes interest payments — is targeted to drop from 3 percent to 0.8 percent. On paper, these are commendable goals, suggesting discipline in public finances.

But the absolute size of these deficits remains high. For a developing economy like India, substantial fiscal deficits mean heavy borrowing requirements. Such borrowing can crowd out private investment by competing for the same pool of funds, thereby pushing up interest rates. Higher interest costs can discourage private businesses from expanding, limiting job creation and long-term growth potential. More troubling still is the public debt-to-GDP ratio, which stood at around 81 percent in 2022-23 — well above the 60 percent ceiling envisioned by the Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management Act. Servicing this debt consumes a large slice of government revenue, leaving less room for crucial spending on health, education and infrastructure. For citizens, this could mean either reduced public services or the prospect of higher taxes in the future to stabilise debt levels. When these factors are combined — volatile food inflation, stagnant real wages, persistent inequality and a tight fiscal position — the claim of a harmonious macroeconomic "sweet spot" begins to look overstated. The benefits of growth are not broadly shared, and the resilience of the economy is not underpinned by equally resilient household finances. GDP growth of 7.6 percent may capture headlines, but it is the lived experience of ordinary citizens that determines whether the economy is truly "just right."

True equilibrium requires more than statistical alignment. It demands a structural foundation where inflation is not only low but also stable, where wage growth consistently outpaces price increases, where opportunities are broadly distributed across sectors and classes, and where the government's fiscal strength allows for sustained investment in public goods without overburdening future generations.

The "Goldilocks" metaphor, borrowed from a children's tale, suggests a perfect balance that is neither too hot nor too cold. But in India's case, the porridge may be cooling too fast for some and boiling over for others. For the upper tiers of the economy — high-net-worth individuals, global-facing corporates, tech-savvy urban professionals — this may indeed feel like a moment of balance and opportunity. For vast sections of the workforce, especially in rural areas and low-income urban settlements, it is a period of slow gains, persistent vulnerability and uncertain prospects.

India's true economic strength will ultimately rest on its ability to turn episodic spurts of growth into sustained, inclusive prosperity. That means addressing the volatility in essential prices through stronger supply chain resilience, rebalancing labour markets to deliver higher real wage growth, ensuring that inequality narrows not just in taxable income statistics but in the lived standards of the poorest, and managing public finances in a way that creates space for transformative investment in people and infrastructure.

Until then, the "Goldilocks" label may serve as a comforting headline, but it risks lulling policymakers and the public into complacency. The challenge is not merely to preserve a fleeting balance of macroeconomic indicators, but to build an economy where the warmth of growth is felt evenly across society, and where stability is not an illusion but a lived reality for all. In that vision lies India's sustainable economic future — one that will be measured not in the poetry of political slogans but in the prose of everyday life. (the writer can be reached at dipakkurmipltd@gmail.com)





# China to build Xinjiang-Tibet rail link 'near' LAC with India: Report

**BEIJING, Aug 11:** China is set to build the most ambitious rail link connecting Xinjiang province with Tibet, part of which will "run near" the Line of Actual Control (LAC) with India, according to a media report.

Work is expected to get underway this year on one of the world's most ambitious rail projects with the launch of a state-owned company to oversee the construction and operations of a line that will link Hotan in Xinjiang and Lhasa in Tibet, the Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post reported.

The Xinjiang-Tibet Railway Company (XTRC) had been formally registered with 95 billion yuan (USD 13.2 billion) in capital and wholly owned by China State Railway Group to build the project, the report said, quoting the state-run Shanghai Securities News. "This ambitious project aims to establish a 5,000 km plateau rail framework centred on Lhasa by 2035," Hubei-based Huayuan Securities said in a research note on Friday.

The project's registered capital represents initial funding, not total project costs. For example, the 1,800km Sichuan-Tibet Railway required an estimated 320 billion yuan (USD 45 billion) to build, according to the report published on Saturday. "Parts of the route will also run near the China-India Line of Actual Control (LAC), the de facto border between the two countries, giving it defensive importance in a frontier area with less infrastructure than the rest of China," the report said.

China's mega infrastructure project in the route, the Xinjiang-



Tibet highway, also known as G219 highway, was built through the disputed Aksai Chin area, which was a major flashpoint in the 1962 war.

India asserts Aksai Chin as an integral part of its territory based on historical claims and past treaties.

The Xinjiang-Tibet Railway is one of four lines planned to connect Tibet with the rest of the country, with the other services linking the western region to Qinghai, Sichuan and Yunnan provinces, the report said.

The Qinghai-Tibet line is up and running while construction continues on the other two, it said.

The Tibet region in China is well connected by air, road and rail networks. Its high-speed rail network from Lhasa stretches close to the Arunachal Pradesh border.

Significantly, China's plans for the new Xinjiang-Tibet rail link come just after Beijing and New Delhi began a normalisation of relations after over four years of a freeze in ties due to the military

standoff in the sprawling Eastern Ladakh. Aksai Chin is part of the region.

The relations began looking up after last year's meeting in Russia between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping on the sidelines of the BRICS summit.

Modi is expected to attend the two-day Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit beginning August 31.

Tibet continues to be the focus of China's mega constructions. China recently started the construction of the world's biggest dam over the Brahmaputra River in ecologically fragile Tibet, close to Arunachal Pradesh.

The mega dam raised concerns in the lower riparian countries - India and Bangladesh. Costing about USD 170 billion, the dam is stated to be the world's biggest infrastructure project.

China defended the dam project, saying it would not have any negative impact on the downstream countries. (PTI)

According to the details provided in the registration of XTRC, its business scope also includes diversified operations such as real estate development, tourism, catering, accommodation and international project contracting.

Under the plan, the train route will join the existing Lhasa-Shigatse line with a new one from Hotan to Shigatse, forming a roughly 2,000km strategic artery linking northwestern and southwestern China, the Post reported.

The route will have an average elevation of over 4,500 metres, and pass through the Kunlun, Karakoram, Kailash and Himalayan mountain ranges, going through glaciers, frozen rivers and permafrost.

The project posed many challenges as the winter temperatures on the Tibetan Plateau can plunge to -40 degrees Celsius, with oxygen levels at just 44 per cent of inland regions.

Along with the engineering challenges, the project team will have to cope with accelerated machinery wear, soaring logistics costs, and environmental conservation needs, the report said.

Planning for the Xinjiang-Tibet line dates back to 2008, when it was included in the revised "Medium and Long-Term Railway Network Plan" approved by the National Development and Reform Commission, the country's top economic planner. Key milestones include the May 2022 launch of survey and design tenders for the Hotan-Shigatse section. Ministry of Transport officials confirmed in April that construction was expected to get underway this year, the Post report said. (PTI)

# India on UK's 'Deport Now Appeal Later' expanded list for foreign criminals

**LONDON, Aug 11:** India is among the countries being added to an expanded UK government list of countries where foreign criminals will be deported once they are sentenced before their appeals are heard as part of measures to crack down on rising migration to the country.

In an announcement on Sunday, the UK Home Office confirmed that the scope of its "Deport Now Appeal Later" scheme will be nearly trebled from eight countries to 23, with foreign nationals from these countries to be deported to their home countries before they can appeal against that decision.

Foreigners who have had their human rights claim refused will have a chance to take part in their UK appeal hearing remotely from overseas using video technology.

"For far too long, foreign criminals have been exploiting our immigration system, remaining in the UK for months or even years while their appeals drag on. That has to end," said Home Secretary Yvette Cooper.

"Those who commit crimes in our country cannot be allowed to manipulate the system, which is why we are restoring control and sending a clear message that our laws must be respected and will be enforced," she said.

The list of countries covered under the remote hearing scheme, revived in 2023 by then Conservative home secretary Suella Braverman, included Finland, Nigeria, Estonia, Albania, Belize, Mauritius, Tanzania and Kosovo.

Now, India will be added along with Angola, Australia, Botswana, Brunei, Bulgaria, Canada, Guyana, Indonesia, Kenya, Latvia,



Lebanon, Malaysia, Uganda and Zambia.

The UK government said it remains in continuous discussions with "a range of other countries about joining the scheme".

"We are leading diplomatic efforts to increase the number of countries where foreign criminals can be swiftly returned, and if they want to appeal, they can do so safely from their home country. Under this scheme, we're investing in international partnerships that uphold our security and make our streets safer," said Foreign Secretary David Lammy.

According to the Home Office, previously offenders from the countries on the expanded list could remain in the UK for months or years while their cases were worked through the appeals system as an "added burden on the British taxpayer" toward the end of the prison sentences.

It also released the latest figures to highlight that around 5,200 foreign nationals were deported since July 2024 when the Labour gov-

ernment came into office, an increase of 14 per cent over the previous year.

Additionally, the government said it is legislating to ensure that asylum seekers who commit notifiable sex offences can be stripped of their right to claim refugee protection under new powers in the Borders Security, Asylum and Immigration Bill. It is said to have invested GBP 5 million for the deployment of specialist staff to almost 80 jails around England and Wales to speed up removals and deportations. The UK Ministry of Justice (MoJ), meanwhile, announced it will go further on a previous legislation from June stipulating that most foreign prisoners can now be deported to their home country after serving just 30 per cent of their prison time, rather than 50 per cent.

Stripping back what it termed as "a decades-old law", new powers will see the immediate deportation of criminals from prison, and such offenders will then be barred from re-entering the UK. (PTI)

## Europe says US-Russia summit this week cannot decide on Ukraine land swaps

**BRUSSELS, Aug 11:** Ukraine and its backers in Europe insist that the United States and Russia cannot decide on land swaps behind their backs at a summit this week, but the Europeans concede that Moscow is unlikely to give up control of Ukrainian land it holds.

Ahead of the summit in Alaska on Friday, US President Donald Trump suggested that a peace deal could include "some swapping of territories," but the Europeans see no sign that Russia will offer anything to swap. Europeans and Ukrainians so far are not invited to the summit.

European Union foreign ministers are meeting on Monday following talks on Ukraine among US and European security advisors over the weekend. They are wary that President Vladimir Putin will try to claim a political victory by portraying Ukraine as inflexible.

Concerns have mounted in Europe and Ukraine that Kyiv may be pressured into giving up land or accepting other curbs on its sovereignty. Ukraine and its European allies reject the notion that Putin should lay claim to any territory even before agreeing to a ceasefire.

"As we work towards a sustainable and just peace, international law is clear: All temporarily occupied territories belong to Ukraine," EU foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas said on the eve of the ministerial meeting. "A sustainable peace also means that aggression cannot be rewarded," Kallas said.

On Sunday, Chancellor Friedrich Merz said Germany cannot accept that territorial issues in Ukraine would be discussed or decided by Russia and the United States "over the heads" of Euro-

peans or Ukrainians.

Still, it's hard to ignore the reality on the ground.

Russia in 2022 illegally annexed the Donetsk and Luhansk regions in Ukraine's east, and Kherson and Zaporizhzhia in the south, even though it doesn't fully control them. It also occupies the Crimean Peninsula, which it seized in 2014.

On the 1,000-kilometre front line, Russia's bigger army has made slow but costly progress with its summer offensive. The relentless pounding of urban areas has killed more than 12,000 Ukrainian civilians, according to UN estimates.

"In the end, the issue of the fact that the Russians are controlling at this moment, factually, a part of Ukraine has to be on the table" in any peace talks after the Alaska summit, NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte said on CBS on Sunday. Rutte said Ukraine's Western backers "can never accept that in a legal sense," but he suggested that they might tacitly accept knowledge Russian control. He compared it to the way that the US hosted the diplomatic missions of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania from 1940 to 1991, "acknowledging that the Soviet Union was controlling those territories, but never accepting (it) in a legal sense."

Giving up claim to any territory, especially without a ceasefire agreement first, would be almost impossible for Zelenskyy to sell at home after thousands of troops have died defending their land.

Ultimately, Putin is seen as being not so much interested in land itself, but rather in a more "Russia-friendly" Ukraine with a malleable government that would be unlikely to try to join NATO. (AP)

## Israel targets and kills Al Jazeera correspondent Anas al-Sharif in Gaza as journalist toll grows

**JERUSALEM, Aug 11:** Israel's military targeted and killed an Al Jazeera correspondent and others with an airstrike late Sunday in Gaza, after press advocates said an Israeli "smear campaign" stepped up when Anas al-Sharif cried out over starvation in the territory.

Both Israel and hospital officials in Gaza City confirmed the deaths of al-Sharif and colleagues, which the Committee to Protect Journalists and others described as retribution against those documenting the war in Gaza. Israel's military asserted that al-Sharif had led a Hamas cell — an allegation that Al Jazeera and al-Sharif previously dismissed as baseless.

It was the first time during the 22-month war that Israel's military swiftly claimed responsibility after a journalist was killed in a strike. Observers have called this the deadliest conflict for journalists in modern times.

Officials at Shifa Hospital said those killed while sheltering outside Gaza City's largest hospital complex also included Al Jazeera correspondent Mohamed Qreiqh. The strike also killed four other journalists and two other people, hospital administrative director Rami Mohanna told The Associated Press. The strike damaged the entrance to the hospital complex's emergency building.

The airstrike came less than a year after Israeli army officials first accused al-Sharif and other Al Jazeera journalists of being members of the militant groups Hamas and Islamic Jihad. In a July 24 video, Israel's army spokesperson Avichay Adraee attacked Al Jazeera and accused al-Sharif of being part of Hamas' military wing.

**Al Jazeera calls strike assassination**  
Al Jazeera called the strike a "targeted assassination" and accused Israeli officials of incitement, connecting al-Sharif's death to the allegations that both the net-



work and correspondent had denied. "Anas and his colleagues were among the last remaining voices from within Gaza, providing the world with unfiltered, on-the-ground coverage of the devastating realities endured by its people," the Qatari network said in a statement.

Apart from rare invitations to observe Israeli military operations, international media have been barred from entering Gaza for the duration of the war. Al Jazeera is among the few outlets still fielding a big team of reporters inside the besieged strip, chronicling daily life amid airstrikes, hunger and the rubble of destroyed neighbourhoods.

Al Jazeera is blocked in Israel and soldiers raided its offices in the occupied West Bank last year, ordering them closed.

The network has suffered heavy losses during the war, including 27-year-old correspondent Ismail al-Ghoul and cameraman Rami al-Rifi, killed last summer, and freelancer Hossam Shabat, killed in an Israeli airstrike in March.

Like al-Sharif, Shabat was among the six that Israel accused of being members of militant groups last October. Al-Sharif's death comes weeks after a UN expert and the New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists said Israel had targeted him with a smear campaign.

Irene Khan, the UN Special Rapport-

teur on freedom of expression, on July 31 said that the killings were "part of a deliberate strategy of Israel to suppress the truth, obstruct the documentation of international crimes and bury any possibility of future accountability."

The UN human rights office on Monday condemned Sunday's airstrike targeting the journalists' tent "in grave breach of international humanitarian law."

The Committee to Protect Journalists said on Sunday that at least 186 journalists have been killed in Gaza, and Brown University's Watson Institute in April said the war was "quite simply, the worst ever conflict for reporters."

Funerals goers call to protect journalists

Al-Sharif reported a nearby bombardment minutes before his death. In a social media post that Al Jazeera said was written to be posted in case of his death, he bemoaned the devastation and destruction that war had wrought and bid farewell to his wife, son and daughter.

"I never hesitated for a single day to convey the truth as it is, without distortion or falsification," the 28-year-old wrote.

Hundreds of people, including many journalists, gathered Monday to mourn al-Sharif, Qreiqh and their colleagues. The bodies lay wrapped in white sheets at the Shifa Hospital complex.

Ahed Fervana of the Palestinian Journalists Syndicate said reporters were being deliberately targeted and urged the international community to act.

Al-Sharif began reporting for Al Jazeera a few days after war broke out. He was known for reporting on Israel's bombardment in northern Gaza, and later for the starvation gripping much of the territory's population.

In a July broadcast, al-Sharif cried on air as a woman behind him collapsed from hunger. (AP)

## Nepalese PM Oli to visit India on Sept 16-17: Foreign Ministry sources



**KATHMANDU, Aug 11:** Nepalese Prime Minister K P Sharma Oli is likely to pay an official visit to India from September 16-17, the Foreign Ministry sources said here on Monday.

A wide range of issues, such as trade, tourism, information technology, connectivity, hydropower and border, will be discussed during the visit, they added.

The Foreign Ministry is currently working towards finalising the agenda and itinerary for the proposed high-level visit, said the Foreign Minister's Press Advisor Ek Raj Pathak. On Monday, Foreign Minister Arzu Rana Deuba, who would be part of Oli's delegation, said that direct flights between Nepalgunj and Delhi will be on "top" of her agenda during the upcoming visit to India.

"Direct air connectivity between Nepalgunj, a Western Nepal city, and New Delhi will be my top agenda," Deuba said at a meeting with political leaders, lawmakers and industrialists at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. "If this happens, it will certainly change the face of Western Nepal," she said, adding that the government has already done the necessary groundwork to strengthen the necessary infrastructure in the area for the purpose. The people from around 25 districts of Western Nepal will benefit from the proposed direct flight between Nepalgunj and Delhi, Deuba said.

Nepalgunj can be the gateway to Kailash-Mansarovar situated in Tibet if we start direct flights between Nepalgunj and Delhi, she added. The proposed flight between the two cities will benefit the people of both countries, she pointed out. Nepal shares a border of over 1,850 km with five Indian states — Sikkim, West Bengal, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand. (PTI)

## On front lines in eastern Ukraine, peace feels far away

**DONETSK REGION (Ukraine), Aug 11:** In a dugout where each nearby blast sends dirt raining from the ceiling and the black plastic lining the walls slipping down, Ukrainian soldiers say peace talks feel distant and unlikely to end the war.

Explosions from Russian weapons — from glide bombs to artillery shells — thunder regularly overhead, keeping them underground except when they fire the M777 howitzer buried near their trench.

Nothing on the Eastern Front suggests the war could end soon.

Diplomatic peace efforts feel so far removed from the battlefield that many soldiers doubt they can bring results. Their scepticism is rooted in months of what they see as broken US promises to end the war quickly.

Recent suggestions by US President Donald Trump that there will be some "swapping of territories" — as well as media reports that it would involve Ukrainian troops leaving the Donetsk region where they have fought for years defending every inch of land — have stirred confusion and rejection



among the soldiers. Few believe the current talks can end the war. More likely, they say, is a brief pause in hostilities before Russia resumes the assault with greater force.

"At minimum, the result would be to stop active fighting — that would be the first sign of some kind of settlement," said soldier Dmytro Loviniukov of the 148th Brigade. "Right now, that's not happening. And while these talks are taking place, they (the Russians) are only strengthening their positions on the front line."

Long war, no relief

On one artillery position, talk often turns to home. Many Ukrainian soldiers joined the army in the first days of the full-scale invasion, leaving behind civilian jobs. Some thought they would serve only briefly. Others didn't think about the future at all — because at that moment, it didn't exist.

In the years since, many have been killed. Those who survived are in their fourth year of a grueling war, far removed from the civilian lives they once knew. With mobilization faltering and the war dragging on far longer than ex-

pected, there is no one to replace them as the Ukrainian army struggles with recruiting new people.

The army cannot also demobilize those who serve without risking the collapse of the front.

That is why soldiers wait for even the possibility of a pause in hostilities. When direct talks between Russia and Ukraine were held in Istanbul in May, the soldiers from 148th brigade read the news with cautious hope, said a soldier with the call sign Bronson, who once worked as a tattoo artist.

Months later, hope has been replaced with dark humour. On the eve of a deadline that US President Donald Trump reportedly gave Russia's Vladimir Putin — one that has since vanished from the agenda amid talk of a meeting in Alaska — the Russian fire roared every minute for hours. Soldiers joked that the shelling was because the deadline was "running out."

"We are on our land. We have no way back," said the commander of the artillery group, Dmytro Loviniukov. "We stand here because there is no choice. No one else will come here to decent years. Vietnam, Malaysia,

## Marcos says Philippines will be pulled into any war over Taiwan, despite China's protest

**MANILA, Aug 11:** Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. said Monday his country would inevitably be drawn "kicking and screaming" into any war over Taiwan due to its proximity to the self-ruled island and the presence of large numbers of Filipino workers there, despite China's strong protest over such remarks.

Marcos also told a news conference that the Philippines' coast guard, navy and other vessels defending its territorial interests in the South China Sea would never back down and would stand their ground in the contested waters after the Chinese coast guard on Monday staged dangerous blocking maneuvers and used a powerful water cannon to try to drive away Philippine vessels from the hotly disputed Scarborough Shoal.

It's the latest flare-up of long-simmering territorial disputes in the busy waterway, a key global trade route, where overlapping claims between China and the Philippines have escalated in recent years. Vietnam, Malaysia,

Brunei and Taiwan also lay claims to parts of the contested waters.

Relations between China and the Philippines have been severely strained after Marcos, who took office in mid-2022, and his administration emerged as some of the most vocal critics in Asia of China's increasingly aggressive actions in the South China Sea.

The Marcos administration deepened its treaty alliance engagements with the United States and started broadening security alliances with other Western and Asian countries like Japan, Australia, India, and some EU member states to strengthen deterrence against Beijing's assertiveness.

China protested last week and accused Marcos of interfering in its domestic affairs and violating its "One China" policy when he told reporters on the sidelines of a visit to India that there was no way the Philippines could stay out of a possible war in Taiwan because of his country's proximity to it and the presence of about 200,000 Filipino workers on the self-ruled island. China claims

Taiwan as its own territory and has repeatedly threatened to annex it, by force if necessary.

The Chinese Foreign Ministry then said through a spokesperson that "'geographic location' and a large volume of Filipinos" in Taiwan should not be used as pretexts to interfere in the internal and sovereign affairs of other countries" and urged the Philippines "to earnestly abide by the One China principle" and "refrain from playing fire on issues bearing on China's core interests."

Asked to comment on China's protest, Marcos said he was perplexed and could not understand Beijing's concern.

"I don't know what they're talking about, playing with fire? I was just stating facts. We do not want to go to war, but I think if there is a war over Taiwan, we will be drawn, we will be pulled in, whether we like it or not, kicking and screaming," Marcos said. "We will be drawn and dragged into that mess. I hope it doesn't happen, but if it does, we have to plan for it already." (AP)



# CM Khandu launches govt housing redevelopment project

ITANAGAR, Aug 11: Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu on Monday said the redevelopment of government housing colonies is a key step towards transforming Itanagar into a modern, well-planned city.

Laying the foundation stone for phase-II of the housing redevelopment project in four sectors of the capital city — B-Sector, C-Sector, P-Sector and Niti Vihar, Khandu recalled the inauguration of the A-Sector multi-storey housing complex on May 31 as the beginning of his vision to replace unsafe, outdated structures with safe and comfortable homes.

"Housing is not only for our employees, but affordable housing for the masses is also our priority. Every flat we build must be earthquake-resilient, safe, and dignified," Khandu emphasised. He gave a stern message to encroachers of government land and property that none would be spared.

"Urban transformation requires planning, discipline, and execution. Together, we will make Itanagar a city we are all proud to call home," Khandu added.

Phase-II involves the construction of 116 modern flats, including 48 type-II units, 66 type-III units, and 2 type-V units, replacing 42 old and dilapidated type-III quarters.

The flats will be built in G+3 format with ground-floor parking, seismic-resilient design, organised green spaces, better waste management systems, and enclosed compounds to promote community integration.

The project will be implemented by the



urban development department at a cost of ₹ 80 crore and is targeted for completion by April 30, 2027.

Earlier, state Urban Affairs Minister Balo Raja highlighted the urgent need to protect government land from encroachments during the redevelopment process.

He urged the creation of adequate posts to safeguard all 33 sectors in the Itanagar Capital Region (ICR) and called for the establishment of a full-fledged directorate of housing with manpower and resources to manage housing in both the capital region and all census towns

of the state.

He also stressed the importance of maintaining quality in construction and taking strict action against government employees who indulge in encroachment, in line with the newly approved general pool quarters allotment guidelines.

Urban Affairs commissioner Vivek Pandey said phase-II will not only provide better living spaces but also help in preventing illegal land occupation, improving urban planning, increasing land-use efficiency, and creating land banks for future development. (PTI)

# Governor presents 'Governor's Medallion for Excellence' to NIMAS director

HT Correspondent

ITANAGAR, Aug 11: Governor of Arunachal Pradesh Lt General KT Parnaik, (Retd) on Monday felicitated Colonel RS Jamwal, Director of the National Institute of Mountaineering and Adventure Sports (NIMAS), Dirang, with the prestigious 'Governor's Medallion for Excellence' in recognition of his exceptional contributions to promoting adventure activities in the State.

According to an official statement, Col Jamwal called on the Governor at Raj Bhavan, where he briefed him on the institute's recent landmark achievements, notably the Brahmaputra River Rafting Expedition and the Mount Kanchenjunga Expedition.

The Governor lauded these accomplishments, describing them as extraordinary feats that reflect not only physical endurance and skill but also meticulous planning and team spirit.

Commending the NIMAS Director for leading two challenging expeditions to remarkable success, the Governor expressed confidence that such milestones would inspire the youth of Arunachal Pradesh to explore their own potential in adventure sports.

He urged NIMAS to expand its outreach and create more opportunities for local youth to engage in mountaineering, river rafting, trekking, and other challenging pursuits that test courage and resilience.

Highlighting the growing list of achievements by the State's mountaineers, including several who have summited Mount Everest, Lt Gen Parnaik remarked that Arunachal Pradesh is home to immense untapped talent.

"Our youth need the right exposure, mentorship, and opportunities to shine. With proper guidance, they can make the State



and the Nation proud on the global stage," he said, adding that adventure sports can be a platform for building character, discipline, and leadership qualities among young people.

The Governor also took note of the details shared by Col Jamwal about NIMAS's recent undertakings.

The Brahmaputra River Rafting Expedition, the Director informed, covered the entire Indian stretch of the mighty Brahmaputra (Siang) River — from Gelling in Arunachal Pradesh to Hatingimari in Assam — a distance of approximately 1,040 km.

Over the course of 28 days, the team navigated 63 challenging rapids, making it one of the most demanding river expeditions in

the country.

Equally notable was NIMAS's successful summit of Mount Kanchenjunga, India's highest peak and the world's third-highest mountain, a feat requiring exceptional stamina, technical expertise, and determination.

These achievements, the Governor noted, set new benchmarks for adventure sports in the State and underscore NIMAS's role as a leading institution in promoting outdoor leadership and extreme sports training in India.

According to the official statement, the Governor expressed his hope that such ventures would continue to motivate Arunachal's youth to dream big, aim high, and push the boundaries of what is possible, both in adventure sports and in life.

# Military-Civil Fusion Conclave held in Seppa



HT Correspondent

SEPPA, Aug 11: The Indian Army's Gajraj Corps, under the aegis of the Himalayan Warrior Brigade, in close coordination with the East Kameng district administration and the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), convened a Military-Civil Fusion Conclave in Seppa to address the developmental, security, and resilience needs of this strategically important border district.

According to an official statement, the forum brought together the Deputy Commissioner, Superintendent of Police, senior commanders from the Army and ITBP, all departmental heads of the district administration, elected members, and prominent tribal leaders.

Their collective presence underscored the importance of a unified approach to ensure that development, security, and cultural preservation progress in harmony.

The Seppa conclave built on the momentum of the recent Bichom Military-Civil Fusion Conclave, advancing the collaborative framework for border development, disaster preparedness, and youth empowerment.

Key discussions focused on the creation and upgradation of dual-use infrastructure such as helipads, logistics hubs, and road networks to improve accessibility to remote areas.

Participants stressed that enhanced connectivity would not only facilitate faster troop mobilisation but also boost civilian mobility and economic opportunities.

Another major agenda point was vocational skill development and awareness about recruitment opportunities in the Armed Forces.

Senior officers encouraged the youth of East Kameng to see military service as both a career path and a means to serve the nation.

ITBP's flagship initiative, Project Arunveer—which promotes the procurement of locally produced goods to strengthen the rural economy and integrate village enterprises into the security forces' supply chains—was highlighted as a sustainable livelihood model with the potential to be replicated in other frontier districts.

The meeting also reviewed existing disaster response mechanisms, with a particular emphasis on inter-

agency collaboration between the Police, ITBP, Army, National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), and State Disaster Response Force (SDRF).

Proposals included more frequent joint training sessions, public awareness drives, and improved communication readiness for rapid deployment in emergencies.

Educational representatives at the conclave advocated for increased student engagement through interaction programmes with Army Public Schools, noting the potential such exchanges have to inspire and motivate the younger generation.

Sports promotion was another priority, with the identification and structured grooming of local sporting talent earmarked for support so that promising athletes could access opportunities at higher levels.

Civil officials welcomed the proactive leadership of the Army and ITBP in bringing diverse stakeholders onto a single platform to discuss and address shared concerns.

They assured their full cooperation in translating the deliberations into tangible outcomes.

According to the official statement, the meeting concluded with a strong consensus to institutionalise such civil-military interactions as a regular feature.

This, participants agreed, would ensure faster resolution of challenges, close existing development gaps, and maintain East Kameng's status as a secure, self-reliant, and forward-moving frontier district firmly integrated into the nation's growth story.

# Sowa Rigpa healthcare facility in Arunachal soon: NISR director

LEH, Aug 11: The National Institute of Sowa Rigpa (NISR), an autonomous body working on this traditional Himalayan system of medicine, is set to open a healthcare facility in Arunachal Pradesh, a top official said.

Within five years of its establishment, this institute under the ministry of Ayush has already enrolled its fifth batch of students in the undergraduate course, he said.

"Sowa Rigpa is recognised by the government of India as a traditional medical system under the Ayush ministry. All the systems of medicine under the ministry have a central institute each, and in line with this, the NISR was announced by the prime minister in 2019. After necessary approvals, the institute started functioning in 2020," NISR director Padma Gurmet told PTI in an interview here.

One of the oldest medical traditions in the world, the term 'Sowa-Rigpa' means 'knowledge of healing' in Bhoti language.

This system is popular in Himalayan societies such as Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh (Spiti and Lahoul), Jammu and Kashmir, West Bengal (Darjeeling), Arunachal Pradesh, and Sikkim.

It is also practiced in some parts of China, Mongolia, Nepal, Russia and Bhutan.

Gurmet said the main objectives of the institute are to impart quality education in the Sowa Rigpa system of medicine, conduct research in a scientific line and also cater to public health in the Himalayan region.

He maintained that NISR's progress has been fast as it launched its five-year undergraduate (UG) programme within the first year of establishment.

The National Commission for Indian System of Medicine conducts the NEET for admission into the Bachelor of Sowa Rigpa Medicine and Surgery programme run at NISR. (PTI)

# ABVP Siang Vibhag holds three-day training camp in Pasighat



HT Correspondent

PASIGHAT, Aug 11: The Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) — Siang Vibhag successfully organised its three-day Vibhag Training Camp from August 8 to 10 at Government Polytechnic College, Pasighat, with the objective of enhancing organisational skills, deepening ideological understanding, and fostering social awareness among its karyakartas from across the region.

According to an official release, the programme brought together 157 delegates representing West

Siang, East Siang, and Upper Siang districts.

Over the three days, participants engaged in a series of interactive sessions, lectures, and discussions designed to prepare them for greater involvement in social and community initiatives.

The camp featured noted resource persons who shared their expertise on a variety of topics.

Superintendent Engineer Er Debaang Tayeng spoke on professional discipline and commitment, while noted anti-drug activist Jaya Tasung highlighted the growing menace of substance abuse and its harmful impact on youth and society.

ABVP Arunachal Pradesh State Organising Secretary Shri Jeli Ete addressed the gathering on organisational structure, leadership, and the role of youth in national development, and SFS Northeast Zone Convener Yage Tayeng shared insights on women's participation and empowerment in societal change.

Participants also took part in sessions on goal setting for a purposeful future, identifying and addressing social challenges specific to Arunachal Pradesh, and understanding the guiding principles and initiatives of ABVP.

Group discussions encouraged exchange of ideas, while practical exercises helped translate theoretical concepts into actionable plans.

According to the press release, the camp not only equipped karyakartas with the skills and knowledge necessary for community engagement but also reinforced their sense of responsibility towards nation-building and social upliftment.

ABVP Siang Vibhag reaffirmed its commitment to nurturing youth leadership and addressing pressing social issues through sustained grassroots efforts.

# Tiranga yatra and cycle rally held in Namsai

HT Bureau

NAMSAL, Aug 11: A tiranga yatra and cycle rally was organised on Monday from 2nd Mile to Gandhi Chowk under the "Har Ghar Tiranga" campaign.

According to an official press release, the event was led by Namsai MLA Chau Zingnu Namchoom and saw participation from Nang Koliani Namchoom, in-charge Deputy Commissioner of Namsai, the Superintendent of Police, the Commandant of CRPF 186 Battalion, the ZPC, administrative officers, heads of departments, CRPF personnel, police, students, and

members of the public.

Addressing the gathering at the culmination point, Namchoom emphasised five key pillars for building a stronger and more harmonious society — equality for all, family values, environmental protection, self-reliance, and fulfilment of civic duties. He urged citizens to incorporate these values into their daily lives.

Appreciating the public's enthusiastic response to the Har Ghar Tiranga campaign, Namchoom encouraged all to display the national flag at their homes and honour it with due respect.

# Healthy baby delivered inside 108 ambulance

HT Correspondent

BORDURIA, Aug 11: In a remarkable display of skill and dedication, Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) from EMRI Green Health Services successfully delivered a healthy baby boy inside a 108 emergency ambulance in Tirap district on Monday.

According to an official statement, the incident occurred when a 108 ambulance (AR01N8380) from PHC Borduria was transporting a pregnant woman to a medical facility.

As the vehicle approached the Bogapani area, the patient began experiencing intense labour pain.

She was also diagnosed with leaking per vaginam (P/V) and pregnancy-induced hypertension (PIH), a condition that can pose significant risks to both mother and child.

Recognising the urgency of the situation, EMTs Phetat Wangsa and Liamhun Tongrang acted swiftly and decisively.

Drawing on their training and experience, they created a safe delivery environment inside the moving ambulance.

At approximately 12:59 p.m.,

they successfully assisted in the birth of a healthy male baby weighing 3.4 kg.

Following the delivery, both mother and newborn were transported to Mayflower Hospital in Margherita, Assam, for postnatal care.

Medical staff at the hospital confirmed that both were in stable and healthy condition.

The EMTs' quick thinking, professional competence, and compassionate approach drew praise from the newborn's family as well as hospital personnel.

The statement highlighted that the 108 free emergency ambulance services, operated by EMRI Green Health Services (formerly GVK EMRI), were launched in Arunachal Pradesh on June 21, 2021, by Chief Minister Pema Khandu.

Since its inception, the service has catered to more than 26,000 beneficiaries across the state.

The organisation commended the dedication of its EMTs and ambulance pilots, who provide 24/7 emergency support throughout the year, ensuring that critical healthcare reaches even the most remote corners of Arunachal Pradesh.

# 3 Arunachal athletes to represent India at Asian Curling Club Championship in South Korea



HT Correspondent

ITANAGAR, Aug 11: Arunachal Pradesh will take a significant step onto the international winter sports stage this month, as three of its ath-

letes have been selected to represent India at the prestigious Asian Curling Club Championship in Uiseong, South Korea.

According to an official state-

ment, the trio — Limphu Nihangu, Jummam Karbak, and Sonam Tsering — have earned their place in the national squad following their performance and dedication in the sport of curling, a discipline still relatively new to India but steadily gaining attention in the Northeast.

The championship is scheduled from August 15 to 17, 2025, and will feature elite teams from seven countries: Japan, China, Thailand, Singapore, India, Hong Kong, and Taiwan.

In a proud and symbolic moment for the state, the athletes were formally flagged off by Gumnya Karbak, Director of the Sports Authority of Arunachal Pradesh (SAA), during a send-off ceremony that underscored the occasion's importance.

The event, attended by members of the Arunachal Pradesh Curling Association and local sports officials, celebrated the athletes' achievement while also highlighting the state's growing engagement

in winter sports.

Speaking at the ceremony, Director Karbak commended the dedication and hard work of the players, noting that their participation on such a prestigious platform is a source of inspiration for the youth of Arunachal Pradesh.

"They are not just competing for medals; they are ambassadors for our state and role models for aspiring athletes, especially in sports that are still emerging in our country," he said.

Riba Pangia Dolo, President of the Arunachal Pradesh Curling Association, echoed these sentiments, stressing that the athletes' selection reflects the state's potential in winter sports disciplines.

He expressed optimism that their performance in South Korea would not only boost curling's visibility in the region but also encourage greater investment in training facilities and grassroots promotion.

The Asian Curling Club Championship is expected to be an intense

contest of skill, precision, and strategy, with top-level teams competing for continental honours.

For the three Arunachal players, the tournament offers a rare opportunity to test themselves against some of Asia's finest while carrying the Indian flag in a sport where the country is still carving out its identity.

According to the official statement, the Sports Authority of Arunachal Pradesh and the Curling Association have extended full support to the team, ensuring they are equipped for the challenges ahead.

The state's sporting community and residents alike are rallying behind the trio, eager to see them make their mark on the Asian stage and bring home laurels.

As the countdown to the championship begins, the journey of Limphu Nihangu, Jummam Karbak, and Sonam Tsering stands as a testament to the potential of Arunachal's youth, the value of perseverance, and the promise of a new sporting frontier for the state.



## Cong, oppn protest well-thought-out strategy to create anarchy, instability in country: BJP

**NEW DELHI, Aug 11:** The BJP on Monday slammed opposition parties over their protest against the voter roll revision in Bihar and alleged "vote theft" in past elections, accusing them of trying to create anarchy and instability in the country.

Addressing a press conference at the BJP headquarters here, Union minister Dharmendra Pradhan termed Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's allegation of "vote theft" against the ruling BJP and the Election Commission a "lie" and said the Congress has been resorting to such tactics as it has no other issues to raise.

Union minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan accused Gandhi of acting "under pressure from anti-national forces". "He and the INDI alliance are defaming democracy, tearing it to shreds and tampering with the dignity of constitutional institutions," the senior BJP leader said in a post on X. Both Pradhan and Chouhan are among the prominent OBC faces of the BJP.

Pradhan alleged that the opposition's protest was a "well-thought-out strategy" to create instability in the country.

"Congress and other opposition



parties want to create anarchy in the country," Pradhan said. Gandhi, the Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha, is speaking the language of "big forces" who want to destroy democracy in India, he charged. Pradhan alleged that the Congress and other opposition parties are raising questions on the poll process and voter roll revision in Bihar, levelling baseless allegations against the poll panel as they want to make "intruders and foreigners" voters in the country.

"I appeal to the Congress and the entire opposition to raise the issue in Parliament," he said.

"You cannot adversely impact PM Modi's leadership, people's decision, country's constitutional system by creating fear" in the minds of people, he added.

Pradhan slammed the Congress and its allies for indulging in "undemocratic and anti-people" politics and asked them to play the role of opposition that the country expects from them. He flayed Gandhi for not sharing proof of his "vote theft" allegations with the Election Commission in an affidavit, saying that "this spit and run theory of anarchy" mindset of the Congress leader is "so worrisome and lethal

for the country's democracy.

Pradhan alleged that the Congress is weaving a "web of lies" by making false claims on a range of issues, from Rafale fighter jets, EVMs to poll outcomes in Maharashtra and Haryana, as it has been continuously facing defeat in elections since 2014.

"Continuous defeats in 2014, 2019, 2024, and in several state elections in between have driven the Congress into a state of political bankruptcy," Pradhan said.

"I express serious concern over the Congress' directionlessness. Those who keep roaming around with a copy of the Constitution, have they made up their mind to destroy it? I condemn it in the strongest words," he added.

Chouhan slammed Gandhi for "repeatedly lying" and accused him of wanting to "spread anarchy" in the country. "I want to ask Rahul ji and the leaders of the INDI alliance: did Congress win in Karnataka and Himachal Pradesh due to irregularities in the voter list? Were governments formed in Telangana, Tamil Nadu, and Jharkhand due to mistakes by the Election Commission?" the minister said in a post on X. (PTI)

## 'Grim' situation: SC orders permanent relocation of stray dogs from Delhi-NCR streets to shelters

**NEW DELHI, Aug 11:** Noting an "extremely grim" situation due to stray dog bites resulting in rabies, particularly among children, the Supreme Court on Monday directed Delhi-NCR authorities to permanently relocate all strays from streets to shelters "at the earliest".

Saying dog shelters will have to be augmented over time, the apex court directed Delhi authorities to start with creating shelters of around 5,000 canines within six to eight weeks.

A bench of Justices J B Pardiwala and R Mahadevan passed a slew of directions and warned of strict action against an individual or organisation in case of obstruction, which might also prompt the court to initiate contempt proceedings. "If any individual or any organisation comes in the way of such force picking up stray dogs and rounding them up, and if it is reported to us, we shall proceed to take strict action against any such resistance which may be offered," the bench said.

The bench further remarked if the animal activists and "so-called lovers" would be able to bring back children who fell prey to rabies. "Will they put life back to those children? When situation demands, you have to act," it said.

The top court was hearing a suo motu case initiated on July 28 over stray dog bites leading to rabies in the national capital.

The top court on Monday directed all the strays to be removed and put in shelters by the Delhi government and civic bodies of Gurugram, Noida and Ghaziabad.

It ordered dog shelters to have sufficient personnel to sterilise and immunise the dogs aside from looking after them. The centres would be under CCTV surveillance to ensure the dog remains in the facility.

Calling it a "progressive exer-



cise", the top court suggested augmenting the number of dog shelters in future. It said the authorities "shall at the earliest start picking up stray dogs from all localities, more particularly the vulnerable localities of the city as well as areas on the outskirts".

The bench went on, "How to do it is for the authorities to look into. For this, if they have to create a force they shall do it at the earliest." The bench underlined making the city and outskirts free of strays was the "first and foremost" exercise. Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, in the meantime, requested the bench to direct appropriate authorities of Noida, Gurugram and Ghaziabad to comply with the court's directions. The bench agreed to the suggestion and said there should not be any compromise in undertaking the exercise.

The top court said it was issuing the directions only keeping the "larger public interest" in mind.

"Infants and young children should not at any cost fall prey to such dog bites leading to rabies. The action should inspire confidence in the mind of people, young and old, that they can move around freely on roads without any fear of being bitten by a stray dog," it said, suggesting against any sentiments in the exercise.

The bench directed the authorities to maintain a record of daily stray dogs captured and housed in shelters. The record was directed to be produced before the next court hearing.

"However, what is important and without this perhaps the entire exercise which we have undertaken may go futile, is that not a single dog picked up from any part of the locality shall be released back on the streets/public spaces," the bench said, cautioning against any such occurrence.

Authorities were further directed to create a helpline within a week for immediate reporting of dog bite instances. "Action must be taken to round up/pick up/catch the dog within four hours from the complaint being received," it said.

The authorities were directed to inform the victims of the medical facilities for quick assistance.

"Availability of rabies vaccines is a major concern, especially genuine vaccines. The authorities concerned, more particularly the government of NCT of Delhi, is directed to put detailed information about the places where such vaccines are available, the stock of vaccines and the number of persons who report for treatment on monthly basis," the top court said. (PTI)

## Over 16 lakh people affected by floods in Bihar, rescue operations underway

**PATNA, Aug 11:** More than 16 lakh people have been affected by floods in Bihar, where several rivers are in spate due to torrential rainfall in the past 24 hours, officials said on Monday.

A total of 32 teams of the NDRF and the SDRF have been engaged in rescue operations, they said. "Incessant rain in various districts, including Bhojpur, Patna, Bhagalpur, Vaishali, Lakhisarai, Saran, Munger, Khagaria and Begusarai caused rivers and streams to overflow. Besides, heavy rainfall in catchment areas of Nepal has also led to rivers flowing above the danger level at several places," an official said. "Rains in the past few days have raised the water level of the Ganga, Kosi, Bagmati, Burhi Gandak, Punpun and Ghaghara rivers in the state. These are flowing above the danger mark at certain places in Bhojpur, Patna, Bhagalpur, Vaishali, Lakhisarai, Saran, Munger, Khagaria and Begusarai," the Disaster Management Department said in a statement.

More than 16 lakh people are currently affected by floods in the state. No deaths have been reported so far from any part of Bihar, it said.

"In view of the continuous rise in the water levels of several rivers in Bihar and heavy rainfall in the catchment areas of Nepal-based Gandak and Kosi rivers, all concerned wings of the Water Resources Department (WRD) have been instructed to stay on alert mode," Principal Secretary, WRD, Santosh Kumar Mall, told PTI. Directions have also been issued to districts concerned to remain fully prepared for setting up more relief camps and community kitchens if the situation aggravates further, he said. (PTI)

## Parl nod to 8 Bills after Rijju's ultimatum to Oppn to join debate

**NEW DELHI, Aug 11:** Parliament on Monday passed eight Bills as Union minister Kiren Rijju slammed the opposition parties for repeated disruptions of both the Houses of Parliament and announced that the government would proceed with the legislative agenda without their participation.

Addressing a press conference here, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Rijju also hinted at an early end of the Monsoon session, contending that the Congress and other opposition parties were not interested in allowing Parliament to function.

"Woh toh dekhte hai (Let us see it)... Opposition is not interested in allowing Parliament to function. The Opposition is interested only in headline management. They do not trust democratic institutions," Rijju said in response to a question on an early end to the ongoing Monsoon session of Parliament.

The session began on June 21 and has witnessed disruptions for 14 days, barring a two-day discussion on Operation Sindoor and the Pahalgam terror attack. It is scheduled to last till August 21.

The Lok Sabha passed four Bills -- The National Sports Governance Bill, The National Anti-Doping (Amendment) Bill, The Income-Tax (No 2) Bill and Taxation Laws (Amendment) Bill -- amid protests from the Opposition on the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in Bihar.

The Rajya Sabha passed The Readjustment of Representation of Scheduled Tribes in Assembly Constituencies of the State of Goa Bill and The Merchant Shipping Bill, and also returned the Manipur Appropriation Bill and The Manipur Goods and Services Tax (Amendment) Bill, which were already passed by the Lok Sabha.

"Every day, we will not allow the country's and Parliament's time to be wasted on one issue. Therefore, we will pass important Bills," Rijju said.

The minister said the government was keen to have a discussion on important Bills, but repeated disruptions by the Opposition were leading to adjournments of both Houses of Parliament. (PTI)

## State disputes, study gaps stall India's river-linking push: Parl panel

**NEW DELHI, Aug 11:** India's flagship river interlinking programme, launched to tackle water scarcity, drought and floods, is struggling to move beyond the planning stage due to delays, inadequate studies and persistent disputes between states, a parliamentary panel has said.

In its seventh report on the action taken by the government, the Standing Committee on Water Resources noted that while pre-feasibility studies have been completed for all 30 identified link projects under the National Perspective Plan and feasibility reports for

24, detailed project reports (DPRs) exist for only 11. Just one link -- the Ken-Betwa project -- is currently under implementation, with completion targeted for March 2030. Five links have been prioritised -- Ken-Betwa, the Godavari-Cauvery link (three sub-links) and the Modified Parbati-Kalisindh-Chambal link. The committee said an amount of ₹ 4,000 crore was allocated in 2024-25 for land acquisition, rehabilitation and state reimbursements, but consensus between states "remains a persistent obstacle" despite "numerous meetings" to address concerns. (PTI)

No.TECH-213/NT/KOK/BLDG/2023-24/2195 Dated Kokrajhar, the 11/08/2025  
**PRESS NOTICE**  
 Tender No. KOK/BLDG-218/152 of 2025-26  
 The Executive Engineer, P.W.D. Kokrajhar District & Chirang District Territorial Building Division, Kokrajhar invites bids from registered contractors with Class-I(A), (B), (C) and Class- II for  
 1) Construction of Office Building of the Kokrajhar District All Bodo Primary Teachers' Association, Simangpuri (Kadamtola) under Municipality Board, Kokrajhar for an estimated amount of 24,99,997.00 (Rupees Twenty Four Lakhs Ninety Nine Thousand Nine Hundred and Ninety Seven) only (approx.)  
 The details may be seen at the website <http://assamtenders.gov.in> and also in the office of the undersigned during office hours.  
 Sd/- Executive Engineer, P.W.D.  
 Kokrajhar Dist. & Chirang Dist.  
 Territorial Building Division, Kokrajhar  
 IPR(BTC)/C/2025-26/2512

**KARBI ANGLONG AUTONOMOUS COUNCIL**  
**ART & CULTURE DEPARTMENT**  
**KAAC SECRETARIAT DIPHU-782460**  
 No. KAAC/Art & Culture/Appointment/TMS/2022/95 Dated Diphu, the 11<sup>th</sup> August, 2025

### NOTIFICATION

In pursuance of No. KAAC/Art & Culture/Appointment/TMS/2022/87 Dated Diphu, the 5<sup>th</sup> July, 2025; the authority of Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council (KAAC), Diphu under Art & Culture Department is pleased to notify those candidates applied for the post of 5 (Five) Nos. Additional Instructors as Fixed Pay (Contractual) posts under Art & Culture Department to be engaged at various Traditional Music Schools in Karbi Anglong and West Karbi Anglong to attend for Written Examination as per the scheduled date, time and venue mentioned thereof.

| Sl. No. | Name of Post           | Name of Examination | Date/Time/Venue   | Remarks |
|---------|------------------------|---------------------|---|---------|
| 1.      | Additional Instructors | Written Examination | *17/08/2025<br>*9:30 AM (2 Hours)<br>*Diphu Govt. Boys HS School, Diphu |         |

### General Terms & Conditions:

- All candidates must carry their important credentials including Admit Card at the examination centre.
- All candidates must reach the venue (Examination Hall) by 9:00 AM.
- No TA/DA will be provided by the KAAC Authority.
- The date of Practical/Viva-Voce will be announced in due course of time.
- Those candidates whose application are not rejected may collect their Admit Cards for attending Written Examination from the Art & Culture Dept., KAAC Secretariat, Diphu on or before 16th August, 2025. Candidates are requested to check their names during the office hours (10:00 AM till 5:00 PM).

Sd/-

i/c Deputy Director, Art & Culture Dept.,  
 Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council  
 DIPHU

Memo No. KAAC/Art & Culture/Appointment/TMS/2022/95-A

Dated: 11/08/2025

## GOVT OF ASSAM OFFICE OF THE ADDITIONAL CHIEFENGINEER PWD (R&B), ASSAM, DIPHU.

No.ACEH/CS/SSA/03/2025-26/07

Date. 11.08.2025.

### Cancellation Notice

It is for information to all concerned that the Bids for "Construction of 50 bedded hostel separately for boys & girls" at 66 No's of school under the scheme "Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarh Abhiyan" in Karbi Anglong District and West Karbi Anglong District, published earlier vide Press Notice Inviting No.ACEH/CS/SSA/03/2025-26/02, Dated.07-07-2025 is hereby cancelled due to Revised Administrative Approval. Fresh Notice will be floated for the same shortly.

Sd/-

Additional Chief Engineer, P.W.D.(R&B),  
 Hills, Assam, Diphu.

Memo NOACEH/CS/SSA/03/2025-26/07-(A)

Date 11/08/2025.

No. TE(Ex) Admn-1/2025/

### EDUCATIONAL NOTICE

- A. Regarding Upgradation of JLEE-2025 and JMEE-2025  
 B. Regarding Spot round of Counselling through CEE-2025, JLEE-2025 and JMEE-2025.

- A. An upgradation round will be conducted for JLEE-2025 and JMEE-2025 candidates on 13<sup>th</sup> August-2025. Interested candidates must submit the upgradation request form to the institute where, he/she takes admission on 12<sup>th</sup> August-2025. Upgraded candidates must report to the upgraded Institution as detailed below for admission:-  
 (i) Venue: Respective College (where upgraded).  
 (ii) Date: 14/08/2025  
 (iii) Reporting time: 10.00 A.M. to 11.00 A.M.  
 (iv) Admission time: 11.00 A.M. to 12.00 Noon.

Note: If any upgraded candidate does not report to the upgraded Institution then his/her upgraded seat as well as the earlier allotted seat will be cancelled and the vacancy arising from that may be filled up through Spot Counselling.

- B. A Spot round of Counselling for provisional admission into State Government Engineering Colleges of Assam through CEE-2025, JLEE-2025 and JMEE-2025 will be conducted as per the schedule mentioned below:-  
 (i) Date of Counselling: - 14/08/2025  
 (ii) Reporting Time: 12.00 Noon to 1.00 P.M.  
 (iii) Admission Time: 2:00 PM onwards.

Note (1) Programme wise vacancy and name of participating colleges, eligibility criteria etc. will be notified in the website: <https://dte.assam.gov.in>

(2) All vacant seats will be filled up as per merit.

Interested candidates having CEE-2025, JLEE-2025 and JMEE-2025 score may visit the website of the concerned college for detailed information or contact the Admission Co-ordinator.

Spot round is open for both registered and non-registered candidates. However, unregistered candidates will have to pay the Non-refundable Registration Fee amount of Rs. 800/- (Rupees Eight Hundred) only to the under mentioned Account Number.

In favour of:- Controller of Examination, SCTE, Assam, Guwahati  
 Account No.-: 33334506570  
 IFSC: SBIN0004420

Note:- As per Order eCF No. 500152/1 dated 5<sup>th</sup> June 2024, vacant seats at the time of the Spot-Counselling round will be de-reserved to the unreserved category.

All candidates appearing for Spot round must fulfil the eligibility criteria as per the information brochure for CEE-2025, JLEE-2025 & JMEE-2025 which is available in <https://dte.assam.gov.in> in the website: <https://dte.assam.gov.in>

Sd/-

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

DIPR /D/HLT/116/12-Aug-25



# Tripura to set up 45 EV charging stations; railway electrification work completes: Minister

# Rajya Sabha returns Manipur budget, GST bill

**HT Correspondent**

**AGARTALA, Aug 11:** The Power Department is working to install 45 electric vehicle charging stations across the state and aims to complete more sub-stations before the upcoming Durga Puja.

Tripura Power Minister Ratan Lal Nath said this on Monday after inaugurating the 33 kV Durga Chowmuhani Sub-station under the NER Power System Improvement Project.

A total of ₹ 9.76 crore was spent on this project, benefiting 10,945 consumers.

He informed that the work for the electrification of railways has been completed and will soon be handed over to the Railway Board.

The Minister said, "We do not have a huge quantity of gas as it is slowly running out, and a day will come when it will be finished.

However, solar and wind power will always be there. That is why we are depending on solar energy so that we can generate more power and earn revenue. After our government came to power, we have been providing free ration, drinking water, and other facilities. The slogan of the present government is Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas. This government is different."

The Minister also said that if a person uses more electrical appliances without informing the TSECL, the power load will increase, which can lead to power disconnection.

"In such cases, we need help from the public; otherwise, it will damage the transformer and cause further problems," he said.

The Minister said that the power department is now thinking of new and innovative ideas for the development of the power sector.



Minister Ratan Lal Nath inaugurating the 33 kV Durga Chowmuhani Sub-station.

"We will use drone systems to detect hook lines and to repair power connections without shutting down supply. We are also providing smart meters for genuine consumers so that load capacity will be known, and when the power goes out, the TSECL will automatically receive a call for repair. So far, 96,000 people have installed smart meters voluntarily. We are not forcing anyone to install them," the Power Minister said.

The Minister also urged genuine consumers to inform the TSECL about hook lines.

He said that so far, 694 consumers have installed solar power units under PM-KUSUM out of 15,000 registrations, generating over 2 megawatts of power.

"In Gomati, we are planning to produce an additional 15 megawatts of power. The micro-hydel project in Maharani, which was defunct, will be restarted soon to generate 1 megawatt of power. Pump storage will be set up in Dhalai district for 500 megawatts of power generation.

We are also working to set up 45 electric vehicle charging stations," the Minister said.

He also directed officials to complete all pending sub-station works so that there is no problem during the upcoming Durga Puja.

**NEW DELHI, Aug 11:** The Rajya Sabha on Monday returned the Manipur Appropriation Bill, 2025, and The Manipur Goods and Services Tax (Amendment) Bill, 2025 amid opposition protests over the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) issue.

A brief debate on the Bills was also held.

The Manipur Appropriation Bill authorises payment and appropriation of certain sums out of the Consolidated Fund of the State of Manipur for services of the financial year 2025-26.

The Manipur Goods and Services Tax (Amendment) Bill, 2025, which seeks to implement the decisions approved by the GST Council, would replace the Manipur Goods and Services Tax (Amendment) Ordinance, 2025. Opposition MPs, who took out a march to the Election Commission's headquarters on Monday, but were stopped midway and detained, reached the Upper House as the debate on the bills was being undertaken.

Opposition MPs wanted Leader of Opposition Mallikarjun Kharge to be allowed to speak, and they raised slogans against the ongoing SIR exercise in Bihar. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman slammed the Opposition for opposing the Manipur budget.

She said while the Opposition speaks about Manipur, when its budget and GST bills are being taken up, they are not just protesting on some other issue, but also voting against it. Opposition MPs, many of whom were in the Well of the House, were heard saying "no" as voting on the Bill was going on. The two Bills, which were both Money Bills, were returned to the Lok Sabha through voice vote. (PTI)

## IRCTC, Mizoram Govt ink MoU to promote tourism ahead of rly link to Aizawl

**HT Bureau**

**GUWAHATI, Aug 11:** The capital city of Mizoram, Aizawl, is set to join India's railway map for the first time with the completion of the Bairabi-Sairang new railway line project under the Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR).

Undertaken as part of the capital connectivity projects, the line will extend railway services up to Sairang, located a short distance from Aizawl, and is expected to significantly improve accessibility, boost economic activity and transform travel to the hill state.

In anticipation of the operational launch of the railway services, the Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) has signed a two-year Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Mizoram Government to promote inbound and outbound tourism.

According to an official statement, the agreement, signed in August 2025, seeks to harness the potential of the improved connectivity to attract both domestic and international visitors.

Under the terms of the MoU, IRCTC will serve as the front-end marketing agency for tourism in Mizoram, while the state's Tourism Department will facilitate access to its infrastructure, including tourist lodges. Both parties will jointly develop curated travel packages that highlight the region's cultural and natural offerings. The plan also includes building the capacity of local Des-

tinuation Management Companies and service providers to arrange transport, accommodation, sightseeing and cultural experiences.

The state's vibrant traditions will feature prominently in the promotion strategy, with a focus on community festivals marked by feasting, bamboo dances, traditional folk music and ceremonial rituals. Beyond these cultural attractions, Mizoram will also be showcased for its scenic valleys, verdant hills, pristine waterfalls and heritage sites.

Adventure tourism, which has seen a steady rise in recent years, will be another key draw, supported by the state's reputation for warm hospitality and a peaceful ambience.

The agreement complements IRCTC's plans to introduce a special tourist train under its "Discover NE beyond Guwahati" programme, in which Aizawl will be a key destination.

The service, to be launched after train operations commence on the new line, will promote budget-friendly and sustainable travel experiences.

According to the official statement, the combination of the new rail link and the tourism promotion initiative is expected to position Mizoram as a prominent destination in the Northeast.

The project is also anticipated to create fresh livelihood opportunities for local communities, with NFR playing a pivotal role in making the state more accessible to the rest of the country.

## 2<sup>nd</sup> phase Clean Doyang Mission soon to clean Doyang reservoir



**HT Correspondent**

**DIMAPUR, Aug 11:** The Wokha district administration on Monday announced the second phase of the Clean Doyang Mission following reports of alarming accumulation of plastic waste, floating debris, and logs in the Doyang Water Reservoir in the district.

Taking serious note of the environmental impact the accumulated debris may cause, Wokha deputy commissioner Vineet Kumar announced that the second phase of the Clean Doyang Mission will be launched soon, once weather conditions are conducive for effective and sustained cleanup operations.

The Doyang hydro electric project, located in Doyang river, is the only major river dam in Nagaland.

The initiative will be carried out in collaboration with departments and agencies concerned, with a focus on restoring the ecological balance of the reservoir and its surrounding areas.

The DC emphasised that the issue will also be taken up at the state government level to explore long-term and sustainable measures for waste management and environmental protection.

Every year, large volumes of waste, including plastics, floating logs, and other debris, accumulate in the Doyang Reser-

voir, posing a significant threat to the freshwater quality, local biodiversity, and the structural integrity of the dam.

The pollution not only endangers aquatic life but also affects the livelihoods of communities dependent on the reservoir for fishing, tourism, and agriculture.

Kumar appealed to all concerned citizens and residents of Wokha and surrounding areas to extend their support and cooperation during the upcoming cleaning phase.

He stressed the importance of community participation, responsible waste disposal, and inter-agency coordination to ensure the success of the mission.

The Clean Doyang Mission is part of a broader effort to promote environmental stewardship, protect natural resources, and foster a culture of sustainability in the district.

On June 7, 2024, the six-day first Clean Doyang Mission was initiated on a mission mode with extensive manpower and coordination and completed successfully. It had restored the reservoir to a cleaner state, but with this year's monsoon that achievement has been nullified with the dam once again overwhelmed with floating debris.

No.TECH-213/NTI/KOK (BLDG)/2023-24/2194 Dated Kokrajhar, the 11/08/2025

### SHORT NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Sealed tenders affixing a non-refundable court fee stamp of Rs. 8.25 (Rupees eight & paise twenty five) only with a validity period of 180 days, which will subsequently be converted and drawn up in the printed F-2 form are invited from the registered contractors under PWD of all classes of the Assam PWD Building and BTC according to their eligibility for submitting tenders for the works stated below. The tenders will be received by the undersigned up to 1.30 P.M on 18/08/2025 and will be opened on the same date & place at 2.30 P.M.

| Sl. No. | Name of Work  | Estimated Amount | Earnest Money(2% for GNL and 1% for ST&SC) | Cost of Tender Document | Time of Completion |
|---------|---|------------------|--|-------------------------|--------------------|
| 1       | Repair and Renovation with Aluminium Partition and Electrification of Office Chamber at Room No.A-9, Room No.A-12, Room No.B-18 at BTC, Secretariat, Bodofa Nwgr, Kokrajhar | Rs.8,50,500.00   | Rs.17,010.00 (2%) and Rs.8,505.00(1%)      | Rs. 500.00              | 2 (Two) Months     |
| 2       | "Renovation of Community Hall at Narjang Bwra-Narjang Buri Mandir at Nadangiri VDC, Salakati, Kokrajhar"  | Rs.15,03,000.00  | Rs.30,060.00 (2%) and Rs.15,030.00(1%)     | Rs. 500.00              | 3 (Three) Months   |

Detail N.I.T. may be seen in all working days in the office of the undersigned. Tender paper will be issued to the contractor or their authorized agent upto 1.30 PM on all working days from 11/08/2025 to 18/08/2025 in the office of the undersigned on payment in the form of Bank Draft/Demand Draft, duly pledged to the Principal Secretary, BTC.

Sd/- Executive Engineer, P.W.D.,  
Kokrajhar Dist. & Chirang Dist.  
Territorial Building Division, Kokrajhar

IPR(BTC)/C/2025-26/2510

No.FA/TR/Tender/2025-26/1215

### NOTICE INVITING TENDER

July 28, 2025

Sealed Tenders are invited affixing a non-refundable Court Fee Stamp of Rs. 8.25 (Rupees Eight and paise Twenty Five) only are invited from the registered Contractors along with self-attested copy of up to date Contractor's/Firm's/Dealer's Registration/Trade license, GST Registration, Up to date GST Return, Income Tax Return (last 3 years), Annual Turnover (last 3 years), Bank Solvency, Previous experience etc. along with the Tender which will be received by the undersigned through speed post/courier/registered post/ tender box till 18.08.2025 up to 2 P.M (I.S.T.) and will be opened on 18.08.2025 at 2:30 P.M. (I.S.T.) in the O/o the Field Director, Manas Tiger Reserve, Barpeta Road as details below:

| Sl. No. | Particulars   | Specification | Location       | Estimated Amount | EMD  |
|---------|---|---------------|----------------|------------------|--|
| 1       | Construction of triangular shaped self supporting Tower with requisite MS pipe. | 100 feet.     | Bansbari Range | Rs. 300000.00    | Rs. 6000/- for General & Rs. 3000/- for SC/ST/OBC. |
| 2       | Construction of triangular shaped self supporting Tower with requisite MS pipe. | 100 feet.     | Panbari Range  | Rs. 300000.00    | Rs. 6000/- for General & Rs. 3000/- for SC/ST/OBC. |

Detail N.I.T. may be seen in all working days during office hours in the office of the undersigned.

In the event of any unusual occurrence due to strike, bandh, holiday etc. the same will be received and opened on the next working day at the same place and same time.

Sd/- Field Director,  
Manas Tiger Reserve,  
Barpeta Road

IPR(BTC)/C/2025-26/2492



## অসম লোকসেৱা আয়োগ

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No. 44PSC/DR-04/1/2025-26

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 Public Health Engineering Department.

(2) No of posts : 187 (One Hundred Eighty Seven) nos.

(3) Breakup of posts (Discipline wise):

| Name of the Service/Post     | Open Category |     | Reserv ed for OBC/ MOBC |     | Reserv ed for TT & Adivasi |     | Reserv ed for SC |     | Reserv ed for STP |     | Reserv ed for STH |     | Grand Total |     | Post reserved for PwBD & Type of Disability   | Post reserved For Ex-Servicemen |
|------------------------------|---------------|-----|-------------------------|-----|----------------------------|-----|------------------|-----|-------------------|-----|-------------------|-----|-------------|-----|---|---------------------------------|
|                              | Total         | RFW | Total                   | RFW | Total                      | RFW | Total            | RFW | Total             | RFW | Total             | RFW | Total       | RFW |   |                                 |
| Junior Engineer (Civil)      | 85            | 25  | 32                      | 10  | 04                         | 01  | 10               | 03  | 20                | 06  | 09                | 03  | 160         | 48  | Total : 09<br>Type of Disability<br>1.Deaf & hard of hearing:05<br>2.Locomotor disability including cerebral palsy, leprosy cured, dwarfism, acid attack victims and muscular dystrophy: 01<br>Autism, etc.: 03 | 09                              |
| Junior Engineer (Mechanical) | 04            | 01  | 02                      | 00  | 01                         | 00  | 01               | 00  | 02                | 00  | 00                | 00  | 10          | 01  | Total :01<br>Type of Disability<br>Blindness & low vision: 01   | 01                              |
| Junior Engineer (Chemical)   | 04            | 01  | 02                      | 00  | 01                         | 00  | 01               | 00  | 02                | 00  | 00                | 00  | 10          | 01  | Total :01<br>Type of Disability<br>Autism, etc: 01  | 01                              |
| Junior Engineer (Electrical) | 02            | 00  | 03                      | 01  | 01                         | 00  | 01               | 00  | 00                | 00  | 00                | 00  | 07          | 01  | Total :01<br>Type of Disability<br>Autism, etc: 01  | 01                              |

\*PwBD - Persons with Benchmark Disabilities; RFW - 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 ZilaSainik 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:

3 (Three) years Diploma specifically in Civil/Mechanical/Electrical/Chemical Engineering from any institute recognised by AICTE.

(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.

(i) STARTING DATE FOR ONLINE APPLICATION : 14-08-2025

(ii) CLOSING DATE FOR ONLINE APPLICATION: 13-09-2025

(iii) LAST DATE FOR PAYMENT OF APPLICATION FEE: 15-09-2025

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/115/12-Aug-25



## It's very difficult to make good movies now: Jackie Chan



**LOS ANGELES, Aug 11:** Action star Jackie Chan says it's difficult to make a good movie in Hollywood at present as everything revolves around business rather than quality. Chan, whose credits include notable roles in projects such as "The Fearless Hyena" (1979), "Who Am I?" (1998), and "Police Story" (1985), attended the Locarno Film Festival on Saturday, where he was bestowed with the career achievement honour.

Following, the actor took part in the interactive session during which he addressed the films.

The 71-year-old actor said old films are much better than the current ones. "I think the old movies are better than today... Right now, a lot of big studios, they're not filmmakers, they're business guys. They invest 40 million and think, 'How can I get it back?' And you can't go over. It's very difficult to make a good movie now," he said, according to the entertainment news outlet Variety.

Chan is known for performing daring stunts on his own in the films. The actor has also ex-

plored direction and worked as a stunt coordinator, producer, and has written two autobiographies.

He quipped that in Asian cinema, there are only two people with a similar skill set, him and actor-martial artist Sammo Kam-Bo Hung.

"In all of Asia, only two directors can do everything: the writing, directing, acting, stunt coordinating, stunt fighting, and editing. Only two," he began. "One is Sammo Hung, the second one is Jackie Chan," he said.

The actor joked he can't be doing stunts throughout, especially when he asked to perform while attending the shows, and is now mastering the art of singing.

"I cannot do this forever (stunts). It's just so dangerous. Whatever station I would go to, they would ask me how to punch and kick. I thought, What should I do? I should learn how to sing. Then I started trying to learn how to sing." The Locarno Film Festival commenced on August 6 and will conclude on Saturday. (PTI)

## ASSAMESE FILM 'HIRAETH' SELECTED FOR PRESTIGIOUS CHICAGO SOUTH ASIAN FILM FESTIVAL 2025

**HT Bureau**  
**GUWAHATI, Aug 11:** Assamese feature film 'Hiraeth', written, shot and directed by Chow Partha Borgohain, has been officially selected for the in-competition category at the 16th Chicago South Asian Film Festival (CSAFF), to be held from September 14 to 21.

The world premiere of the film 'Hiraeth' will be held at the Chicago South Asian Film Festival alongside acclaimed works from across the globe, with the festival's opening night red carpet set for September 19 in downtown Chicago and the closing ceremony on September 21.

Shot primarily in Dibrugarh, 'Hiraeth' is a social realism drama that follows the journey of Pori, a village woman whose life is upended by a devastating flood, forcing her and her husband to move to the city. There, they face the brutal realities of socio-economic inequality, corruption and exploitation.

Starring Meghali Kalita, Ashim Kumar Sharma and Atanu Mahanta in key roles, the 100-minute Assamese-language film explores the resilience of those who live on society's margins and the injustices they endure.

Reacting to the selection, director Chow Partha Borgohain said: "I am very overwhelmed and happy by the recognition and love this film is receiving. The story we have tried to tell is based on the harsh realities faced by those who are often ignored, they are the people who live on the margins, whose sweat and pain silently acts as a food for the progress of others at times. I am so grateful to all the people who helped me in this journey, especially to my two mothers — my own mother, who has always been my support, and my mother-in-law, who went one step further and helped finance this film. And to my wife, her trust and love are the reasons I was able to complete this work."

This film is for all those who struggle with dignity and are never seen. Through Pori's journey, I only hope to spark reflection on the inequalities we have come to accept as normal. Keep loving, keep working hard. Try not to hate anyone — life is too short, so make every moment count and live every moment to the fullest."

Other cast in the film includes Dipankar Sharma, Archana Bezbaruah, Vishwa Kinkar Baruah, Hemanta Rajkonwar, Smritirekha Chetia Handique, Pradipta Pran Bhattacharya, Rimjhim Deka, Rumi Sharma Pathak and Bhoirab Phukan.

Written and directed by Chow Partha Borgohain, the film is produced by Sengpam Borgohain, with Subhitya Borgohain and Ruchie Baruah as executive producers. Cinematography is by Chow Partha Borgohain himself while production design is by Jayanta Gogoi, editing by Kavin Adithya, music by AT Ram with Delepan Rajan and Dhirus as colorists, Nabapan Deka as sound designer, Rhitwik Raj Pathak re-recording mixer, location sound by Bishal Nath, VFX by Pixel Light Studio, Rza Boitlung, Dhruvrajit Kalita; costume & make-up artist - Parin Sharma, Mandita Goswami and first assistant director as Victor Das.

Born in Along in Arunachal Pradesh on December 6, 1986, Chow Partha Borgohain spent his childhood in different districts of Arunachal Pradesh as his father worked in the Arunachal Pradesh Police service. His mother Sengpam Borgohain, also working in Arunachal Pradesh as a government employee, left her job after Partha was born. Since then, she



served the family as a homemaker. After completing his schooling in Arunachal, Partha moved to Chennai, where he earned his degree in Visual Arts from Madras Christian College. He then pursued further studies in film and motion photography at Mindscreen Film Institute. Since 2014, Partha has been forging a career as a freelance cinematographer and director. The Chicago South Asian Film Festival, one of the largest of its kind in North America, celebrates diverse stories from the subcontinent and the diaspora, combining film screenings with Q&As, panel discussions, and cultural events.

## 'Boong' named Spotlight Film at Indian Film Festival of Melbourne 2025

**NEW DELHI, Aug 11:** "Boong", the debut feature by Lakshmi Priya Devi and backed by Farhan Akhtar and Ritesh Sidhwani's Excel Entertainment, has been selected as the Spotlight Film of the Indian Film Festival of Melbourne (IFFM) 2025.

Starring Guggun Kipgen and Bala Hijam in the lead roles, the Manipuri drama will have its Victorian state premiere at the festival, a press release said.

Devi, who has previously worked as first assistant director on films such as "Luck by Chance", "Talaash", "PK" and Mira Nair's series "A Suitable Boy", makes her directorial debut with the film.

"We are thrilled to present the world premiere of 'Boong' as this year's Spotlight Film. It's a story that is as bold as it is intimate, and Lakshmi Priya Devi's debut is a powerful reminder of the extraordinary talent working behind the scenes in Indian cinema. "IFFM has always been committed to championing new voices, and 'Boong' is exactly the kind of story that resonates globally — deeply rooted in its context yet universally human in its emotion," said festival director Mitu Bhowmick Lange.

The 2025 edition of IFFM will be held from August 14 to 24 across Melbourne, featuring a packed schedule of screenings, red carpet galas, industry panels, and the IFFM Awards. (PTI)



## Fawad-Vaani's 'Abir Gulaal' to release worldwide except India on August 29

**MUMBAI, Aug 11:** Months after its India release was stalled following the Pahalgam terror attack, romantic drama movie 'Abir Gulaal', starring Pakistani actor Fawad Khan and Vaani Kapoor, is now set to hit overseas screens on August 29.

A source close to the film said 'Abir Gulaal' will hit theatres in over 75 countries, including the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, on August 29 worldwide except India.

The movie, directed by Aarti S Bagdi, was slated for release in India on May 9 but found itself at the centre of a huge controversy in the aftermath of April 22 terror attack in Pahalgam in south Kashmir, in which 26 people lost their lives. Many trade organisations, including All Indian Cine Workers Association (AICWA) and the Federation of Western India Cine Employ-

ees (FWICE), reiterated their call for a ban on Pakistani artists in the Indian film industry.

The release of the film, which would have marked Khan's comeback to Indian cinema, was cancelled. The actor's social media accounts, along with those of many other prominent Pakistani actors, including Hania, Fawad Khan, Mahira Khan, Ali Zafar, Atif Aslam and Rahat Fateh Ali Khan, was also withheld in India.

Hostilities between India and Pakistan escalated further after Indian armed forces carried out strikes on nine terror camps across Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) on May 7, in an operation codenamed Operation Sindoor. "Abir Gulaal" is produced by Indian Stories and A Richer Lives Entertainment. Producers include Vivek Agrawal, Avantika Hari and Rakesh Sippy. (PTI)

## Pratik Gandhi, Sunny Hinduja on playing spies in 'Saare Jahan Se Accha': Our war is of intelligence

**NEW DELHI, Aug 11:** Actors Pratik Gandhi and Sunny Hinduja, who play RAW and ISI agents in Netflix's 70s era set drama series "Saare Jahan Se Accha", said the spies in their world are depicted as conflicted humans full of dilemmas unlike their mainstream representation that's full of swagger, action and fancy gadgets.

The series, directed by Sumit Purohit and written by Bhavesh Mandalia and Gaurav Shukla, begins with Indian scientist Homi Bhabha's death in a plane crash in 1966 and charts the rise of two spy agencies in the aftermath of Indo-Pakistan war of 1971.

Gandhi, who broke out with "Scam 1992" and has featured in critically-acclaimed films such as "Madgaon Express", "Do Aur Do Pyaar" and "Phule", plays a resilient Indian spy,

Vishnu, who is tasked with outsmarting Murtaza (Hinduja), his counterpart from across the border, to sabotage Pakistan's nuclear programme. The show premieres on Netflix on August 13.

"We were very curious about what happened in history and about the 70s as a period. There were a lot of life changing events in our countries as well as in other countries," Gandhi told PTI in an interview.

The actor said when the script came to him, he was pleasantly surprised that it was different from the spy dramas he had grown up on, where spies were shown as nothing less than super-heroes.

"They were all so full of swagger and fancy gadgets," Gandhi said.

Hinduja, known for his roles in "The

Family Man" and "Aspirants", said like Gandhi, he was also happy that the portrayal was close to how spies would operate in real life.

"Their war is of intelligence, how to outsmart other people and how to bring your country first, that's how they work. The kind of stakes that they have, we have never seen... like the many dilemmas they deal with and how there is always a lot going on but they have to put the country first and above everything," the actor said.

What Gandhi liked about his character of Vishnu was that he is shown to be very restrained.

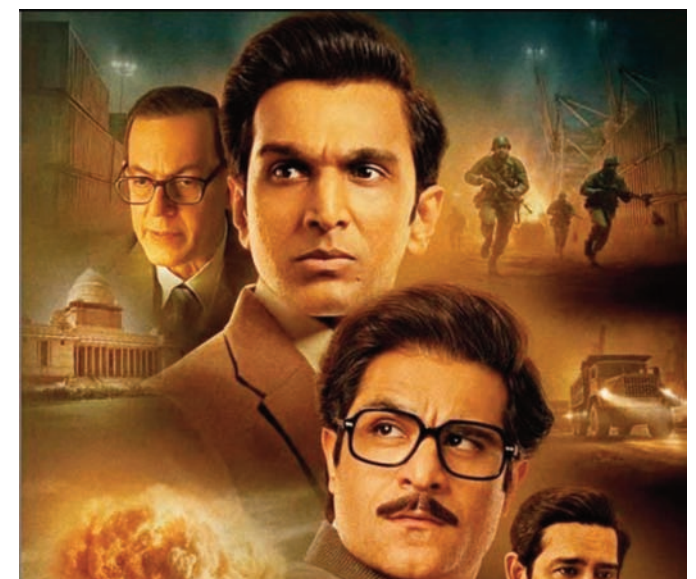
"He may get angry, but there are some decisions that he doesn't want to take in haste. He also wants to find a way to save everyone, and it is fun to perform that layering. When he is

standing in front of his wife, he wants to answer a lot of questions but he is not able to, because he can't. You can show it only through your eyes and there is always a lot of fun in playing such characters," the actor said.

Sunny said he watched a lot of videos from the 1970s to understand body language and life in general during that era.

He also worked with a dialect coach to embody Murtaza, a sharp-witted ISI agent willing to pay any price for his country, even if it meant killing those closest to him.

"It was challenging to play the character as I am not from that country. I don't know how people live, their habits and how they were in the 1970s... It was a challenging role both emotionally and physically. But the



way the character is written is beautiful." While Hinduja's Murtaza is more out there, Gandhi's Vishnu likes to operate on the margins and the actor said that was by design.

"What we want to convey is that Murtaza has crossed that moral line and is ready to do anything for his country and he is cold blooded in that. But Vishnu has not been able to cross that moral line 100 per cent... I think Vishnu has to become Murtaza to protect his country as passionately and with the same courage, but the good man inside Vishnu is stopping him," Gandhi added.

Both the actors share the screen briefly that Gandhi said lasts for a few seconds but helps establish their dynamics. (PTI)



## IGU sends four-member team to compete in APGC Mid-Amateur Championship

**TANGERANG (INDONESIA), Aug 11:** The Indian Golf Union (IGU) has sent a four-member team to Indonesia to compete in the first-ever Mid-Amateur Championship organised by the Asia-Pacific Golf Confederation in association with the Indonesia Golf Association.

Led by current IGU All-India Mid-Amateur champion Ranjit Singh, the Indian team comprising Arjun Singh, Simarjeet Singh and Col. Varoon Parmar will participate in the prestigious event at the Gading Raya Golf Club here from August 12-14. A total of 80 golfers from 20 countries will be battling it out for the coveted trophy.

Col. Varoon Parmar, who won gold at the World Military Games 2025 and finished runner-up in the IGU All-India Mid-Amateur Championship, bolsters the Indian team with his presence.

Simarjeet, who won the IGU All-India Mid-Amateur Golf Championship in 2022 apart from clinching multiple national titles on previous occasions, is also in the team.

Sharing his thoughts on competing in the event, Ranjit Singh said: "I have represented India for many years and I am eternally grateful to the Indian Golf Union for sending me for this prestigious event."

"It is the first such Mid-Amateur Championship being organised by the Asia-Pacific Golf Confederation and I am happy to be part of the first such Indian team to be competing in it."

"The Gading Raya course is in pristine shape but there is likelihood of rain for the next three days, so adapting to the conditions becomes essential."

IGU Director General Maj. Gen. (Retd) Bibhuti Bhushan said: "The IGU has sent a strong team to Indonesia for the inaugural APGC Mid-Amateur Championship."

"The tournament serves our purpose of fostering camaraderie and the spirit of patriotism among the team members. Being contested among more than 20 countries, it also gives an opportunity to the Indian team to test their skills and play for the Tricolour."

The championship will be staged in four age divisions – Group A (ages 25 to 29); Group B (ages 30 to 37); Group C (ages 38 to 46) and Group D (aged 47 and above) – and is open to men who have amateur status in accordance with the R&A guidelines.

The tournament will be played in individual stroke play format over 54 holes. (PTI)

## Indian-American Megha Ganne wins US Women's Amateur to stun golfing world

**BANDON (US), Aug 11:** Indian-American golfer Megha Ganne created history by winning the 2025 U.S. Women's Amateur title at Bandon Dunes here, beating Brooke Biermann 4 and 3 in the 36-hole final, to stun the golfing world.

Ganne, a rising senior competing in her seventh U.S. Women's Amateur, defeated the 2025 Michigan State graduate Biermann.

The 21-year-old Megha's parents are Sudha Ganne, an endocrinologist, and Hari Ganne, an IT entrepreneur. Both are originally from India and are first-generation immigrants to the United States. They live in Holmdel, New Jersey, with their two daughters – Megha and Sirina.

In 2021, Megha, then a teen, held the lead after the first round at the US Women's Open and was tied for third going into the final round. She finished tied 14th but had the golfing world looking at her in amazement.

Alongside Indian-Americans Akshay Bhatia and Sahith Theegala on the PGA Tour, Megha may well be the next big name in golf. Another golfer of Indian origin, Aaron Rai, who is Indo-British is also a PGA Tour winner and has been ranked inside Top-30.

Also, Indo-Canadian Sudarshan Yellamaraju, and Indo-American Julian Suri, both of whom won the Korn Ferry Tour this year, are other golfers of Indian origin making waves around the world.

## We want to break the barrier: Harmanpreet on India's trophy-less run in ICC events

**MUMBAI, Aug 11:** India captain Harmanpreet Kaur on Monday said her team is determined to end its ICC trophy drought during next month's ODI Women's World Cup and the preceding series against title favourites Australia will give the side a clear picture of where it stands. India have never won a world title despite coming close on a few occasions including the 2017 ODI World Cup in England where they finished runners' up to capture the country's imagination.

"We want to break that barrier which all Indians are waiting for. World Cups are always special, always want to do something special for my country. Whenever I see Yuvi bhaiya (Yuvraj Singh) it gives me a lot of motivation," Harmanpreet said here at the trophy tour unveiling ceremony for the ODI World Cup.

Former India all-rounder Yuvraj Singh, former captain Mithali Raj and Harmanpreet's teammates Smriti Mandhana and Jemimah Rodrigues were also part of the function.

India go into the Australia series at home, starting September 14, high on confidence after beating England in an away ODI and T20I series.

"Playing against Australia is always challenging and we get to know what our standing is. The series (three ODIs vs Australia) will give us a lot of confidence. We have been putting a lot of effort in our training camps and the results



are showing," said Harmanpreet. Her match-winning 171 in the semifinal against Australia back in 2017 remains fresh in Harmanpreet's mind.

"That knock was something really special to me and the entire women's cricket. A lot of things changed for me after that knock. When we came back to India, even though we had lost, a lot of people were waiting and cheering for us. I still get goosebumps," she added. Yuvraj said players will have to individually believe that they can win matches for the country. "(I

would say) play the situation and not the expectation and be in the moment," he said.

"It's a great opportunity to create history. But that doesn't mean that from the start point you are thinking of winning it. You have to experience the whole enigma of it. You have to feel that you have put in the process and results will come." The multiple World Cup-winner advised the players to keep faith in their experience.

"But if you want to win the World Cup, you will be in pressure, things won't go well and

that's when experience and self-belief has to take over. You have to believe that you want to win the game for your country (on) that day," added Yuvraj. India's player of the tournament in the 2011 World Cup.

Both Rodrigues and Mandhana noted that there has been a significant change in the team's attitude when it comes to preparations.

"A lot has changed with my preparation and mindset. I want to have a lot of confidence coming from my preparation and that gives me clarity," said Rodrigues. (PTI)

## Bhatia hangs on for sixth, moves into Top-30 at FedEx Cup

**MEMPHIS (TENNESSEE, USA), Aug 11:** Akshay Bhatia hung in for a tied-sixth place with a modest 1-under 69 in the final round as Justin Rose rallied over the last five holes to win the FedEx St. Jude Championship.

Bhatia rode the week on his first round 8-under 62 and followed up with 69-70-69 to total 10-under and finish six shots behind Rose (67) and JJ Spaun (65) who tied at the top and then went into a play-off which was won by Rose.

Bhatia moved up 16 places from his 45th at the start of the week and it was the biggest upward move other than Rose, whose win moved him 21 places from 25th to fourth.

Bhatia began in style with birdies on the second and the third and then managed only one more on the ninth. He also dropped shots on the seventh and the 17th.

But the sixth place finish by Bhatia confirmed him for the second of the three play-offs. By being in top-50 he is also assured of starts at all USD 20 million Signature events in 2026.

He now needs to stay on in Top-

30 to play the Tour Championship for the second straight year.

Aaron Rai, the Indo-British player, who was also in the Play-offs shot 67 and finished tied 22nd, but it did not move him from 55th to inside 50th. He was stranded 53rd and it ended his season.

Rose closed with a 3-under 67 for his 24th victory worldwide and 12th PGA TOUR victory that puts him back into the top 10 in the world at age 45 and secures his spot in another Ryder Cup.

Rose played in the final group with Fleetwood and was three shots behind when he hit 6-iron to just inside 15 feet for birdie at the par-3 14th. He followed with two more short birdies, and drained a 15-footer on the 17th for his fourth in a row.

Rose would have won in regulation but he narrowly missed a 13-foot birdie putt on the 18th hole at TPC Southwind. Rose wound up making six birdies over the last eight holes that he played, the last one a 10-foot putt on the 18th on the third playoff hole.

Spaun made a 20-foot birdie putt



on the 17th hole to pull into a share of the lead and closed with a 65. He also made a 30-foot birdie putt on the second extra hole.

Lost in this fight was Tommy Fleetwood, who once again came close but missed out. He seemed the likely winner with his 35-foot birdie on the 12th, which was the first of three birdies in a four-hole stretch that gave him a two-shot lead with three to play.

Then he scrambled for par on the par-5 16th and on the 17th he hit a poor shot and a worse par at-

tempt from seven feet for bogey. Needing birdie on the 18th to have a chance, he drove it into a bunker. Fleetwood shot 69 and finished one shot out of the playoff.

Fleetwood tied with Scottie Scheffler, who grazed the edge of so many putts on the back nine and had to settle for a 67.

Scheffler has not finished worse than eighth place in his last 12 tournaments dating to March. He played the final round without his regular caddie, Ted Scott, who rushed back home to Louisiana for an emergency.

Rickie Fowler, who missed the postseason last year, shot 69 to tie for sixth and advance. Others who moved into the top 50 were Kurt Kitayama, Jhonattan Vegas and J.T. Poston.

The top 50 are assured of being in all the USD 20 million Signature Events next year.

Jordan Spieth (68) to tie for 38th and finished at No. 54 and Chris Kirk hit into the water on the 15th for bogey and failed to birdie the par-5 16th and ended at No. 51. (PTI)

## Crystal Palace loses appeal against demotion by UEFA to third-tier Conference League

**LAUSANNE (SWITZERLAND), Aug 11:** Crystal Palace lost its appeal at sport's highest court on Monday against demotion to the third-tier Conference League because of breaching UEFA rules on club ownership with American investor John Textor. The Court of Arbitration for Sport said its judges dismissed the English cup winner's request to stay in the more lucrative second-tier Europa League in a case that also involved Premier League rival Nottingham Forest and French club Lyon.

Forest and Lyon are confirmed taking entries directly into the Europa League in September and Palace must start in the Conference League qualifying playoffs round next week. Palace was drawn last week to play Fredrikstad of Norway or Midtjylland of Denmark on Aug. 21 and Aug. 28.

UEFA demoted Palace because Textor had a 43% ownership stake last season while also owning Lyon. Palace missed a March deadline set by UEFA to solve the potential issue.

CAS said its judges decided Textor "was a board member with decisive influence over both clubs at the time of UEFA's assessment date." The panel of three judges "considered that the UEFA Regulations are clear and do not provide flexibility to clubs that are non-compliant on the assessment date," the court said in a statement. The case proceeded despite Textor selling his stake in Palace last month

to New York Jets owner Woody Johnson.

Unlike Palace, Forest and Lyon remain part of multi-club ownership networks though do not conflict with UEFA rules for entry to European competitions. Forest owner Evangelos Marinakis also has Greek title holder Olympiakos which plays in the Champions League this season.

Palace qualified on merit for the second-tier Europa League by winning the English cup in May — a first major trophy in the club's 120-year history.

The threat of UEFA sanctions for breaching multi-club ownership rules — drafted more than 25 years ago to protect the integrity of European competitions — cast a shadow over Palace's offseason celebrations and preparations for this season.

At Wembley Stadium on Sunday, some Palace fans displayed the slogan "UEFA Mafia" ahead of the game against Liverpool in the season opener between the cup winner and league champion.

UEFA has repeatedly warned about the growing trend for investors to take stakes or full ownership in multiple clubs in different countries, and the potential threats to the integrity of games and the transfer market.

Textor is among a slew of investors from the United States buying into the multi-billion dollar European soccer industry in recent years. (AP)

## Tribute to former Liverpool forward Diogo Jota disrupted at Wembley

**LONDON, Aug 11:** A tribute to former Liverpool forward Diogo Jota and his brother Andre Silva was disrupted when some fans at the Community Shield match failed to observe a moment's silence. Before the game between Liverpool and Crystal Palace at Wembley Stadium both teams and their staff stood silently to commemorate the brothers, who died in a car accident in Spain in July. A minority of Palace fans broke the silence, eliciting a strong response at the other end of the field as well as from other Eagles supporters who tried to silence those not respecting the tribute.

Referee Chris Kavanagh then blew his whistle to signal the end of the tribute. Liverpool manager Arne Slot later played down the incident. "I don't think this was planned, or that this was the idea of the fan that made some noise. Maybe he wasn't aware of the fact that it was the minute of silence,"

he said. "And I think then the fans of Palace were trying to calm that person or those persons down ... They tried to calm him down, but that was a bit noisy as well. And then our fans reacted, Hey, what's happening here?"

Palace won the match -- beating Liverpool 3-2 on penalties after the game ended 2-2.

This was Liverpool's first major game since the death of Jota, who was 28. The brothers died when the Lamborghini they were in veered off a road and burst into flames near the northwestern city of Zamora. The Premier League champion has made a number of tributes to Jota following his death, including retiring his No. 20 jersey.

Liverpool supporters began to applaud Jota when Sunday's game reached the 20-minute mark and that applause quickly erupted into cheers as new signing Jeremie Frimpong scored to put the Merseyside club 2-1 ahead. (AP)

## Qualifying for Asian Cup was our goal, we've done it: India U20 Women's coach, players ecstatic

**NEW DELHI, Aug 11:** The Indian senior team's recent qualification to the AFC Women's Asian Cup acted as an extra dose of motivation for the national U-20 squad on its way to the age-group continental showpiece, said head coach Joakim Alexandersson on Monday.

India qualified for the AFC U20 Women's Asian Cup football for the first time in two decades after edging past hosts Myanmar 1-0 in their final Group D qualifying match in Yangon on Sunday.

Alexandersson, who has trained this bunch since his appointment in December last year, said, "This is very special for the girls. They've been preparing for many months now, and seeing how the senior women's team qualified in such a fantastic way gave them extra motivation."

"They had a great spirit and really wanted to achieve this too. Qualifying for the Asian Cup was our only goal when we arrived in Myanmar, and now we've done it." Pooja scored the decisive goal in the 27th minute at the Thuwunna Stadium as India finished on top of the group with seven points to make it to the 2026 edition of the main tournament in Thailand.

India dominated the first half while Myanmar controlled the proceedings in the second and came very close to scoring in the 80th minute.

Alexandersson noted, "Honestly, the second half wasn't the best in terms of the quality of our play. But to keep a clean sheet for



the third time, and to work as hard as we did as a team, shows the fantastic morale these players have."

After the on-pitch celebrations, the Swedish coach gave a heartfelt speech to the players and the staff, saying they deserved to be in the main tournament.

"This is a very emotional moment for me because I saw how hard you worked out there. But despite the challenges, the effort you put into the game was immense. We fought so hard, defending with every part of our bodies. We truly showed that we deserve to be in this Asian Cup, and that is exactly why we are here."

"In the first game, we couldn't score goals, but we improved on that. And today, that improvement has been enough. Looking back at all three matches, I believe we totally deserve to qualify for the Asian Cup."

"Of course, there are still things we can improve on, but now we have time before the tournament to sharpen our play style and make ourselves even better. I look forward to that," said Alexandersson.

After the victorious campaign in Yangon, the Young Tigresses received a warm welcome upon their arrival in New Delhi on Monday morning.

This was also about vanquishing the demons of the past. In 2023, the U20 side were knocked out in the first round of the qualifiers by the narrowest of margins, on goal difference, by Vietnam.

Winger Neha was one of the few players who returned from Vietnam grieving two years ago and had an opportunity to redeem themselves this time in Myanmar.

"I feel ecstatic that I've done it for the first time, finally. Last time in Vietnam, we missed the qualifiers by just a goal. But this

time, I feel proud. This was our best match so far. I would like to extend my gratitude to my father. Before the match, for the first time, he told me, "Beta, go do something for Team India today", so I'm feeling very proud."

"The coach also noticed there's something good in me and supported me a lot. I would also like to thank my papa," said the 19-year-old who provided the assist for Pooja's winning goal with a superb cross from the left flank.

Captain Shubhangi Singh had expressed her disappointment after the goalless draw with Indonesia in the first game, but was over the moon after Sunday's result. "I'm actually beyond happy, to be honest. The way we worked as a team, especially in the second half, we gave it our all, and it was totally worth it. The crowd tried to put us under pressure, and it got harder, but our mindset remained strong."

"I think we were the better team, but credit to them as they performed well too. We came in with the mentality of winning, because for us, a draw in today's game would've almost been like a loss. So we went for it, and we came back with the win. That's all that matters," said Shubhangi.

The second half wasn't comfortable by any stretch of the imagination as the hosts piled the pressure in the Indian half.

But the Indian backbone, led by Cindy Colney and Thobisana Chanu in central defence, who hadn't conceded any goal in the qualifiers, was in no mood to let go of that perfect record. (PTI)

## Ahlawat shoots under par to finish Tied-25th in Scotland

**ABERDEEN (SCOTLAND), Aug 11:** Veer Ahlawat shot one-under 71 in the final round of the Nexo Championship and ended with a total of 3-over for four days to finish tied 25th at Trump International Golf Links here.

Ahlawat, playing on the DP World Tour by virtue of topping the PGTI Order of Merit last year, had three birdies against two bogeys, all on the front nine. He parred all nine holes on the back nine. It was only the third Top-25 finish for Ahlawat, who also finished T-17 at Hero Indian Open and T-13 at Austrian Alpine Open.

Scotsman Grant Forrest secured his second DP World Tour title with a comfortable four-shot victory. Forrest carded a level par final round of 72 in tough conditions at Trump International Golf Links to finish on eight under par and triumph for the first time since the Hero Open at Fairmont St Andrews four years and two days ago. The 32-year-old has catapulted to 28th on the Race to Dubai Rankings and into pole position on the Closing Swing Rankings with only next week's Danish Golf Championship to play. Forrest has also secured a bonus \$10,000 for his course record 66 on Friday after the Course Record Presented by Nexo prize was launched earlier this week.

Kristoffer Reitan signed for a closing 72 to finish with a total of eight under par, four ahead of Joe Dean who parred the last to claim second place as only nine players finished the tournament in red numbers. (PTI)



# India in 'continuous dialogue' phase with IOC on 2036 bid: Sports Ministry

**NEW DELHI, Aug 11:** India's bid to host the 2036 Olympics is in the 'Continuous Dialogue' phase with the International Olympic Committee's Future Host Commission, Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya told the Lok Sabha on Monday.

In response to a query from Aam Aadmi Party's MP from Sangrur, Gurmeet Singh Meht Hayer, Mandaviya said the entire bidding process is being handled by the Indian Olympic Association (IOA).

"IOA has submitted a letter of intent to IOC. The bid is now in the 'Continuous Dialogue' phase with the Future Host Commission of IOC," the Minister stated in the lower house.

The Minister, however, did not respond to Hayer's specific query of whether India is bidding to host the Olympics across multiple venues. Hayer asked if the proposed plan includes Hockey in Bhubaneswar, Rowing in Bhopal, Canoeing/Kayaking in Pune and Cricket in Mumbai.

"Bidding to host the Olympic Games in India is the responsibility of the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) and allotment of hosting rights for the Olympics is done by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) through a detailed host selection process," Mandaviya stated.

Although a host city has not been proposed by India officially, the Gujarat government has been at the forefront and its Sports Minister Harsh Sanghani was part of an Indian delegation that visited IOC headquarters in Lausanne to discuss the bid last month.

The 'Continuous Dialogue' phase involves a feasibility assessment by the IOC of the interested party's preparedness. However, as of now, the host selection process has been "paused" by new IOC President Kirsty Coventry.

Coventry, an Olympic gold-winning former swimmer who is the first woman and the first African President of the IOC, said the consensus among the members, during her maiden Executive Board meeting in June, was to reassess the process.



Earlier, a decision on India's bid was expected next year. India is also facing competition from the likes of Qatar and Turkey, who are also in the 2036 race.

"There was an overwhelming support from the IOC members for a pause to be done and a review of the future host election process and we will be setting up a working group to look into this," the 41-year-old Coventry had said in July.

Coventry said the executive board members felt that the experience of already decided future hosts -- Los Angeles (2028 Summer Games), Brisbane (2032 Summer Games), French Alps (2030 Winter Games) -- need to be studied before proceeding on future proposals.

India's poor record in doping is an issue for the IOC, which has sought corrective measures by the IOA. The IOA has set up a panel to address doping in Indian sports after being rebuked by the IOC.

Mandaviya also faced a question on the pitiable state of Indian football. While the national men's team has been hurtling from one

setback to another, domestic football is also in doldrums after the top-tier Indian Super League was placed on hold due to technical issues.

Congress' Adoor Prakash, who represents the Attingal constituency in Kerala, asked whether the Government "noted the declining situation of Indian football" and that the team has slipped to the lowest FIFA ranking in the last nine years.

He also sought a lowdown on the measures being undertaken to revive the sport. The minister placed the onus on the All India Football Federation and blamed the poor rankings on the "dynamic" of the process to determine them.

"Rankings of football teams are dynamic and influenced by match results, strength of opposition, and frequency of matches."

"The Sports Authority of India (SAI), an autonomous body under the aegis of the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, regularly engages with the AIFF to review the performance and overall development of the sport and provides its advice accordingly," he stated.

"At present, a total of 500 athletes are being trained in football discipline," he added. (PTI)

## JDSA holds annual general meeting, forms new committee

**HT Correspondent**

**JORHAT, Aug 11:** The biennial meeting of the Jorhat District Sports Association was held at its conference hall on Sunday. The meeting was presided over by Santanu Puzari, while Jul Khound delivered the welcome address and presented the annual report. A total of 51 registered clubs and sub-association members participated in the meeting and exchanged their views and thoughts. As per the decision, Santanu Puzari and Jul Khound were elected as president and general secretary respectively. It is worth mentioning that this marks the fifth consecutive victory for Santanu Puzari as president and the third consecutive term for Jul Khound as general secretary.

## Diksha Dagar finishes in Top-20 in PIF London Championship

**LONDON, Aug 11:** Diksha Dagar endured contrasting fortunes on the front and back nines of the final round to finish tied 19th at the PIF London Championship at Centurion Club.

Diksha seemed to be going great with three birdies on the front nine, but she gave away all those gains on the back nine a matter of four holes between the 11th and the 14th.

After rounds of 70-73-73 at the Par-73 Centurion Club, Diksha was 3-under 216 for three rounds and finished Tied-19th. Diksha, is still 12th on the Order of Merit of the Ladies European Tour.

Two other Indians, who made the cut, Aditi Ashok (72) and Pranavi Urs (75) were further down the leaderboard. Aditi (73-74-72) was even par for three rounds and Tied-34th while Pranavi (75-71-75) was 2-over and T-44th.

Avani Prashanth had missed the cut.

Laura Fünfstick held her nerve during the final round to clinch the title with a one-stroke victory.

On a sunny day in Hertfordshire, it was a tightly contested final shot with 10 players finishing within three strokes of Fünfstick.

The German star had a three-shot lead overnight but had a tricky start to the day as she was three-over after four holes.

However, the 30-year-old, who lives in

## Lok Sabha passes sports bill; Mandaviya calls it single biggest sports reform since independence

**NEW DELHI, Aug 11:** The long-awaited National Sports Governance Bill was passed in the Lok Sabha here on Monday with Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya describing it as the "single biggest reform in Indian sports since independence" amid opposition protests over revision of electoral rolls in Bihar.

The National Anti-Doping (Amendment) Bill was also passed when the Lok Sabha reassembled at 2pm after an early adjournment due to opposition protests.

"It is the single biggest reform in sports since independence. This bill will ensure accountability, ensure justice, best governance in sports federations," Mandaviya said amid sloganeering by opposition members.

"It will have massive significance in India's sports ecosystem. It is unfortunate that such an important bill and reform does not have opposition's participation," he added.

The opposition leaders were not present in the house when the bills were introduced for consideration and passage as most of them were detained while marching towards the Election Commission headquarters against the Special Intensive Revision of electoral rolls in Bihar and alleged voter data fudging.

But after two MPs participated in the consideration debate, speaking in the bill's support, the opposition members returned to the house and started raising slogans.

Amid the din, the bills were passed by a voice vote following which the House was adjourned till 4pm.

Earlier, Chairman of the parliamentary committee on sports, Digvijaya Singh, requested Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla to refer the National Sports Governance Bill to the panel. He felt that the bill should be examined and discussed before it is taken up by Parliament.

Mandaviya said the two bills were key reforms aimed at building a "transparent, accountable and world-class sports ecosystem" in India as the country aims to bid for the 2036 Olympics.

"Efforts have been made since 1975 and in 1985, we had the first draft. But sports was also politicised for personal gains. Some ministers made efforts to bring this bill but could not move forward."

"In 2011, we had a National Sports Code. Another effort was made to turn it into a bill. It reached the cabinet, there was a discussion as well but the bill was deferred after that. It did not reach the Parliament," the minister stated while presenting a timeline of the bill's journey.

"The National Sports Bill Governance Bill is a force of change...Despite being such a large country, our performance at the Olympic Games and on the international stage has not been satisfactory and this Bill aims to build India's sports capacity," he added.

The sports governance bill has provisions for a National Sports Board (NSB) to create a stringent system of accountability. All National Sports Fed-

erations (NSFs) will have to attain NSB's recognition for access to central government funding.

The NSB will have the mandate to de-recognise a national body that fails to hold elections for its Executive Committee or has committed "gross irregularities in the election procedures."

Failure to publish annual audited accounts or "misused, misapplied or misappropriated public funds" would also be liable for action by the NSB but it would be required to consult the concerned global body before making its move.

Another feature is the proposal for a National Sports Tribunal, which will have the powers of a civil court and decide disputes ranging from selection to election involving federations and athletes. Once instituted, Tribunal's decisions can only be challenged in the Supreme Court.

The bill makes some concessions on the issue of age cap for administrators by allowing those in the bracket of 70 to 75 to contest elections if the concerned international bodies' statutes and bylaws allow for it. It is a departure from the national sports code that capped the age limit at 70.

"...as a part of the preparatory activities for the bidding of Summer Olympic Games 2036, it is imperative that the sports governance landscape undergo a positive transformation to bring better outcomes, sporting excellence and aids in improved performance in major international competitions," read the bill's statement of objectives.

All recognised national sports bodies would also come under the ambit of the Right to Information (RTI) Act, something that the BCCI has vehemently opposed since it is not dependent on government funding.

However, the cricket board has got some leeway on that front with the government amending the bill to ensure that RTI would be applicable only on bodies that rely on government funding or support.

The National Anti-Doping (Amendment) Bill-2025 that seeks to incorporate the changes sought by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA), which objected to "government interference" in the functioning of the country's Anti-Doping Agency (NADA).

The act was originally passed in 2022 but its implementation had to be put on hold due to objections raised by WADA.

The world body objected to the institution of a National Board for Anti-Doping in Sports, which was empowered to make recommendations to the government on anti-doping regulations.

The Board, which was to comprise a chairperson and two members appointed by the central government, was also authorised to oversee the National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA) and even issue directions to it.

WADA rejected this provision as government interference in an autonomous body. In the amended bill, the Board has been retained but without the powers to oversee NADA or the advisory role it was previously assigned. The amended bill asserts NADA's "operational independence". (PTI)

## West Indies levels series with a 5-wicket victory over Pakistan in the second ODI



**TAROUBA (TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO), Aug 11:** Roston Chase and Justin Greaves led West Indies to a five-wicket victory over Pakistan with 10 balls to spare in the rain-reduced second one-day cricket international, leveling the three-match series at 1-1.

Chase's 49 not out off 47 balls included two sixes and the winning boundary as West Indies scored 184-5 in 33.2 overs on Sunday.

The hosts were chasing a revised target of 181 runs in 35 overs under the DLS method after multiple rain interruptions saw Pakistan's innings end at 171-7 in 37 overs. Right-arm fast bowler Jayden Seales took 3-23 in seven overs.

West Indies stumbled from 101-3 after 18 overs at Brian Lara Stadium in Tarouba, Trinidad and Tobago, to 111-5 off 24 overs, including the wicket of Sherfane Rutherford, who hit a 33-ball 45 with three sixes and four fours.

Chase and Greaves (26 off 31) shared

a 77-run unbroken partnership for the sixth wicket.

West Indies earlier chose to bowl first and Hasan Nawaz again played a key role for Pakistan with 36 not out off 30 deliveries, after his unbeaten 63 in the ODI opener.

Hasan's knock on Sunday included three sixes — two of them in what turned out to be the last over of Pakistan's innings after more rain. Hussain Talat got 31 off 32 balls but most Pakistan batters were much slower, including captain Mohammad Rizwan who was trapped lbw by Gudakesh Motie for a 38-ball 16.

Pakistan beat West Indies in the first one-day international on Friday, also by five wickets.

The third and final match in the ODI series is scheduled for Tuesday at the same stadium.

Pakistan won the preceding Twenty20 series 2-1 played in Florida. (AP)

## Ritika bags heavyweight gold; India end Asian U22 Boxing Championships on overall fourth

**BANGKOK, Aug 11:** Ritika bagged gold in the women's 80+kg category as India finished a creditable overall fourth in the Under-22 category of the Asian Boxing Championships here on Monday.

The Indian U-22 contingent concluded their campaign with a total of 13 medals, while the U19 group returned home with a total of 14 medals, including three gold, seven silver and four bronze. The effort helped the U-19 side to end up at overall second in the tournament.

However, the day's sole gold came through Ritika in the women's 80+kg final, where she kept her composure under pressure to beat Kazakhstan's Assel Toktassyn. (PTI)

## Digvijaya writes to Birla, calls for National Sports Governance Bill to be referred to parl panel

**NEW DELHI, Aug 11:** Chairman of the parliamentary committee on sports, Digvijaya Singh, on Monday wrote to Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla and urged him to refer the National Sports Governance Bill 2025 to the panel, asserting that it should be examined and discussed before it is taken up by Parliament.

"I am writing to you regarding the National Sports Governance Bill 2025, which was intro-

duced in the Lok Sabha on July 23, 2025. I wanted to bring to your attention the fact that the Bill has not previously been referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Sports," Singh said in his letter to Birla.

Singh said the Bill was a significant legislation that makes major changes to the existing sports governance architecture of this country.

He said it was critical

that it be examined and discussed by the parliamentary standing committee before it is taken up by the Parliament as a whole. "This is after all the very purpose of the Standing Committees."

"I therefore request you to refer the National Sports Governance Bill 2025 to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Education, Women, Children, Youth, and Sports," said the panel chairman. (PTI)

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