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## NDA's Radhakrishnan elected as next VP

### Oppn candidates Reddy beaten with bigger than expected margin of 152 votes

NEW DELHI, Sept 9: NDA candidate C P Radhakrishnan was elected the next vice president of India on Tuesday as he bagged 452 votes against the opposition candidate B Sudershan Reddy's 300, winning the contest with a bigger than expected margin, indicating cross-voting from the rival camp.

Announcing the result of the vice presidential election this evening, Rajya Sabha Secretary General and Returning Officer P C Mody said 767 MPs cast their votes out of the total valid electors of 781 in a turnout of 98.2 per cent.

He said 752 ballots were valid and 15 were invalid,



bringing down the required majority of first preference votes to 377.

Though the victory of Radhakrishnan (67), currently the

Maharashtra governor and a seasoned leader with an RSS background and decades-long stint first in the Jana Sangh and then the BJP in Tamil Nadu,

was a foregone conclusion due to the ruling alliance's numerical edge but the extent of his victory margin is a setback to the opposition.

Hours before the result, senior Congress leader and Rajya Sabha MP Jairam Ramesh had claimed that the Opposition has stood united. "All of its 315 MPs have turned up for voting," he said. The final tally in favour of Reddy, a retired Supreme Court judge, was 300, decidedly less than expected by the opposition camp as some MPs unaligned to the two blocs had also announced their support to him.

BJP leaders were quick to claim that at least 15 opposi-

tion MPs voted in favour of Radhakrishnan. There were hints from the ruling alliance that some opposition MPs deliberately cast invalid votes.

"I declare C P Radhakrishnan elected to the post of Vice President of India and the results will be communicated to the Election Commission," Mody said.

BJP MP Sanjay Jaiswal claimed that "nearly 40 opposition MPs" listened to the voice of their conscience and voted in "some manner" in support of the NDA candidate, showing a wider acceptance for him. His assertion of support from 40 opposition MPs appeared (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

## Assam goes tough on illegal immigration

### State Cabinet approves relief, pay corrections, agricultural reforms on the table

**HT Bureau**

GUWAHATI, Sept 9: The Assam Cabinet, chaired by Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma at Lok Sewa Bhawan on Tuesday, approved several key decisions, with a particular focus on strengthening border management and tackling the growing challenge of illegal immigration, an official statement said.

Among the decisions, the Cabinet approved the framing of a Standard Operating Procedure under the Immigrants (Expulsion from Assam) Act, 1950, aimed at providing clear guidelines to District Commissioners and Senior Superintendents of Police on identifying and expelling illegal migrants.

The move comes amid growing concerns over unabated illegal immigration from neighboring countries, which the government says threatens the cultural and demographic fabric of the state.



Under the new procedure, if the District Commissioner receives information from the police or any other source that a person is suspected to be an illegal immigrant, the individual will be required to produce valid proof of citizenship within ten days.

If the submitted evidence is found unsatisfactory, the District Commissioner will issue a written opinion, identifying the individual as an illegal (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

## Himanta reviews preparations for PM's likely visit to Assam

GUWAHATI, Sept 9: Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma reviewed preparations for Prime Minister Narendra Modi's likely two-day visit to the state from September 13.

He also said Assam was all set to accord a rousing reception to the Prime Minister on his visit this week.

"Chaired meetings with various stakeholders to review preparations ahead of the ensuing visit of Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri @narendramodiji", the chief minister posted on 'X'.

The PM is expected to participate in a programme to mark the birth centenary celebrations of Bharat Ratna Dr Bhupen Hazarika and release a commemorative coin of Rs 100 dedicated to the legend, officials said.

On September 14, the PM is likely to visit Mangaldai in Darrang district, where he will inaugurate the (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

## Nepal in grip of crisis as PM Oli resigns following massive as anti-government protests

KATHMANDU, Sept 9: Nepal reeled under a serious political crisis on Tuesday as Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli resigned in the face of massive anti-government protests with the demonstrators attacking private residences of several high-profile leaders, headquarters of political parties and even vandalising the parliament, a day after 19 people died in police action against the agitators.

The students-led protests appeared to reflect the growing public anger with the Oli dispensation over a range of issues including a ban on social media and inaction against alleged corruption as the protesters, defying curfews and heavy deployment of security forces, resorted to arson and stormed various key buildings and establishments.

Hours before Oli's resignation, the protesters set on fire the Nepalese leader's private house in Balkot, and attacked properties of President Ramchandra Paudel, former prime minister Pushpa Kamal



Dahal, Communication minister Prithvi Subba Gurung, former home minister Ramesh Lekhak and former prime minister Sher Bahadur Deuba.

The intensity of the protests that began on Monday against the government's ban on social media sites grew on Tuesday with demonstrators taking out anti-government marches in all leading cities and towns.

Flight services at Tribhuvan International airport in Kathmandu have been partially suspended in view of the protests.

With the situation deteriorating

rapidly, the top brass of Nepali Army and other security agencies issued a joint appeal calling for restraint and resolution of the crisis through dialogue.

"As the prime minister's resignation has already been accepted by the president, we call upon all to restrain and not to allow more loss to life and property in this difficult situation," they said.

"A peaceful resolution through dialogue is the only way to restore order and stability," they said in a joint statement.

The statement was signed by Nepal Army chief Ashok Raj Sigdel, Chief Secretary Ek Narayan Aryal, Home Secretary Gokarna Dawadi, Chief of Armed Police Force (APF) Raju Aryal, Inspector General of Police Chandra Kuber Khapung and Chief of National Investigation Department Htutaj Thapa. Oli stepped down shortly after hundreds of agitators entered his office shouting slogans demanding his (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

## BJP may emerge as winner in BTC polls: Himanta

**HT Bureau**

GUWAHATI, Sept 9: Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Tuesday said the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has emerged as a serious contender in the upcoming Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) elections and could spring a surprise in the region that has traditionally been dominated by local parties.

Speaking to reporters, Sarma noted that the United People's Party Liberal (UPPL) and the Bodoland People's Front (BPF) have so far remained the two strongest players in Bodoland politics.

"In my assessment, UPPL and BPF were the dominant parties for the BTC polls and they continue to be stronger compared to the BJP. But given the fact that the BJP has been preparing for the upcoming polls in Bodoland, it would not be surprising if we emerge as a winner," he said.

The Chief Minister emphasised that beyond electoral competition, the primary purpose of the BTC

elections is to uphold and safeguard peace in the Bodoland region.

"The BTC polls are not just about power-sharing but also about protecting the peace that has been achieved after years of unrest," Sarma remarked.

Bodoland, which falls under the Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR), has a complex political landscape shaped by decades of movements for autonomy, armed insurgencies, and peace accords.

The BTC, an autonomous body under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution, governs areas spread across four districts — Kokrajhar, Chirang, Baksa, and Udalguri.

The BPF led by Hagrama Mohilary held sway over the BTC for nearly 17 years until the 2020 elections, when the UPPL, supported by the BJP, formed the council after a tough contest.

The BJP itself has been gradually expanding its organisational base in the BTR, riding on its alliance with the UPPL and the Asom (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

## State BJP sends relief materials to flood-affected people of Himachal Pradesh

**HT Bureau**

GUWAHATI, Sept 9: The Assam Pradesh BJP has extended its support to the people of Himachal Pradesh affected by recent floods and landslides, an official statement said on Tuesday.

Following days of torrential rainfall and cloudbursts, several districts of Himachal Pradesh including Gullu, Poonna, Shimla, Chamba, Barmour, Kangra, and Sunder Nagar have suffered severe damage, disrupting public life and displacing thousands.

In a gesture of solidarity, the Assam BJP, under the leadership of chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, dispatched ten truckloads of relief materials from Assam Bhawan, New Delhi.

The consignment includes 2,000 tarpaulins, 2,000 blankets, 1,000 bedding mattresses, over 2,000 track suits for men and women, 500 electric stoves, 500 school bags, and 500 sets of essential kitchen utensils. The relief materials were flagged off in the presence of State BJP President Dilip Saikia, Union Ministers Sarbananda Sonowal and Pabitra Margherita, MP and National Secretary Kamakhya Prasad Tasa, and State BJP In-charge Harish Dwivedi.

State BJP president Dilip Saikia remarked, "Service is the soul of the organisation — this is the principal mantra of the BJP. With this mantra as our guiding light, the BJP has always remained steadfast in serving the people. It is our moral and sacred duty to stand beside every distressed person of the State and the Nation. By sending this modest consignment of relief materials to the flood-affected people of Himachal Pradesh today, we feel that we have fulfilled a sacred responsibility."

## Govt resolves caste certificate issue for tea tribes, Adivasis: CM

**HT Bureau**

GUWAHATI, Sept 9: Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Tuesday announced that the long-pending demand for proper caste certificates for Assam's tea tribe and Adivasi communities has finally been settled through discussions with leading students' bodies.

Sarma said that after talks with the Assam Tea Tribe Students' Association (ATTSA) and the All Adivasi Students' Association of Assam (AASAA), the government has reached an "amicable resolution" and will soon issue a formal

notification.

The announcement comes close on the heels of a major protest in Tinsukia district, where hundreds of AASAA members blocked NH-37 at Makum demanding recognition of specific Adivasi identities in caste certificates. The protesters argued that the current system — which issues OBC certificates under four broad categories such as tea garden labourers, tea garden tribes, ex-tea garden labourers, and ex-tea garden tribes — undermines the historical and cultural distinctiveness of over 100 sub-groups

within the tea community.

Community leaders have long expressed concern that the identities of groups such as Santhal, Oraon, Munda, Kharia, Bhumij, Teli, Tanti, Kurmi, Karmakar, Mahato, Nagbansi, Kanika, and Rajgarh are being erased by such generalised classification. They had also warned the BJP government of political repercussions if the issue was not addressed before the next Assembly elections.

The Tinsukia demonstration had ended with a memorandum being handed over (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

## Assam's health department under lens with string of arrests of fake doctors

**HT Bureau**

GUWAHATI, Sept 9: Assam's health department is once again in the spotlight after police arrested another fake doctor, adding to a string of recent cases that have raised alarm about the presence of fraudulent medical practitioners across the state.

A senior police official of Cachar district said on Tuesday that they have apprehended one Pankaj Choudhury from a private hospital in the Ghungoor area of Silchar.

Choudhury was reportedly

working with forged medical certificates, including a fake degree from a hospital in Kazakhstan and another counterfeit MD certificate.

Police have started a detailed investigation into how he managed to secure employment in the hospital.

The incident follows several similar arrests across Assam in recent weeks.

In Kokrajhar, police nabbed Anisur Rahman, who allegedly posed as an MBBS doctor despite only holding a homeopathy degree. He had joined the National Mo-

bile Medical Unit on September 1 using a fake certificate.

A case under IPC sections has been registered against him at Kokrajhar police station.

Earlier, in Silchar, two others — Kamrul Islam and Tinku Mazumder — were arrested for allegedly posing as dentists.

Their arrest came after the Indian Dental Association filed a complaint.

Cachar SP Numal Mahatta confirmed that the probe into the case is still underway. Another arrest was reported (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

## Director of Archaeology urges halt to construction and vandalism at Ligeripukhuri

### Archaeology director instructs for preservation of Ahom era pond

GUWAHATI, Sept 9: The director of Archaeology on Tuesday asked the Sivasagar district commissioner to "stop construction and vandalism" at Ligeripukhuri, an Ahom era pond in Nazira town, in the interest of preservation of the cultural heritage of the state.

The Ahom dynasty ruled Assam for around 600 years between 1228 and 1826, with locals claiming that the Ligeripukhuri is believed to have been dug during the period.

The director also said that though the pond is not a protected site, it bears archaeological heritage of medieval Assam and can be protected under state rules.

The matter was raised before the



director of Archaeology by the leader of the opposition in the state Assembly Debabrata Saikia last month, after locals submitted writ-

ten complaints to the police and district administration alleging illegal constructions.

Director of Archaeology Deepi

Rekha Kouli, in a letter to the Sivasagar district commissioner, has requested that construction and vandalism be stopped at Ligeripukhuri.

She said the directorate had conducted an inspection of the Ligeripukhuri of the Ahom period and found that 1st Assam Police Battalion has laid a pipeline by drilling through the embankment of the historic tank for pumping water for drinking purposes.

Some locals have also laid pipes to use the water for household purposes, she added.

Kouli said that though the tank is not a protected site of the Directorate of (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

## Tezpur University officials hold discussions on setting up Indo-Russian think tank

GUWAHATI, Sept 9: Tezpur University Vice Chancellor Prof Shambhu Nath Singh met Indian embassy officials in Russia's Vladivostok to discuss the establishment of a joint Indo-Russian think tank on strategic policies.

The varsity delegation, which also included Director of International Affairs Prof Subhrangshu Sekhar Sarkar, met Indian Embassy's Deputy Chief of Mission Nikhilesh Giri and the Consul General in Vladivostok, Siddharta Gowrav, along with other senior officials, a release said on Tuesday.

"At the heart of the discussions was the proposal to establish a joint Indo-Russian think tank on



strategic policies for the future of education," Singh said.

The think tank is envisioned as a policy and research hub that will chart a structured roadmap for educational advancement across the Asia-Pacific region, he said.

It will draw upon shared experiences and best practices of India

and Russia, two nations with long traditions of higher education and innovation, the release said.

It aims to formulate a comprehensive educational strategy aligned with regional development priorities, to promote joint research and innovation in sectors critical to both nations, including aviation engineering, energy, oil and gas, environment, and digital transformation, it said.

The Consulate General of India emphasised that this effort builds upon the momentum of the Eastern Economic Forum, where Tezpur University had already initiated meaningful engagements with Russian counterparts, the release added. (PTI)



# Sensex rises by 314 pts on rebound in IT & FMCG stocks, US Fed rate cut hopes

MUMBAI, Sept 9: Benchmark Sensex rose by 314 points and Nifty closed above 24,850 on Tuesday following a rebound in IT and FMCG shares and hopes of a rate cut by the US Federal Reserve later this month.

Rising for the second day in a row, the 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 314.02 points or 0.39 per cent to settle at 81,101.32. During the day, it surged 394.07 points or 0.48 per cent to 81,181.37. Rising for the fifth consecutive day, the 50-share NSE Nifty rose by 95.45 points or 0.39 per cent to 24,868.60. Among Sensex firms, Infosys jumped 5.03 per cent after India's second-largest IT services company said its board will consider a proposal for buyback of equity shares on September 11. Tech Mahindra, Adani Ports, HCL Tech, Tata Consultancy Services, Sun Pharma, HUL, ITC and Bajaj Finserv were also among the gainers.

However, Trent, Eternal, Ultra-Tech Cement and NTPC were among the laggards.

"Markets closed higher on Tuesday, buoyed by strength in IT stocks following Infosys' announcement that its board will consider a share buyback on Sep-



tember 11. The news lifted sector sentiment," Hariprasad K, Research Analyst and Founder - Live-long Wealth, said.

"The markets closed on a positive note following a sharp rally in IT sector stocks. Investor sentiment turned distinctly positive in IT, which emerged as the day's clear outperformer. The rally was led by Infosys, Tech Mahindra, Wipro, and HCLTech, after Infosys announced a board meeting to consider a share buyback. This domestic trigger, coupled with global optimism around a potential US

Fed rate cut following weak US jobs data, lifted risk appetite," Ponnudi R, CEO of Enrich Money, an online trading and wealth tech firm, said.

The BSE smallcap gauge edged higher by 0.22 per cent and midcap index went up by 0.20 per cent.

Among sectoral indices, BSE Focused IT jumped 2.89 per cent, IT surged 2.76 per cent, while tech (2.18 per cent), healthcare (0.67 per cent) and FMCG (0.54 per cent) also gained.

Oil & Gas, realty, energy, consumer discretionary, auto and

power were the laggards. "Conversely, auto stocks came under pressure due to profit booking after recent gains on GST rationalisation. The market sentiment is likely to remain range-bound amid lingering uncertainties over global trade negotiations," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Investments, Ltd said.

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

European markets were trading on a mixed note. US markets ended higher on Monday.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth ₹ 2,170.35 crore on Monday, while Domestic Institutional Investors (DIIs) bought stocks worth ₹ 3,014.30 crore, according to exchange data. Global oil benchmark Brent crude climbed 0.80 per cent to USD 66.55 a barrel.

On Monday, the Sensex edged higher by 76.54 points or 0.09 per cent to settle at 80,787.30, and the Nifty ended marginally higher by 32.15 points or 0.13 per cent at 24,773.15. (PTI)

## Govt directs manufacturers to revise MRP on unsold stock as GST rates change

NEW DELHI, Sept 9: The government on Tuesday directed manufacturers and importers to declare revised maximum retail prices (MRP) on unsold stock to reflect changes in goods and services tax (GST) rates, with the deadline set for December 31 or until stocks are exhausted, whichever is earlier.

The directive comes as the government has reduced GST on various products and services, which will come into effect from September 22. "As per the new GST rates,

manufacturers, packers, and importers can revise the MRP on unsold stock until 31st December 2025 (or until stock lasts)," Union Food and Consumer Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi said in a social media post on X. The minister emphasised that the revised prices must reflect GST changes only. "Any increase or decrease in price can only match the tax change," Joshi said.

According to the directive, the new MRP should be declared with a sticker, stamp or online print,

while ensuring the original MRP remains visible.

The government has also mandated that manufacturers, packers or importers make at least two advertisements in one or more newspapers regarding the price revision.

They must also inform dealers and state/central government officials about the change in prices of such packages. Companies are required to inform consumers through advertisements and public notices. (PTI)

Contd. from Page 1...

## Archaeology director instructs

Archaeology, the Ligeripukhuri, being a historical site bearing archaeological heritage of the medieval Assam, can be protected as per 'The Assam Ancient Monuments and Records Rules, 1959' and 'The Assam Ancient Monuments and Records Rules, 1964'.

"I therefore, kindly request you to take the necessary steps to stop damage to the embankment at the historic tank 'Ligeripukhuri' for the interest of preservation of the cultural heritage of Assam," the director added. (PTI)

## Assam's health department

from Charaideo district, where Abhishek Shah, who had been posted at the Naharhahi tea estate hospital, was caught practicing with fake credentials. Shah was also treating patients in private pharmacies at Lakwa. His arrest followed a complaint lodged by the Anti-Quackery and Vigilance Officer of the Assam Council of Medical Registration. The series of arrests has sparked concerns over public health and safety, as fake doctors continue to infiltrate the state's medical system. Officials have appealed to people to remain vigilant, verify the credentials of medical professionals, and immediately report any suspicious cases to the authorities.

## Govt resolves caste

to the local administration, while AASAA vowed to intensify its agitation unless concrete action was taken. With the Chief Minister's latest assurance, tensions are expected to ease for now. However, both ATTSA and AASAA have made it clear that the community will wait for the official government order before deciding if their demand for recognition of distinct caste identities has truly been fulfilled.

The resolution holds significant political weight as the tea tribe and Adivasi population remain one of Assam's most influential voting blocs, often playing a decisive role in electoral outcomes.

## Himanta reviews preparations

Guwahati-Ring Road, a bridge over the Brahmaputra river, connecting Kuruwa and Narengi in Guwahati, and also lay the foundation stone for the Mangaldai Medical College Hospital, they said.

After that, the PM is also expected to leave for Numaligarh Refinery Limited (NRL) in Golaghat district and dedicate to the nation the bio-ethanol plant, set up at a cost of ₹ 4,200 crore, the officials added. (PTI)

## Nepal in grip of

ouster for the death of at least 19 people in police action during the protests on Monday as well as for his alleged "inaction" against widespread corruption. In his resignation letter to President Ramchandra Paudel, the 73-year-old Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist-Leninist) cited the "extraordinary circumstances" facing Nepal and said he is quitting to pave the way for a "constitutional and political" resolution of the current situation.

Oli, known to be close to China, had become the prime minister in July 2024 for the fourth time with the support from the Nepali Congress Party. He was scheduled to visit India this month. Though the Nepal government last night revoked its ban on social media websites following the protests led by 'Gen Z' youths, the agitators continued their demonstration against corruption and demanding accountability for deaths of 19 people.

The agitators under the banner of Gen Z, shouted slogans such as "KP Chor, Desh Chhod" (KP thief, leave the country) and "Take Action Against Corrupt Leaders". Protesters also torched the residence of former home minister Ramesh Lekhak at Naikap in Kathmandu, just a day after he resigned from his post, according to officials.

Demonstrations were reported from Kalanki, Kalimati, Tahachal, and Baneshwor in Kathmandu, as well as Chyasal, Chapagau, and Thecho areas of Lalitpur district. Protesters, mostly students, chanted slogans such as "Don't kill students", defying the restrictions on public gatherings. In Kalanki, demonstrators burnt tyres to block roads from the early hours of the morning, according to eyewitness accounts.

The agitating youths also pelted stones at the residence of Communication Minister Prithvi Subba Gurung in Sunakothi at Lalitpur district, eye witnesses said. Gurung had ordered a ban on the social media sites.

They also vandalised former PM Sher Bahadur Deuba's house at Budhanilkantha in Kathmandu. The Gen Z group, which has been campaigning against corruption for some time, has used social media platforms like Reddit and Instagram to expose what they called the "extravagant lifestyles of the children of ministers and other influential figures." They have posted videos and images, questioning the sources of wealth that fund such opulence, purportedly derived from corrupt practices.

The ban of social media sites was an attempt to suppress freedom of speech, the agitators said. The Nepalese government had ordered the ban of 26 social media sites, including Facebook and 'X', over their failure to register with the government. However, in a late-night development on Monday, the government announced the restoration of access to social media platforms, in an apparent bid to ease public anger.

Among the other demands of the protesters include guarantee for freedom of expression, and the introduction of a retirement age for those holding political office, according to Gen Z activists.

Nepal Army has also issued a separate statement expressing its commitment to protect the country's independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity, independence and national unity. "We are analysing the latest developments of the Gen Z movement being launched in Nepal in the recent period," it said. (PTI)

## BJP may emerge as

Gana Parishad (AGP). In earlier statements, Sarma had underlined the importance of political stability in the region, insisting that "permanent peace" in Bodoland is crucial for the overall development of Assam.

He has also projected the BJP as a party capable of balancing local aspirations with the state's broader development goals.

As preparations for the BTC polls gather pace, the Chief Minister's latest comments signal the BJP's intent to test its electoral strength independently in one of Assam's most politically sensitive regions.

## NDA's Radhakrishnan elected

to include several invalid votes. Some opposition leaders had appealed to MPs' conscience in the polls to support Reddy, and the senior BJP leader's comments were seen as a retort to them.

"Congratulations to Thiru CP Radhakrishnan Ji on winning the 2025 Vice Presidential election. His life has always been devoted to serving society and empowering the poor and marginalised," Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on X. "I am confident that he will be an outstanding VP, who will strengthen our Constitutional values and enhance Parliamentary discourse," he said.

Radhakrishnan would be India's 15th vice president when he is sworn in to the post. Reddy said he humbly accepts the result and wished vice president-elect Radhakrishnan the very best as he embarks upon his tenure. The poll was necessitated due to the sudden resignation of Jagdeep Dhankhar on July 21, almost two years before his term was to end. The electoral college for the vice presidential election comprises a total of 788 members - 245 from the Rajya Sabha and 543 from the Lok Sabha. The present strength of the electoral college is 781 as six seats are vacant in the Rajya Sabha and one in the Lok Sabha.

The BJP-led NDA had on paper 427 MPs in its alliance, with the YSR Congress also extending the support of its 11 MPs to its candidate. Some MPs representing smaller parties also backed Radhakrishnan.

The Congress congratulated the NDA nominee on his win, and said its ideological battle against the ruling alliance will continue "undiminished". (PTI)

## Assam goes tough on

immigrant based on facts and reasons. The expulsion process will be swift and decisive.

The District Commissioner is empowered to pass an expulsion order under Section 2(a) of the Act, directing the migrant to leave Assam within 24 hours. Those already declared foreigners by the Foreign Tribunals will not require further identification, and expulsion orders will be issued immediately. Biometric and demographic details of identified individuals will be captured on the Foreigners Identification Portal to ensure tracking and enforcement. If the individual fails to comply, the District Commissioner, with assistance from law enforcement, may detain the person in a Holding Centre or hand them over to the nearest border guarding force under Section 4 of the Act.

In cases where illegal migrants are detected near the zero line or within 12 hours of entry, they will be pushed back immediately without undergoing further procedures. Chief minister Sarma underscored the government's commitment to safeguarding the indigenous population and strengthening Assam's security and administrative apparatus. Officials present at the meeting noted that the SOP would act as a comprehensive framework to curb illegal migration, ensure effective border enforcement, and maintain law and order in the state.

In addition to addressing the illegal migration issue, the Cabinet approved ex post facto financial assistance of ₹ 5 crore from the Chief Minister's Scheme for Public Emergency to the Chief Minister Relief Fund in Himachal Pradesh, aimed at providing relief from monsoon-related disasters.

The Cabinet also approved correction of pay anomalies affecting 20 employees, including physiotherapists and accountants at Jorhat Medical College and other hospitals, ensuring parity with direct entry scales.

Furthermore, to modernize the agricultural sector, the Cabinet approved amendments to the Assam Agricultural Produce and Livestock Marketing Act, 2020.

The amendments align the state's marketing policies with evolving trends, enhancing market access for small and marginal farmers and promoting transparent bidding for better price realisation.

The Cabinet's decisions reflect Assam's holistic approach toward governance—balancing humanitarian relief, employee welfare, economic reforms, and stringent border management—with illegal immigration emerging as a top priority for ensuring the state's security, stability, and cultural integrity.

## BSA Gold Star marks first anniversary in India

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, Sept 9: BSA Gold Star is celebrating its first anniversary in India with an exchange programme and a limited-edition accessory kit as part of its festive season offering, an official statement said.

Reintroduced in India last year, the 650cc BSA Gold Star has been lauded for blending British design heritage with contemporary engineering.

To mark the milestone, customers can exchange any two-wheeler for up to ₹10,000 in value and receive a curated accessory kit worth ₹5,896.

The total benefits, including an exchange bonus, amount to ₹15,896. Purchases made before September 21, 2025, can avail savings of up to ₹23,702 on the ex-showroom price in Delhi, following the revised pricing after GST 2.0 reforms.

The limited-edition "Goldie-kit" includes a tall windshield, a pillion backrest, a polished exhaust guard, and a rear rail, designed to enhance both comfort and style.

Sharad Agarwal, Chief Business Officer of Classic Legends, said, "Since its launch in India, the BSA Gold Star has found a loyal following. It takes forward the BSA spirit in a form that feels classic yet contemporary. Marking one year here makes us proud, and this initiative is our way of thanking riders for their trust and welcoming more enthusiasts to the BSA family."

The exchange programme will run from August 23 to September 23, 2025.

## Sunsilk marks bold new era with Mohan Sisters, sets world record with 'Nachdi Kudi'

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, Sept 9: Sunsilk, one of India's leading haircare brands, has launched a refreshed identity and a cultural campaign in collaboration with the Mohan Sisters, setting a new Asian World Record, an official statement said.

The brand's relaunch includes modern packaging, updated design, and contemporary storytelling that highlight its evolution into a science-backed and future-ready brand. The campaign celebrates individuality, sisterhood, and self-expression while staying relevant and innovative for today's generation.

As part of the initiative, Sunsilk partnered with the Mohan Sisters for Nachdi Kudi, a music video featuring 16 dance forms in a single track – a record certified by the Asian Book of Records.

Neeti Mohan lent her voice, Shakti Mohan choreographed and performed, and Mukti Mohan added energy on screen.

The video introduces Bouncenatam, symbolising the bounce, beauty, and confidence that Sunsilk's products inspire.

The project brought together top industry talents including director Ruel Dausan

Varindani, composer Vikram Montrose, lyricist Kunaal Vermaa, and mixing engineer Eric Pillai.

The campaign was executed by HUL's agency Mindshare, in collaboration with Dharma Cornerstone Agency.

Sairam Subramanian, Vice President, Haircare, Unilever, said, "This record-breaking music video Nachdi Kudi with the Mohan sisters is a cultural celebration of music, dance, sisterhood and self-expression." Amin Lakhani, President, Client Solutions, WPP Media South Asia, added, "With Sunsilk's relaunch, we wanted to go beyond communication and create a cultural celebration... This campaign reflects the bold new identity of Sunsilk – modern, confident, and rooted in creativity."

Neeti Mohan expressed, "Being part of this campaign and setting a World Record has been an incredible experience... it truly celebrates confidence and the joy of expression." Shakti Mohan said, "Choreographing 16 diverse dance styles was both a challenge and a dream come true... it gave me the chance to showcase the richness of Indian and global dance forms while celebrating creativity and self-expression."

## HDFC Bank unveils festive treats 2025 with over 10,000 offers

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, Sept 9: HDFC Bank, one of India's largest private sector banks, has launched its annual festive campaign, Festive Treats 2025, offering customers more than 10,000 discounts and cashback opportunities across various products and services, an official statement said on Monday.

The campaign, aimed at making festive shopping more affordable and rewarding, features offers on personal loans, business loans, car loans, two-wheeler loans, home loans, gold loans, agri loans, commercial vehicles, credit and debit cards, savings accounts, PayZapp, and EASYEMI, among others.

Customers can save up to ₹50,000 on festive purchases made through HDFC Bank credit cards and EASYEMI options.

Leading brands such as LG and Google Pixel are part of the campaign, with cashback offers of up to ₹50,000 and ₹10,000 respectively.

The offers are applicable across product categories including apparel, electronics, dining, travel, and jewellery.

The campaign will be rolled out in phases, aligned with key festivals including Onam, Ganesh Chaturthi, Navratri, Durga Puja, and Diwali.

This phased approach is designed to ensure the offers remain timely and relevant for customers across the country.

HDFC Bank will leverage its network of 9,499 branches, 21,251 ATMs, and over six lakh merchant and dealer touchpoints.

The bank also plans more than 37,000 on-ground activations at retail centres, residential complexes, and offices to bring the offers closer to customers.

Parag Rao, Country Head – Payments, Liability Products, Consumer Finance and Marketing at HDFC Bank, said, "As the country begins to wrap itself in festive delights, we bring to our consumers myriad offers that provide tangible value, which enable them to celebrate while spending smart through the convenience of our cards, loans, PayZapp and EASYEMI."

Ravi Santhanam, Group Head and CMO, Head – Direct to Consumer Products at HDFC Bank, added, "A multi-year franchise, Festive Treats is like a clarion call for the festive season. We bring these curated offers to our customers through our strong physical and digital footprint. By rolling out Festive Treats in phases from Onam through to Diwali with hyperlocal activations, we will ensure that the offers are not only compelling but also deeply relevant to local communities."

**Office of the Commissioner**  
**Panchayat & Rural Development Department**  
**Juripar, Panjabari, Guwahati, Assam**

Applications are invited for State Program Manager and State Program Executive (Data Analysis and Management) in Contractual positions under PMAY-G in the Office of the Commissioner, Panchayat & Rural Development Department, Assam.

**Positions:** State Program Manager and State Program Executive (Data Analysis and Management)

**Key dates:**  
Application Start Date: 10<sup>th</sup> September 2025 10:00 Hrs  
Application Last Date: 30<sup>th</sup> September 2025 23:59 Hrs

**For details and application process please visit:** <https://rural.assam.gov.in>

Sd/-  
Commissioner,  
Panchayat and Rural Development, Assam

DIPR /D/ HLT 155 10-SEP-25

**OFFICE OF THE ASSAM STATE LEVEL EMRS SOCIETY**  
**Directorate of Tribal Affairs (Plain), Assam**  
**Rukmini Nagar, Guwahati-781006**

No. DTA(PYEMRS/Misc/Pt-II/188/2025/

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Applications are invited from the eligible female candidates for engagement of Female Staff Nurse for the following Eklavya Model Residential School (EMRS). The nature of engagement is **purely contractual** for the Academic year 2025-26 or till the appointment of regular staff by NESTS, whichever is earlier.

Sl. No.	Position	Name of EMRS	Nos. of posts	Eligibility Criteria
1	Female Staff Nurse	Kharadhara, Dist: Bajali	1	1. <b>Either</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>B.Sc (Hons.) in Nursing from a recognized University/Institute.</li><li>OR</li><li>Regular course in B.Sc Nursing from a recognized University/Institute.</li><li>OR</li><li>Post Basic B.Sc Nursing from a recognized University/Institute.</li></ul>
		Jalah, Dist: Baksa	1	
		Jonai, Dist: Dhemaji	1	
		Howraghat, Dist: Karbi Anglong	1	
		Ardaapur, Dist: Dima Hasao	1	2. <b>AND</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>GNM (General Nursing and Midwifery) from recognized University/Institute.</li><li>Two and Half years' experience in minimum 30 bedded Hospital after acquiring (1) above.</li></ul>
				3. Registered as a Nurse or Nurse Mid-wife (RN or RM) with any State Nursing Council.

The details of the advertisement can be downloaded from <http://directoratetribalaffairsplain.assam.gov.in>.

Sd/-  
**Director, Tribal Affairs (Plain), Assam**  
&  
**Member Secretary, Assam State Level EMRS Society**

DIPR /D/ HLT 156 10-Sep-25



# 'When we discuss the situation in Assam or the world, there are two trends'

## Broad political platform needed to oust BJP from power: CPI(M)'s M A Baby

**GUWAHATI, Sept 9:** Accusing the central government of trampling the Constitutional framework in the country, CPI(M) general secretary M A Baby on Tuesday called for a broad political platform to oust the BJP from power.

He urged the Leftist forces to study the political trends in the country closely, take people into confidence, communicate with them and mobilise them under the 'red flag' so that the rights of the people can be protected.

Baby, on his first visit to Assam after taking over the top position of the party, was speaking at a programme on the theme 'Current Situation and the Role of the Left'.

The programme was organised on the first death anniversary of former CPI(M) general secretary Sitaram Yechury.

"When we discuss the situation in Assam or the world, there are two trends. One is of extreme reactionary, anti-people, rightist forces which emerge to dominate people. At the same time, there is another progressive force which organises the deprived, marginalised, working class."

"These forces are there in every part of the globe. Even if rightist forces emerge, progressive voices will prevail," the veteran CPI(M) leader asserted.



He accused US President Donald Trump and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi of being "part of the forces which try to exploit, oppress and dominate the people".

"The Modi government is misusing Constitutional institutions such as central investigating agencies and autonomous Constitutional bodies like the Election Commission. It has been trampling the Constitutional framework of the country," Baby alleged.

He referred to the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA), 2019, which offers Indian citizenship to persecuted religious minorities from select neighbouring countries, and claimed that it was "against the spirit of the Constitution as religious identity cannot be criteria for citizenship".

"The Modi government takes care of only the Ambanis and Adanis. It needs to be exposed. The BJP must be removed from power.

For that, we have to develop a broad political platform," Baby asserted.

Assam is a 'good model' in creating a united platform against the saffron party," he added.

The CPI(M) general secretary also criticised Modi for 'praising' the RSS during his Independence Day speech from the ramparts of Red Fort.

He maintained that it was to warm up to the organisation, which

holds sway over the BJP, as Modi will be turning 75 years of age later this month, the threshold earlier fixed for party leaders to side-step from active political role.

"Now Modi is at 75 and he wants RSS support to continue as the PM," Baby claimed.

Taking a hit at Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, he accused the BJP leader of trying to divide the state on religious lines, and claimed that several anti-minority laws have been passed by his government.

He cited the ban on inter-religion land transfer without the CM's authorisation and stopping new Aadhaar enrolment for adults in the state as instances of "anti-minority decisions".

Baby also questioned the BJP for accepting Sarma into its fold after initially bringing corruption charges against him.

"The BJP had called Himanta Biswa Sarma a corrupt leader, but all problems were solved when he joined the saffron party," he claimed.

Speaking on the high tariffs on Indian products imposed by US President Trump, Baby said this will impact Assam's tea sector as its exports to America might decline on account of increased prices there. (PTI)

## Assam BJP demands apology from Kharge

Centenary year of Bharat Ratna Dr Bhupen Hazarika commences

**HT Bureau**

**GUWAHATI, Sept 9:** In consonance with the birthday of Sudhakantha Dr Bhupen Hazarika, from yesterday has commenced the Centenary Year Celebrations of Bharat Ratna Bhupen Hazarika. Yesterday was a day of immense pride for us as the Assamese nation. A special write-up on Bhupen Hazarika, the heartbeat of the Assamese people, authored by Prime Minister Narendra Modi himself, was published yesterday in almost all major newspapers of India from Kashmir to Kanyakumari, from Gujarat to Arunachal Pradesh.

For this noble endeavour of taking Bharat Ratna Bhupen Da, the heartbeat of the Assamese people, as the brand ambassador of India before the global stage, the Assam State BJP, through a press conference at the State Party Headquarters, has conveyed reverence, gratitude, and heartfelt thanks to the Prime Minister Narendra Modi, through its spokespersons Dr. Devajit Mahanta and Kishore Bhattacharya.

It may be recalled that in 2019, under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Government of India conferred posthumously the highest civilian award, Bharat Ratna, upon Sudhakantha Bhupen Hazarika. The people of Assam, along with the countless admirers of the Bard, have not forgotten that at that very time, the present President of the Indian National Congress, Mallikarjun Kharge, expressed sorrow and resentment that such an "ordinary singer" as Bhupen Hazarika should be conferred the Bharat Ratna honour. In the press meet, spokespersons Dr. Mahanta and Bhattacharya asserted the demand that Mallikarjun Kharge must, in the interest of the nation and society, tender an apology before the people.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who has addressed Bhupen Hazarika as the heartbeat of the People, on the occasion of his centenary year, will be paid tribute through year-long programmes organised by the Government of Assam at both national and state levels. Chief Minister Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma has already appealed to every Bihu committee of Assam to dedicate one evening of their Bihu celebrations as "Dr Bhupen Hazarika Evening." Furthermore, the Chief Minister has announced that centenary programmes dedicated to Bhupen Hazarika will also be organised in Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, West Bengal, Mumbai, and Delhi. To offer homage to Bhupen Da, Prime Minister Narendra Modi himself shall grace as Chief Guest the inaugural ceremony of the year-long programme being organised by the Government of Assam on 13th September.

## Governor inaugurates BIMSTEC Youth Leaders Summit 2025



**HT Bureau**

**GUWAHATI, Sept 9:** Assam Governor Lakshman Prasad Acharya today inaugurated the BIMSTEC Youth Leaders Summit 2025, a gathering of emerging leaders from the Bay of Bengal region, at a city hotel in Guwahati. The summit is being hosted by the Bharat Scouts and Guides under the aegis of the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India.

Addressing the delegates, Governor Shri Acharya described the summit as a confluence of ideas, a celebration of cultures, and a foundation for future possibilities. He emphasized the unifying role of BIMSTEC the Bay of Bengal initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation which brings together seven nations namely India, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, and Thailand. "This platform unites us not just geographically, but emotionally, culturally, civilizational, and historically," the Governor said. Acharya extended his heartfelt appreciation to the Bharat Scouts and Guides for their pivotal

role in organizing the event. He praised the organization for upholding the values of service, peace, harmony, and inclusivity that are increasingly relevant in today's interconnected world.

Highlighting the strategic significance of the BIMSTEC, Acharya noted that the real strength of the region lies in its youth. He commended that today's young generation is rising above borders to become bridges of peace, collaboration, and innovation in areas such as trade, technology, tourism, and environmental protection.

Acharya thanked the organizer for choosing Guwahati as the venue for the BIMSTEC Summit. Recalling the rich legacy of youth leadership in Northeast India, the Governor paid tribute to iconic freedom fighters such as Kanaklata Barua of Assam, Bir Tikendrajit Singh and Rani Gaidinliu of Manipur, and Tirok Singh of Meghalaya, calling them eternal sources of inspiration for generations to come. The summit, supported by the Government of India, seeks to empower youth as catalysts of in-

novation, development, and social change. Acharya remarked that national missions like Startup India, Skill India, and Atmanirbhar Bharat will gain renewed momentum through such initiatives.

Quoting Hon'ble Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Governor said, "If you call yourself a leader, then you have to be decisive. If you are decisive, then you have the chance to be a leader. These are two sides to the same coin." This sums up the essence of the summit, urging youth to embrace the Prime Minister's call for reform, perform and transform.

Governor Acharya encouraged young leaders to focus on skills, innovation, digital learning, student exchange, and joint research. He emphasized the importance of aligning with campaigns like "Vocal for Local" to achieve both economic empowerment and cultural self-reliance.

The Governor further called upon the youth to engage proactively in tackling global challenges such as climate change, natural disasters, and environmental degradation and reminded them that leadership is not merely a position, but a responsibility toward society, the nation, and humanity. As the summit brings together dynamic youth leaders from BIMSTEC countries, it promises to be a powerful platform for collaboration, policy dialogue, and building a shared vision for the future.

Joint Secretary, BIMSTEC & SAARC Division, Ministry of External Affairs, GoI C.S.R. Ram, President of Bharat Scouts and Guides Dr Anil Kumar Jain, Chief National Commissioner of Bharat Scouts and Guides, Dr K.K. Khandalwal along with a host of other dignitaries were present on the occasion.

## Medicine dealers association holds workshop

**HT Correspondent**

**HAFLONG, Sept 9:** The Dima Hasao Medicine Dealers Association organised a day-long training workshop on the furnishing of details of existing licenses Form 20/21 issued to retail pharmacies and chemists across the district on the newly introduced Ease of Doing Business (EODB) service portal.

Bonrai Rongmai, Inspector of Drugs, Hojai & in-charge of Dima Hasao, provided valuable insights on the topic. The workshop began with a welcome address and the felicitation of Rongmai with a traditional Assamese gamocha by Nirmal Singh, Chairman of the Association.

During the technical session, Rongmai explained the importance of uploading license details on the EODB portal as part of the government's digitalization initiative to ensure transparency and efficiency in pharmacy operations. He gave a live demonstration of the step-by-step process, including data entry, submission of annexures, system acknowledgment, and final approval by the concerned Inspector of Drugs. Rongmai also elaborated on key provisions of Forms 20-21, Schedules H, H-1, C, and C(i) covering both biological and non-biological drugs, as well as psychotropic substances. He emphasized the need to strictly maintain records under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940 and the Drugs and Cosmetics Rules, 1945, which regulate the import, manufacture, distribution, and sale of drugs and cosmetics to ensure safety and quality. He further highlighted the importance of displaying valid licenses prominently at pharmacy premises, maintaining hygiene, and ensuring proper cold storage facilities. Assuring his continued cooperation, Rongmai urged members to follow all regulatory guidelines.

Speaking on the occasion, Nirmal Singh encouraged members to comply with the notifications issued by the Drug Controller of Assam to uphold transparency in day-to-day business practices.

Members from different parts of the district, including Umrangso, Maibang, Harangajao, and Haflong, participated in the workshop. They expressed their gratitude to Inspector Rongmai for his valuable guidance and termed the programme an eye-opener, enabling them to improve their operations and serve the community more effectively.

## Cachar pays tribute to Dr Bhupen Hazarika on centenary

**HT Bureau**

**GUWAHATI, Sept 9:** As the entire state of Assam paid homage to Bharat Ratna Dr Bhupen Hazarika on his birth centenary on 8th September, Cachar district, along with Lakhimpur co-district and the newly formed Dholai co-district, joined the commemorations with deep reverence and admiration.

The day-long programmes reflected the bard's enduring message of cultural unity and humanism, with tributes led by Cachar's District Commissioner, Mridul Yadav, IAS, and Co-District Commissioner of Dholai, Raktim Baruah.

The morning in Silchar began with the soulful notes of Dr. Bhupen Hazarika's iconic songs played across the town through the fixed loudspeaker system of the Regional Office of Information and Public Relations, Barak Valley Zone. Soon after, at the Cachar District Commissioner's office, Mridul Yadav, along with Phyllis Hrangchal, Assistant Commissioner and IC DDIPR Barak Valley Zone Silchar, Deepa Das, and senior officials of the district administration, offered floral tributes at the portrait of the maestro. The solemn ceremony, attended by staff and officers, honoured the singer, poet, and reformer who gave voice to the collective aspirations of Assam and India.

The celebrations extended beyond Silchar, with vibrant participation from Lakhimpur and Dholai. In the newly created Dholai co-dis-

trict, Co-District Commissioner Raktim Baruah graced the occasion as chief guest and delivered a powerful tribute. "Dr. Bhupen Hazarika was not just an artist, he was an era, he was a movement, he was the voice of the voiceless," Baruah said. Recalling Hazarika as the "Bard of the Brahmaputra," he added, "His music carried the fragrance of our soil, the hopes of our people, and the dreams of generations. Through his music, he taught us that art is not merely for entertainment but for enlightenment, for awakening the human spirit."

Baruah also spoke at length about the artist's journey from a prodigious childhood in Assam to becoming a global cultural icon. "Born on 8th September 1926, Dr. Hazarika was a child prodigy, singing in Assamese films at the age of 12, later carrying Assam in his heart as he studied in Banaras and the United States. Who can forget songs like Bistino Parore, which echo the cry for unity and equality? In him, we find not just a singer, but a reformer, a dreamer, and above all, a humanitarian," he addressed the gathering, drawing loud applause.

Cultural fervour was at its peak across the district, with schools and organisations joining hands to celebrate the centenary. At Gandhi Bhawan in Silchar, a "Bhupendra Sangeet" competition drew enthusiastic participation from students across Cachar, their youthful voices paying homage to the maestro's immortal songs. Similar competitions

were also held in Lakhimpur Co-District and Dholai Co-District with prizes distributed to winners to encourage young talents. As dusk fell in Silchar, Bonga Bhawan turned into a vibrant stage.

Speaking at the event, Mridul Yadav described Dr Bhupen Hazarika as "a voice that united the soul of India," reminding the gathering how his music transcended boundaries of caste, creed, and language. He highlighted the pride of Cachar in contributing 19 participants to the grand chorus in Khanapara, Guwahati, on September 13, where 1,000 singers from every district of Assam will render the bard's iconic songs before Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Chief Minister Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma, ministers, legislators, and cultural dignitaries.

"This is a historic moment where the message of Dr Hazarika will reverberate across the nation, and Cachar will be proudly represented both by its young singers and by 20 eminent personalities invited by the district administration," DC Yadav quipped.

Earlier, in her welcome address, Assistant Commissioner and Branch Officer of the District Cultural Affairs Department, Deepa Das, spoke at length on Dr Hazarika's life and work, reminding the gathering how his music embodied justice, compassion, and resilience. Later, prizes were handed over by District Commissioner Mridul Yadav to the winners of the singing competition.

## AJYCP stages protest, demands repeal of CAA

**HT Correspondent**

**BOKAJAN, Sept 9:** The Asom Jatiyatibadi Yuba-Chatra Parishad (AJYCP), Bokajan Regional Committee, staged a protest demanding the repeal of the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA). Protesters raised their voices against the Central Government's decision to extend the application period under CAA by 10 years. Carrying banners and festoons, a huge number of AJYCP members shouted anti-BJP slogans, creating a heated atmosphere across Bokajan.

## Training on scientific nursery bed preparation held

**HT Bureau**

**DIPHU, Sept 9:** Under 'Green Revolution Assam, 2025' a one day training programme on nursery bed preparation with scientific method on horticulture crops and medical plants was organised by Asom Rajyik Krishak Samannay Samiti, Guwahati in collaboration with Karbi Anglong Environment development Society held at Bakulia stadium on September 8 last.

The resource person Agriculture Development Officer (ADO), Bakulia Circle, Mantu Saikia explained to the trainees on the above mentioned topic on how to prepare nursery beds with scientific approach and plantation of horticulture plants.

by UNESCO were already executed by him. He was pioneer in areas like symbolism, drama etc. His contribution extended to national sphere also. His Ankiya bhāṇā were trendsetters in medieval Indian theatre. But some people spread disinformation about him from time to time.

The book by Dr Sanjib Kr Borkakoti discusses several such issues. The overall purpose of the book is to give an accurate evaluation of Srimanta Sankaradeva. There are numerous colour photographs also in the book about the Sankaradeva legacy. It has been published by Bedakantha Books & Publications.

It may be mentioned that Dr Sanjib Kr Borkakoti has authored and edited about seventy books on diverse disciplines, more than half of them being on Srimanta Sankaradeva's life and contributions.

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## Golaghat observes 10<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of Dr Bhupen Hazarika

**HT Correspondent**

**GOLAGHAT, Sept 9:** The Golaghat district administration celebrated the inaugural function of the 10th birth anniversary of the bard of Brahmaputra, the legendary Dr. Bhupen Hazarika yesterday. The programme began with a floral tribute to the portrait of Dr. Bhupen Hazarika at the district commissioner's office, Golaghat and other govt. offices, performing two of his soulful songs -- "Manuhe Manuhor Babe" and "Axiom amar rupahi" by the school children in the morning assembly, quiz and essay competition, Bhupendra sangeet competition, seminars at college and university levels, colorful procession, followed by lighting of 100 earthen lamps at the Bhupen Hazarika statue campus in presence of the finance minister Ajanta Neog. A cultural programme was organized by the administration on the occasion at the District Library Auditorium reflecting the multifaceted genius--a singer, composer, writer, editor, journalist and film maker whose work go beyond the territories and encourage generation.

## Dr Sanjib Kr Borkakoti's book 'Outlook of Srimanta Sankaradeva' released

**HT Correspondent**

**NAGAON, Sept 9:** A new book of Dr Sanjib Kr Borkakoti, "Outlook of Srimanta Sankaradeva" was released at Bardowa during the national seminar on Srimanta Sankaradeva organised by Kumbha Surakshya Parishad.

The book was released by a galaxy of intellectuals including Supreme Court advocate Aswini Upadhyaya, former VC of Ravindranath Thakur University Prof Amalendu Chakraborty, HoD in International Institute for Population Sciences Prof Nandita Saikia, Acharya Kurpati Maharaj from Ayodhya, Swami Nanda Saraswati from Puri, social activist Satya Ranjan Bora and several other scholars and religious Gurus from different parts of India. Aswini Upadhyaya opined that details about Srimanta Sankaradeva should

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<https://www.iapt.org.in>



## QUOTE OF THE DAY

*If one does not know to which port one is sailing, no wind is favorable. -Lucius Annaeus Seneca*

## Japanese investment in India

Japan committed investment in India worth Yen 10 trillion (US \$ 65 Billion) in the next decade. This is more than what Japan Invested in India till now. (US\$ 44 Billion). The moot point for enhanced investment is to make India hub for alternative supply chain. Hitherto, China was the promising destination for Japanese investment in Asia over one and half decade. Nonetheless, the trend underwent into a turnaround with the bursting of COVID pandemic and incentive from Japan to shift from China. India topped China in 2023 and became the second biggest investment destination in Asia. The overturn in the investment direction was accelerated by the visit to Japan by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi on August 29 and 30 before attending SCO summit on August 31 apart from his bilateral meeting with the Chinese President Xi Jinping. The new investment will be encouraged in energy saving and new technology, besides automobile. In this regard, India-Japan Joint Credit Mechanism (JCM) pitches for cooperation between two countries to reduce greenhouse gas emission in India. Both sides aimed to launch sustainable fuel initiative and battery supply chain partnership, which will pose a new challenge to China.

To this end, under TDSG plan (Time Division Switching Group), India launched its first lithium-ion battery manufacture for hybrid vehicle. Japanese companies are significantly increasing investment in India's battery sector, driven by joint strategic efforts. These include joint ventures between Toshiba Corporation, Denso and Suzuki of Japan in Gujarat. Besides, the visit initiated a new era for exchange of human resources between the two countries. Both sides agreed to exchange 5 lakh skilled workforces in different fields. Under this, 50,000 skilled Indians will be invited to Japan. Special ties between the two countries began with the first ever visit of Emperor Akhito and Empress Michiko to India in 2013. In the following year, India and Japan shared a "Special strategic and Global Partnership". These led India and Japan into a closer and strategic relation. The relation became further stronger by the visit of late Prime Minister of Japan Shinzo Abe, who became the first Japanese Prime Minister as Chief Guest to Republic Day celebration in 2014.

According to JBIC (Japan Bank for International Cooperation) survey 2024, India emerged the top investment destination in Asia. According to a survey by JETRO (Japan External Trade Organisation), India took lead in Japanese investor's expansion in Asia. In contrast, business expansion intention in China hit a record low. The trilateral relationship between India-Japan-China is indispensable to make India global hub for supply chain workshop.

# The Social Impact of Sudhakantha's Songs

The songs of the musical luminary, Sudhakantha Dr Bhupen Hazarika, have transcended the geographical boundaries of Assam, creating a universal appeal across India and various parts of the world. This is undoubtedly a testament to the distinctive quality and compelling power of his songs. Through his timeless compositions, the struggles, sorrows, joys, aspirations, and social issues of society have been vividly portrayed, transforming his songs not only into artistic masterpieces but also into a powerful medium for social change. The social impact of his songs is a vast subject, the study of which enables a deep connection with the innermost layers of society. Through his creations, Dr. Hazarika championed humanism, social reform, preservation of heritage, nationalistic fervor, rebellious spirit, social unity, and environmental consciousness, earning him recognition as a global citizen.

One of the primary characteristics of Dr Bhupen Hazarika's songs is his humanistic perspective, which imparts a universal dimension to his work. His songs reflect the struggles, hardships, joys, and hopes of human life. Through his music, he highlighted the realities of the lives of the marginalized sections of society, bringing their struggles and pain to the forefront for the privileged classes to acknowledge. His songs resonate with a profound protest against social inequalities, exploitation, and injustice, awakening social consciousness among listeners. The deep emotion in his voice and the beauty of his melodies penetrate the hearts of the audience, making his messages accessible to the common people. These songs have inspired individuals to become aware of their rights and encouraged them to fight against societal injustices. This humanistic aspect of his music has fostered unity among various social classes, as his messages are not confined to any specific group or community but carry a universal appeal. Through this humanistic outlook, mutual empathy and understanding have been cultivated among different strata of society, laying the foundation for robust social cohesion. His songs have made

society conscious of its responsibilities and motivated people to work toward social change. Thus, his songs have served as a powerful medium for nurturing moral and social awareness.

Dr Hazarika's creations reflect a deep respect and love for Assam's cultural heritage. His songs beautifully encapsulate Assam's traditional music, tribal culture, folk songs, and the simplicity of rural life, instilling a sense of pride in listeners for their cultural roots. Through his compositions, he painted a vivid picture of Assam's rivers, mountains, natural beauty, and cultural richness, making listeners deeply aware of their heritage. This effort has played a significant role in awakening Assamese nationalism, particularly among the younger generation. His songs have propagated Assam's cultural identity to various parts of the world, establishing a universal recognition of its heritage and traditions. His contributions have revitalized the cultural consciousness of Assamese society, as his songs have not only served as a musical medium but also as a powerful tool for preserving Assam's pride and heritage. This contribution has fostered a sense of pride among the Assamese people for their cultural roots and instilled a sense of responsibility in the younger generation toward their heritage.

Moreover, his songs vividly depict the harsh realities of the lives of society's underprivileged sections, including their struggles and sorrows. His compositions poignantly portray the toil of laborers, the daily struggles of farmers, and the emotions of society's neglected classes. These songs have made the upper echelons of society aware of the realities faced by the lower classes, fostering a sense of social responsibility. This sensitivity in his music has acted as a bridge between different societal classes, promoting overall social unity. This aspect of his songs has profoundly impacted listeners, as his melodies and lyrics have given voice to the marginalized. His efforts have encouraged society to stand against injustice and instilled a sense of moral duty. This sensitivity has fostered mutual empathy and cooperation among various

social strata, contributing significantly to society's overall progress. His contributions have made people aware of their responsibilities and provided a powerful impetus to fight against societal injustices.

Dr Hazarika's songs clearly reflect his deep love for Assam's nature, history, and culture. His compositions describe Assam's rivers, mountains, natural beauty, and the simplicity of its people in a way that evokes pride in the listener's homeland. Through his music, he highlighted Assam's historical glory, cultural richness, and the history of its struggles, fostering a sense of nationalistic consciousness among the younger generation. His songs pay homage to various

historical events and personalities of Assam, making listeners aware of their past. This nationalistic fervor has played a crucial role in fostering unity within Assamese society, as his songs have brought together diverse communities, creating cultural cohesion. His contributions have solidified the identity of the Assamese people on a global stage and established a strong foundation for nationalistic consciousness.

Dr Bhupen Hazarika's songs resonate with a powerful tone of protest against societal injustices, corruption, and exploitation. His compositions have played a vital role in raising awareness about social malpractices, inequalities, and exploitation, inspiring people to fight against them. This rebellious tone has sparked a sense of awakening among various societal classes, motivating them to stand against injustice. His music's rebellious spirit has served as a powerful medium for social change, encouraging the masses to become aware of their rights and fight against societal malpractices. This rebellious attitude has made his songs a universal force, uniting people across different

strata and paying the way for social transformation. This rebellious tone has given birth to a new consciousness, empowering people with the courage to fight against injustice. Through his songs, Dr Hazarika propagated a message of unity among different communities, religions, and cultures. His music expresses a universal sense of humanism, calling for people to rise above their differences and unite. His songs have successfully fostered a sense of solidarity among various communities. This message of unity has opened new avenues for social cohesion, bringing together different societal groups. His contributions have promoted mutual understanding and cooperation among diverse communities, creating a peaceful and stable societal environment. This message of unity has played a significant role in uniting various ethnic groups, fostering cultural connections. Furthermore, his creations beautifully express the importance of nature's beauty and its preservation. His songs describe Assam's rivers, mountains, forests, and natural elements in a way that instills deep respect for nature in listeners. Through his music, he emphasized the importance of environmental conservation, urging people to be conscious of it. This effort has created a new sense of responsibility toward the environment, making people aware of the importance of preserving ecological balance. His environmental consciousness has encouraged various societal strata to work toward nature's protection and inspired action for environmental conservation.

Dr Hazarika's messages were not confined to Assamese society but carried a universal appeal. Through his music, he successfully propagated messages of humanism, equality, and brotherhood to various parts of the world. This universality made him a distinguished global artist, transcending Assam's boundaries. His creations have served as a bridge between different cultures, allowing people from various communities worldwide to find reflections of their emotions and struggles

in his music. This universality has fostered unity among different societal strata and played a significant role in creating cultural connections worldwide. His contributions have inspired people from diverse cultures to foster mutual understanding and cooperation, enhancing overall cultural cohesion.

Through his songs, he endeavored to educate listeners about various societal issues. His music deeply explores aspects such as history, culture, politics, the environment, and social problems. His songs compel listeners to reflect on these issues and encourage them to seek solutions. This educational aspect of his music has sparked an intellectual awakening, inspiring people to think deeply about societal issues. His educational efforts have contributed to positive changes in societal mindsets, as his songs have served not only as entertainment but also as a powerful medium for educating people and enhancing their knowledge and consciousness. This educational value has made people aware of their responsibilities and inspired them to work toward resolving societal issues.

In conclusion, an analysis of the various dimensions of the social impact of Sudhakantha Dr Bhupen Hazarika's songs reveals that his creations were not confined to the realm of music alone. His songs have left a profound impact on the minds of people from different societal strata, inspiring them to move forward on the path of social change. Through his music, he championed humanism, social reform, heritage preservation, nationalistic consciousness, rebellious spirit, social unity, environmental awareness, and educational messages. His contributions have facilitated positive changes in various aspects of society, establishing his creations as an immortal treasure for generations to come. The immense impact of his music has made people aware of their responsibilities and provided a powerful impetus for working toward society's overall progress. For future generations, Sudhakantha's songs will continue to serve as a guiding light, offering endless inspiration to advance on the path of social transformation in the years to come.

## 'Nepal's online lockdown: A question mark on freedom'

The Nepal government has ordered 26 major social media and messaging platforms including Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, YouTube and X (formerly Twitter)—to be blocked in the country. The government argues that the companies have not set up local offices and have not created a complaint redressal system, leading to rumours and cybercrime. Critics see it as an attack on freedom of expression. The move will affect ordinary citizens, families, businessmen and content creators.

By: Dr Privanka Saurabh

A small democratic country like Nepal has recently taken such a big decision that shocked the whole world. The government ordered a sudden ban on 26 social media and messaging platforms. This includes the most popular platforms like Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, YouTube and X. As sudden as this decision was taken, it also started a deep debate whether this step was an attack on civil rights or was necessary for the digital security of the country.

The government says that social media companies were already warned to open their local offices in Nepal, appoint representatives and ensure a system for grievance redressal. But the companies did not follow it. According to the government, due to this, rumors, misleading news and cyber crime were increasing rapidly. This big step was taken to stop this.

But this decision is also being opposed rapidly. Journalist organizations, human rights groups and common citizens are considering it an attack on freedom of expression. They argue that social media is not just a means of entertainment, but it has now become the voice of citizens and the basis of democracy. When platforms are closed on such a large scale, it will have a profound impact on the public's freedom of communication and expression.

There are millions of families in Nepal whose members are working abroad. For them, WhatsApp and Facebook are the easiest way to stay connected with their families. This ban will make their daily life difficult. Not only this, small traders and people doing online business also used to reach customers through social media. They used to sell their products by advertising on Instagram, YouTube and Facebook. Now all this will be affected.

Thousands of content creators and YouTubers, who were earning their livelihood from social media, are suddenly on the verge of unemployment. Disappointment and discontent is increasing among the

youth. This is not only an economic problem, but also a big blow to digital employment.

This decision can also be challenging for the Nepal government from a political point of view. The opposition is considering it a dictatorial step. They say that the government is afraid of criticism and questions, so it banned social media. The real strength of democracy lies in the voice of the people. When that voice is suppressed, democracy weakens.

Nepal's image will also be affected at the international level. Investors and digital companies will think that Nepal's digital environment is not stable and secure. This will affect investments and partnerships. Tourists may also be unhappy, because today a large part of travel, communication and information is based on social media.

The government's argument is not wrong at all. Rumours, fake news and cyber crime are spreading rapidly on social media. This can also trigger social tension and violence. The government has the right to ensure the safety of citizens and make companies responsible. But the solution to the problem should not be to directly shut down the platforms.

Many countries of the world have imposed rules on social media companies. India made new information technology rules in 2021, making it mandatory for companies to appoint grievance officers and take immediate action on content. The European Union also implemented the Digital Services Law. But no such complete ban has been imposed anywhere. Nepal's move therefore seems harsh and hasty.

The solution is for the government to negotiate with the companies, impose fines on them and force them to follow the rules. Completely suppressing the voice of the public is not the right way. This is not only against democratic values but will also increase distrust between the public and the government.

In the future, Nepal will have to choose the path of balance. It will have to understand that social media is no longer just a technical

tool, but has become an important part of people's lives. Shutting it down is an attack on both people's freedom and communication. It would be better if the government keeps the companies under strict rules, but the freedom of expression of citizens is also protected.

The real strength of democracy is the trust of the people. This trust is built only when the government communicates with the people and does not suppress their voice. Nepal should reconsider its decision and adopt a path that follows the law and also protects the freedom of citizens. This is the right democratic solution.

This incident in Nepal is a lesson for the whole world. It shows how important it is to maintain a balance between rules and freedom in the digital world. On one hand there is a need for security, control over rumors and crimes, while on the other hand it is equally important to respect the freedom of expression and communication of the public. If this balance is achieved, democracy will remain strong and everyone will benefit from the digital world.

Nepal's decision has made it clear that governments are responsible for taking the right steps in the digital world, but this responsibility should not mean curbing the voice of the public. In every democracy, the freedom of citizens is paramount. Therefore, Nepal should strike the right balance between the strictness of the law and the freedom of the people and should not let social media become a victim of mere ban.

Ultimately, this decision is also a reminder that the importance of social media is no longer limited to entertainment or information. It has become an important part of democracy, employment, social dialogue and global identity. The future lies in controlling it properly, enforcing rules and protecting the voice of citizens.

Nepal should reconsider this decision and find a solution that ensures compliance with the law, curbs rumors and cybercrime, and also protects people's freedom of expression. This is the true power of democracy.

## Modi's Multi-Alignment: Designing India's strategic resolve and defining its ascendant Global role in 2025

By: Bedanga Chutia

The year 2025 finds India at an inflection point where history, geography, and destiny converge. At the heart of this convergence stands Narendra Modi, who, in his third term as Prime Minister, has sculpted a diplomatic doctrine best described as multi-alignment—a strategic architecture that refuses the binaries of Cold War thinking and embraces the multiplicity of an interdependent world. Where once nations were compelled to choose camps, India today has assumed the rare confidence to convene them, arbitrate their disputes, and shape the contours of tomorrow's global order.

**Syntax of Power**  
Unlike the rigid polarities of the 20th century, Modi's diplomacy has orchestrated a grammar of engagement where partnerships coexist without contradiction. India buys oil from Russia while deepening defence industrial cooperation with the United States. It signs climate compacts with Europe while championing energy security for the Global South. This is not strategic ambiguity; it is strategic maturity, born from an economy now surpassing \$4.6 trillion in nominal GDP in 2025, according to the IMF, and projected to overtake Japan by 2027. India's growing economic heft has liberated it from dependency, giving it leverage to craft terms rather than accept them.

**Sindoor: Strategic Resolve**  
Few moments captured this new India better than Operation Sindoor, the evacuation of thousands of Indian and foreign nationals from conflict-torn West Asia earlier this year. Beyond humanitarian relief, the operation displayed India's logistical muscle, naval depth, and political will. It signalled a state that anticipates crises and delivers solutions. Operation Sindoor was less about evacuation than about strategic resolve: India asserting its role as a reliable stabiliser for both its citizens and partners. In a world of uncertain guarantors, India showed that it has moved from being protected to being a protector.

**Modi's Diplomatic Journey**  
If diplomacy is theatre, Modi has mastered both script and stage. His 2025 itinerary illustrates the choreography of multi-alignment. In February, he was in France and the United States, reaffirming defence and technology ties, with the U.S. visit yielding a semiconductor investment worth \$12 billion. In March, his presence in Mauritius strengthened diaspora and maritime influence.

April showcased layered engagement: BIM-STEAC and Sri Lanka cemented India's Bay of Bengal leadership, while his Riyadh summit with Saudi Arabia produced a long-term energy transition pact. August was a whirlwind: Cyprus, G7 in Italy, Argentina, BRICS in Johannesburg, Namibia, and Japan. Each stage reflected India's convening role, from lithium partnerships in Argentina to defence talks in Tokyo. Finally, the SCO Summit in Tianjin underlined India's ability to sit with adversaries without yielding autonomy. No other leader in 2025 can claim such a global calendar with tangible outcomes.



### Strategic Diplomatic Signals

What distinguishes India's diplomacy is not attendance but messaging. To Washington, it signals that multipolarity is necessity, not rebellion. To Beijing, it conveys coexistence without capitulation. To Riyadh, it affirms energy interdependence. To Africa, it offers partnership without conditionality. These gestures form a strategic mosaic, where each piece strengthens the whole.

### India's Convening Power

India's greatest asset may be its convening power. The Voice of Global South Summit, which drew 125 nations this year, and Modi's ability to participate meaningfully in both BRICS and the G7, show a country that bridges divides. In a fragmented era, India positions itself as a platform builder rather than a fence-sitter. The Munich Security Report 2025 notes India as a "balancing hinge" in global affairs, remarking that "no Indo-Pacific crisis can be addressed without New Delhi's participation."

### Strategic Economic Weight

The IMF projects 6.5% growth for India in 2025, the highest among major economies, with its middle class now exceeding 450 million consumers. India contributes nearly 15% of global growth, transforming it into an engine of financial governance. Its digital public infrastructure—UPI and Aadhaar—has become a model for inclusive modernization, now adopted in parts of Africa and Southeast Asia. Economic weight is no longer passive; India translates growth into strategic leverage, ensuring that its seat at the table is permanent.

### Strategic Military Resolve

Prestige rests also on hard power. India's defence spending has risen to 2.1% of GDP, with emphasis on indigenisation under Atmanirbhar Bharat. The INS Vikrant carrier group and S-400 air defence systems have bolstered deterrence, while exercises with the U.S., France, and Japan highlight interoperability. At the same time, legacy ties with Russia remain intact. This duality ensures India is not trapped by dependence but empowered by diversification.

### India Among Emerging Powers

Unlike Brazil, which remains constrained by domestic turbulence, or Turkey, whose assertiveness lacks scale, India combines stability, economic depth, and demographic momentum.

Unlike Indonesia, which wields regional weight but limited global pull, India possesses both the numbers and the narrative to shape institutions. Its rise is therefore not an anomaly but a structural transformation in global order.

### Multipolarity as Strategy

Unlike the unipolar 1990s or the bipolar Cold War, today's reality is multipolar. Modi has embraced complexity rather than fleeing from it. India does not seek to replace one hegemon with another; it pursues a concert of powers, where cooperation is fluid and competition managed. This vision is neither naive nor cynical—it is pragmatic pluralism for an era of dispersed power.

### The Road Ahead

India's outlook blends promise with challenge. Climate change demands balancing growth with sustainability. Border tensions with China endure, even as trade expands. Yet projections are emphatic: by 2030, India will be the third-largest economy, with a defence budget surpassing \$150 billion, and a demographic dividend still active. Its leadership in the International Solar Alliance, growing Arctic footprint, and activism in space diplomacy highlight ambitions beyond its neighbourhood.

### India's Global Position 2025

The answer is both simple and profound: India in 2025 is everywhere and nowhere confined. It is not shackled to any alliance, yet it is indispensable to all. It is Washington's partner, Beijing's rival, Africa's friend, South Asia's anchor, and the Global South's voice. It mirrors the contradictions of the age—seeking peace while building deterrence, embracing modernity while rooted in civilisation.

The architecture of multi-alignment is not a transient tactic but India's blueprint for relevance in a fractured century. In the kaleidoscope of 2025's geopolitics, India is less a bystander and more an architect. Its message to the world is unmistakable: you may debate without India, but you cannot decide without it. That, perhaps, is the truest measure of New Delhi's place in the world order today—a nation that has shifted from the margins of decision-making to the very centre of the global stage. (The writer is a commentator on global affairs and the pursuit of justice.) e-mail: bedanga987@gmail.com



# Role of Tribal Women in Assam Economy

By: Chafikhur Rahman

Assam is home to a rich mosaic of Scheduled Tribes (STs)—including Bodo, Mising (Miris), Karbi, Dimasa, Rabha, Tiwa, Deori and others—who together constitute roughly 12.4% of the state's population (2011 Census). Within these communities, women sustain livelihoods through agriculture, weaving and sericulture, fisheries and wetland-based work, non-timber forest produce (NTFPs), and an expanding network of self-help groups (SHGs). Their labor is central both to household welfare and to state-level value chains such as handloom and silk. Yet, much of their contribution remains informal and undercounted.

## Demographic and Sectoral Context:

Assam's handloom economy is a standout example of women-led production. Official sources indicate over 12.83 lakh weavers and 12.46 lakh handlooms in the state, with women as the overwhelming majority of weavers; handloom is widely cited as the second-largest employer after agriculture in Assam.

National handloom data reinforces this picture. The Fourth All India Handloom Census (2019–20) shows India's handloom sector engages 26.7 lakh weavers and 8.5 lakh allied workers, the vast majority female; Assam leads the country by number of weavers. Independent analysts estimate women's participation in Assam's handloom workforce at around 90%, underscoring a distinctly gendered craft economy. Beyond handloom, women's participation in MGNREGS (rural public works) has risen nationally; in Assam, the MIS dashboard reports women's person-days typically near or just below half in recent years—an important cash buffer for rural households.

Female labour force participation (FLFP) in Assam has improved since 2021–22 (PLFS), now above the national average per an independent 2025 state factsheet—though the gains are uneven and a large share remains informal.

## Core Economic Roles:

1) Agriculture and Allied Activities: Tribal women in both hill and plain districts carry significant responsibility across sowing, weeding, harvesting, seed conservation, and post-harvest processing. They manage mixed livelihoods—paddy, horticulture, small livestock—and seasonal wage work including MGNREGS, particularly during agricultural lean periods. Studies of rice-based systems and seed preservation practices highlight women as custodians of agrobiodiversity in tribal farming systems. Climate stress complicates this role.

Assam's recurring floods and riverbank erosion displace families and disrupt cropping calendars; women often become "left behind" managers of homes, fields, and children when men migrate for work. Local and state-wide studies document the gendered burden of climate shocks, especially in vulnerable districts like Dhemaji and riverine islands such as Majuli.

2) Handloom & Sericulture (Muga, Eri, Pat): Weaving is both livelihood and cultural identity for many ST communities (e.g., Mising, Bodo, Karbi, Dimasa). Women are the primary weavers, producing textiles for home use and sale (mekhela sador, dokhona, shawls, gamocha, etc.). Assam's unique silks—Muga (GI-tagged), Eri, and Pat—anchor niche value chains in which women rear silkworms, reel yarn, dye, design, and weave. Government and academic sources recognize Muga as a Geographical Indication associated closely with Assam's heritage and women's skills.

As noted, the state leads India in number of handloom weavers, with women estimated to form the vast majority of the workforce. Yet the sector remains highly informal; many women juggle weaving with agriculture and care work, and face constraints in credit, quality raw material, design inputs, and stable market access. 3) Fisheries and Wetland Economies: Assam's rivers, beels (oxbow lakes), and floodplains support small-scale fisheries. While men often dominate capture fisheries, women's roles are significant in fish processing, vending, aquaculture support, and cooperative decision-making in certain community-managed wetlands. Case studies—including community fisheries management in floodplain wetlands—document women's participation and empowerment in decision-making spaces.

4) Non-Timber Forest Produce (NTFPs) and Bamboo/Cane: In forest-fringe and hill communities, women collect and process NTFPs (wild edibles, medicinal plants, fibers) and engage in bamboo and cane crafts, a near-universal household skill across many tribal areas of Assam. Bamboo/cane value chains offer home-based, low-capital livelihoods with scope for design upgrades and cluster support. The national MSP for MFP mechanism acknowledges the centrality of NTFPs to tribal livelihoods, which typically involve high women's labour shares.

5) Markets, Micro-Enterprises, and SHGs: The SHG movement has transformed women's access to microcredit, savings discipline, and enterprise. In Assam, ASRLM (NRLM) reports wide-

spread SHG coverage with millions of women members, and state support for producer groups, bank linkages, and livelihood clusters. Studies from Assam show SHG participation raising women's income, mobility, and decision-making power.

Recent state initiatives—such as Mukhya Mantri MahilaUdyamita Abhiyan (MMUA) grants for SHG-linked micro-entrepreneurs and Sakhi Express mobility support for community cadres—signal continued policy momentum to reduce mobility and financing barriers for rural women.

## Nuanced Cases and Sector Linkages

Tea and Plantation Work- A Clarification: Women are over 50% of the workforce in Assam's tea estates—largely concentrated in labour-intensive plucking—yet these communities (often called Tea Tribes/Adivasi) are not currently listed as Scheduled Tribes in Assam, though political debates about their ST status continue. Their situation intersects with tribal women's economic realities but requires a category distinction in official statistics and policy design.

Majuli and Riverine Communities: In Majuli, women (notably from the Mising community) have formed weaving cooperatives and community enterprises to offset the shocks of flood and erosion, linking cultural craft to climate resilience and local income.

## Institutional and Policy Landscape

1. NRLM/ASRLM: State-wide SHG mobilization, credit linkage, enterprise promotion (producer groups, rural marts, bank sakhis/krishisakhis, etc.). State action plans highlight scaling of producer groups and linkages to markets and financial services.

2. Handloom & Sericulture Departments: Training centres, design inputs, procurement tie-ins (e.g., government purchases of handloom items), and GI/branding initiatives around Muga/Eri/Pat. Legislative committee reports emphasize the sector's employment significance and institutional support networks.

3. Microfinance Ecosystem: NABARD's Status of Microfinance in India and sector reviews track SHG-bank linkage volumes and credit flows; Assam figures in the national uptick in SHG penetration and bank linkage, supplemented by NBFC-MFI outreach.

4. MGNREGS: Provides counter-cyclical employment and an income floor; women's participation has trended up nationally, while Assam's women's share hovers near the 50% mark per MIS.

5. FRA and NTFPs: Recognition of community rights under the Forest Rights Act, 2006 remains uneven in Assam, con-



straining women's collective access to forest commons and NTFPs that underpin cash incomes. Fact-finding reports recommend improving CFR (Community Forest Resource) implementation and micro-planning.

## Key Constraints

Informality and Low Returns: Handloom and craft work is mostly home-based, part-time, and price-taker in nature. Women face thin margins due to raw material costs (yarn, dyes), limited design upgradation, and weak bargaining power with traders.

Credit & Market Linkages: Despite SHG progress, gaps remain in timely working capital, risk-sharing, and stable off-take contracts, especially for small, remote producers.

Mobility and Care Burdens: Distance to markets/banks and lack of childcare restrict enterprise growth. Recent mobility schemes (e.g., scooters for cadres) try to lower these barriers but are not yet universal.

Land and Commons: Incomplete tenure security and slow FRA realization can limit women's ability to invest in NTFPs or aquaculture-based livelihoods.

Climate Risk: Floods and erosion periodically wipe out looms, inventory, fish ponds, and stored grain—eroding assets and discouraging reinvestment.

Data Blind Spots: Official datasets often undercount unpaid and home-based work, masking women's actual contribution and hindering targeted support. (This is widely noted in gender and labour lit-

erature; the PLFS trend improvements still leave informality high.)

## What's Working: Positive Trends and Illustrative Impacts

Producer Groups and Federations: ASRLM-supported producer groups aggregating SHG women can improve bulk purchase of yarn, common facilities (dyeing, reeling), and collective marketing, including government procurement linkages.

GI/Branding Pathways: Muga's GI and the state-wide recognition of handloom heritage create opportunities for premium pricing, authenticity labels, and tourism tie-ins, especially when women's cooperatives can meet design and quality standards.

Market-Ready Skilling: Recent state schemes (e.g., MMUA) pair grants with basic business training—an essential complement to credit that improves repayment capacity and business survival.

Women in Community Fisheries: Participatory governance in wetlands has shown women can take on leadership roles in resource management and revenue allocation where institutions actively include them.

## Recommendations

1. Strengthen Value Chains, Not Just Production: (a) Handloom/Sericulture: Invest in district-level common facility centres for yarn dyeing, design services, and quality testing; encourage government and corporate procurement of handloom uniforms/gifts with fair-price contracts to women's groups. (b) Bamboo/Cane: Support design labs and cluster-based branding tied to local motifs;

build market linkages (urban craft stores, e-commerce) with logistics support from federations.

2. Finance that Fits Women's Cash-flows: Use revolving working-capital funds at SHG federation level; expand credit guarantees to lower collateral barriers for micro-enterprises; and pilot invoice-discounting for orders from government buyers to producer groups. Sector reviews from NABARD and MFIN can guide bank partnerships.

3. Mobility, Care, and Safety as Enterprise Infrastructure: Scale last-mile mobility solutions (building on Sakhi Express) and community childcare near weaving clusters and weekly markets to free time for production and sales.

4. Climate-Resilient Livelihoods: Provide elevated weaving sheds, flood-resilient storage, micro-insurance, and seasonal cash grants after floods to protect inventories and restart production quickly in flood-prone districts (Majuli, Dhemaji, etc.).

5. Fisheries & Wetland Enterprises for Women: Expand community-based aquaculture with training on pond management, feed, and market channels; formalize women's roles in beetle management committees with quotas and leadership training.

6. Secure Commons and Implement FRA Fairly: Accelerate Community Forest Resource (CFR) recognition and micro-planning in tribal villages; integrate NTFP value chains with MSP for MFP procurement, prioritizing women's groups as primary collectors/processors.

7. Data that Counts Women's Work: In PLFS/NSS-type surveys and state handloom databases, record home-based, part-time, and seasonal work more accurately; incorporate time-use modules to reflect unpaid care burdens that limit enterprise growth.

## Conclusion

Tribal women in Assam are producers, entrepreneurs, knowledge keepers, and risk managers. They grow food, rear silkworms, weave world-renowned textiles, steward bamboo and cane traditions, process fish, and keep markets alive—often while navigating floods, displacement, and thin margins. Progress in SHGs, state schemes (e.g., MMUA, Sakhi Express), and sector branding (Muga GI) has opened new doors. The next leap requires value-chain investments, gender-responsive finance and infrastructure, climate resilience, and secure rights to land and commons—so that the work tribal women already do can translate into stable incomes, asset building, and intergenerational opportunity.

# Five faces of Mother India: A fable of civic mothers on stage Homes as graves: Why outrage never ends violence

By: Ghazala Jamil

Supported by the colonial British-Indian administration, American Historian Katherine Mayo wrote her best-known work, Mother India in 1927. The book tried to fix India's image in a single damning frame. Mayo argued forcefully that Indians were not worthy of autonomy because of abominable treatment of women and best served by colonialism's civilising influence. It created a furor in Indian public and they responded with prolific rebuttals in print, art and politics creating a long-standing debate on what Mother India is and is not.

Understandably, an important strand in this debate would seek to reimagine Mother India in a way which made her a moral figure, and Indians, worthy of freedom.

Being an intensely political writer, filmmaker, journalist and cultural commentator, Khwaja Ahmed Abbas must have been conscious of the contours of this debate when he wrote Bharat Mata ke Paanch Roop. It was first published in 1959 in a volume of short stories titled Diya Jale Saari Raat. In the story, Abbas may not be responding to Mayo's polemical Mother India directly but he replaced the singular, majoritarian, divine "Mother" with five ordinary-yet-exemplary women.

He uses description of their everyday courage to give content to the idea of India as an ethical collective, and thus, Indians as deserving of autonomy.

Kaun Hai Bharat Mata, a stage adaptation of the story by Mandala Theatre Group performed on September 2 tapped this alternative reimagination of patriotism of KA Abbas with verve and warmth. The production was supported by IPTA, Rajiv Gandhi Foundation and Khwaja Ahmed Abbas Memorial Trust.

Staged at Delhi's Jawahar Bhawan auditorium—hardly a purpose-built theatre—the production could easily have been hamstrung by limitations of the space. But it wasn't. Despite heavy rain in the city the auditorium was full. Clean sightlines and unconventional entries of several actors from among the audience made the space work well.

The use of a digital screen on the stage was jarring in the beginning but turned out to be effective for a minimalist set. The projected visuals authenticated the context. A central screen provided a living archive: grainy archival newsreel, fragments from films and TV shows, artworks stitched together transitions and highlighted the subtext without too much moralising.

Each of the five sketches was delivered as a story narration but the actors infused it with the entire lifeworlds of the protagonists through lively speech rhythms and expansive stage work. The tone of each of the sketch was varied and the performances were notably polished. Moments of solo narration and quiet reflection were offset by imaginative transitions. The music, sometimes recorded played and live singing, was often carrying emotion across scene

changes. It was consistently engaging but sometimes overpowered actor speeches.

Even in a hall not exactly designed for professional theatre performances, the cast's projection and timing kept the back rows involved. Applause punctuated key points in the play, and, at more than one point, the audience joined with the actors' slogans and songs. The theatre adaptation of Abbas' memoir-story by Lokesh Jain was creative yet faithful to Abbas' core spirit. The five women narrated by women and men actors produced a complex gendered field on the stage, which reflected the paradox and need of Indian feminism to distinguish itself from western feminism as an anti-colonial move at the time.

Gandhi figures prominently in Abbas' narrative and in the play through Masood Hussain's artworks in the play. But the play was fairly successful in depicting Gandhi as a value in the moral universe of these civic mothers and not as a cult of personality.

Mohammad Kazim's narration of a multilingual household in Madras was delightful and Pakhi Jain made the story of old Hakeemat weaving a khadi shroud radiate with her youthful perspective. Chhavi almost became the refugee Maaji from Rawalpindi.

The only character among the five who is not a Gandhian or pacifist is a Maharashtrian Brahmin whose will to provide cover to her grandson Inquilabi's friends involves breaking caste strictures. Rajesh Tiwari made valiant effort to infuse Nani's story with satirical humour.

Director Lokesh Jain became the voice of KA Abbas and narrates the story of his mother—a Muslim woman who was displaced from her beloved Panipat in the Partition violence but still refuses to move to Pakistan.

The vignettes foreground choices that make these women appear as a cut above and against the grain. In Abbas's telling these mothers are ordinary, but for their extraordinary response to exceptional circumstances. His civic mothers dethrone a divine icon, thus reimagining Mother India characterised by practicable set of ethics.

They are seen setting aside regional parochialism, ridding themselves of deeply ingrained caste prejudice, risking financial security, favouring the political over familial bonds—in order to inhabit a plural, capacious India. Their virtues involve tethering courage, self-discipline and labour to solidarity and fraternity. These biographies were able to remind the audience what citizenship means in the best possible sense, which was perhaps the intention of Abbas when he penned them.

History pulsates through the play. The Non-Co-operation and Khilafat movements are the moments in which political judgment is formed by the five mothers. The choices made by Lokesh Jain meant that the audience confront the Partition as a wound. But they are not left only hurting. The contemplation of the pain helped me understand that the Partition was also experienced by its survivors as a test of moral principles

in face of a violent political vision.

I saw the book Five Faces of Mother India with an introduction and translation by Sayeda Hameed published by Pratham at a book display and sale table outside the theatre only after the performance. As a result the intertextuality created by projection of the book illustrations by Nilofer Wadia elided me during the performance. But the artwork matched the prose's clarity.

Many years ago I had seen artist Savi Savarkar's striking work critiquing caste imagination in the Manusmriti. Used in Inquilabi Nani's story it is a brilliant example of how art can disturb normative ways of understanding. The show was entertaining in the best sense. The music and video coordination by Akhil and Madhur was pacey, melodic and emotionally legible. Even when its entertainment slipped into sentimentality it still made the audience feel the loss of values and encourage to value anew like the use of quranic verses when Gandhian khadi weaver Hakku dies.

If a couple of sections felt overtly oratorical, the production earns them with careful build-up and a quick return to lived detail. The closing minutes of the sketches left the hall audibly moved.

This review would be incomplete without mentioning the ethical architecture the play seeks to bring into the spotlight. In the Gandhian tradition, nationalism is not primarily a question of whether the agents who colonise our lifeworld are foreign or native; it is a question of morality and autonomy. Satyagraha, is, in that frame, a method for reconstituting the self, the neighbourhood, and the polity by refusing domination and cultivating mutual aid. This necessarily means quiet courage for standing up for other's freedom too.

None of this can be achieved by jingoistic sloganeering, so steering clear of that would be a requirement too.

A professional cast in an under-equipped hall appeared before a parched audience ready to soak in stories of composite culture. That night Bharat Mata morphed from being an idol to be defended with aggression and came alive as civic mothers whose imagination was marked by faith in humanity. Five Faces of Mother India offers a calm grammar of belonging against the frenzied circulation of mythic nationhood that alienates.

Once or twice an individual in the audience broke into slogans that resonated with the feared jingoism too and many joined in with the person as if there was no option but to. But some were startled too, and others reacted with now familiar, fatigued dismay.

I hope I am not over estimating the atmosphere in the theatre, but the active spectatorship of the audience in Jawahar Bhawan could indicate a hunger for a civic, inclusive nationalism that many of us experienced not too long ago, and miss sorely. The play made one hopeful that perhaps others may not have forgotten it too because this civic feeling appeared familiar too. And perhaps has a more enduring appeal than we give it credit for.(Courtesy:Scroll.in)

By: Acharva Prashant

Every few months, the nation gets shaken by a horrifying report of a young woman's death in her marital home. Police investigations may cite accident, suicide, or homicide, with reasons ranging from dowry harassment to alleged infidelity. Social media erupts, families accuse, lawyers argue. Yet beneath all the noise, one fact refuses to go away: such incidents unsettle us because they feel very familiar. They are not rare exceptions. They reveal what many homes quietly hide: the reality of how relationships often play out.

## The Ordinary Face of Violence

Contrary to the stereotype, most domestic violence cases do not originate in criminal settings. They emerge in households that otherwise appear respectable: middle-class families with jobs, education, and social standing. Violence is often hidden under the surface until it bursts into tragedy.

Why does this happen? The answer lies in the manner in which marriage usually takes place in our society. Often, marriage is pushed upon young people long before they are emotionally ready. By their twenties, marriage is treated like an ultimatum. Love, spoken of in lofty terms, remains unexplained and is usually reduced to attraction, duty, or calculation. Parents, with relief, often remark: "My daughter is married: one responsibility less."

When marriage begins from such a place, it rarely becomes a union of two free individuals. It becomes an arrangement, a transaction between families. Transactions rarely generate trust; they sow seeds for obligations and resentment. What should have been a conscious partnership becomes a quiet marketplace of duties and demands, and that is a fragile foundation on which to build a lifetime together.

## The Endless Shadow of Dowry

Dowry was outlawed more than six decades ago, but its grip remains. The National Crime Records Bureau reported 6,450 dowry deaths in 2022, around 18 women every single day. Uttar Pradesh, where the most recent incident occurred, also tops this list with 2,218 deaths. When greed becomes tradition, no law can restrain it. Behind these numbers lie homes where women face harassment and coercion. And what follows after an FIR is filed? More than 60,000 dowry-death cases were pending in courts in 2022, and the conviction rate hovered around 33 per cent.

The tradition of dowry is one of the clearest signs of society's values falling apart. How can marriage, which is supposed to bring two lives together, be turned into a financial bargain? How can love or respect for each other grow when a relationship starts with money and demands? Dowry is not just greed; it is woven into families even before birth. Sons are celebrated as "investments," daughters treated as "liabilities," leading even to female foeticide. In such homes, violence is not an accident. It is the logical outcome of values sown generations earlier.

## Violence Normalised as Silence

India flaunts its low divorce rates. But what hides beneath the pride? A culture where individuals endure humiliating, sometimes violent relationships. Women are told to put up with things "for the sake of the children." But a home where fear and violence are common can never provide a healthy environment. Children's well-being depends on dignity and safety, not appearances of unity. A broken home can still raise healthy children; a violent home never can. NFHS-5 (2019-21) found that 29 per cent of married women aged 18-49 have faced physical or sexual violence. Many of these injuries are explained away as "accidents." To endure in silence is not strength; it is slavery stretched over decades. Silence does not prevent violence; it feeds it.

## The Practice of Courage

Courage cannot be conjured in a single moment. When smaller humiliations—taunts, restrictions, slaps—are tolerated for years, resistance withers. Real protection comes from everyday strength: refusing what demeans, and build-

ing the muscle to walk away from wrong in its small forms.

## A Trap for Both Genders

Women, of course, continue to endure the harshest consequences of domestic abuse and dowry. But men, too, often face suffering. Sometimes, protection laws are exploited and misused, which can lead to false allegations that cause shame, financial ruin, and even self-harm. According to NCRB data of 2021, more than 70 per cent of suicide victims in India were male. The lesson here is not to set one gender against the other. Just as men have historically misused power, women, too, can misuse it if empowerment is given without wisdom. The solution is not a tug-of-war between sexes but the recognition that both men and women must be raised as conscious beings: neither trapped in the role of controller, nor reduced to that of victim.

## Beyond Tradition: Questioning Marriage Itself

Some of the most pointed critiques strike at the root of tradition. Why must marriage mean that a woman leaves her parents' home? Why can't a husband live with his wife's family, or both maintain their own spaces? These customs were born in an age when men's physical labour sustained families. Today, when both genders can earn equally, why should old arrangements continue?

The tragedy is that society clings to these outdated structures. Girls grow up in ecosystems that see them as parayadhan—someone else's property. She bears the alienation of being raised as transferable, a possession to be handed over. By adulthood, marriage is presented not as a choice but as a cut-off point, like a hotel checkout time. Parents push daughters out by 22 or 24, as if their time has expired. If daughters are so loved, why are families in such haste to send them away?

## The Way Forward

What then can stop the next tragic headline? Laws and police action are vital, but they cannot reach the core of the problem. Real change has to start much earlier, within the individual. Education in dignity and courage: Children must not only pass exams but also learn to recognise society's illusions and stand up to injustice.

Economic independence: Without some measure of self-reliance, women and men alike remain vulnerable to dependence and exploitation.

Support systems: Counselling and safe spaces can assist, but they must guide individuals not just toward escape from pain, but toward self-understanding.

Rethinking traditions: Customs like dowry or the expectation that a woman must leave her home after marriage are not sacred truths but relics of another age. They must be questioned and, where detrimental, rejected.

Inner empowerment: The deepest solution does not come from outside. Courage is cultivated, not as a one-day miracle, but as the fruit of inner clarity. This clarity grows as we see through conditioning, question fears and illusions, and live from a centre of self-knowledge. Without that, laws are paper, and traditions only shift form.

## A Culture of Consciousness

Domestic violence, dowry, and oppressive marriages are symptoms of a deeper poverty: absence of inner clarity. They do not thrive because of a few "bad families," but because society at large runs on fear, desire, and unexamined habits. Outrage after each tragedy has become a ritual, but rituals cannot cure the blindness of the mind. That blindness can be dispelled only by clarity. When men and women see themselves not as roles or possessions but as conscious beings, the basis of exploitation dissolves. Empowerment without wisdom only changes who holds the whip; empowerment with wisdom ensures no whip is ever raised.

Liberation does not begin with outer reform but with seeing rightly. Without clarity, there can be no love; without love, greed is the default, and violence is inevitable. Dowry deaths are gross violence; mental trauma, wasted potential, and ill-raised children are subtle violence. With every new headline, let us be reminded that what shocks us has always been waiting beneath our silence. (Courtesy:The Pioneer)



# Nepal internet crackdown part of global trend toward suppressing online freedom

*A healthy 21st-century democracy cannot function without a trustworthy online environment*

**KATHMANDU, Sept 9:** Nepal's crackdown on social media companies, which led to protests and police killing at least 19 people, is part of a yearslong decline of internet freedoms around the world as even democracies seek to curtail online speech.

The Himalayan country's government said last week it was blocking several social media platforms including Facebook, X and YouTube because the companies failed to comply with a requirement that they register with the government. The ban was lifted Tuesday a day after the deadly protests.

What's happening in Nepal mirrors "this broader pattern of controlling the narrative and controlling of stories emerging from the ground," said Aditya Vashistha, an assistant professor of information science at Cornell University.

This has happened several times in the neighbouring countries Pakistan and Bangladesh, he said.

"So this is nothing new - in fact, I would say this is taken from the playbook, which is now very established, of trying to control social media narratives," Vashistha said.

Like neighbouring countries, Nepal's government have been asking the companies to appoint a liaison in the country.

Officials are calling for laws to monitor social media and ensure both the users and operators are responsible and accountable for what they share. But the move has been criticised as a tool for censorship and punishing opponents who voice their protests online.

"Governments absolutely have a valid interest in seeking to regulate



social media platforms. This is such a daily part of our lives and in our business. And it is certainly reasonable for authorities to sit down and say we want to develop rules for the road," said Kian Vesteinsson, senior research analyst for technology and democracy at the Washington-based nonprofit Freedom House.

"But what we see in Nepal is that wholesale blocks as a means of enforcing a set of rules for social media companies results in wildly disproportionate harms. These measures that were put in place in Nepal (cut) tens of millions of people off from platforms that they used to express themselves, to conduct daily business, to speak with their families, to go to school, to get healthcare information."

It's not just Nepal. Freedom House has found that global internet freedom has declined for the 14th consecutive year in 2024, as governments crack down on dissent and people face arrest for expressing political, social or religious views online.

While China consistently tops the list as the "world's worst environment" for internet freedom, last year Myanmar shared this designation as well.

The organisation did not track Nepal.

In January, Pakistan's lower house of parliament passed a bill that gives the government sweeping controls on social media, including sending users to prison for spreading disinformation.

Calling internet freedom a "pillar of modern democracy," Freedom House said a healthy 21st-century democracy cannot function without a trustworthy online environment, where people can access information and express themselves freely.

Increasingly, though, governments are putting up roadblocks.

Often, regulations are in the name of child safety, cyber crime or fraud, Vesteinsson said, "but unfortunately, a lot of this regulation comes hand in hand with restrictive measures."

In the Nepali law, for instance, "the same provision of this law, directs social media platforms to restrict content relating to child trafficking and human trafficking and labour, a really important issue," he added. "Two bullet points above that, it orders platforms to restrict people from posting anonymously."

The Committee to Protect Journalists said Monday that the protests "underscore the widespread concerns over Nepal's ban on social media and the pressing need for the government to drop its order. Such a sweeping ban not only restricts freedom of expression, it also severely hinders journalists' work and the public's right to know."

The crackdown appears to have spurred a surge in use of virtual private networks, or VPNs, according to Proton, which provides encrypted services.

Signups for Proton's VPN service in Nepal have jumped by 8,000% since Sept 3, according to data the company posted online. A VPN is a service that allows users to mask their location in order to circumvent censorship or geography-based online viewing restrictions.

But experts caution that VPNs are not an end-all solution to government internet blocks. They can be expensive and out of reach for many people, Vashistha noted, and they can be slow and lead to lower-quality experiences when people try to access blocked social platforms.

Google, Meta, X and TikTok (which registered and continues to operate) didn't respond to requests for comment.

Vesteinsson said companies can take important steps to safeguard privacy of their users - particularly human rights defenders and activists who might be a specific target for government repression in their countries.

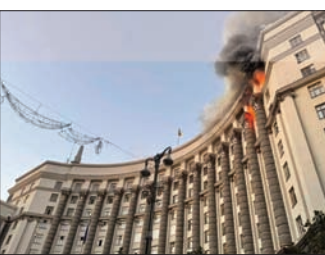
"It's enormously important for social media platforms to be responsible to their users in that way," he said. (AP)

# Russian glide bomb attack in eastern Ukraine kills at least 21 people

**KYIV, Sept 9:** A Russian glide bomb struck a village in eastern Ukraine as older people were lined up to receive their pensions on Tuesday, killing at least 21 and wounding nearly two dozen others, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and a regional official said.

The bomb hit the village of Yarova in the Donetsk region, Zelenskyy said in a post on Telegram. "Frankly brutal," he said of the attack, urging the international community to make Russia pay economically for its full-scale invasion through additional sanctions.

"The world should not remain silent," Zelenskyy wrote. "The world should not remain inactive. The United States needs a reaction. Europe needs a reaction. The G20



needs a reaction. Strong action is needed so that Russia stops bringing death."

With US-led peace efforts making no headway in recent months, Russia has escalated its aerial barages of Ukraine. On Sunday, Russia hit the capital, Kyiv, with drones and missiles in the largest aerial attack since the war began on February 24, 2022.

The glide bombs are retrofitted Soviet weapons that have laid

waste to eastern Ukraine for months. Some of them now weigh 3,000 pounds (1,360 kilograms), which is six times bigger than when they were first used in battle in 2022.

Donetsk Governor Vadym Firlashkin said that 21 people were killed and 21 others wounded in the attack, which struck a line of older people waiting to receive their pensions.

"This is not warfare. This is pure terrorism," he wrote on Telegram. Emergency responders were at the scene, he said.

Yarova is located less than 10 kilometres from the front line.

The territory was already occupied by Russia in 2022, but was then liberated by Ukraine's armed forces in a counteroffensive later the same year. (AP)

# Thailand's political path shadowed by former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra's dramas

**BANGKOK, Sept 9:** Thaksin Shinawatra, the billionaire former prime minister of Thailand, remains one of the country's most influential and controversial figures nearly two decades after being ousted in a 2006 military coup. His political journey, marked by unprecedented popularity, a dramatic fall from power, years in self-imposed exile and a high-profile return, continues to shape Thailand's political landscape.

Thaksin's dramatic path took another turn Tuesday when the Supreme Court ruled that he must serve a one-year prison term for previous convictions on graft and abuse of power charges, after investigating whether officials had mishandled his return to Thailand in 2023 to begin serving the sentences.

Last month, he defied expectations when a court that has historically leaned against him and his political machine acquitted him of royal defamation, an offence that could have sent him to prison for up to 15 years.

Despite powerful enemies in the Thai establishment and criminal convictions for corruption, he had avoided prison by going into exile after his ouster. His return had seemed to signal an accommodation with his opponents.

He was insistent on maintaining a high public profile and was seen as the real power directing the government that was formed as he returned, especially when his daughter, Paetongtarn Shinawatra, became prime minister last year. It appeared to keep his old enemies alive and embroiled him in legal challenges from those wishing to curb his influence.

## Thaksin's beginnings

The Shinawatra family is prominent in the northern city of Chiang Mai, where Thaksin was born to a mercantile family in 1949. After a career in public service as a police colonel, Thaksin became a business entrepreneur in the late 1970s. He built a telecommunications empire starting with Advanced Info Systems, an early mobile phone service provider and the primary source of his fortune.

He entered politics in 1994, holding Cabinet posts before establishing the Thai Rak Thai Party in 1998. Using his fortune to build a nationwide political machine, he promoted populist policies that resonated with lower-income citizens, especially in the countryside.

His platform promised to spread economic growth and bridge the wealth gap, with signature policies including universal healthcare and village development funds. This led to landslide victories for his party in 2001 and 2005, making him the first elected Thai prime minister to complete a four-year term and the country's longest-serving democratically elected leader.

## Powerful foes

However, Thaksin's massive popularity and elec-

toral support rocked Thailand's established political order. This earned him powerful enemies among conservative forces, including the army and the courts, which saw him as a threat to the monarchy, the bedrock of Thai identity, as well as to their own influence.

He also faced criticism for his imperious CEO-style governance, intolerance of criticism, especially from the media, and failure to distance his business interests from government policy. His administration was also blamed for setting off a persistent Muslim insurgency in Thailand's southern provinces and for what human rights advocates said were more than 2,000 extrajudicial killings during his war on drugs.

His second term was cut short by a military coup in 2006 while he was abroad. Opponents accused him of corruption, abuse of power, and disrespecting then-King Bhumibol Adulyadej, and hounded him with legal cases that he characterised as politically motivated. Thaksin's ouster triggered nearly two decades of deep political polarisation, pitting his supporters against opponents, including better-off urban dwellers, ardent royalists and the military. He briefly returned in 2008 to face charges but skipped bail and fled abroad again, commencing a self-imposed exile lasting over a decade.

## Leading from overseas

Despite his physical absence, Thaksin remained a beloved and influential figure among his followers, whom he encouraged remotely. Parties formed from the ashes of his Thai Rak Thai Party and, still under his influence, consistently won elections but just as consistently were driven from office by legal challenges in courts hostile to him and destabilising street protests. His supporters, the "Red Shirts," engaged in militant street actions, countering "Yellow Shirt" royalists, with both sides responsible for street violence.

His sister, Yingluck Shinawatra, continued the family's legacy, leading the Pheu Thai Party to victory in 2011 and becoming Thailand's first female prime minister. Her government's proposed amnesty for Thaksin triggered protests, leading to another military coup in 2014, and driving Yingluck into exile as well. While in exile, Thaksin, who had his Thai passport revoked, obtained another from Montenegro through investment and spent significant time in Dubai. He also purchased and sold the Manchester City Football Club and invested in mining in Africa. Thaksin's return became possible after the progressive Move Forward Party's victory in 2023 rattled the establishment that had so abhorred him. This led to what many called a "self-serving deal" between Thaksin and his former conservative foes, a move that alienated many supporters even as it returned Pheu Thai to power while keeping Move Forward out of government. (AP)

# Activist group says drone hit Gaza aid boat in Tunisia

**TUNIS (TUNISIA), Sept 9:** An international activist group seeking to deliver aid to Gaza on a flotilla says one of its boats was hit by what it believes was a drone while docked in Tunisia. Tunisian authorities denied a drone was involved, and said they are investigating a fire in a life jacket aboard the boat. The Global Sumud Flotilla said in a statement overnight that a vessel known as the "Family Boat" and travelling under a Portuguese flag was struck by a drone, but that no one aboard was hurt. Footage posted on the group's social media showed a flash of light landing on one of the boats and setting off what appears to be a fire. The group, whose flotilla was scheduled to leave Tunisia on Wednesday, is expected to give a news conference in Tunis later Tuesday about what happened. It said the incident would not derail its mission to deliver aid to Gaza. (AP)

# US, European officials meet to discuss new sanctions on Russia

**WASHINGTON, Sept 9:** US and European officials met at US Treasury Department on Monday evening to discuss various forms of economic pressure to exert on Russia, including new sanctions and tariffs on Russian oil purchases, a person familiar with the meeting told The Associated Press.

The person, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss the meeting, said US officials emphasised to their European counterparts that President Donald Trump is willing to exert significant actions to end the war but expects full cooperation from European partners in whatever actions are taken.

The meeting, which lasted less than two hours, highlighted tariff actions, the need for collective action on whatever is determined on sanctions, and how to manage Russian sovereign assets that are still immobilised largely in Europe, among other issues.

Officials with the White House, State Department and US Trade

Representative participated in Monday's meetings. The European team includes staff focused on energy, sanctions, financial services and trade.

The officials are set to meet again Tuesday.

The meeting comes as Trump has tried to get Russian President Vladimir Putin to agree to sit down with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy for direct talks aimed at ending the 3 1/2-year war. Trump held a summit with the Russian leader last month in Alaska.

It also comes after a Trump-imposed deadline, set in August, for the Kremlin to end its invasion has since passed.

Trump said Sunday that he expected to speak with Putin in the next couple days and acknowledged that the conflict had proved harder to resolve than he anticipated. "I believe we're going to get it settled," Trump told reporters. "I have confidence we're going to get it done." (AP)

# At least 60 people killed in eastern Congo

**GOMA, Sept 9:** At least 60 people have been killed in an overnight attack by Islamic-State-affiliated rebel group in eastern Congo, an official said.

The attack was reportedly carried by the Allied Democratic Force in Ntoyo, North Kivu, after residents gathered at a burial.

"The ADF attack caused around 60 deaths, but the final toll will be given later this evening because the territory has just deployed services to the area to count the number of beheaded people," Col Alain Kiwewa, local administrator of the Lubero territory where Ntoyo is located, told The Associated Press.

"There were about 10 of them. I saw machetes. They told people to gather in one place and started cutting them. I listened to people screaming and I fainted," a survivor who was present at the burial told the AP. She requested anonymity out of fear of reprisal. (AP)

# Global shares trade mixed as focus shifts to Fed's next move



**TOKYO, Sept 9:** Global shares traded mixed Tuesday as eyes turned to US data reports set for release later in the week that are likely to impact whether the Federal Reserve cuts interest rates at its next meeting.

France's CAC 40 rose 0.1% in early trading to 7,742.97, while the German DAX fell nearly 0.5% to 23,697.43. Britain's FTSE 100 gained 0.1% to 9,232.78. US shares were set to drift only moderately with Dow futures little changed at 45,593.00. S&P 500 futures rose 0.1% to 6,511.75.

In Asia, Japan's benchmark Nikkei 225 erased earlier gains to finish 0.4% lower at 43,459.29, as political uncertainty continued after Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba said over the weekend that he planned to step down. Who will replace him is still uncertain and may take weeks to decide. The benchmark had momentarily surpassed the 44,000 mark.

Anticipation over one of the likely candidates, Sanae Takaichi, a hawkish legislator, sent defence issues higher in Tokyo trading.

Mitsubishi Heavy Industries rose 0.3%, IHI added 1.0% and Kawasaki Heavy 0.4%. Veteran ruling party legislator Toshimitsu Motegi has indicated he wants to run, and other expected contenders include Farm Minister Shinjiro Koizumi and Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshimasa Hayashi.

All are members of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party, which will need coalition partners to stay in power.

Australia's S&P/ASX 200 declined 0.6% to 8,793.60. South Korea's KOSPI climbed 1.3% to 3,260.05. Hong Kong's Hang Seng surged 1.2% to 25,938.13, while the Shanghai Composite fell 0.5% to 3,807.29. The mixed trading followed a stronger opening in Asia.

"Asian markets opened Tuesday with momentum, riding Wall Street's conviction that Fed cuts are no longer a question of if but how many. Nearly three reductions are now being priced before year-end. That expectation is washing through global markets like a spring tide," said Stephen Innes, managing partner at SPI Asset Management.

Updates are coming later this week on the US economy and inflation, which could alter expectations among traders, who at the moment are unanimously forecasting the Fed will cut its main interest rate for the first time this year at its meeting two Wednesdays from now.

The Fed has been more worried about the potential of inflation worsening because of President Donald Trump's tariffs than about the job market. But a slew of recent reports showing the US job market is slowing may be changing minds.

On Tuesday, the US government will release preliminary revisions for job growth numbers reported through March, and it could show that hiring was weaker than earlier thought. Reports on inflation will follow on Wednesday and Thursday.

In energy trading, benchmark US crude gained 85 cents to \$63.11 a barrel. Brent crude, the international standard, added 87 cents to \$66.89 a barrel.

In currency trading, the US dollar slipped to 146.68 Japanese yen from 147.51 yen. The euro cost \$1.1757, down from \$1.1765. Gold has been rising as a safe investment, surpassing the \$3,600 per ounce mark. Gold has been gaining on the back of a falling dollar and anticipation for the Fed's rate cut. (AP)

# BRICS nations hate each other, act like vampires in trade with US: Trump aide Navarro

*'Navarro warned that India must come around at some point on trade negotiations with the US'*



**NEW YORK/WASHINGTON, Sept 9:** The BRICS alliance will not last since the member nations "all hate each other", White House trade adviser Peter Navarro has said, likening their trade practices to "vampires" exploiting the United States.

BRICS, originally comprising Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa, expanded in 2024 to include Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, and the United Arab Emirates, with Indonesia joining in 2025.

"I don't see how the BRICS alliance stays together since historically they all hate each other and kill each other," Navarro said in an interview with the "Real America's Voice" show on Monday.

In a diatribe targeting the BRICS nations, he said the "bottom line" is that none of the countries in the grouping can "survive if they don't sell to the United States. And when they sell to the United States, their exports, they're like vampires sucking our blood dry with their unfair trade practices".

Navarro, who has been ranting against India over its import of Russian oil and high tariffs, said the country has been at war with China for decades.

In a sarcastic remark, he said, "And I just remembered, yeah, it was China that gave Pakistan a nuclear bomb. You got ships flying around the Indian Ocean now with Chinese flags. (Prime Minister Narendra) Modi, see how you kind of work that out."

He also claimed that Russia is in "bed with China".

Navarro claimed Beijing has its sights on the Russian port of Vladivostok and is already "colonising Siberia, which is the biggest land mass of the Russian semi-empire" through "massive illegal immigration".

"So good luck with that, Putin," he said.

On Brazil, Navarro said the country's economy is "going down the tubes" because of President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva's "socialist policies" while "they keep the real leader of that country in a cell", a reference to former president Jair Bolsonaro, who is currently under house arrest and is on trial for allegedly plotting a coup following his loss in the 2022 presidential election.

In July, President Donald Trump criticised Brazilian officials for their "persecution" of Bolsonaro and said the Brazilian government has "unjustly charged Bolsonaro with multiple crimes". For this, he imposed an additional 40 per cent levy on Brazil.

Earlier, in a post on X, Navarro said India has the largest population in the world and "all it can do is manage a few hundred thousand X propagandists to jerk around a poll? Too funny. America: look at how foreign interests use our social media to advance their agenda."

that "won't end well" for India.

He said the Indian government has taken offence to his describing India as the "Maharajah" of tariffs.

"But it's absolutely true. They have the highest tariffs in any major country in the world against the United States. We got to deal with that," Navarro said.

He claimed India never bought oil from Moscow before Russia invaded Ukraine, "except for like little tiny drops of it. And then they go into this mode of profiteering with Russian refiners coming on to Indian soil and profiteering," and American taxpayers end up having to send more money for the conflict.

Listing the "great" trade deals that the US has inked with the European Union, Japan, South Korea, the Philippines and Indonesia, Navarro said "all these countries are working very closely with us" because they realise that they've been taking too much advantage of the US and also because they need American markets.

On additional sanctions on China, which is the largest purchaser of Russian oil, Navarro said Washington is walking a "fine line" and again urged India to stop importing Russian oil.

"I think that what's got to happen is India's got to stop buying Russian oil. That's going to be good for the whole peace; the road to peace partly runs through New Delhi. Europe certainly has to stop buying Russian oil... with China, we got over 50% tariffs on them, and we're doing the best we can in terms of negotiating to protect the American people without hurting the American people.

"And that's the art of diplomacy that we've got going on. And you just got to trust in Trump," he said. (PTI)



# CM Pema Khandu, Dy CM Chowna Mein pay floral tribute to late mother of Taba Tedir

## Across Party Lines: Leaders come together to condole Late Taba Yaja's Passing

HT Correspondent

**ITANAGAR, Sept 9:** The Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh, Pema Khandu, along with Deputy Chief Minister Chowna Mein, ministers, senior officials, and public leaders, visited Belo village in Keyi Panyor on Tuesday to pay floral tribute to the late Taba Yaja, mother of former Minister Taba Tedir, an official statement said.

The condolence visit took place as the team was returning to Itanagar after a four-day tour of Anjaw and Lower Subansiri districts.

The tour was aimed at inaugurating developmental projects, interacting with local communities, and participating in the "Cabinet Apke Dwar" initiative at Ziro in Lower Subansiri district.

Accompanying the chief minister and deputy chief minister were several dignitaries, including minister for environment & forest Wangki Lowang, minister of agriculture Gabriel Denwang Wangsu, Commissioner to the CM Sonam Chombay, chairman of the Sports Authority of Arunachal (SAA) John Neelam, Lishi Yapu Wahge (wife of Health & FW Minister Biyuram Wahge), Kamle SP Techhi Henyir, Keyi Panyor SP Angad Mehata, and other political leaders, community representatives, and well-wishers.



In a social media message, chief minister Pema Khandu expressed deep condolences, stating, "With profound reverence, I offer my heartfelt Shradhdanjali to Late Taba Yaja, beloved mother of former Minister Taba Tedir. May her soul attain Sadgati and may the family find strength and solace during this difficult

time. Om Shanti."

Former Minister Taba Tedir, expressing gratitude, wrote, "My deepest gratitude to the Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh, Pema Khandu, for their gracious presence during the last rites of my beloved mother, Late Taba Yaja, beloved wife of Late Taba Tat, PI (Rtd.). Your kind presence, condolences, and words of comfort have given us immense strength in this difficult time. We are truly humbled and honoured by your solidarity and support, which will always remain etched in our hearts."

The last rites for Late Taba Yaja were performed on Monday at her native village in Belo, Keyi Panyor district.

The ceremony witnessed participation from people cutting across party lines, religious affiliations, and professional backgrounds.

Several lawmakers, political leaders, social workers, community leaders, and members of local organizations gathered to pay their respects.

Among those present were former chief minister and North East Congress Coordination Committee (NECC) Chairman Nabam Tuki, former minister Lishi Legi, Yachuli MLA Toko Tatung, as well as senior police and civil officers including IGP Chukhu Apa,

Taba Tusar, Keyi Panyor SP Angad Mehata, Naharlagun SP Nyelam Nega, Secretary Pige Legu, and Itanagar Capital DC Toko Babu.

Also present were SLUB Director Joram Pupa, Arunachal Pradesh Women Welfare Society (APWWS) team led by Kani Nada Maling, Bharatiya Majdoor Sangh (BMS) team led by Ringu Chapo, Tebw Lappa Welfare Society (TLWS) led by President Taba Tara, Camdir Welfare Society (CWS) led by President TC Tok, along with representatives from various political parties, religious groups, and community organisations.

Born in 1935, Late Taba Yaja was the wife of the late Taba Tat, a respected public figure in the region.

Known for her dignity, kindness, and compassion, she was a beloved member of the community and leaves behind a legacy of love and wisdom. Her passing has left a deep void among family, friends, and the wider community.

Condolences have poured in from across the state, including messages from chief minister Pema Khandu, deputy chief minister Chowna Mein, Home & Border Affairs Minister Mama Natung, and many others, reflecting the widespread grief and respect for her contributions to the community.

Governor extends Pham Kho Sowai festival greetings to Khowa Community

HT Correspondent

**ITANAGAR, Sept 9:** The Governor of Arunachal Pradesh, Lt General KT Parnaik, (Retd), has extended his warm greetings to the people of the State, especially the Khowa community, on the occasion of the Pham Kho Sowai festival, an official statement said on Tuesday.

In his message, the Governor expressed his hope that the festival would usher in a season of good harvests, prosperity, and happiness for all households. He highlighted the significance of festivals in preserving the cultural identity and values of communities, while fostering unity and a sense of belonging.

"Festivals are the soul of our communities. They reflect who we are, what we cherish, and the values we pass on to the next generation. In Arunachal Pradesh, where agriculture plays a vital role in our way of life, our festivals are closely connected to the rhythms of the land. The Pham Kho Sowai, celebrated during the harvest season, is a shining example of this bond between people, culture, and nature," the Governor said.

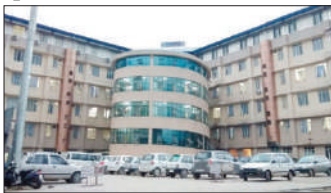
He further expressed confidence that the festival would continue to nurture and safeguard the rich cultural heritage of the Khowa tribe, ensuring that traditions are carried forward by future generations.

Concluding his message, the Governor conveyed his solidarity with the Khowa community and offered prayers to the Almighty for good health, peace, and contentment in everyone's lives.

"On this special day, I join my Khowa brethren in offering prayers for good health, peace, and contentment," he added.

The Governor's message underscores the importance of cultural festivals like Pham Kho Sowai in promoting harmony and preserving the unique heritage of Arunachal Pradesh.

HRA demands removal of health minister after patient's death at TRIHMS



HT Correspondent

**ITANAGAR, Sept 9:** The Human Rights of Arunachal (HRA) has urged the Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh to immediately remove Health Minister Biyuram Wahge and hold hospital authorities accountable following the death of 22-year-old Bengia Ama Gora at TRIHMS, Naharlagun, an official statement said.

In the letter addressed to the chief minister, Dr Kipa Kaha, Chairman of HRA, expressed concern that the patient's death was the result of grave negligence by the medical staff at TRIHMS.

The organisation has demanded the termination of the hospital's Director, Superintendent, and doctors responsible for the incident, in addition to calling for a time-bound and transparent inquiry.

HRA has also called for compensation of ₹1 crore to the deceased's family to ensure their livelihood and has emphasized the need for urgent reforms in healthcare infrastructure and patient safety.

The statement further criticized the assurance given by the Health Minister to form an inquiry committee, calling it a delay tactic that undermines the demand for justice.

Highlighting systemic issues, the HRA noted that despite substantial funds allocated to the health sector under the leadership of chief minister Pema Khandu, citizens continue to face poor healthcare facilities and lack of accountability.

Dr Kaha said, "It is in the greater public interest that the chief minister takes decisive action by removing the Health Minister and holding all responsible officials accountable. Ministers should not enjoy the privileges of power without responsibility."

The letter has been circulated to all print and electronic media in the state, seeking public attention and intervention.

## District level NCORD meeting at Yingkiong reviews drug prevention initiatives

HT Correspondent

**YINGKIONG, Sept 9:** The District Level NCORD (Narcotic Coordination) meeting was held on Tuesday at the Conference Hall of the DC Office in Yingkiong to review ongoing efforts and strengthen coordinated action against drug abuse in Upper Siang district, an official statement said on Tuesday.

Organised by the District Police, the meeting brought together key officials, line departments, and community representatives to assess progress on drug prevention measures and identify future strategies.

The discussions centered on implementing and expanding efforts initiated as per the minutes of the last meeting, with a renewed focus on joint action, innovation, and community involvement.

Superintendent of Police (SP) Upper Siang, Token Saring, in his opening remarks, underscored the primary objectives

of NCORD and called for enhanced cooperation among departments.

"We must rise above individual efforts and work collectively with innovative approaches to address drug-related issues in our district. A coordinated strategy and proactive participation from every stakeholder are vital if we are to ensure a drug-free Upper Siang," he stated.

During the meeting, Dr Karo Teng, Medical Superintendent of District Hospital Yingkiong, presented a detailed report on the department's interventions.

He informed participants that integrated health camps had been conducted in 10 schools across the district as part of awareness and prevention efforts.

Additionally, progress was shared regarding the ongoing development of the De-addiction Centre at Yingkiong, aimed at providing treatment and counselling services for those affected by substance

abuse.

Ine Pertin, Child Development Project Officer (CDPO) and Deputy Director of Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS), highlighted the role of Anganwadi workers under the Nasha Mukti Abhiyan.

"Our frontline workers have been sensitized on their responsibilities, and action plans have been implemented at the grassroots level to educate families and communities about the dangers of drug abuse," she said.

Further, the Deputy Director of School Education (DDSE) shared that Prahari Club Committees had been constituted in schools across the district to actively promote anti-drug campaigns.

These student-led committees are responsible for spreading awareness about the risks of substance abuse, supporting peer education initiatives, and fostering a healthy and drug-free learning environment.

The meeting also emphasized the need for sustained efforts and innovation in tackling the issue.

Officials called upon departments to explore new methods, collaborate across sectors, and encourage community participation in drug prevention programmes.

The gathering concluded with a collective resolve to intensify anti-drug campaigns and strengthen support mechanisms to safeguard the health and well-being of the youth in Upper Siang.

The official statement further noted that the District Level NCORD meeting reaffirmed the administration's commitment to promoting a safe and healthy environment.

Participants unanimously agreed that persistent coordination, awareness drives, and timely interventions are critical to preventing drug abuse and protecting future generations from its harmful effects.

## Upper Siang district launches awareness campaign on POCSO and Child Rights

HT Correspondent

**YINGKIONG, Sept 9:** In line with the recommendation of the Arunachal Pradesh State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (APSCPCR), the District Administration of Upper Siang has launched a series of sensitization and awareness programmes on the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act and child rights, an official statement said.

The campaign aims to promote awareness and ensure strict implementation of child protection laws across educational institutions, government offices, commercial establishments, and administrative outposts in the district.

The initiative was formally launched with a programme organized at the Conference Hall of the DC Office, Yingkiong, which brought together government officers and staff to deliberate on child safety and legal provisions.

The programme is being conducted under the supervision of Smti Ine Pertin, Deputy Director (ICDS), Department of Women and Child Development, Upper Siang. Addressing the participants, Advocate Omem Apang, Para Legal Counsellor at the One Stop Centre (OSC), Upper Siang, delivered a detailed session on the POCSO Act, 2012.

He emphasised the importance of preventing and reporting cases of sexual offences against children and outlined the procedures for intervention and support.

Advocate Akoying Tekseng, Legal cum Probation Officer at the District Child Protection Unit, Upper Siang, provided insights into child rights and the legal framework designed to protect children from abuse, exploitation, and neglect.

He sensitised the participants on their role in identifying and addressing child protection concerns and ensuring that legal provisions are implemented effectively. According to the official statement, this initiative is part of a broader effort to foster a child-friendly environment and ensure that the rights and safety of children are upheld in all sectors of society.

Similar awareness sessions on POCSO and child rights are scheduled to be conducted across Upper Siang in schools, commercial spaces, government offices, and administrative units.

## 'Milestone for wildlife research'

**ITANAGAR, Sept 9:** Deep in the high-altitude wilderness of Arunachal Pradesh, a landmark wildlife survey has thrown up rare treasures of nature -- among them, the first-ever photographic proof of the mysterious and little-seen Pallas's cat.

The survey, conducted by WWF-India with the support of the state Forest Department and local communities, also recorded the presence of snow leopard, common leopard, clouded leopard, leopard cat, and marbled cat above 4,200 metre, indicating the landscape's unique wildcat diversity.

"The discovery of the Pallas's cat in Arunachal Pradesh is a milestone for wildlife research in the eastern Himalayas," said the state's Principal Chief Conservator of Forest Nyilyang Tam.

A total of 136 camera traps were set up at 83 locations across 2,000 sq km of rugged high-altitude rangelands in the West Kameng and Tawang districts under the project funded by the UK government through the Darwin Initiative. WWF-India's director of Assam and Arunachal office, Archita Baruah Bhattacharyya, said.

The survey documented the highest elevation records for several species, such as the common leopard at 4,600

metre, the clouded leopard at 4,650 metre, the marbled cat at 4,326 metre, the Himalayan wood owl at 4,194 metre, and the grey-headed flying squirrel at 4,506 metre, she said.

The elevation records were the highest in India to date and may exceed previously known global limits, she added.

The Pallas's cat was recorded slightly lower than the absolute global maximum of 5,050 metres. This cold-adapted wild cat is one of the most elusive, rarely photographed and therefore remains one of the least studied feline species.

Its documentation in Arunachal Pradesh significantly extends the known distribution of the species in the eastern Himalaya, adding to earlier confirmed records from Sikkim, Bhutan, and eastern Nepal.

WWF-India's head for science and conservation of the Himalayas Programme, Rishi Kumar Sharma, said the discovery of Pallas's cat in Arunachal Pradesh at nearly 5,000 metres is a powerful reminder of how little is still known about life in the high Himalayas.

"That a landscape can support snow leopards, clouded leopards, marbled cats, and now Pallas's cat alongside vi-

brant pastoral traditions speaks to its extraordinary richness and resilience. These findings highlight why community-led conservation, grounded in science and local knowledge, is indispensable for securing the future of our fragile rangelands," he said.

The survey involved meticulous planning and days of trekking through remote and high-altitude areas. The camera traps were kept active for over eight months, often in extreme weather and remote, difficult-to-access terrain, he added.

In a rare behavioural observation, the camera traps also documented a snow leopard and a common leopard scent-marking at the same location, offering fresh insight into how these big cats share fragile alpine habitats.

The survey also captured images of the Brokpa herding community and their livestock, underscoring centuries-old pastoral traditions that have enabled coexistence between people and wildlife in these high-altitude rangelands.

Tam, the PCCF, said the active participation of herders and villagers in the survey demonstrates that conservation, traditional knowledge, and their livelihoods can go hand in hand in protecting the fragile mountain ecosystems. (PTI)

## KARBI ANGLONG AUTONOMOUS COUNCIL DEPARTMENT OF WORKS KAAC:: BRANCH SECRETARIAT HAMREN-782486

NO.KAAC/HRN/W-151/2025-26/132

Dated: 05/09/2025

### TENDER NOTICE

Sealed tender affixing Non refundable KAAC court fee stamp (Receipt) Rs10.00 (Rupees Ten) only eventually to be drawn up in form are hereby invited from KAAC registered contractor/reputed firms of Works Department and will be receive by the undersigned up to 4 P.M on 25/09/2025 and will opened on the same date, place and the hours in presence of the tenderers or their authorized agent if any.

If the day of the opening of tender happens to be any holidays/Non-working day, the tender will be opened in the next working day. The undersigned has the right to accept, reject any tender without any reason thereof and will not be bound to accept the lowest tender quoted rate.

Sl. No.	Name of Works	Tender Amount	A/A Amount	Earnest Money	Time allowed for completion
1	Development of Hambi Kapathu ground with pitches at 9 different constituencies of West Karbi Anglong. i.e, Amreng, Amri, Bithung Rengthama, Chinthong, Duar Amla, Hamren, Kopili, Rongkhang, Socheng @ Rs. 10,00,000.00 each constituencies.	Rs. 90,00,000.00	Rs. 90,00,000.00	ST/SC/OBC=1% GENERAL=2%	45 days

Detail N.I.T/ document and name of works amounts may be obtained from Office of the E.E (Work) KAAC. Branch Secretariat, Hamren during working hours.

#### Terms & Conditions

##### N.B

1. The rate to be quoted as % (Percent) above/below/as per schedule rate for building/sanitary/works for all division under CPWD-2020-2021.
2. Earnest money should be deposited in favour of the undersigned in the form of call deposit/bank draft & should be attached with the tender, without which no tender will be accepted.
3. The contractor shall Repair/Re-construct if the works executed failed due inferior quality of works. The KAAC Authority will take legal action if the contractor refuses to Repair/Re-construction the work.
4. The work must be carried on as directed by the E.E (W), KAAC/KAAC Authority.
5. The following up to date documents should be enclosed with the tender.
  - a) Professional Tax Clearance Certificate.
  - b) Sale Tax Clearance Certificate/ GST registration.
  - c) KAAC Registration (Contractual).
  - d) Call Deposit.
  - e) Caste Certificate.
  - f) Bank Account number & Pan Card.
6. Payment will be made subject to availabilities of fund.
7. The undersigned is not bound to accept the lowest quoted rate.

Sd/-  
Executive Engineer (Work)  
KAAC Branch Secretariat  
HAMREN

Memo No. KAAC/HRN/W-151/2025-26/132 (A)

Dated : 05/09/2025



# Security tightened along Indo-Nepal border in wake of unrest in Nepal

**Nepal government revoked its ban on social media websites following protests; PM Oli resigns following protests**

**BALRAMPUR (UP), Sept 9:** The Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) that guards the 1751-km-long unfenced international front with Nepal has stepped up security across all its border posts and vulnerable points in the wake of unrest in Nepal, officials said.

All the field commanders of the SSB have been asked to be on the ground and maintain an enhanced vigil, they said.

"Additional forces have been deployed at 22 outposts of the Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) along the border, while police stations in five border areas are keeping surveillance through drone cameras," Superintendent of Police Vikas Kumar said in Balrampur.

He added that intelligence agencies have been instructed to maintain strict monitoring, and all personnel deployed along the 85-km-long border in Balrampur have been directed to remain on high alert.

Police teams and SSB jawans are conducting joint patrols, while



'Operation Kavach' committees in the region have been asked to stay active and keep a close watch on cross-border movement.

Nepalese Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli resigned on Tuesday in the face of massive anti-government protests sparked by a ban on social media with the demonstrators attacking private residences of several top politicians, including President Ramchandra Paudel, and

vandalising the parliament.

Though the Nepal government last night revoked its ban on social media websites following the protests led by 'Gen Z' youths, the agitators continued their demonstration against corruption while demanding accountability for the death of 19 people in police action against protesters.

Meanwhile, restrictions imposed by the Nepal government on social

media platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook and Messenger had affected cross-border communication between people in the two countries.

Residents of border areas, who often use the internet to connect with relatives in Nepal, said they faced hardships due to the restrictions. Ranipur resident Gyas Ahmed, an advocate, said India and Nepal have traditionally shared strong social and cultural ties.

"We have many relatives in Nepal. Through the internet, we were able to remain in touch with them and check on their well-being. The ban created difficulties for us and added to our concerns amid the violent agitation," he said.

Rakesh Yadav, MLA from Gasdi constituency, said several Tharu tribal families in his area have marital ties with people in Nepal.

"The Nepal government should make sincere efforts to end the violent agitation," he said. (PTI)

## PM conducts aerial survey of flood-hit areas in Punjab

**CHANDIGARH, Sept 9:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday conducted an aerial survey of the flood-ravaged areas in Punjab, battling its worst deluge since 1988.

Modi, who is on a daylong visit to Himachal Pradesh and Punjab to review the flood situation in the two states, will also hold discussions with senior officials and chair a review meeting on the ground situation in Gurdaspur, officials said.

He will also interact with flood-affected persons as well as NDRF, SDRF and Aapda Mitra Team in Gurdaspur.

Modi came to Punjab after his visit to Himachal Pradesh.

While leaving from Delhi for Himachal Pradesh and Punjab earlier in the day to review the situation in the wake of floods and landslides, PM Modi wrote on X, "The Government of India stands shoulder to shoulder with those affected in this tragic hour."

Punjab is currently facing one of its worst flood disasters in decades. The floods are a result of swollen rivers the Sutlej, Beas, and Ravi along with seasonal rivulets caused by heavy rainfall in their catchment areas in Himachal Pradesh and Jammu & Kashmir. (PTI)

## Avalanche in Siachen base camp; three dead



**LEH, Sept 9:** Three soldiers lost their lives when an avalanche struck Siachen, the world's highest battlefield, in the Union Territory of Ladakh, officials said on Tuesday.

The avalanche occurred in the 12,000-foot-high Siachen base camp area on Sunday, trapping three soldiers, including two Agniveers, the officials said.

They said a rescue operation was immediately launched and the bodies of the trapped soldiers were retrieved. (PTI)

## PM announces ₹ 1,500 cr immediate relief for disaster-hit Himachal

**SHIMLA/DHARAMSHALA (HP), Sept 9:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday announced an immediate relief of Rs 1,500 crore for rain-affected Himachal Pradesh.

Modi, who took stock of the flood and landslides situation in the state, also announced ₹ 2 lakh ex-gratia for the next of kin of the dead and ₹ 50,000 for the injured.

He first conducted an aerial survey of affected areas and then held a meeting in Kangra to review the relief and rehabilitation measures undertaken as well as assess the damage.

In the meeting with Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu, Governor Shiv Pratap Shukla, BJP leaders, affected families and people engaged in rescue services in Kangra, Modi assured all help for restoration and rebuilding of infrastructure in the affected areas.

The financial assistance of ₹ 1,500 crore will be the advance release of the second instalment of SDRF and PM Kisan Samman Nidhi.

Modi asked for a multi-dimensional view to be taken to get the entire region and people back on its feet. These would be done through multiple ways, like rebuilding homes through PM Awas Yojana, restoration of national highways, rebuilding schools, provision of relief under PMNRF along with release of mini kits for livestock.

To ensure uninterrupted education, schools will be able to report and geotag damages, enabling timely assistance under the Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan.

Construction of recharge structures for water harvesting to help collect and store rainwater will be



done. These efforts will improve groundwater levels and support better water management.

The Centre has already sent inter-ministerial teams to Himachal Pradesh to assess the extent of damage, and based on their detailed report further assistance will be considered.

Modi also met families affected by the calamity. He expressed condolences and deep sorrow to those who lost their relatives. A photograph of the prime minister holding 11-month-old Neetika, the lone survivor in her family, has also gone viral on the internet.

Modi said that the Centre will work closely with the Himachal Pradesh government at this difficult time and extend all possible assistance.

Recognizing the critical need to support the agricultural community, additional assistance will be provided specifically targeted at farmers who currently lack power connections, he said and added that geotagging of damaged houses

will be done under the Under the PM Awas Yojana to assess the damage accurately and ensure faster delivery of aid.

He said all assistance under disaster management rules are being made including advance disbursements to the states. He appreciated the efforts of the personnel of NDRF, SDRF, Army, state administration and other service-oriented organisations in relief and response work.

The central government will further review the assessment based on the memorandum of the state as well as the report of the central teams, he said.

Modi acknowledged the gravity of the situation and assured that the Centre will make all efforts to address the situation.

Earlier, he also watched a presentation on the prevailing situation in Himachal Pradesh state after cloudbursts, flash floods and landslides triggered by heavy rains wreaked havoc in the state and was briefed about the same. (PTI)

## ED questions BJP worker who filed petition in HC questioning Rahul Gandhi's citizenship

**NEW DELHI, Sept 9:** A Karnataka BJP worker, who had petitioned the Allahabad High Court claiming that Congress leader Rahul Gandhi is a British citizen, deposed before the Enforcement Directorate on Tuesday where his statement was recorded, official sources said.

S Vignesh Shishir told reporters before entering the office of the federal probe agency in central Delhi that he has been summoned under section 37 of the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA) with regard to the said investigation.

Shishir was asked to submit certain documents and "evidence" he had claimed to have been possessing. He has been asked certain questions and his statement has been recorded under the FEMA, agency sources said.

Under FEMA, the Enforcement Directorate (ED) probes complaints related to foreign exchange law violations by individuals and companies.

"I have some concrete evidence, information, documents, records and videos..." Shishir told reporters.

The Congress party declined to comment on the issue.

In a PIL filed before the Allahabad High Court, Shishir had claimed that he has documents and some emails of the British government which prove Gandhi, the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, is a British citizen, and due to that he is ineligible to contest elections in India.

The Lucknow bench of the Allahabad High Court on August 30 had ordered round-the-clock security for Shishir to be provided by the Union government. (PTI)

## 2008 MALEGAON BLAST

## Victims move HC against acquittal of Pragma Thakur, 6 others



**MUMBAI, Sept 9:** Six family members of people who died in the 2008 Malegaon bomb blast have moved the Bombay High Court, challenging a special court judgment acquitting the seven accused in the case, including former BJP MP Pragma Singh Thakur and Lt Col Prasad Purohit.

The appeal claimed faulty investigation or some defects in the probe cannot be the ground for acquitting the accused. It also contended that a conspiracy is hatched in secrecy and hence there cannot be a direct evidence of it.

The petitioners claimed the order passed by the special NIA court on July 31 acquitting the seven accused was wrong and bad in law and hence deserves to be quashed.

The appeal, filed on Monday by Nisar Ahmed Sayyed Bilal and five others through their advocate Mateen Shaikh, sought the HC to quash the special court judgment.

As per the HC website, the appeal is likely to come up for hearing before a division bench headed by Justice A S Gadkari on September 15.

An explosive device strapped to a motorcycle went off near a mosque in Malegaon town, located about 200 km from Mumbai in Maharashtra's Nashik district, on September 29, 2008, killing six persons and injuring 101 others.

The claim said the trial court judge should not act as a "postman or mute spectator" in a criminal trial. When the prosecution failed to elicit facts, the trial court can ask questions and/or summon witnesses, it added.

## Air India cancels four flights on Delhi-Kathmandu route

**NEW DELHI, Sept 9:** Air India on Tuesday cancelled four flights between Delhi and Kathmandu amid massive anti-government protests in the neighbouring nation.

IndiGo and Nepal Airlines also announced their flights from the national capital to Kathmandu on Tuesday as the Tribhuvan International Airport in the Nepal's capital has been temporarily closed.

A source said one of the flights of Air India returned to the national capital on Tuesday as smoke was noticed at the Kathmandu airport during final approach of the aircraft.

"In view of the current situation prevailing in Kathmandu, the following flights AI2231/2232, AI2219/2220, AI217/218 and AI211/212 operating on the Delhi-Kathmandu-Delhi route have been cancelled today. We are closely monitoring the situation and will share further updates," Air India said in a statement on Tuesday.

Air India operates six flights a day between Delhi and Kathmandu.

Nepal is facing massive anti-government protests and Nepalese Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli resigned on Tuesday. (PTI)

## Bihar cabinet nod for anganwadi honourarium hike, 3,300 new govt posts

**PATNA, Sept 9:** The Bihar cabinet on Tuesday gave its approval to a slew of proposals, including increasing the honourariums of anganwadi workers, creation of 3,303 posts of revenue staffers and the construction of marriage halls in all 8,053 panchayats of the state.

The decisions assume significance with assembly polls due to be held in the state in a few months.

A meeting of the state cabinet, chaired by Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, approved a proposal regarding increasing the honorariums of 1.20 lakh anganwadi workers and helpers.

With this hike, anganwadi workers will get ₹ 9,000 per month, up from ₹ 7,000, and helpers will receive ₹ 4,000 instead of ₹ 4,500.

The government will spend an additional ₹ 345.19 crore for the hike, effective from September 1.

The cabinet also approved the Revenue and Land Reforms Department's proposal for the creation of 3,303 posts of 'revenue staffers'.

The decision to create the new posts was taken keeping in view the increasing number of 'jama-bandi' cases, relating to the record-of-right, Additional Chief Secretary (Cabinet Secretariat) Arvind Kumar Chaudhary said.

The cabinet also sanctioned ₹ 280.60 crore for the installation of CCTV cameras in 176 new police stations and maintenance of already installed CCTV cameras, he said. The cabinet gave its nod to spend ₹ 50 crore from the Bihar Contingency Fund for the construction of marriage halls in a phased manner in all 8,053 panchayats, he added.

Approval was also given to the



'Mukhya Mantri Fellowship Yojana', as part of which "experienced specialists" will be roped in to speed up the formulation and implementation of public policy at different levels, Chaudhary said.

A total of 121 fellows will be appointed under the scheme, which will be implemented by the General Administration Department and IIM-Bodh Gaya.

IIM-Bodh Gaya will award a Certificate of Public Policy and Good Governance on the completion of the two-year fellowship. A monthly stipend of ₹ 1.5 lakh, ₹ 1.25 lakh, ₹ 1 lakh and ₹ 80,000 will be given to the fellows who will be appointed to the CM's Secretariat, Dy CM's Office, and the office of the Chief Secretary and Development Commissioner, among others.

The cabinet also gave its approval for setting up LPG-based crematoriums in six cities by the Isha Foundation. These crematoriums will be set up in Patna, Gayaji, Saran, Saharsa, Bhagalpur and Begusarai. One acre of land will be given on lease for 33 years in each place for these crematoriums.

The cabinet approved the 'Jeevika Godhan Conservation and Management Scheme' for the conservation and proper management of stray cows. (PTI)

## 50 killed, crops on more than 5 lakh hectares damaged in Marathwada this monsoon

**CHHATRAPATI SAMBHAJINAGAR, Sept 9:** At least 50 people lost their lives and crops on more than five lakh hectares of land were damaged due to heavy rainfall in Marathwada this monsoon, with Nanded emerging as the worst-hit district, an official said on Tuesday.

As per a report shared by the divisional commissioner's office, the region comprising eight districts received 606.3 mm of rainfall since June 1, which is 8.7 per cent above the normal expected rainfall.

Marathwada consists of Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar, Jalna, Beed, Latur, Nanded, Dharrashiv, Hingoli and Parbhani. Nanded, which was hit by floods last month, received 21.2 per cent more than the average expected rainfall. The region reported 50 deaths, the highest 18 were recorded in Nanded, followed by 11 in Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar, six each in Beed and Hingoli, five in Parbhani and three in Jalna, the report stated.

At least 1,049 animals died due to heavy rainfall, while 3,388 houses suffered damage, it said.

According to the report, crops on more than 5.62 lakh hectares of land, belonging to 15.78 lakh farmers, were damaged due to rains in the last three months. Nanded district was the most affected, with crop losses on 2.62 lakh hectares, while in Hingoli, crops on 1.24 lakh hectares of land were affected.

The administration has completed 45 per cent of the crop loss survey, the report stated. (PTI)



**NEW DELHI, Sept 9:** Indore, Amravati and Dewas on Tuesday emerged as top performers in curbing air pollution under the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP).

At an award event here, Union Environment Minister Bhupendra Patel said several cities have achieved significant progress despite being industrial hubs or having coal mines.

He announced that from next year, wards within cities will also be assessed for their air pollution control efforts, and released guidelines for this.

Indore ranked first among cities with more than 10 lakh population, followed by Jabalpur (Madhya Pradesh). Agra (Uttar Pradesh) and Surat (Gujarat) shared the third spot.

In the 3-10 lakh population category, Amravati (Maharashtra) stood first, Jhansi

(Uttar Pradesh) and Moradabad (Uttar Pradesh) were joint second, while Alwar (Rajasthan) took the third position.

Among smaller cities with less than 3 lakh people, Dewas (Madhya Pradesh) bagged the top rank, followed by Parwanoo (Himachal Pradesh) and Angul (Odisha).

Yadav specially congratulated Angul for maintaining air quality standards despite the presence of coal mines.

He also awarded Indore and Udaipur for earning international recognition as wetland cities under the Ramsar Convention.

Yadav said the number of Ramsar sites in India has increased from 25 in 2014 to 91 in 2025.

"If forests are the lungs, lakes act as kidneys," he said.

"A holistic and integrated approach is needed to fight air pollution. We must embrace recycling, reuse and the circular economy," Yadav added.

He urged other cities to emulate Indore and added, "If your city's air is bad, it will enter your lungs. Make efforts to save your cities."

The minister announced a target of planting 75 crore saplings between September 17 and October 2.

Environment Secretary Tanmay Kumar said 64 of the 130 cities covered under NCAP have reduced PM10 levels by 20 per cent or more compared to 2017-18, while 25 cities have achieved a reduction of 40 per cent or more.

Launched in 2019, NCAP is the country's first national initiative to set clean air targets, aiming at a 40 per cent cut in particulate pollution by 2026 using 2017-18 as the base year. (PTI)



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## Nagaland pre-service teachers raises alarm over recruitment irregularities, demands immediate action

**KOHEMA, Sept 9:** An association of pre-service teachers in Nagaland on Tuesday raised concerns over the alleged irregularities and lack of transparency in the recruitment of primary teachers in the state.

The All Nagaland Pre-Service Teachers Association (ANPSTA) alleged that over the past decade, more than 1,000 primary teacher posts remained unadvertised, though appointments have continued through questionable practices.

An Education Department official said that the matter is being examined as the pupil-teacher ratio in the state is already 7:1, higher than the national ratio.

The issue will be looked into under the ongoing process of rationalisation of teachers, the official said.

In a press conference, the association's representatives presented findings claimed to have been obtained through multiple Right to Information (RTI) applications, which exposed discrepancies in the recruitment data.

According to the RTI responses, 401 primary teachers were appointed between 2016 and the present time. However, upon careful scrutiny, the association found that many names were repeated or missing, bringing the total down to 397 confirmed appointments, the ANPSTA claimed.

Only two posts were advertised during this entire period - one in Mon district in 2020 and another in Wokha district in 2021 - leaving 395 posts apparently filled through backdoor appointments without any public notice or fair process, the association alleged.

The association also alleged that 65 of these appointed teachers lack the mandatory teacher qualifications. The ANPSTA criticised the education department for failing to provide proper justification or accurate data in response to RTI queries. They argued that this opaque system endangers the quality of education and constitutes a "time bomb" for the future generation.



Expressing frustration at the government's inaction despite repeated appeals, the association demanded an immediate open recruitment process for the 1,168 pending primary teacher posts.

They referenced a Supreme Court directive from November 2023, stating that recruitment must be conducted exclusively for qualified Diploma in Elementary Education (D.El.Ed) candidates, rejecting ECCE or Montessori qualifications as valid.

Highlighting the larger impact, the association said this situation reflects not only a failure in public administration but also contributes significantly to rising unemployment among trained teaching professionals in Nagaland.

Many qualified candidates, especially DLA trainees, are now at risk of becoming overage or having their careers permanently derailed due to inaction.

A memorandum outlining these demands and evidence was officially submitted during the day to the Principal Director of School Education, the association said, adding that they would wait for three weeks and resort to a democratic course of action if the department does not positively respond. (PTI)

## NSF wants stringent documentation for ILP ₹ 700-cr project to alleviate Shillong's water woes: CM

**HT Correspondent**  
**DIMAPUR, Sept 9:** The inner line regulation commission (ILRC) of the Naga Students' Federation (NSF) on Tuesday stressed that the very essence of the inner line mechanism lies in maintaining stringent documentation for all non-indigenous individuals entering or residing in Nagaland.

It also reiterated that no waiver of ILP fee, whether long-term or short-term, should be granted under any circumstances.

"Even short-term visitors must obtain and carry a valid ILP document, without exception," the ILRC said in a release. The ILRC also reaffirmed its commitment to constructive collaboration with the state government and district authorities to ensure that the inner line system, strengthened by Article 371(A), is uniformly enforced.

"In doing so, we must preserve its original purpose of safeguarding the land, identity, and heritage of the Naga people, while adapting resiliently to contemporary challenges," it stressed.

Further, aligned with the very spirit of the Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation (BEFR) 1873, where the executive phrase "inner line pass" was originally used, the ILRC urged all district administrators and government offices to revert to the original nomenclature "inner line pass", not "inner line permit."

**SHILLONG, Sept 9:** Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma on Tuesday said his government has sanctioned ₹ 700 crore for a new water supply scheme for Shillong, which is at an advanced stage of implementation.

Speaking in the assembly, Sangma said it will provide relief to the people of Shillong and adjoining areas.

He said the Wahrynthem water project, having a capacity of 33 million litres per day, is also being planned with the Umngot river at Dawki as the source.

The project, he added, is expected to ease the water crisis in the region.

Leader of Opposition Mukul Sangma expressed concern over the sustainability of the water sources in the wake of erratic weather patterns and climate change.

The CM said the state is addressing the challenges through externally aided projects, focusing on natural resource management, rejuvenation of springs and catchment area protection.

He also stressed the role of the Meghalaya Climate Council in this regard.

"The council is guided by the state's water policy, adopted in 2019. We were the first state to adopt the water policy," Sangma said, adding that efforts are underway to ensure the sustainability of water sources amid climate-related challenges.

He admitted that the state has been hit hard by a 50 per cent rainfall deficiency this year, but noted that the government is tapping different sources to meet the demand.

Public Health Engineering Minister Marcuse N Marak said the much-awaited Greater Shillong Water Supply Scheme (GSWSS) would be completed by March next year.

"In Shillong city, the gap is expected to reduce on completion of GSWSS (Phase-III)," he said.

Marak said Shillong city and its adjoining areas require 5,58,30,000 litres of drinking water daily, but the available supply is only 4,17,80,000 litres, resulting in a shortfall of 1,40,50,000 litres.

With regard to Mawlai, he said 64,75,000 litres of water is being supplied daily, but a deficit of 27,75,000 litres remains. (PTI)

## C-CAMP, Nagaland sign pact to strengthen public healthcare

**HT Correspondent**  
**DIMAPUR, Sept 9:** The Centre for Cellular and Molecular Platforms (C-CAMP), a Government of India-supported initiative through its biotechnology department, signed an MoU with the Nagaland government to strengthen the state's public healthcare system through innovative indigenous health technologies.

C-CAMP director and CEO Dr Taslimarif Saiyed and commissioner & secretary, Nagaland health & family welfare department, Anoop Khinchi made this announcement at the directorate of health & family welfare in Kohima on Tuesday.

This collaboration builds on C-CAMP's earlier efforts to support Nagaland's public health system.

The C-CAMP successfully established two

oxygen-supported augmented hospital facilities in the state during the COVID-19 pandemic - a 50-bed facility at Dimapur district hospital and a 39-bed facility at Imkongliba Memorial District Hospital in Mokochung. These facilities played a crucial role in enhancing oxygen-supported care capacity during the pandemic surge and continue to serve patients today.

Commissioner & secretary Khinchi said the objectives of the partnership include introducing and implementing innovative technologies for improving health outcomes in public health settings together with C-CAMP, adding the vision for the partnership is long-term.

It aims to build a resilient, inclusive, and innovation-driven health system that ensures equitable access to quality care for every citizen of the state, he said.

According to the 2011 census, the northeastern state has 79,000 people belonging to the Chakma community, one of the 19 tribes in the state, and the population of this group has now grown to around 1,20,000, he said.

The Chakma language is being taught in 123 government schools, in which over 4,000 students from classes I to VIII are studying, the minister said.

"A total of 172 Chakma-speaking teachers are engaged in these schools. The advisory committee also decided to constitute nine sub-committees for the overall development of the language," he said. He also emphasised the development of the languages of all the tribes living in the northeastern state. (PTI)

## Chakma language words to be included in Google translation platform: Tripura minister

**AGARTALA, Sept 9:** The Tripura government on Tuesday decided to include words of the Chakma language in the Google translation platform so that the content in the tribal language can be converted into English, Hindi and Bengali, a state minister said.

Agriculture Minister Ratan Lal Nath said the government also decided to observe Chakma language and script day on August 7 from next year onwards in a bid to protect the culture of the indigenous people in the state.

He said an advisory committee for the development of the Chakma language took these decisions in a meeting during the day.

"The panel decided to include words of the Chakma language in the Google translation platform so that the content in the tribal language can be converted into English, Hindi and Bengali," the minister said.

For this purpose, the committee has already collected 50,000 words of the Chakma lan-

guage, and 50,000 more will be identified shortly, he said.

Kokborok, the mother tongue of the Tripuri tribe, has already been introduced in the Google translation platform.

KARBI ANGLONG AUTONOMOUS COUNCIL  
DEPARTMENT OF WORKS  
KAAC:: SECRETARIAT  
DIPHU-782460

NO.KAAC/W-132/2025-26/1120

Dated: 05/09/2025

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Sealed tender affixing Non refundable KAAC court fee stamp (Receipt) Rs10.00 (Rupees Ten) only eventually to be drawn up in form are hereby invited from KAAC registered contractor/reputed firms of Works Department and will be receive by the undersigned up to 4 P.M on **25/09/2025** and will opened on the same date, place and the hours in presence of the tenderers or their authorized agent if any.

If the day of the opening of tender happens to be any holidays/Non-working day, the tender will be opened in the next working day. The undersigned has the right to accept, reject any tender without any reason thereof and will not be bound to accept the lowest tender quoted rate.

Sl. No.	Name of Works	Tender Amount	A/A Amount	Earnest Money	Time allowed for completion
1	Development of Hambli Kapathu ground with pitches at 17 different constituencies of West Karbi Anglong. i.e, Nomati, Mahamaya, Karkanthi, Langhin, Phuloni, Howraghat, Langpher, Singhason, Lumbajong, Dhansiri, Borjan, Bokajan, Sarupathar, Deopani, Nilip, Socheng Dhenta and Duar Bagori @ Rs. 10,00,000.00 each constituencies.	Rs. 1,70,00,000.00	Rs. 1,70,00,000.00	ST/SC/OBC=1% GENERAL=2%	30 days

Detail N.I.T/ document and name of works amounts may be obtained from Office of the E.E (Works) KAAC, Diphu during working hours.

Terms & Conditions

N.B

1. The rate to be quoted as % (Percent) above/below/as per schedule rate for building/sanitary/works for all division under CPWD-2020-2021.

2. Earnest money should be deposited in favour of the undersigned in the form of call deposit/bank draft & should be attached with the tender, without which no tender will be accepted.

3. The contractor shall Repair/Re-construct if the works executed failed due inferior quality of works. The KAAC Authority will take legal action if the contractor refuses to Repair/Re-construction the work.

4. The work must be carried on as directed by the E.E (W), KAAC/KAAC Authority.

5. The following up to date documents should be enclosed with the tender.

a) Professional Tax Clearance Certificate.

b) Sale Tax Clearance Certificate/ GST registration.

c) KAAC Registration (Contractual).

d) Call Deposit.

e) Caste Certificate.

f) Bank Account number & Pan Card.

6. Payment will be made subject to availabilities of fund.

7. The undersigned is not bound to accept the lowest quoted rate.

Sd/-

Executive Engineer (Work)

Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council,

DIPHU

GOVT. OF ASSAM  
DIRECTORATE-CUM-ADDITIONAL CHIEF ENGINEER,  
PWD, (R&B), HILLS, ASSAM, DIPHU.

NO.ACEH/E(G)/10/2025-2026/12,

Dated Diphu, the 08th September, 2025.

NOTICE

It is for general information to all the eligible candidates who have applied for Lower Division Assistant (Junior Assistant) and Section Assistant (SA) Grade-III post against the advertisement No. ACEH/E(G)/10/2025-26/06, Dtd. 01/07/2025, that the Written Test for Grade-III posts shall be held on as detailed below:-

Sl. No	Name of Post	Date & Time of Written Test	Venue of Written Test	Date of Issue of Admit Card
1	LD. Assistant (Jr. Asstt.)	21/09/2025 Morning 9:00 AM to 12:00 Noon	D.A.V. H.S. School, Diphu. Rengbonghom H.S. School, Diphu.	12/09/2025 to 20/09/2025
2	Section Assistant (S.A.)	21/09/2025 Afternoon 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM	D.A.V. H.S. School, Diphu. Rengbonghom H.S. School, Diphu.	12/09/2025 to 20/09/2025

Therefore, all eligible candidates are informed to collect their Admit Cards / Calling Letter for appearing the said Written Test for the above given Grade-III post from the office of the undersigned during office hours as per dates as mentioned above

It is to be mentioned here that No Admit Card/Calling Letter shall be sent to the candidates by post individually.

Sd/-

Director-Cum-Addl. Chief Engineer,

PWD(R&B), Hills, Assam, Diphu.

Cum

Member Secretary,

Interview Board & Selection Committee.

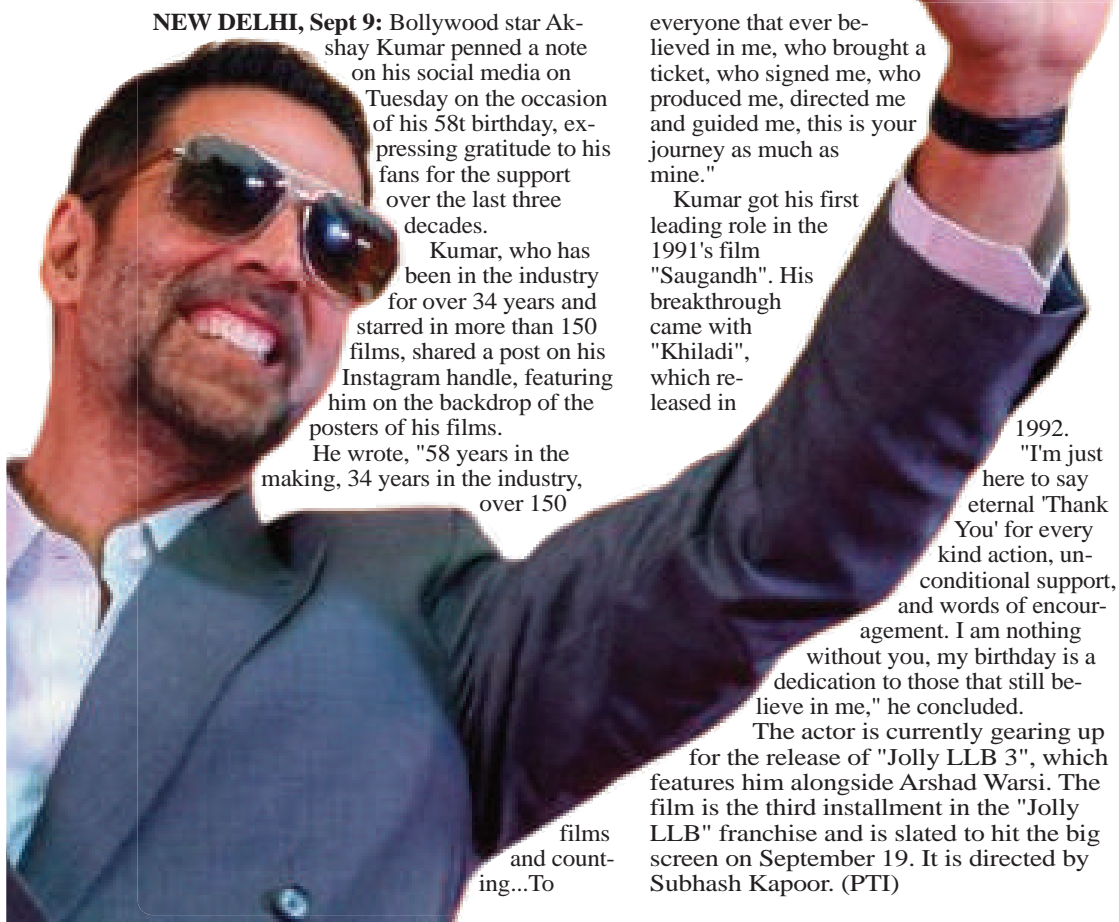
Dated Diphu, the 08th September, 2025.

Memo NO.ACEH/E(G)/10/2025-2026/12-A,

5202 / 121



# I AM NOTHING WITHOUT YOU: AKSHAY KUMAR THANKS FANS ON 58<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY



**NEW DELHI, Sept 9:** Bollywood star Akshay Kumar penned a note on his social media on Tuesday on the occasion of his 58th birthday, expressing gratitude to his fans for the support over the last three decades.

Kumar, who has been in the industry for over 34 years and starred in more than 150 films, shared a post on his Instagram handle, featuring him on the backdrop of the posters of his films.

He wrote, "58 years in the making, 34 years in the industry, over 150

everyone that ever believed in me, who brought a ticket, who signed me, who produced me, directed me and guided me, this is your journey as much as mine."

Kumar got his first leading role in the 1991's film "Saugandh". His breakthrough came with "Khiladi", which released in 1992.

"I'm just here to say eternal 'Thank You' for every kind action, unconditional support, and words of encouragement. I am nothing without you, my birthday is a dedication to those that still believe in me," he concluded.

The actor is currently gearing up for the release of "Jolly LLB 3", which features him alongside Arshad Warsi. The film is the third installment in the "Jolly LLB" franchise and is slated to hit the big screen on September 19. It is directed by Subhash Kapoor. (PTI)

# Emma Stone, Olivia Colman, Mark Ruffalo among 1,200 celebrities pledging to not work with Israeli Film Institutions

**MUMBAI, Sept 9:** Anurag Kashyap was writing a film for Manoj Bajpayee after the success of his two-part epic "Gangs of Wasseypur" but he had to abandon the project after hitting a roadblock, says the actor, who shares a close friendship with the director that dates back to their first commercial hit "Satya" in 1998.

The Ramgopal Varma-directed film, which Kashyap wrote, launched Bajpayee into stardom as Bhiku Mhatre. They went on to work on "Kaun" and "Shool" but misunderstanding kept them from working together for several years.

Years later, Kashyap and Bajpayee reunited for the director's "Gangs of Wasseypur".

"There was too much misunderstanding, which got cleared up only after we decided to work on 'Gangs of Wasseypur'. But it was a loss not only for both of us but also for our audience because we could really create a lot of magic together. We understood each other, we were just right for each other, and 'Gangs of Wasseypur' proved it right," Bajpayee told PTI in an interview.

But it has been thirteen years since "Wasseypur", did they not discuss another collaboration?

"We were discussing a film very seriously. But Anurag being Anurag, he is very unpredictable, and I accept him in all of his flaws, that's the kind of relationship I've with him. He realised that he is not being able to do justice to it as a writer, so we stopped," the actor said.

Bajpayee has not lost hope about Kashyap starting the project again but wouldn't actively follow its development. "Let's see, one fine morning he will get up and he will have his script. I don't put any pressure on him at all. He is that kind of a person who is never easy with compulsions whether emotional, physical or financial."

Now Kashyap has turned presenter for Bajpayee's new project "Jugnuma", which has been directed by Raam Reddy. "He saw the film at the New York Film festival, and he was blown away by the film. And he decided to support the film, and put his name on the poster. He got a few of the exciting filmmakers, big names from South India like Vetri Maaran, Nag Ashwin, Lijo. All of them have seen the film and they have lent their names to it. This just tells you about the beauty of the film, and what



magical story 'Jugnuma' is," he said.

According to Bajpayee, Kashyap single handedly mentored many independent films by putting his might behind the filmmakers.

"He is a very courageous guy. There are flip sides to him, there is always a dark phase that he goes through, but that's his personality. I personally feel that he can't create without chaos. So, his chaos is a positive indication to me that he is going to come up with something really fantastic."

Asked if there was something that he disliked about Kashyap's personality that he has not shared with his friend, Bajpayee said the filmmaker thrives in chaos, while he himself is highly organised.

"There are very few things that I dislike about him, like he is not tidy enough. He should be, but he refuses to be tidy. His place is always scattered, and he doesn't like anyone to clean it. I'm a person who is very organised, so I find it very unsettling when I enter his house," Bajpayee said.

"Jugnuma", which is titled "The Fable" in English, is set to release in theatres this Friday. (PTI)

# Manisha Koirala pays tribute to grandfather B P Koirala amid Nepal protests



**NEW DELHI, Sept 9:** Bollywood star Manisha Koirala on Tuesday paid tribute to her grandfather, former Nepal prime minister Bishweshwar Prasad Koirala, and remembered him as a man who "gave voice to love, conflict, and resilience".

Koirala's post on Instagram came amid the violent anti-government protests in the neighbouring country. The "Heeramandi" actor shared an old photograph of her grandfather on Instagram.

"Remembering B P BA on his birthday — Nepal's first elected Prime Minister and a writer who gave voice to love, conflict, and resilience. As students rise today against corruption and for freedom, his words feel timeless. 'Democracy is indivisible; if you want democracy at home, you cannot afford to neglect all struggles for it.' — B.P. Koirala," the 55-year-old actor wrote.

Nepalese Prime Minister KP Sharma

Oli resigned on Tuesday in the face of massive anti-government protests sparked by anger over corruption and a ban on social media, with the demonstrators attacking private residences of several top politicians, including President Ramchandra Paudel, and vandalising the parliament.

Though the Nepal government on Monday night revoked its ban on social media websites following the protests led by 'Gen Z' youths, the agitators continued their demonstration against corruption while demanding accountability for the death of 19 people in police action against protesters.

The actor on Monday condemned the violent crackdown on protesters in Nepal in a post on Instagram. She posted a picture of a bloodied shoe along with a caption that read, "Today is a black day for Nepal- when bullets respond to the voice of the people, outrage against corruption and demand for justice." (PTI)



# We were to do a film after 'Wasseypur', Anurag felt script was not coming together: Manoj Bajpayee

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## LeBron James uses basketball diplomacy to bridge US-China tensions

**HONG KONG, Sept 9:** At a time of tensions and tariffs, LeBron James is harnessing basketball diplomacy as a way of finding some common ground for people in the U.S. and China.

The NBA legend wrote a rare op-ed in Chinese state media, following his first visit to China since 2019, saying: "Basketball is not only a sport, but also a bridge that connects us."

The op-ed appeared in Monday's edition of the People's Daily newspaper and got the attention of the Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post, which reported: "It is rare for the mouthpiece of China's ruling Communist Party to run articles carrying the byline of foreign sports stars. It is more common for international sporting heroes to connect with fans in China via Chinese social media."

James was in China ahead of two NBA pre-season games next month in Macao between the Phoenix Suns and the Brooklyn Nets, part of the league's efforts to rebuild the brand in greater China.

The games on Oct. 10 and 12 will take place more than five years after the league was effectively banned for a while in China over NBA Commissioner Adam Silver's decision not to punish Daryl Morey in 2019 for tweeting support of anti-government protesters in Hong Kong.

The geopolitical rift started when Morey, then the general manager of the Houston Rockets and now GM of the Philadelphia 76ers, tweeted support for protesters while the Nets and Los Angeles Lakers were in China.

The tweet was deleted quickly, but the fallout lasted years. No NBA games were shown in China for a year, and broadcasts of games only started returning regularly in 2022. There's been a series of moves toward a return to normalcy between China and the league, including a visit by Golden State's Stephen Curry and Sacramento's De'Aaron Fox last year that drew enormous crowds. Curry returned for a visit last month. (AP)

## INDO-PAK ASIA CUP CLASH No instructions but Surya and Salman 'won't stop' on-field aggression



**DUBAI, Sept 9:** India skipper Suryakumar Yadav on Tuesday said his side will not hold back on aggression in the high-voltage Asia Cup clash against Pakistan on September 14 as it is an important aspect of playing international sport.

His Pakistani counterpart Salman Ali Agha had identical views -- no instructions but no shying away from it either. Before the Pakistan game, India will open their campaign against the UAE on Wednesday.

"Temper? Sir, aggression is always there on the field when we take the field. And without aggression, I don't think you can play this sport. And I'm sure, I'm very excited to take the field on the front foot," Suryakumar replied when asked whether players will be told to dial down the intensity in the much-awaited Sunday clash of the T20 event.

The Asia Cup match is being held in the backdrop of border tensions between India and Pak-

istan after 26 tourists were killed by terrorists in Pahalgam earlier this year leading to military action by India under Operation Sindoor.

Salman held a similar view on aggression but added that he wouldn't be issuing any specific instructions to his players.

"Well, you don't need to say anything to any player. Because everyone is individually very different. If someone wants to be aggressive on the field, they are more than welcome to do that."

"When it comes to fast bowlers, they are always aggressive," Salman said.

The captains' press conference and the trophy unveiling ceremony was followed by a question and answer session. The emcee requested the media to ask only apolitical questions.

In fact, Suryakumar and Salman weren't even seated together as Afghanistan skipper Rashid Khan took the place between them.

The Indian skipper was also

asked if he would like to see a change in his team's approach and philosophy.

"Why are you needing me?" he cheekily retorted.

"When you play a format you need to know how good is your preparation. Why mend something that isn't broken? If something has given us results why would we need to change that aspect separately?" he said.

There was the inevitable question about who among Sanju Samson and Jitesh Sharma will make the cut in the playing XI on Wednesday.

Like all other skippers, Suryakumar also kept cards close to his chest but did not let go of his trademark cheeky humour while responding to the query on Samson as the scribe who threw the question at him also hailed from the keeper-batter's native state Kerala.

"I will message you the whole team sir," he laughed and then in a slightly serious tone added: "We are taking good care of him."

Don't worry, we will take the right decision tomorrow."

When quizzed on the pressure of being title favourites, he admitted that there is pressure of coming good.

"Who said that? (favourites) I haven't heard it. But you have played in this format and you know how your preparations are. If your preparations are good, then you will be very confident when you take the field. We are playing T20 as a team after a long time."

For Salman, the challenge is to prove that the team has moved beyond Babar Azam and Muhammad Rizwan -- the two senior players who were dropped.

"We are playing very good cricket. I think for almost four months, we have won three series out of four. So we are doing very well as a team and at the same time, we are very excited."

"A lot of the boys will play Asia Cup for the first time but they are ready for the challenge," he added. (PTI)

## Chaos reigns as Gattuso's Italy scrambles to avoid missing a 3<sup>rd</sup> straight World Cup

**ROME, Sept 9:** Own goals. Uncharacteristic defensive lapses. General disorder. But lots of attacking flair.

If the idea in hiring Gennaro Gattuso to replace the fired Luciano Spalletti was to restore order and discipline to Italy's under-pressure squad -- which is still facing the possibility of failing to qualify for a third straight World Cup -- there's still plenty of work to be done.

Italy's 5-4 victory over Israel in a World Cup qualifier was, Gattuso acknowledged, "the craziest game I've been involved with as a coach."

"But that's my fault and not down to the players," Gattuso added. "If we want to play in a certain way, we need to get better at this. We were crazy to systematically go on the attack. That's what Israel was waiting for. They hit us on the counter every time."

Italy helped Israel with two own goals for the opponent, and Monday's game wasn't decided until Sandro Tonali's curled winner in stoppage time.

Still, it was a victory and three more points after Italy also scored a handful of goals in Gattuso's debut in charge, a 5-0 win over Estonia on Friday.

Italy on course for another playoffThe results meant that Italy leapfrogged Israel into second place in their qualifying group. Norway, which was hosting Moldova on Tuesday, leads the group with a perfect 12 points from four games. Italy is next with nine points from four games followed by Israel with nine points from five games -- trailing on goal differential. Winning the group is the only way to ensure direct qualification to next year's tournament in North America. The second-placed team goes into the playoffs, the stage where Italy was eliminated by Sweden and North Macedonia and ruled out of the 2018 and 2022 World Cups, respectively.

But at least Italy, which started qualifying with a 3-0 loss at Norway, is now in position to make the

playoffs.

Assuming that Erling Haaland's Norway continues to cruise, four-time champion Italy needs to be perfect in its remaining qualifiers and vastly improve its goal differential -- the first tiebreaker -- before a likely decisive final group game against Norway at the San Siro in November.

Norway's goal differential entering Tuesday's game was +11 while Italy's was +5.

Calafiori benching questionedGattuso was criticized for benching Arsenal defender Riccardo Calafiori against Israel, with center backs Gianluca Mancini and Alessandro Bastoni unable to stop Manor Solomon from slaloming his way through the Azzurri defense.

Napoli center back Alessandro Buongiorno was unavailable due to injury, and veteran Francesco Acerbi's days with Italy appear done after he turned down a call up for the Norway match under Spalletti.

There were also glaring mistakes from new Manchester City goalkeeper Gianluigi Donnarumma and Juventus midfielder Manuel Locatelli.

"We're a crazy team, because we're too fragile, we concede ridiculous goals too easily," Gattuso said. "The guys know that. But this is my problem, not theirs. My staff and I need to figure out solutions."

Gattuso likened the match to the wild 2005 Champions League final, when the AC Milan team he played for squandered a 3-0 half-time lead and lost to Liverpool in a penalty shootout.

"We need to learn that these matches are never finished," Gattuso said.

10 goals in 2 matchesOn the positive side, Gattuso has several in-form forwards.

Mateo Retegui scored two goals and provided three assists in two matches; Moise Kean scored three goals and Giacomo Raspadori scored two and assisted on two off the bench. (AP)

## Rakshit and Anshul lead Indians at Asia-Pacific Amateurs in Dubai



**DUBAI, Sept 9:** Reigning All India amateur champion Anshul Mishra and promising Rakshit Dahiya will be among prominent golfers representing India at the 16th Asia-Pacific Amateur Championship to be played here from October 23 to 26.

As per the current entry list, India will also have Raghav Gulati and Ranveer Mitroo, alongside Dahiya and Mishra. All four players have had considerable international experience, with Gulati, in particular, having played a lot in Dubai, where he spends most of his time.

The tournament has the most attractive prizes in amateur golf with the champion receiving an invitation to the 2026 Masters Tournament and an exemption into The 154th Open in 2026.

The runner(s) up finisher(s) will receive exemption into The Open Qualifying Series and the top-three receive an exemption into The 131st Amateur Championship.

Of the four Indians currently on the list, only Dahiya has earlier played in the AAC. He played at the 2024 edition in Japan, made the cut and finished Tied-37th with a consistent showing.

Dahiya has had a very good year, winning the Delhi Golf Club Juniors, Delhi NCR Cup and Samarvir Sahi amateurs, all prominent Indian amateur events.

However, his standout recent performance came in a Pro event on the Professional Golfers Tour of India, where he registered a creditable Top-10 finish at Coal India Open against some of India's top pros.

Mishra, winner of the storied and 132-year old All India Amateurs in

2024, has had varied experience over the last few months. Second at the FCG Callaway event in US, he also had Top-10s in Dubai and Singapore.

The young star also played at a series of junior events in the US, including the prestigious Boys Junior PGA, US Junior amateurs, FCG Callaway and Uswing Mowing Junior World.

Gulati had wins in two events in Dubai, so he will be in a familiar environment. He won the FJT Middle East and the Tommy Fleetwood Pathway International Pathway event presented by DP World.

Mitroo, too, is not short on experience, having had Top-10s in Asia-Pacific Juniors in Hong Kong and then in Singapore, besides a Top-10 in an American Junior Golf Association (AJGA) event in the US.

Around 120 players will tee off at the event, which was established in 2009 by the Asia-Pacific Golf Confederation (APGC), The R&A and the Masters Tournament to further develop amateur golf in the Asia-Pacific region.

Players from 41 APGC member organizations have accepted invitations with 117 confirmed thus far for the 120-player field.

The top stars expected this year include Harry Takis of Australia, the 2024 runner-up Ziqin Zhou of China, Kent Hsiao of Chinese Taipei, Jeffrey Shen of Hong Kong, Rayhan Latief of Indonesia, Taisei Nagasaki, Taishi Moto and Rintaro Nakano of Japan, and Fifi Laopakdee, Ratchanon TK Chanatanuwat and Chanachon Chokprajakchat of Thailand. (PTI)

## Indian women's recurve team in bronze final; men bow out, compound archers fall short

**GWANGJU (SOUTH KOREA), Sept 9:** The women's recurve team of Deepika Kumari, teenager Gatha Khadake and Ankita Bhakate entered the bronze medal playoffs at the World Archery Championships here on Tuesday but the men made a shocking first-round exit and the compound archers failed to add more to their tally of two medals.

The third-seeded Indian trio secured back to back wins before losing to Japan 2-6 in the semifinals. India will now face South Korea for the bronze, aiming for their first women's team medal at the World Championships since 2015.

So far, India have won two medals, both in the compound section -- a first ever men's team gold and a mixed team silver for Rishabh Yadav and Jyothi Surekha Vennam.

Four-time Olympian and former world No.1 Deepika led the women's charge in the recurve

competition, finishing sixth in qualification with 677 points.

Gatha, seeded 14th with 666, and Ankita, seeded 30th with 656, ensured India took third place in the team qualification to earn a direct entry into the second round.

The trio began strongly, ousting 10th seeds Slovenia 5-1, shooting 50, 55 and 55 against their rivals' 48, 55 and 53.

In the quarters, they overcame an early setback against Turkey, losing the opening set 51-55 after a wayward seven. But they stormed back with 55 and a superb 57 to turn the match around before sealing it 6-2 with another 55. Their fine run ended in the semifinals against Japan, who prevailed 6-2.

After a 56-all opener, Japan raised their game with a near-flawless 58 in the second set to lead 3-1.

The third set was tied again at 56-all, leaving India with all to



play for.

But in the fourth, the Japanese slipped to 54, only for the Indians to falter with a seven and an eight, totalling a poor 51.

That handed Japan the set, the match, and a place in the final against Chinese Taipei, who shocked hosts South Korea in a shoot-off.

In contrast, the men's recurve

team endured a disappointing outing. Seeded ninth, the trio of Neeraj Chauhan (670, 36th seed), Olympian Dhiraj Bommadevara (669, 39th) and Rahul (657, 62nd) slumped to a shock first-round defeat to 24th seeds Denmark.

The match went into a shoot-off, where India managed only 26 against Denmark's 28 to bow out 4-5.

## Sharath hopes to shape India's first TT Olympic medallist by 2036 with some help from German football



Nadu government, with a singular aim to produce an Olympic medallist.

"I'm looking at my main goal at this very moment is setting up the High Performance Centre, making it run and hopefully what I couldn't achieve in my career of you know the Olympic medal, I hope I can live the dream through

the young talents that are there here and I can support them in their career."

"Yeah. So we're looking at 2036 Olympic Games. Hopefully it happens in India. That would be the best. Even if it doesn't happen, still giving myself 11 years time," said Sharath in an interview to PTI on the sidelines of the

National Ranking Table Tennis event here on Tuesday.

Sharath, who is busy with administrative roles at the International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF) and the Indian Olympic Association (IOA), will be the sporting director of the HPC while full-time coaches are being sought from Germany, and sport's powerhouses China and Japan.

Sharath also revealed that he is in talks with top German football club Borussia Dortmund to help his HPC in talent identification. The facility will be up and running by October.

"I need a lot of help from abroad also. So I have been talking to the German Table Tennis Federation where I have played for a long time and also to a couple of football clubs (including Borussia Dortmund) in Europe where we can have some exchanges on in terms of talent

identification. Because talent identification is something I feel we don't do very robustly."

"I haven't explored so much into the Indian cricket side, but European football I do know that they have a fantastic structure in terms of talent identification and getting them," said Sharath.

The HPC will be looking to work with the talent in the 11-15 age bracket so that they have enough time to ready for the 2036 Olympics.

"So it's almost like two and a half Olympic cycles where we can identify talent between the age of 11 to 15 and groom them at the same time. These days there's a lot of sports science advancement that's been available and which I feel like we can make use of it."

Sharath and his team is looking to groom the players in three phases. (PTI)



# Determined India look to continue winning run against Korea in Super 4 match

**HANGZHOU (CHINA), Sept 9:** Unbeaten so far in the tournament, a determined Indian women's hockey team will look to continue their impressive run when they play against South Korea in their first Super 4 stage match of the Asia Cup here on Wednesday.

India started their Asia Cup campaign with a bang, thrashing Thailand 11-0, before settling for a 2-2 draw against South Korea. The Indians then mauled Singapore 12-0 in their last match to top Pool B ahead of Japan on the basis of goal difference.

India will look to carry forward the momentum as they bid to win the title and qualify for next year's World Cup to be held in Belgium and the Netherlands.

World No. 10 India will start as favourites against Japan, ranked 12th in the FIH chart. After Korea, India will take on title contenders China on Thursday before facing Japan on Saturday.

Forwards Navneet Kaur and Mumtaz Khan have been in stellar form, scoring five goals each in the pool stage, and the duo will be expected to continue their scoring touch as the team battles for a spot in the final.

Navneet, Mumtaz and Lalremisiami were simply uncontrollable against Singapore as they utilised the chances that came their way. Navneet and Mumtaz dazzled with a hat-trick each in the 12-0 thrashing of Singapore.

Midfielders Neha, Udita, Sharmila and Rutuja Pisal also shown bright for the team.



The Super 4 stage will see India, China, Japan, and South Korea play against each other once. The top two sides will qualify for the final, while the other two will play for 3rd/4th place.

India entered the Super 4 stage on the

back of a strong momentum, while South Korea managed two wins and a loss in their pool stage.

Significantly, in the last five meetings between the two teams, India have won three times, while Korea have managed one vic-

tory. One match ended in a draw.

India, thus, will have the psychological edge.

India coach Harendra Singh is happy with his side's performance in the pool stage.

"We are pleased with the way the team has started the tournament. The players have shown good intent, maintained discipline, and capitalised on our attacking opportunities," he said.

"The pool stage gave us a good platform to build momentum and test ourselves against different styles of play. However, the Super 4s stage will be a different challenge altogether as we face strong opponents like Korea, China, and Japan."

He said the team's focus will be on sticking to its structure, defensive sharpness and converting chances in front of opposition goal.

"We know that in this stage there is little room for error, so consistency and composure will be key," he said.

"The players are motivated, they understand the responsibility of wearing the Indian jersey, and they are eager to continue the momentum. If we play to our potential and trust our process, I am confident we can achieve the results we are aiming for," Harendra added.

India's biggest threat remains world no.4 China whom they will face for the first time in the Super 4 stage and possibly in the final.

Harendra's biggest task would be to plot a plan to get the better of the Chinese, a potent side in women's world hockey. (PTI)

## 'You cannot do without aggression on field'



**DUBAI, Sept 9:** India skipper Suryakumar Yadav on Tuesday said his side will not hold back on aggression in the high-voltage Asia Cup clash against Pakistan on Sunday.

India will play their opening Group A match of the T20 event on Wednesday against the UAE, which will be followed by the match against arch foes Pakistan on Sunday.

"Aggression (is) always there on field and you can't do without aggression if you want to win," Suryakumar said during the tournament-eve captains' press conference here when asked whether the players will dial down the aggression during the marquee clash.

Responding to the same ques-

tion, Pakistan skipper Salman Ali Agha said, "If someone wants to be aggressive that is his call. From my side I don't give anyone any instructions."

Suryakumar said his team is in a good place after undergoing extensive practice sessions.

"We have got few practice sessions. Feels good. It's will be a good challenge playing best teams from Asia Cup," he said.

UAE, coached by Indian coach Lalchand Rajput, will be the underdogs but Suryakumar did not want to underestimate the host side.

"They are playing exciting brand of cricket and came close in some of the games in a (recent) tri-series. Hope they cross the line in the Asia Cup," he said.

Asked whether India would look to experiment in the opening game, Suryakumar replied in the negative.

"When you play a format you need to know how good is your preparation. Why mend something that isn't broken? If something has given us results why would we need to change that aspect separately," he said. (PTI)

## 30th National Senior Women Football C'ship: Assam team maintain unbeaten streak

**HT Bureau**

**DIPHU, Sept 9:** Assam senior girl's team maintained their unbeaten record by winning in the entire three Group - E encounter of the 30th National Senior Women Football Championship for Rajmata Jijabai Trophy of the All India Football Federation (AIFF) being played at Karbi Anglong Sports Association (KASA) stadium, here.

The Assam senior girl's team in their last league match played last evening (September 8) here at KASA stadium, registering their win over the visitors Arunachal Pradesh by 3-0. With last evening's win Assam girls climbed on top of the points table by collecting all 9 points.

Kiranbala Chanu opened the first account for her team in the 20th minute assisted by Apurna Narzary. The second goal was scored by Apurna Narzary in the 55th minute assisted by Ranjana Chanu. In the second half the Assam girls found their third and winning goal from Ranjana Chanu in the 65th minute assisted by Meghasmita Kropi.

In another match played between Mizoram and Tripura, the former registered a win by 2-0. From group -E Assam girls has secured a spot in the final rounds to be played in October in Chhattisgarh. The team is coached by Horen Engti and manager Melina Terangpi.

## Nottingham Forest fires head coach Nuno Espirito Santo

**NOTTINGHAM, Sept 9:** Nottingham Forest has fired head coach Nuno Espirito Santo after his working relationship with the club's owner deteriorated.

"Nottingham Forest Football Club confirms that, following recent circumstances, Nuno Espirito Santo has today been relieved of his duties as head coach," the club said in a statement released late Monday. "The club thanks Nuno for his contribution during a very successful era at the City Ground, in particular his role in the 2024-25 season, which will forever be remembered fondly."

"As someone who played a pivotal role in our success last season, he will always hold a special place in our journey."



The club released no immediate detail on a replacement as head coach.

Forest is 10th in the Premier League standings with a win, a draw and a loss ahead of this weekend's game at third-place Arsenal.

Nuno acknowledged last month that he was worried about his job security because of worsening relations with the club's owner Evangelos Marinakis.

The 51-year-old Portuguese coach last season led Forest to seventh place

in the Premier League — with the club securing a place in Europe for the first time in 30 years.

Still, Nuno's job was not safe despite signing an improved contract in June, particularly after criticizing Forest's off-season transfer activity and saying the club was wasting a good chance to develop.

"I always had a very good relationship with the owner, last season (it) was very, very, very close," Nuno said ahead of the 1-1 draw with Crystal Palace on Aug. 24. "This season, not so well. ... And where there's smoke, there's fire."

Marinakis, who also owns Greek champion Olympiakos, is known in soccer as a big personality with strong opinions on how his clubs are run.

Nuno acknowledged last month that a working relationship that was "more based on trust and sharing opinions" had become one was "now it's not so good." (AP)

## Dismal show by Indian shooters on opening day of ISSF World Cup

**NINGBO (CHINA), Sept 9:** India's campaign in the ISSF World Cup was off to a disappointing start with the 10m air pistol and rifle mixed teams failing to reach the finals here on Tuesday.

The two Indian pairs in 10m air pistol mixed team event finished 11th and 13th respectively in the qualification, while in 10m air rifle rifle mixed team section, the country's combinations finished 14th and 34th.

The pair of Surbhi Rao and young Amit Sharma, competing in his third World Cup, ended up 11th with an aggregate qualification round score of 594.

Surbhi shot 284 while Sharma scored 290 as the pair missed the four-par final by a huge margin.

China, with a combined score of 585, topped the qualification and went on to win the gold by defeating Czech Republic 17-5 in the gold-medal match.

The other Indian pair of Olympian Rhythm Sangwan and Nishant Rawat finished 13th in the 21-team field, aggregating 571.

Rhythm shot 299 while 23-year-old Rawat, competing in only his second World Cup, managed 282 after two poor series of 91 and 92, followed by 99.

In 10m air rifle, the pair of Asian Games individual bronze medalist Ramita Jindal and Maddineni



Umamahesh aggregated 628.6 to finish 14th. Ramita shot 312.9, while Umamahesh managed 315.7 as the pair missed the qualification by more than eight points.

The Chinese pair of Peng Xinlu (318.5) and double Olympic gold medalist Sheng Lihao (318.4) aggregated a world record score of 636.9 to top the qualification round.

They, however, lost the gold-medal match to Norway's Jeanette Hegg Duestad and Jon-Hermann Hegg 15-9.

The other Indian pair of Olympian Divyansh Singh Panwar (309.3) and Meghana Sajjanar

(312.8) aggregated 622.1 to finish 34th in a 36-team field.

India have named a 24-member team comprising shooters ranked primarily between four to six in the national rankings for the year's final World Cup stage. India will now look to open their account on Wednesday when Amit Sharma, Nishant Rawat, and Samrat Rana compete in men's 10m air pistol.

The women's 25m pistol (precision stage) qualification also begins on Wednesday, where Olympian Rabi Sarnobat, Abhinaya Ashok Patil, and Divya T.S. will go up against a 57-strong field. (PTI)

## Over 6,600 runners from 31 countries for Ladakh Marathon

**LEH (LADAKH), Sept 9:** Organisers of the Ladakh Marathon on Tuesday said they planned to make the race among the "most distinctive" events globally, which would in turn help the region gain prominence on the international sporting stage.

The world's highest AIMS-certified (Association of International Marathons and Distance Races) event is scheduled from September 11-14, with more than 6,600 runners from 31 countries, including India, expected to compete.

The 12th edition of the event feature six races — Silk Route Ultra (122 km, Sep 11), Khardung La Challenge (72 km, Sep 12), "Run Ladakh for Fun" 5km (Sep 13), 11.2 km race, half-marathon (21km), and the full marathon (42.195km - Sep 14). (PTI)

## Staying in Dubai and playing all games in Abu Dhabi isn't ideal: Afghanistan skipper Rashid Khan

**DUBAI, Sept 9 :** Afghanistan skipper Rashid Khan on Tuesday didn't mince words while criticising the "not so ideal" scheduling and logistical arrangements of the Asia Cup where his team would be based in Dubai and travel nearly two hours to Abu Dhabi on its match days.

Rashid was speaking at a pre-tournament press meet here this morning on a day when his team is set to take on Hong Kong in its tournament opener at Abu Dhabi in the evening.

"Well, I don't think it's ideal - that's what we were discussing (with the other captains) before as well," Rashid said during the mandatory captains' press meet which also had Asian Cricket Council head and Pakistan Cricket Board chairman Mohsin Naqvi in attendance.

"To play in Abu Dhabi and stay here in Dubai for all three games...it's different. But as professional cricketers, we have to accept these things," said the highest wicket-taker in T20I history.

After Wednesday, Afghanistan's other two group B games are scheduled on September 16 and 18 against Bangladesh and Sri Lanka respectively.

But Rashid, who has 170 T20I wickets, also said that as a professional, he has to for-

get the scheduling and focus on the game.

"Once you enter the ground, you tend to forget everything else. In other countries, we often fly two-three hours and go straight to the game. I remember flying from Bangladesh to the US once and playing straightaway."

Sri Lankan skipper Charith Asalanka was also critical of the scheduling which has left very little time for his team to relax and recuperate after a gruelling away series against Zimbabwe.

"Right now, I'm feeling very sleepy. I should answer it tomorrow I think," Asalanka said when he was asked about playing so many games with virtually no turnaround time.

"No, I mean it's really hard to play back-to-back games in Zimbabwe on September 6 and 7. And then travel here (Dubai) straightaway. I think actually we need to have a couple of days off. I hope the coach will give us."

"It's important to take care of our fitness. And we all know that it's really hot out there. And for me, it's really important to keep fresh and give 100 per cent in the first game," Asalanka said.

Sri Lanka will open their campaign against Bangladesh on September 13. (PTI)

## Bazball 'misconceptions' are 'disrespectful' to players: McCullum

**LONDON, Sept 9:** 'Bazball' brand of cricket was not a 'rigid' playing style but about giving 'freedom' to the players to express themselves and the 'misconceptions' about the approach was 'disrespectful' to them, feels England head coach Brendon McCullum.

McCullum took over England's Test side in 2022, and he, along with captain Ben Stokes, revived a team that had won one match in 17. They have since become known for a fearless and aggressive brand of cricket, particularly with the bat, which came to be known as 'Bazball'.

But, McCullum, who dislikes the term 'Bazball', said he has frustrations around how they are perceived as a team.

"We never have that kind of mindset about ourselves in the sense that, we're not rigid in how we go about things," McCullum told the 'For the Love of Cricket' podcast, as reported by 'BBC Sport'.

"I think there's a bit of a misconception about how we play, that we swing the bat as hard as we can, we try to take wickets and then we go for a round of golf and a few beers."

"I find it slightly disrespectful to all of you guys (the players) and all of the people in the set-up who work so hard and have such clear determination of wanting to succeed, to have that so simply categorised, almost."

The former New Zealand captain said his emphasis has always been around players' mindset, rather than instilling a particular way of playing or a focus on high scoring.

"For us, it's about trying to create an environment that allows you to handle the pressures of international cricket, to understand the size of that task but to not be restricted in your ability to play," McCullum added.

"You want your talent to come out, I hate seeing talent stymied, so having a certain style or belief in

how we want to play gives us the best chance of success. You can't do that if you are bound by this tension and negativity."

McCullum said that when he was appointed in 2022, he felt he was not suited to the white-ball role because at that time they needed someone to take them 'from good to great'.

"I felt like what you guys needed at that time, my skills were kind of suited to that (Test cricket) — giving guys confidence and encouragement to push the boundaries of their games," the former swashbuckling batter said.

"I looked at where the white-ball side was at and I was thinking, that's not really my skill, I'm about giving a team soul and purpose and freedom, and pushing them towards bravery on the field."

"So I felt the Test team was more aligned to that, at the time," said McCullum who was also made ODI and T20I head coach in January this year. (PTI)

## Plenty of cricket still left in Aussie pace trio, says Hazlewood

**SYDNEY, Sept 9:** Australian quick Josh Hazlewood has rejected speculation that the upcoming Ashes series could be the last time that the fearsome pace trio comprising him, Pat Cummins, and Mitchell Starc is seen in action together, saying "everyone still loves" Test cricket to be around for at least two more years.

The three are in their mid-30s and with Cummins dealing with a lumbar bone stress injury, and Starc taking international retirement from T20s, there is a feeling the end of an era is not too far.

However, Hazlewood, who has also grappled with injuries of late, said none of the three is thinking about retiring from the game.

"I don't think we're in a position now to say anything, but I think you might sit back at the end and have a think about it," Hazlewood was quoted as saying by SEN Radio.

"I think everyone still loves the format of Test cricket. There's plenty of Tests coming up in the next two years. There's another cycle of the World Test

Championship so there's a lot of things still exciting about Test Cricket, not just the Ashes."

"I think we've still got a few more games left in us yet," added Hazlewood.

Starc has recently said that he was quitting T20I cricket to prioritise Test cricket and ODIs and was looking to play the series against India, the IPL, and the 2027 ODI World Cup in South Africa and Zimbabwe. Cummins, on the other hand, is skipping the upcoming white-ball series against New Zealand and India, and the Shield matches to be fit for the opening Ashes Test beginning in Perth on November 21.

Hazlewood added that Australia's next generation of pacers is also raring to go.

"I probably don't want to name names, but I think there's been a lot coming through the white-ball system in the last few years. We've got good Shield bowlers at every state, and I think it's just a matter of opportunity once they get their chance in Test colours. (PTI)

