



# Zubeen passes away in Singapore; Assam stunned

Himanta speaks to Indian envoy in Singapore to bring singer's body to Assam ● Condolences pouring in  
Youth icon suffers a seizure whilst swimming

**HT Bureau**  
GUWAHATI, Sept 19: Zubeen Garg, one of Assam's most iconic voices and hearthrob of youths of Assam passed away in Singapore on Friday.

Garg, 52, is survived by his wife. He had travelled to Singapore to attend the three-day North East Festival, which was due to begin on Friday.

In the afternoon, reports suggested that Garg had died in a scuba diving accident.

However, later in the evening his wife Garima Garg issued a statement clarifying that he suffered a seizure whilst swimming, which led to his sudden death.

Despite being rushed to Singapore General Hospital and admitted to intensive care, doc-

tors were unable to save him. Meanwhile, Chief Organiser of the North East India Festival, Shyamkanu Mahanta said that Zubeen Garg had gone on a yacht trip with a few members of the local Assamese community when an accident occurred, which claimed his life in Singapore.

"We later learned that a few members of the local Assamese community had taken him on a yacht visit, of which we had no prior knowledge," Mahanta said.

A household name in Assam, Garg's career spanned more than three decades and crossed multiple languages. His

Assamese songs such as Anamika, Monor Nijanot, Maya, Asha and Majulir Emoni Suwali became generational favourites, while his Bengali tracks and Hindi hits reached audiences far beyond the North East.

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said he received the news from (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)



## Assam lost 'one of its favourite sons': CM

**HT Bureau**

GUWAHATI, Sept 19: Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Friday expressed profound grief over the sudden death of celebrated singer and cultural icon Zubeen Garg, who passed away earlier in the day in Singapore.

In his condolence message, the chief minister said Assam had lost "one of its favourite sons" and described Garg as a "glittering star" whose untimely demise had left a void that could never be filled. "Zubeen's voice had an unmatched ability to energise people. His unique voice stirred the masses, creating music that touched the hearts and souls of people from all walks of life," Sarma said. The chief minister added that future generations would (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

## PM condoles singer Zubeen Garg's death in Singapore

GUWAHATI, Sept 19: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday condoled the death of Assam's popular singer Zubeen Garg in Singapore.

Garg, best known for his 'Ya Ali' song, died while scuba diving in the Southeast Asian country.

Garg, 52, is survived by his wife.

"Shocked by the sudden demise of popular singer Zubeen Garg. He will be remembered for his rich contribution to music," the PM posted on 'X'. "His renditions were very popular among people across all walks of life. Condolences to his family (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

## Fans, friends appeal to bring Zubeen Garg's mortal remains to Jorhat



**HT Correspondent**

JORHAT, Sept 19: A wave of grief and disbelief swept through Jorhat on Friday following the sudden demise of legendary singer Zubeen Garg, widely regarded as the city's cultural icon.

Thousands of fans, friends and well-wishers have made a heartfelt appeal to the government and the singer's family

to bring his mortal remains to his hometown, giving the people of Jorhat a chance to pay their last respects.

Soon after the news of his passing spread, residents, especially youth, took to the streets at key locations such as Baruah Chariali and Garali.

They paid floral tributes, lit candles and incense sticks, and held photographs

of the beloved singer in candlelight processions.

Many participants were visibly emotional, struggling to come to terms with the sudden loss of an artist whose music had touched millions.

The city's shopkeepers and businesses closed early in a mark of respect, reflecting the deep bond between Zubeen and his hometown.

Fans recalled his early days in Jorhat, from cycling across the countryside to his unconventional college routine, and how the city shaped his musical journey.

Zubeen Garg's 50th birthday was celebrated in Jorhat on November 18, 2022, with grand fan club events that included a massive cake-cutting ceremony and an evening performance by the singer at the JDSA Ground, attended by thousands of admirers.

Many fans said they were eager for a similar opportunity to bid farewell to the artist who had become a symbol of Assamese music. As the city mourns, supporters continue to urge authorities and the family to (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

## 'Heartbeat of a generation': Northeast leaders mourn singer Zubeen Garg's death

GUWAHATI/ ITANAGAR/ IMPHAL, Sept 19: Leaders across the Northeast on Friday mourned the death of singing sensation Zubeen Garg, describing him as a generational talent whose voice defined an era.

Garg, who hailed from Assam, was injured while scuba diving in Singapore. He was rushed to a hospital, where he died.

In Assam, all political parties suspended their campaign for the Bodoland Territorial Council election, which will be held on Monday.

Garg (52), best known for the Bollywood number 'Ya Ali' from Imran Hashmi-Kangna Ranaut starrer 'Gangster' (2006), was in Singapore to attend the North East Festival.

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said, "I am in a loss of words to describe what Zubeen meant for Assam. He has gone too early, this was not an age to go. Zubeen's voice had an unmatched ability to energise people and his music spoke directly to our minds and souls. He has left a void that will never be filled," he posted on X.

"Our future generations will remember him as a stalwart of Assam's culture, and his works will inspire many more talented artists in the days and years to come. Beyond his music, his connection with people and passion for helping them will always be remembered. I will greatly cherish all my interactions with him. That magical voice has forever gone silent. Tragic beyond words!" he added.

Congress Deputy Leader in Lok Sabha, Gaurav Gogoi, said Garg's music touched millions, capturing the spirit of Assam and giving voice to the emotions of the people. (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

## 'STILL TO SINK IN': Assam mourns singer Zubeen Garg's death

GUWAHATI, Sept 19: People across Assam poured onto the streets in shock, mourning the death of singer Zubeen Garg, the cultural icon whose music transcended generations.

From thronging his Guwahati residences to his college in his native town Jorhat, and his in-laws' house in Golaghat, people from different walks of life and age came together to mourn their beloved 'Zubeen da', as he was popularly called.

Garg, 52, died in Singapore, where he had gone to attend the three-day North East Festival.

The festival organisers said Garg had gone on a yacht trip with a few members of the local Assamese community when an accident occurred, which claimed his life.

Hundreds of people gathered at Latastil Playground in Guwahati, where the All Assam Students' Union (AASU) organised a memorial.

"We never thought that we would have to organise such a meet. It is still to sink in. Today is among the saddest days for our state," AASU advisor Samujjal Kumar Bhattacharyya said.

Garg was a regular performer at the Rongali Bihu functions at the Latastil Playground.

Sharing their grief, many fans broke down in front of a large poster erected at the site as his music played in the background.

Music composer Manas Robin, who had a long association with Garg, said it was difficult to accept the news of his death. "He had gone to Singapore with the promise of returning. But only his body will come back now. It is difficult to accept, but one has to give in to destiny's decision," he said. (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)



## Zubeen Garg: The Eternal voice of Assam

By: Dipak Kurmi

There are lives that feel larger than their times, voices that refuse to be confined by geography, and spirits that burn so brightly that they leave behind an afterglow long after they have passed. Zubeen Garg belonged to this rare category. He was not only the face of modern Assamese music but also one of India's most versatile cultural icons. A singer, songwriter, composer, actor, filmmaker, poet, philanthropist, and activist, he was a phenomenon who sang in over forty languages, mastered a dozen instruments, and held together the hopes, frustrations, and celebrations of an entire generation. On September 19, 2025, that voice fell silent in a freak accident in Singapore. He was just 52.

The irony is striking. A man who sang with breathless passion, who lent his voice to prayers, protests, and celebrations alike, died struggling for breath underwater while scuba diving. He had flown to Singapore to perform at the North East India Festival scheduled for September 20 and 21. Fate, however, had scripted another story. Rescued from the sea and rushed to Singapore General Hospital, he could not be revived despite all efforts. (Details in Page-4)

## Immortal Strains: Zubeen's contributions to Assamese Soul

By: Satyabrata Borah

In the quiet hours of a fateful afternoon on September 19th, 2025, the heart of Assam stopped a little, beating dimmer in collective grief. Zubeen Garg, the voice that had serenaded generations through the misty valleys and vibrant festivals of the Northeast, slipped away at the age of 52 in a tragic scuba diving accident off the coast of Singapore. The news rippled through the region like a sudden monsoon storm, leaving fans, fellow artists, and an entire cultural landscape in collective mourning. Known as the hearthrob of Assam, Zubeen was more than a singer; he was the soul of Assamese music, a bridge between tradition and modernity, and a relentless champion of his people's spirit. His departure feels premature, as if the rivers of Assam, which inspired so many of his melodies, have lost their most eloquent storyteller. Yet, in the wake of this profound loss, it is essential to celebrate the indelible mark he left on Assamese songs, a legacy woven with over 40,000 recordings that continue to echo in homes, fields, and hearts across the world.

Born Zubeen Borthakur on November 18, 1972, in the verdant town of Jorhat, Assam, to Mohini Mohan Borthakur, a poet and lyricist who penned under the pseudonym Kapil Thakur, and Ily Borthakur, a graceful dancer and singer, Zubeen's early life was steeped in the rhythms of creativity. The family, rooted in the Brahmin traditions of Janji in Sivasagar, moved frequently due to his father's role as a magistrate, exposing young Zubeen to the diverse sounds of Assam's landscapes from the Brahmaputra's gentle flow to the lively beats of rural fairs. (Details in Page-4)

## Kharge, Rahul mourn 'Voice of Assam' Zubeen Garg's death in Singapore

NEW DELHI, Sept 19: Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and former party chief Rahul Gandhi on Friday expressed shock and grief at the demise of acclaimed singer Zubeen Garg in an accident in Singapore, and said his music defined a generation and carved a special place in the hearts of millions.

A popular singer from Assam best known for his song 'Ya Ali' from the film 'Gangster', Garg died while scuba diving in Singapore on Friday, organisers of a festival in the Southeast Asian country said. Garg, 52, is survived by his wife.

Kharge expressed shock at the untimely demise of the well-known singer, songwriter, and someone who carved a special place in the hearts of millions of music lovers.

"Celebrated as the 'Voice of Assam', he enchanted people with his voice in several Indian languages and attained the status of a 'cultural icon' at a very young age.

"In this hour of grief, I express my deepest condolences to his family, friends, and countless fans," Kharge said in a post on X. Gandhi described the passing of Garg as a terrible tragedy.

"His voice defined a generation, and his talent was truly unmatched. He overcame personal tragedies to reshape the landscape of Assamese music. His perseverance and courage have left an enduring mark. He will live on in our hearts and minds forever," Gandhi said.

In a post on X, the Congress said, "We are deeply saddened by the untimely demise of phenomenal singer and composer, Zubeen Garg."

"A renowned cultural icon of Assam, his soulful music touched millions and will continue to inspire generations to come. Our heartfelt condolences to his family, friends and (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

## Zubeen Garg: Assam's musical icon who gave voice to varied genres of songs

GUWAHATI, Sept 19: Strumming the guitar and belting out one song after another in his inimitable style, Assam's Zubeen Garg had mesmerized youth and elders alike for nearly three decades with his songs and films, which had a universal appeal.

Singer, music composer, film director, and actor Zubeen is credited with singing in over 40 languages and dialects. Still, it was the song 'Ya Ali' from the movie Gangster that brought him fame across the country and earned him the best playback singer at the Global Indian Film Awards (GIFA) in 2006.

The 52-year-old singer, who began singing from the age of three, was an icon for several generations of children and youth who grew up singing or humming his songs.

Be it popular Assamese or western, folk or classical-based songs, Garg gave voice to varied genres of music and excelled in all, with most later-year singers emulating his style of music and singing.

Garg was also never shy of expressing his views on political and social issues.

A large number of Zubeen Garg fan clubs have been set up over the years in every nook and cranny of Assam.

Garg began his professional music career with his debut Assamese album 'Anamika', which was released in November 1992 and still remains on the popularity charts.

His first recorded songs were "Tumi Junu Pariba Hun" and "Tumi Junaki Hubakhi" for the album 'Ritu' in 1993.

Garg released many other albums, such as 'Xapunor Xur', 'Junaki Mon', 'Maya' and 'Asha'.

His first album of Bihu songs 'Ujan Pirit' was released before he moved to Mumbai in



1995, which went on to become a resounding commercial success.

The Bollywood music industry beckoned him in the mid-1990s, where he debuted with his first Indipop solo album 'Chandni Raat'. Later, he recorded a few Hindi albums and also sang for films like 'Gaddaar', 'Dil Se', 'Doli Saja Ke Rakhna', 'Fiza', 'Kaante' and 'Zindagi'.

Garg was, however, soon disenchanted with Bollywood, returning to Assam to climb the height of popularity with his numerous songs and he went to compose music for 38 Assamese, four Bengali and three Hindi films.

Zubeen also acted in 27 Assamese films including 'Tumi Mur Mathu Mur', 'Dinabandhu', 'Mon Jai', 'Ramdhenu', 'Kanchanjunga', 'Mission China', 'Dr Bezbaru 2', 'Tumi Ahibane', 'The Underworld' and 'Wide Angle'.

The singer also directed three Assamese films, 'Tumi Mur Mathu Mur', 'Kanchanjunga' and 'Mission China' and acted in the Assamese television serial 'Anuradha' in 2011. (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

## Asam Sahitya Sabha declares three-day mourning for Zubin Garg

**HT Bureau**

GUWAHATI, Sept 19: The Asam Sahitya Sabha has declared a three-day mourning following the death of eminent singer and cultural icon Zubin Garg in Singapore on Friday.

The Sabha said the decision was taken as a mark of respect to the artiste, whose passing has left an irreparable void in Assam's cul-

tural life. In an official statement, Sabha President Dr Kuladhar Saikia and General Secretary Gopalprasad Choudhury expressed deep sorrow over the demise.

They said Zubin Garg was not only the voice of Assam but also a beloved figure whose contributions extended across music, cinema, theatre, literature, and social life. (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

## Zubeen Da: The Omnipresent

By: Hiranya Barman

Grey clouds rumbled in the horizon on Friday afternoon at around 3 PM. Such conditions are normal before rainfall but this time an unusual heaviness filled the air. Then when the news broke out. Singing sensation, music director, artist, lyricist, social worker, actor Zubeen Garg passed away. The fact that nobody could believe, the truth that nobody was able to accept, has pierced hearts, shattered the very thought of existence in a blink of an eye. Now that the very thought that Zubeen Garg is no more set in a sense of plight. A tragedy that the Assamese society would need to withstand for many years to come.

Having sung over 38,000 songs in his lifetime, his every song found meaning in every aspects of people's life. We can imagine that

when an artist sings over 38 thousand songs, one living in his time has no escape. One would listen to Zubeen's songs as if one is living with his creations. He simply didn't topped the charts, he was the chart himself. People cutting across age found hope, rekindled emotions, felt inspired, incalculated devotion, developed euphoria, listening to his songs. The modern music maestro has specially found place in hearts of those growing up in 90's. With variations and vividness Zubeen da lent voice to every possible genre and language. Every possible event witnessed Zubeen da's music and it is one of the many reasons the youth of the time found so involved with him. To name a few "Ane jua bate nujua suwalijoni" evoked curiosity, "Ami jen jontro" stirred introspection, "Monole Ubhoti Ahe Lorali" attracted euphoria, among the devo-

tional songs he lent his voice to the borgeets "Suno Suno", "Gupale Ki Goti Korile" among others instilled pure reflection of the divine. The youth also resonated Zubeen da's persona. The fearless and outspoken attitude inspired them and he became one of the few persons in Assam to attract a huge congregation of people. One such gathering takes place during Bohag Bihu festivities. His listeners would witness the greatest of showdown of concerts during the time. Bohag Bihu functions in April in Assam would draw youth late at night to Zubeen's concert more than the venue could accommodate. The chanting of the name "Zubeen", "Zubeen" would welcome the maestro just before he was about to begin. The chanting would soon turn into cries dedicated to his name. The tears rolling down would (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)



# CEA Nageswaran flags 'critical trade-offs' in energy transition

**KOLKATA, Sept 19:** Chief Economic Advisor (CEA) V Anantha Nageswaran on Friday cautioned that India's path to sustainability and climate goals must not undermine its economic aspirations, stressing the "very crucial and critical trade-offs" in energy transition, fiscal stability, and banking soundness.

Speaking at the Bengal Chamber AGM and Indo-Pacific Economic Conclave, he said India has been "a standout performance among the G20 countries in mitigation," but achieving sustainability goals requires acknowledging difficult choices.

"For a country aspiring to become a developed economy by 2047, energy transition and dealing with climate change must not consign not just India but also other developing countries in the Indo-Pacific and Africa to a state of permanent underdevelopment," he said.

Nageswaran pointed out that India's energy consumption will necessarily keep rising as our per capita incomes rise in the coming years.

He termed the carbon budget allotted to developing nations "arbitrary," saying it ignores the "overdrawn carbon budget by today's developed countries over the last 200 years."

The CEA argued that the Sus-



tainable Development Goals (SDG), framed before the Paris Agreement, should take precedence.

"It is appropriate that both temporarily and logically SDG goals take precedence over climate goals," he noted.

Highlighting fiscal vulnerabilities, he said governments in India currently collect revenues "to the tune of 7.5 lakh crore rupees" from petrol, diesel and coal cess, warning that "the quicker we try to phase out fossil fuels there will be an erosion of tax resources available to our governments."

Nageswaran cautioned that retiring thermal power plants could create stranded assets and have

implications on the soundness of the banking system, triggering a chain reaction of undercapitalised banks.

"It is appealing to say development and energy transition are not mutually exclusive. History tells us there are times when they are mutually exclusive and we need to make choices both in terms of sequence and in terms of priorities," he added.

On policy prescriptions, the CEA said developed nations must share finance, technology and innovation, treating technology as "public commons for the world to benefit from."

He urged India to expand beyond solar and wind to hydro and

nuclear, and pointed out that the Union Budget 2025 announced opening up of nuclear energy for private participation, along with amendments to the civil nuclear liabilities act to enable foreign collaboration.

With the US and European mitigation adoption trends, the global climate goal of limiting warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels is becoming increasingly remote, he said, noting that the target "will be more and more distant and will recede in terms of the world's ability to achieve that goal."

Nageswaran, in this situation, underscored the importance of climate adaptation, calling it a "more practical, realistic and viable goal in comparison to emission mitigation," and suggested measures like seawalls, coastal restrictions, and improving energy efficiency.

He also highlighted the need to strengthen public transport, resolve "last mile connectivity" gaps, and promote a circular economy by reviving traditional practices such as rainwater harvesting and temple tanks.

"India cannot afford the high per capita vehicle ownership and electricity-intensive living standards of the West," he stressed, adding that citizen participation and investment in public goods are essential to sustainable living. (PTI)

## India's forex reserves jump USD 4.698 bn to USD 702.966 bn

**MUMBAI, Sept 19:** India's forex reserves jumped USD 4.698 billion to USD 702.966 billion for the week ended September 12, the Reserve Bank of India said on Friday.

In the previous reporting week, the overall reserves had increased USD 4.038 billion to USD 698.268 billion.

The overall reserves had jumped USD 3.51 billion to USD 694.23 billion.

For the week ended September 5, foreign currency assets, a major component of the reserves, increased USD 2.537 billion to USD 587.014 billion, the data released on Friday showed.

Expressed in dollar terms, the foreign currency assets include the effect of appreciation or depreciation of non-US units like the euro, pound and yen held in the foreign exchange reserves.

The gold reserves increased USD 2.12 billion to USD 92.419 billion during the week, the RBI said. The Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) were up by USD 32 million to USD 18.773 billion, the apex bank said. India's reserve position with the IMF was up by USD 9 million to USD 4.76 billion in the reporting week, the apex bank data showed. (PTI)

## ITC chief for business models which focus on people, planet



**KOLKATA, Sept 19:** ITC Ltd chairman and managing director Sanjiv Puri on Friday said that there is a need to create business models that put people and the planet at the centre, as enterprises have a social role to play.

Speaking at an event of the Merchants' Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI) here, Puri said that the "challenges are daunting because we are living in a very different world".

"There is a need to reimagine how we do business in future with a focus on innovation, sustainability, resilience and skilling. And we need to create business models that put people and the planet at the centre," he said.

Puri said circularity is a trend that is picking up.

Regenerative business models would come in, and that is an opportunity because things will be created from scratch, he said.

"Digitisation and digital transition in the services economy is a reality, and India has a big advantage. Also, resilience in the supply chain is important," Puri said.

Investments in innovation and R&D are equally required, he said, adding that this is an area that India lacks. (PTI)

## Adani Group valuation surges ₹ 69,000 cr in a day after SEBI clears Hindenburg allegations

**NEW DELHI, Sept 19:** Adani Group companies gained over Rs 69,000 crore in market capitalisation in a single session on Friday, fueled by a buying frenzy following SEBI's clean chit in the Hindenburg case.

The regulator's order, which dismissed allegations of stock manipulation and related-party misuse, ignited a surge of investor confidence, sending Adani stocks sharply higher across the board.

Leading the charge, Adani Power surged 12.40 per cent, emerging as the top gainer across the group's listed entities. Adani Total Gas jumped 7.35 per cent, while Adani Green Energy and Adani Enterprises climbed 5.33 per cent and 5.04 per cent, respectively, according to stock exchange data.

Adani Energy Solutions rose 4.70 per cent, rounding out the list of companies that saw gains above the 4.5 per cent mark.

Adding to the momentum, Morgan Stanley initiated coverage on Adani Power, marking the first recommendation in more than a decade by the research house.

The move is being read as a signal that confidence is returning not just among retail investors but also across global institutional stakeholders, who had largely stayed on the sidelines since the Hindenburg-triggered crash.

The rally came just a day after SEBI concluded its investigation, stating that it found no evidence to sup-

port the accusations raised by US-based short seller Hindenburg Research in early 2023.

Those allegations had erased nearly USD 150 billion in market value across Adani Group stocks at their peak, sparking a global debate on governance, transparency, and political influence.

The clean chit, therefore, is being seen as a watershed moment for the conglomerate and a major relief for investors who had been waiting for regulatory clarity before taking fresh positions.

Adani Group companies dominated the top gainers list on the exchanges, and the trading volumes in these counters reflected heightened investor activity.

The surge was particularly notable in energy-related stocks, but the impact was broad-based across the group, from its flagship incubator company to its media arm.

Adani Power hit its 52-week high during the day. The stock of Sanghi Industries advanced 1.41 per cent, ACC rose 1.21 per cent, Adani Ports went up by 1.09 per cent, and Ambuja Cements inched up 0.28 per cent.

The combined market valuation of all these firms stood at ₹ 13.96 lakh crore.

"Adani group stocks surged after Sebi cleared the group in the Hindenburg probe, triggering renewed investor confidence and strong buying interest across the conglomerate," according to Bajaj Broking Research. (PTI)

## Apple mania sweeps Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru as iPhone 17 hits stores

**NEW DELHI, Sept 19:** Apple's latest flagship, the iPhone 17, launched on Friday to an unprecedented frenzy, saw eager customers lining up for hours - even camping overnight for up to 21 hours - outside Apple stores across major cities.

The massive anticipation was palpable as fans in Mumbai, Delhi, and Bengaluru formed long, serpentine queues, determined to be among the first to get their hands on the new devices.

The scene was a vibrant showcase of Apple fandom, highlighting the brand's enduring appeal and the excitement surrounding its latest offering in India.

Retailers reported record-breaking foot traffic on opening day, with early buyers sharing stories of camaraderie and determination in the long lines.

At the Apple Store in Delhi's Saket Citywalk Mall, as also in Mumbai and Bengaluru, people lined up well before store opening hours, underscoring strong demand fuelled by enthusiastic young buyers and the brand's premium appeal.

"I was in the queue since morning, and I am excited to buy the iPhone of this colour," said Ashraf from Sangam Vihar, Delhi, who could not hide his excitement as he clutched his newly-purchased cosmic orange device.

In Bengaluru, the newly-opened Apple Hebbal store at Mall of Asia witnessed heavy footfall as excited shoppers lined up early to purchase the newly launched iPhone 17 lineup along with the latest Apple Watch and AirPods.

One of the customers, Mohammad Suhail, who purchased an iPhone 17 said it was "nice to have a store in Bengaluru."

Apple had launched the retail store in Bengaluru, on September 2, in a grand opening that marked

its debut in South India.

Mumbai saw a similar frenzy outside Apple's Jio World Drive mall at Bandra Kurla Complex business district. A little before 6 am, a scuffle broke out among some of the customers assembled, prompting the security personnel to intervene.

Once the store opened at the designated time of 8 am, it was a smooth flow with customers going in and quickly picking up units of their desired model.

"Every year, I stand in line from 3 am to buy the newest model. I have been very excited about the model and had been waiting for it for the past six months," said Aman Memon, among the first customers, who bought three units for himself and family.

Memon said the colour features of the new phone, along with a newer bionic chip is a big draw for him.

While there is no official word from Apple yet on record turnout, analysts say Apple's growth in India is being fuelled by its strong brand appeal and wider adoption of EMI schemes among young buyers.

Apple unveiled the iPhone 17 series in the price range of Rs 82,900 to Rs 2,29,900, which became available in India starting Friday for customers who have pre-booked the device.

In the US, the iPhone 17 series is priced between USD 799 (about Rs 70,370) and USD 1,999 (Rs 1.76 lakh) apiece.

Tarun Pathak, Research Director at Counterpoint Research, highlighted the aspirational appeal of the Apple brand and its strong momentum in India, marked by double-digit growth. He noted that the increasing adoption of EMI schemes has eased affordability challenges for young buyers, further fuelling demand.

"So the aspirational strength of this particular brand remains. Apple has a very strong momentum in India, growing in double digits. The young, aspirational user base is growing... And now, what is happening is almost three out of five iPhones in India are being sold on EMIs, which actually reduces the purchase barrier and behaviour for lot of these young audience who wish to buy an iPhone," Pathak added.

Taiwanese electronics giant Foxconn is the biggest producer of iPhones, with manufacturing facilities located in China and India. All iPhones produced in India are shipped to meet the requirements of the US market.

The company recently commenced production of the iPhone 17 series at its second-largest manufacturing unit based in Bengaluru, operating under informal restrictions imposed by China.

According to multiple sources, Apple plans to increase iPhone production to 60 million units this year, from about 35-40 million units in 2024-25.

Apple assembled 60 per cent more iPhones, worth an estimated USD 22 billion, in India in the year ended March 31, 2025.

An analysis by S&P Global said that iPhone sales in the US were 75.9 million units in 2024, suggesting a need to double shipments either through new capacity or redirecting shipments bound for the domestic market.

On Thursday, IT Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw while speaking at a pre-event conference for the AI Impact Summit 2026 had said: "Practically all the models of Apple iPhone are now manufactured in India. And most of the advanced countries will be getting the Apple iPhone manufactured in India, that is a good progress we have made." (PTI)

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## Zubeen passes away in Singapore

Union Minister of State for External Affairs, Pabitra Margherita. "It is very painful news and an immense loss to the state and the nation," Sarma said on the sidelines of a programme. Sarma said that beyond Garg's music, his connection with people and passion for helping them will always be remembered. "I will greatly cherish all my interactions with him. That magical voice has forever gone silent. Tragic beyond words!" he added. The chief minister, who was campaigning in the Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR) for the September 22 Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) polls, said that the BJP will cancel all election-related events scheduled for the day. "I am returning to Guwahati and will discuss with the party to decide on the next course of action," he said. He said he has spoken to Indian High Commissioner to Singapore Shilpak Ambule to bring singer Zubeen Garg's body to the state.

The Indian high commission is in touch with Singaporean authorities, which will decide whether an autopsy is required, the CM told reporters on the sidelines of a programme here. "If an autopsy needs to be done, it is likely that Zubeen's mortal remains will reach Assam on Saturday evening," he said. "We are coordinating to ensure the return of Zubeen's mortal remains to Assam at the earliest. As soon as the process is formed up, I will share an update," he also posted on 'X'. News of his death has left fans and colleagues stunned.

Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal described him as "the heartbeat of a generation", while Kiren Rijiju remembered him as "a magical voice and a versatile personality". Congress MP Gaurav Gogoi called him "the pride of every Assamese", saying his death was "an irreparable loss for the music world and a personal loss for every Assamese".

Assam Congress president and the party's deputy leader in the Lok Sabha, Gaurav Gogoi, mourned Garg's death and hailed him as a "pride of every Assamese". Describing Zubeen Garg as her "brother", West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Friday mourned the death of the popular singer.

## 'Heartbeat of a generation': Northeast

"For decades, he stood as a cultural force, an artist whose songs will continue to inspire and unite. This untimely loss leaves a deep void in our musical and cultural life. My heartfelt condolences go out to his family, his countless fans, and the people of Assam, who today mourn one of their brightest stars," he posted on X.

Union Shipping Minister Sarbananda Sonowal said it was an irreparable loss for Assam, the nation, and the world of music.

State BJP president Dilip Saikia said the news of Garg's death has left all heartbroken.

"Devastated by the loss of Assam's heartthrob, #ZubeenGarg. A generational talent whose voice defined an era, he gave us over 38,000 songs across 40 languages," he said in a post on X.

The ruling BJP and the opposition Congress organised condolence meetings at their state headquarters in the evening.

Asom Gana Parishad (AGP) president Atul Bora said the party was devastated by the news. "We pray that the Almighty grants the power to his family, fans, well-wishers to tide through this time of deep sorrow," he said in a statement.

Rajior Dal president Akhil Gogoi said the Assamese community have lost a jewel with Garg's death.

AIUDF president Badruddin Ajmal said it was a loss for the entire country.

"We pay our respects to Zubeen Garg, who was in the heart of every Assamese, irrespective of religion or community," he said. Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu said Garg was more than a singer.

"He was a cultural torchbearer whose melodies brought people together, lifted spirits, and gave voice to our shared identity. My heartfelt condolences to his loved ones. May his soul find peace, and may his music live on forever," he said in a post on X.

Deputy Chief Minister Chowna Mein also joined in mourning the death of the singer.

"His voice and legacy will forever live on in our hearts. May his soul rest in eternal peace," Mein said in a social media post. Health Minister Biyuram Wahge remembered Garg for his contribution to the region.

"His mellifluous voice and fearless artistry transcended boundaries, touching countless hearts and enriching cultures, including the many soulful songs he dedicated to Arunachal Pradesh. I pray for strength for his family and loved ones in this difficult time. May his soul rest in peace," Wahge said.

Former Manipur CM N Biren Singh said Garg was a true cultural icon whose voice echoed the soul of the people of the Northeast. "My heartfelt condolences to his family, fans, and the entire Assamese community. May his soul rest in peace," he said. (PTI)

## Fans, friends appeal to bring

allow Zubeen's mortal remains to be brought to Jorhat, so that the local community can honour the memory of a singer, musician, lyricist and filmmaker whose legacy will remain an inseparable part of Assam's cultural heritage.

## Assam lost 'one of its

remember Garg as a stalwart of Assam's culture and that his creations would inspire many more artists. "Besides his music, his connection with people and passion for helping them will always be remembered. I will greatly cherish all my interactions with him," Sarma said.

He further recalled Garg's generosity and readiness to support those in need, stating that the singer's "magical voice and unforgettable creations" would live forever in the hearts of the people. Offering his condolences to the bereaved family, Sarma prayed for eternal peace to the departed soul.

## Kharge, Rahul mourn 'Voice

admirers during this difficult time," the party said. Garg sustained injuries during scuba diving and was rushed to a hospital, where he died in the intensive care unit while undergoing treatment, according to the organisers. He had gone to Singapore to participate in the three-day Northeast Festival scheduled to begin on Friday. (PTI)

## Zubeen Garg: Assam's musical

Born on November 18, 1972, to a bureaucrat father and a homemaker-singer mother, Garg was also known for expressing his views clearly on political issues.

A man dedicated to strong convictions, he defied the proscribed outfit ULFA's ban on singing Hindi songs during Bihu functions, saying that they have no right to give dikats to artists. Garg was also at the forefront of the agitation against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA).

He ran a charity, the Kalaguru Artiste Foundation, which donates money for various causes, particularly during floods in the state. Garg had dropped out of college to follow his music career but was awarded an honorary Doctor of Literature (D.Litt.) degree by the University of Science and Technology, Meghalaya in 2024. He was also a prolific writer and had three books of poetry to his credit. (PTI)

## Asam Sahitya Sabha declares

"His multifaceted talent and his immense popularity among people from every walk of life made him a true cultural ambassador of the state," the statement read. The Sabha informed that during the three-day mourning, all official programmes have been cancelled.

According to the statement, the Sabha has instructed its branch and district units across Assam to hold condolence meetings in memory of Garg during the mourning period. The Sabha leadership appealed to members and well-wishers to join in paying homage to the departed soul through such observances.

The statement further emphasised that Garg's death is not just a loss to the world of music and art, but also to the wider cultural and social fabric of Assam, where he enjoyed the love and respect of the masses.

## Guv Acharya mourns Zubeen

contribution to Assamese music, art, and identity was unparalleled. "His death is an irreparable loss to the state and to the countless hearts he touched through his works," the Governor said. He added that though Garg has departed, his music, passion, and legacy will continue to inspire future generations.

"His voice will echo in our memories, and his spirit will live on in the hearts of the people," Acharya remarked. Extending condolences to the bereaved family, the Governor prayed for strength and peace in this moment of grief and wished eternal peace for the departed soul.

## Still to sink in': Assam mourns singer

Singer Marmita Mitra said, "It is completely unbelievable that Zubeen da is no more. Just yesterday I had spoken to him." People flocked to his residences in the Kahilipara and Kharghuli areas of Guwahati when the news of his death poured in.

His recording studio at the Zoo Road area of the city also drew crowds, as many associates of the singer came to share their grief.

Condolence meetings were also organised by political parties, including the BJP and Congress, besides cultural organisations like Bihu Samitis.

Journalists also paid their homage to the heartthrob at the Commerce Point in Guwahati, a favourite joint of Garg. Sports organisations, including Assam Cricket Association and Guwahati Sports Association, also mourned the death of the singer, who was an avid sports lover and took to the fields several times to encourage young players.

In Jorhat, where Garg had grown up, a memorial was organised at his alma mater, JB College.

A condolence meet was also held at B Barooah College in Guwahati, where Garg had enrolled for his higher studies in the early 1990s but dropped out to pursue music as a full-time career.

People came out in large numbers in Golaghat, from where Garg's wife Garima hailed, and paid tribute to the deceased singer.

In North Lakhimpur, people took out a procession with a photo of Garg and sang his popular numbers.

Dibrugarh also witnessed an outpouring of grief as people gathered with candles in front of a photo of the cultural icon, mourning his sudden death. (PTI)

## Zubeen Da: The Omnipresent

be the testimony to the pure love and devotion to Zubeen, the music of whose would become only the antidote to the rising adrenaline in the particular night. Thereafter, Zubeen da would deliver for 3 hours straight. Those watching live Bihu functions 12-15 years back know that in many instances he stretched till 5-6 am.

With my hands trembling when I trying to note down few lines on his demise my mind cannot accept the fact that dada is not among us physically. Instances would never be the same again. Events would never bear the same brightness and perhaps the society would now find nobody to fall back to, Zubeen Da's unexpected demise would be a trauma for many.

"Ahe ba nahe ghumoti

Ahiba tumi, xopunake loi, xopunoke loi

Thake ba nathake xaonore dhol tumi momore noi, momore noi"



Gauhati University and several organisations across Nagaon pay heartfelt tribute to the legendary singer whose untimely demise leaves a void in Assam's cultural soul

# Assam mourns the loss of musical icon Zubeen Garg

**HT Bureau GUWAHATI, Sept 19:** Gauhati University expresses profound grief at the untimely demise of Assam's most beloved cultural icon, Zubeen Garg, who passed away today in Singapore. His passing leaves a void that words can scarcely fill, marking an irreparable loss to the people of Assam and music lovers around the world, according to an official release from the University.

Offering condolences, Professor Nani Gopal Mahanta, Vice Chancellor of Gauhati University, said: "Zubeen Garg was not only the heartbeat of Assam but also the voice of both the youth and the elderly. His music carried the soul of our land and gave Assam a

global resonance. On behalf of the Gauhati University fraternity, I express our deepest condolences to his family, friends, and admirers. His demise is an irreparable loss and leaves us with memories that will forever echo in our hearts."

Born in Tura, Meghalaya, into a family deeply rooted in music and literature, Zubeen Garg was nurtured by his mother, the late Borthakur, a singer, and inspired by his father, Mohini Mohon Borthakur, a noted lyricist and poet. From a young age, he displayed prodigious talent, mastering the tabla, immersing himself in Assamese folk traditions, and composing his own songs while still in school.

He rose to prominence with his debut Assamese album,

Anamika, in 1992, before making his mark in Bollywood and beyond. His soulful rendition of "Ya Ali" in the film Gangster (2006) remains one of the most celebrated songs in Indian cinema, earning him the Global Indian Film Award for Best Playback Singer. Over three decades, Zubeen's music transcended languages and boundaries—Assamese, Hindi, Bengali, and more—uniting people through melody.

Gauhati University pays homage to a legend whose voice was the pride of Assam and whose art inspired generations. Zubeen Garg will forever remain an inseparable part of Assam's cultural identity.

**Our Nagaon Correspondent adds:** Several organisa-

tions mourn the passing of Zubeen Garg in Nagaon. The shocking news of the sudden demise of the state's heartthrob, Zubeen Garg, in Singapore this afternoon has sent shockwaves throughout Nagaon district, leaving the entire community in mourning. Several organisations and institutions have expressed their deep condolences and cancelled their scheduled programs as a mark of respect. The Srimanta Sankardev Sangha, Assam Natya Sammilan, and Nagaon Print Media Association have all cancelled their programmes for the coming week. The Srimanta Sankardev Sangha's General Secretary, Kushal Thakuria, stated that Zubeen Garg's untimely demise is an irreparable loss for

Assam's cultural landscape. The Assam Natya Sammilan held a condolence meeting to pay tribute to Zubeen Garg's contributions to Assam's music industry. The meeting, presided over by Kumar Deepak Das, passed a resolution acknowledging Zubeen Garg's impact on Assam's cultural scene.

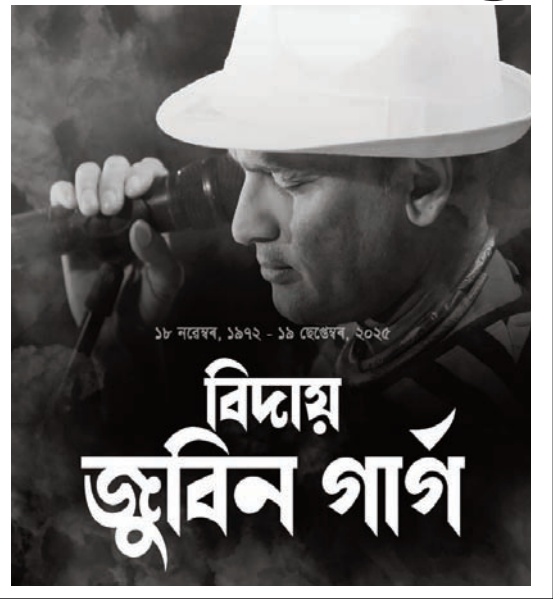
The Nagaon Print Media Association cancelled the upcoming award ceremony for the late journalist Shiv Prasad Bora, scheduled for tomorrow at the Nagaon Press Club. The Nagaon Electronic Media Association organised a tribute ceremony at Maruwaripty, where various dignitaries paid their respects to Zubeen Garg.

Several other organisations, including the Nagaon District

Students' Union, Nagaon District Sahitya Sabha, Nagaon District Koch Rajbongshi Sammilan, Asom Jatiyatibadi Yuba Chitra Parishad, and others, have expressed their deep condolences and paid tribute by lighting candles near the Nagaon Clock Tower.

Nagaon local MLA Rupak Sarma stated that the loss of Zubeen Garg is a significant loss for Assam. The Nagaon District Education Department has cancelled the ongoing half-yearly exams for classes IX and X as a mark of respect.

The outpouring of grief and tributes from various sections of society reflects the profound impact Zubeen Garg had on the cultural and artistic landscape of Assam.



## Kheroni road crash claims one life, another critically hurt

**HT Correspondent KHERONI, Sept 19:** One person died on the spot and another sustained critical injuries when their motorcycle (AS01 AX 2881) rear-ended a dumper truck (RJ 32 GB 2727) carrying sand on Kheroni Road in West Karbi Anglong. The accident occurred on the evening of September 18 at around 7 pm.

The dumper truck was moving slowly due to its heavy sand load when the motorcycle, carrying two riders, crashed into its rear. Gesen Marak died on the spot, while Mahadev Marak was critically injured.

The duo had reportedly started from Kheroni and was on their way to Matikhola in West Karbi Anglong at the time of the incident.

## Over 56,000 saplings distributed in KA as Part of Seva Saptah

**HT Bureau DIPHU, Sept 19:** As part of the week-long Seva Saptah 2025, the Forest Department of Karbi Anglong and West Karbi Anglong, in collaboration with the Education Department, carried out an extensive plantation drive on September 19. A total of 56,227 saplings were distributed across the two districts—17,289 in Karbi Anglong and 38,938 in West Karbi Anglong—reaching schools and community spaces to promote a greener, healthier environment.

The initiative represents a significant step toward ecological balance and sustainable development, encouraging young students to take active roles in environmental conservation. The Forest East Division has also planned to expand the plantation drive in the coming days, aiming to ensure wider community participation and a lasting impact on the region's biodiversity.

## Activist alleges RTI delay by PWD Diphu over pending bills

**HT Bureau DIPHU, Sept 19:** Social activist Jeet Timung has questioned the Executive Engineer of the PWD Roads Division, Diphu, for failing to respond to an RTI application he submitted seeking details on pending contractor bills since 2018.

Addressing media persons at a press meet held at the District Press Club of Karbi Anglong on Friday, Timung stated that he had submitted an RTI application to the office of the Executive Engineer on March 20, 2025, to obtain information regarding the status of contractor bills that remain unpaid under the PWD Roads Division, Diphu.

Following the submission, the department asked Timung to deposit ₹ 1,000 for photocopying the relevant documents, which he paid on May 19, 2025. However, even after 177 days since the initial application, no information has been provided, despite the RTI Act, 2005 mandating a response within 30 days.

"Since 2018, many contractors under the PWD Roads Division, Diphu, have not received their payments. To know the facts, I filed an RTI application. After being asked, I paid the ₹ 1,000 fee, but the department has not furnished the information," Timung said.

He added that he has filed a first appeal with the Secretary of the Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council (KAAC), PWD, and also submitted a complaint to the Principal Secretary, KAAC, on September 1, 2025. Given the prolonged silence from the concerned office, Timung suspects that a larger financial irregularity may be involved. He is now considering approaching the State Public Information Officer (SPIO) under the RTI Act, 2005, to seek redress.

## Massive turnout at rallies; UPPL gains momentum with new members joining from rival parties in Kokrajhar and beyond

**HT Correspondent KOKRAJHAR, Sept 19:** With the BTC elections drawing closer, various political parties have intensified their electioneering campaigns across the Bodoland region; including ruling UPPL party intensified its electioneering campaigns in support of their candidates.

On Friday, the chief executive member of Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR) and UPPL president Pramod Boro attended election campaign at Koklabari constituency in support of party candidate Mantu Boro. Later, he also addressed election campaigns meeting at Bijni, Parbotjhora and Srirampur constituencies to woo the common voters.

CEM Boro said that the UPPL party is now people's choice party across the Bodoland region. He stated that people cutting across the communities are coming forward to extend support and cooperation to the UPPL as party is committed to work for all round development of the society. He said that the every campaigning meeting of the party is



getting massive support from the citizens. He said that the UPPL party is winning majority seats of the BTCLA to form the BTC for straight second consecutive term with mass support.

"Incredible energy in Bodoland region in all our grand public meetings as thousands of people of all constituencies came out to support UPPL's vision of a Shantimoy BTR. The blessings of entire BTR are with UPPL, our victory in the BTR Elections is assured. Vote for Peace,

Unity & Progress and Vote for UPPL", CEM Boro said.

Meanwhile, nearly 100 new members from different political parties have joined the UPPL party at different places including Magurmari of Banargaon and Baukhungri constituency in Kokrajhar district.

UPPL candidate for Baokhungri constituency Ranjit Basumatary has intensified his election campaign, reaching out to the public through a series of pocket meetings. During these interactions, he listened to the concerns of the people and assured them of fulfilling their aspirations if voted to power.

In a significant development, 18 hardcore BPF supporters joined the UPPL at a joining program held at the Central UPPL party office today. The new members were warmly welcomed into the UPPL family, further strengthening the party's base ahead of the polls.

Party leaders expressed confidence that the growing public support and the addition of new members would give UPPL a decisive edge in the upcoming elections.

## ARTIST ZUBIN GARG'S DEATH Call for investigation at Mangaldoi condolence meeting

**HT Correspondent MANGALDOI, Sept 19:** A condolence meeting to honour the memory of renowned artist and humanitarian Zubin Garg was held on Friday at 5:30 PM by the humanitarian organisation Ashar Alok - Manu Manuhaba Babe, Darrang, Assam, at the Mangaldoi Youth Club. The event, anchored by artist Pranjal Sharma with support from Secretary Jayprakash Sharma, began with the lighting of a lamp by the organisation's president Harichandra Sharma, followed by floral tributes offered by the Youth Club's general secretary Rajiv Kumar Deka.

During the meeting, senior journalist Bhargav Kumar Das called for an investigation into Zubin Garg's unexpected death. He alleged that the North East Festival was a sham, accusing the organisers of exploiting it for financial gain. He stressed that those involved in organising such festivals should be held accountable.

Shankar Kakati, editor of Nava Dauranga Barta, remembered Zubin Garg as a true humanitarian. The condolence meeting was attended by the organisation's president Harichandra Sharma, general secretary Ganesh Dutta, vice-president of Darrang District Literary Society Kunja Devi, Outala Higher Secondary School teacher Hitesh Hazarika, cultural organiser Rajiv Kumar Deka, retired DIET principal Madhav Sharma, artist Pranjal Sharma, and Pankaj Hazarika. The gathering concluded with a collective rendition of the song "Mayabini Ratir Bukut" in tribute to the late artist.

## National workshop on NEP 2020 implementation begins at TU

**HT Correspondent TEZPUR, Sept 19:** A three-day National Workshop on "NEP 2020 Implementation for University Administrators" began on Wednesday at Tezpur University. The workshop is being organised by the National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA), New Delhi, in collaboration with the Department of Education, Tezpur University. The workshop aims to provide orientation and training to senior university administrators—including Vice-Chancellors, Registrars, Deans, Academic Council Members, and Heads of Departments—who are responsible for implementing the National Education Policy 2020 at the institutional level.

The inaugural session was graced by Prof Shambhu Nath Singh, Vice-Chancellor of Tezpur University, who served as the Chief Guest. In his address, Prof Singh highlighted

the importance of academic leadership in transforming higher education. "Policies like the National Education Policy 2020 give us direction, but it is our responsibility to adapt and implement them in ways that are meaningful to our institutions and communities," he said.

Prof Neeru Snehi, Programme Director and Head of Training and Professional Development at NIEPA, emphasised the need for sensitizing academic administrators to new academic structures such as the Academic Bank of Credits, multiple entry-exit pathways, and credit-based learning systems to ensure effective policy implementation. Prof Chandan Kumar Sharma, Dean of the School of Humanities & Social Sciences, and Dr Sasipra Chakraborty, Head of the Department of Education, also shared their insights and outlined the workshop's roadmap.

## Peter Tisso apprehended in connection with viral video involving Diphu MLA

**HT Bureau DIPHU, Sept 19:** Peter Tisso, a former district BJP worker from Karbi Anglong, was apprehended by police on the evening of September 18 from Jakhlabandha in Nagaon district. He was brought to Diphu Police Station and produced before the District Judicial Court today. The arrest is linked to a viral video involving Diphu MLA Bidyasingh Englang, which surfaced on Facebook a few weeks ago. The video allegedly showed the MLA in compromising positions with a woman.

Four days ago, the woman seen in the video released a statement on Facebook, admitting her involvement and naming Peter Tisso and Augustin Kramsa as the individuals responsible for uploading and circulating the video. She also alleged that ₹ 30 lakhs were extorted from MLA Englang, out of which she received Rs. 2 lakhs, while the remaining amount was allegedly taken by Tisso and his associate.

A case has been registered against Peter Tisso under Case No. 79/2025 at Diphu Police Station.

While being escorted to the District Judicial Court from Diphu Police Station this morning, Tisso told reporters, "They have committed an act and they are responsible. The allegations are false; I am not involved in any crime. There is a political conspiracy with plans to accuse me. I don't know any of these, as I am busy with other work."

## Empowering youth with skills for a sustainable energy future International workshop on solar power systems inaugurated

**HT Correspondent MARGHERITA, Sept 19:** A week-long international workshop on solar power systems was inaugurated at Margherita College on Thursday, marking a significant step towards promoting renewable energy in the region. Organised by Prachi Marketing, a new enterprise focused on solar and sustainable energy solutions, the event highlights the growing importance of clean energy technologies.

Supported by PUM Netherlands, a respected Dutch NGO dedicated to sustainable development and capacity building, the workshop features internationally renowned solar expert Robert Wijdeveld from the Netherlands as the chief resource person. He brings extensive expertise to train participants on the latest innovations and best practices in solar power systems.

The workshop is a collaborative initiative of the Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) of Margherita College, in association with the Department of Commerce, the Entrepreneurship Development Cell, Seemanta Chetana Mancha, and the Purvottar Seemanta Chetana Mancha Purvottar Margherita Sahayak Nagar Committee. This collaboration reflects a shared commitment to regional empowerment and develop-

ment. The inauguration was graced by several dignitaries, including Dr. Atanu Kakoty, Principal of Margherita College; Margherita Co-District Assistant Commissioners Pronamika Konwar and Pritom Gogoi; Henry James, member of the Assam Minority Development Board; and representatives from organisations such as Indian Oil Corporation Limited, Assam Power Distribution Company Limited, and the Forest Department of Assam. Prominent entrepreneurs like Sanjay Kumar Deb and local leaders also participated, showing strong community support for sustainable initiatives.

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## QUOTE OF THE DAY

You can find peace amidst the storms that threaten you. -Joseph B. Wirthlin

## Nepal's political trajectory

The commotion in Nepal has brought into sharp focus a generational shift in the country's politics, one that has made the term Gen Z part of the mainstream political vocabulary rather than just a casual reference to youth culture in India and elsewhere in the subcontinent. The unexpected rise of Sushila Karki, who has emerged as a symbol of both promise and risk, marks a generational rupture with the established order that has traditionally shaped Nepal's political trajectory. For India, the choice of someone like Karki—who has expressed a favourable disposition towards New Delhi and Prime Minister Narendra Modi—is reassuring in the short term, but it does not eliminate the structural uncertainties that have long characterised Nepalese politics. The enthusiasm of the youth has given a fresh dimension to politics in Kathmandu, but the lack of historical depth and the inexperience of this generation raise important questions about stability in the long run. The Gen Z generation, both in Nepal and across the region, comes equipped with certain undeniable strengths. They are digitally savvy, globally connected, and brimming with ideas about political reform, economic modernisation, and social inclusivity. Their ability to mobilise public opinion rapidly, leveraging social media and digital networks, has already transformed the political culture of Nepal. This youth-led wave is not merely about idealism; it has a clear sense of urgency in addressing unemployment, corruption, and governance inefficiencies that have plagued Nepal for decades.

Yet, as much as this generational momentum excites the masses, it lacks the accumulated experience, historical grounding, and nuanced understanding of geopolitical balances that come only with long years of political practice. Without this maturity, there is always the danger that leadership may falter when tested by the intricate challenges of governance in a country as politically volatile and strategically positioned as Nepal. For India, however, the rise of Sushila Karki offers immediate comfort. New Delhi has often been confronted with leaders in Kathmandu who vacillate between India and China, leveraging their position to extract short-term gains from both sides. In contrast, Karki's outlook suggests a more stable alignment with Indian interests, at least in the initial phases of her leadership. Modi's government would understandably welcome a cooperative regime in Kathmandu that understands the depth of India's stakes in Nepal. Yet, Indian policymakers are well aware that goodwill in the present does not necessarily translate into stability in the future, especially given the fragility of Nepal's political institutions and the volatility of coalition politics.

The structural importance of Nepal to India cannot be overstated. Beyond cultural ties and the open border that allows free movement of people, there are deep economic interdependencies. Indian investments have been pivotal in driving Nepal's industrial and service sectors, creating jobs and contributing to state revenues.

## Awareness against corruption

Recently, the issue of massive corruption involving Nupur Bora, an administrative service officer, has created a storm across news media and social platforms in Assam. The exposure of this officer's misdeeds, while serving as a circle officer, has once again brought the topic of corruption to the forefront in the state, affecting both the ruling establishment and the common populace. In reality, it is not just the Nupur Bora case; the malaise of corruption has deeply permeated our society and the state as a whole.

Corruption is a curse that profoundly impacts every level of society, hinders the dynamism of life, and creates numerous obstacles in the path of societal and national progress. This malady not only affects individuals but also undermines the moral foundation, social equality, and economic prosperity of the entire society. Through corruption, the societal framework weakens, adversely affecting the quality of life for its people. Recognizing the gravity of this issue, raising awareness among the public is of utmost importance. The lack of accurate knowledge about the nature, causes, and consequences of corruption among the general populace creates barriers to resolving this problem. Through awareness, it is possible to empower the public and build a unified and robust resistance against corruption.

Defining corruption may seem simple, but understanding its true nature and the depth of its impact is highly complex. In general terms, corruption refers to the abuse of power, where an individual or group violates ethical or legal boundaries for personal gain. However, beneath this definition lies its far-reaching impact, which brings negative changes across all sectors of society. Corruption is not limited to bribery or financial mismanagement; it encompasses the abuse of authority, misuse of positions, unequal distribution of resources, and neglect of social justice. It is crucial for the public to have a clear understanding of these various forms. If people are unaware of the true nature of corruption, they will be unable to resist it effectively. The first step in awareness is to make the public understand that corruption is not confined to high-ranking officials or politicians but can manifest in the small activities of daily life. Paying extra for minor tasks or bending rules for personal convenience is also a form of corruption. By raising awareness about such practices, individuals can reduce their likelihood of engaging in corrupt activities in their daily lives. Awareness can make people mindful of their responsibilities, serving as a powerful step against corruption. Through such awareness,

the public can become more vigilant about their actions and contribute to upholding society's ethical standards.

Factors such as economic inequality, lack of education, erosion of moral values, weak governance systems, and lack of transparency contribute to the growth of corruption. Economic inequality pushes certain sections of society toward corruption, as limited resources compel individuals to violate rules to secure their interests. Lack of education keeps people ignorant of their rights and responsibilities, rendering them unable to confront corrupt systems. The erosion of moral values diminishes honesty and accountability, creating a fertile ground for corruption. Weak governance and lack of transparency provide opportunities for those in power to violate rules for personal gain. By raising awareness about these causes, the public can become more vigilant. Such awareness helps people understand that corruption is not merely an external issue but a result of internal societal weaknesses. Gaining knowledge about these

weaknesses enables the public to recognize their role and take steps toward societal change. For instance, awareness of economic inequality can encourage people to advocate for equality, while education about rights can make them more assertive. This awareness motivates the public to actively oppose corruption and strengthens the moral foundation of society.

The consequences of corruption are reflected at every level of society, affecting not just individual lives but the entire social fabric. Economically, corruption leads to unequal resource distribution, exacerbating poverty and inequality. Investments in critical sectors like education, healthcare, and infrastructure decline due to the misappropriation of funds in corrupt systems. This results in a diminished quality of life for ordinary people, who are deprived of basic services. Socially, corruption breeds frustration and distrust among people. When they witness justice systems tainted by corruption, their respect for the law diminishes. This lack of trust weakens social bonds and erodes the sense of unity. Reduced public confidence in governance also hampers its effectiveness. By raising awareness about these consequences, people can grasp the seriousness of corruption. Awareness helps them realize that its impact extends beyond their personal lives to the entire society. This understanding motivates people to take an active stand against corruption, playing a vital role in society's overall progress.

Through education, people can be taught about moral values, civic rights, and responsibilities. Including topics on the impact of corruption and ways to resist it in the education curriculum can foster awareness among the younger generation. Education can emphasize that fighting corruption is not solely the responsibility of the government but of every citizen. An educated society is aware of its rights and bold enough to protest against corrupt practices. By educating people about their moral responsibilities and the effects of corruption, they can play a significant role in societal change. Education empowers the public to act as a unified force against corruption, strengthening society's ethical foundation and building a lasting resistance.

The role of the media is also crucial in raising awareness. Through newspapers, television, and digital platforms, accurate information about corruption can be disseminated, increasing public awareness. The media can provide clear and accessible information about the various aspects of corruption, its consequences, and solutions. This enables the public to understand the nature of corruption and feel motivated to act against it. Transparent media reporting can create pressure on governance systems, reducing corrupt activities and fostering public trust. The media must convey that the public's voice can drive societal change. Such awareness encourages people to unite and build resistance against corruption. Furthermore, involving all sections of society in awareness campaigns is essential—from rural farmers to urban educated youth, everyone must be made aware. Local communities play a vital role in this. Through meetings, discussions, and workshops at the local level, people can be educated about the impact of corruption. Such initiatives foster unity and motivate collective action against corruption. Local leadership can play a significant role by raising awareness and empowering communities to understand their rights, creating a strong foundation for societal change.

Transparency in governance increases public trust and reduces the likelihood of corruption. The public must be made to understand that their voice can bring change to the system. Transparency makes governance activities open to public scrutiny, reducing opportunities for corruption. Accountability ensures that officials are answerable to the public for their actions. By raising awareness about transparency and accountability, the public can take on a monitoring role, reduc-

ing corruption and paving the way for justice. Social movements are also critical. They unite the public, creating a powerful voice against corruption. Such movements foster unity and make people aware of their rights. By exerting pressure on governance systems, social movements can ensure action against corrupt practices, emphasizing that collective efforts can transform society.

The youth, as the future of society, are a powerful force for change. Educating them about corruption through schools, social media, and workshops can inspire them to take an active role. Instilling moral values and a sense of responsibility in the youth enables them to work proactively against corruption. Channeling their energy and enthusiasm in the right direction can bring about positive societal change, creating a lasting resistance to corruption.

The government's role in raising public awareness against corruption is vital. Through policymaking, the government can take strict action against corruption and promote awareness. Government campaigns can educate the public about their rights and responsibilities. Adopting transparent policies fosters public trust, encouraging active participation in the fight against corruption. Collaborative efforts between the government and the public can bring positive change and reduce corruption. Similarly, civil society organizations play a crucial role by uniting people and promoting awareness at the local level. These organizations can educate the public about their rights and build resistance against corruption. By monitoring governance, they create a strong voice against corruption, emphasizing that collective efforts can drive societal change.

Digital platforms can provide information about corruption to the public. Social media can unite people and promote awareness. Technology can educate the public about their rights and help build resistance against corruption. Providing accurate information through technology encourages active participation, creating a positive societal change and a strong resistance to corruption.

In essence, raising public awareness against corruption requires a coordinated effort. Through the integration of education, media, government, civil society, and technology, this awareness can be promoted. Educating the public about their rights, responsibilities, and the impact of corruption, along with ways to resist it, will bring about positive societal change. This change will reduce corruption, paving the way for justice and equality. Public awareness will strengthen society's moral foundation and build a lasting resistance against corruption.

## Zubeen Garg: The Eternal voice of Assam

(CONTD FROM PAGE-1)

By 2:30 pm India time, the singer who had given the world "Ya Ali" and countless Assamese gems was no more. The news spread like wildfire, leaving Assam, and indeed India, in stunned disbelief.

Born on November 18, 1972, in Tura, Meghalaya, Zubeen's life always carried the fragrance of destiny. His parents, Mohini Mohon Borthakur, a magistrate and poet known by the pen name Kapil Thakur, and Ily Borthakur, a singer, named him after the great conductor Zubin Mehta. Music was thus inscribed in his very name. From the time he was three, he was already singing under the guidance of his mother. His training was rigorous: eleven years of tabla under Pandit Robin Banerjee, exposure to Assamese folk under Guru Ramani Rai, and self-driven explorations into instruments as diverse as guitar, harmonium, mandolin, and percussion. This foundation gave him the ability to inhabit any genre with ease.

His childhood, however, was not untouched by tragedy. His sister, Jongki Borthakur, a budding singer and actress, died in a car accident in 2002. Zubeen immortalized her memory through his poignant album Xixhu. His other sister, Dr. Palme Borthakur, remained an anchor in his turbulent journey.

Education could not hold him long. After matriculation from Tamulpur Higher Secondary School, he joined B. Borooah College in Guwahati to pursue science but soon abandoned academics to immerse himself fully in music. His gamble paid off. In 1992, his Assamese album Anamika became a breakthrough, making him a household name in Assam. Follow-ups like Xapunor Xur (1992), Junaki Mon (1993), Maya (1994), and Asha (1995) solidified his place. His Bihu album Ujan Piriti was a commercial triumph, and by the mid-1990s he had become Assam's highest-paid singer.

Yet Zubeen was never content with regional boundaries. In 1995 he moved to Mumbai, determined to carve out a space in the highly competitive world of Hindi music. His debut Indipop album Chandni Raat opened the door. Soon came others — Chanda (1996), Shradhaanjali (1996-97), Jalwa (1998), Yubi Kabhi (1998), Jadoo (1999), and Sparsh (2000). He sang for Bollywood films including Gaddaar (1995), Dil Se (1998), Doli Saja Ke Rakhna (1998), Fiza (2000), and Kaante (2002). His versatility was evident, but the definitive moment came in 2006 when Anurag Basu's Gangster featured his song "Ya Ali." That one track changed everything. Melancholic yet transcendent, "Ya Ali" swept across the subcontinent and beyond. It won him the Global Indian Film Award for Best Playback Singer and made him a household name across India. The song still plays at weddings, protests, and quiet evenings, reminding listeners of the raw intensity of his voice. He would go on to contribute to Bollywood with tracks like "Dil Tu Hi Bataa" from Krrish 3 and "Jaane Kya Chahe Man" from Pyaar Ke Side Effects, proving his ability to adapt to mainstream tastes without losing individuality.

Even as Bollywood embraced him, Zubeen never forgot Assam. He became the heartbeat of Assamese cinema, acting in films such as Hiya Diya Niya (2000), Daag (2001), Kanyadaan (2002), Agnishakshi (2003), Mon Jai (2008), Rodor Sithi (2014), Mission China (2017), Kanchanja (2019), Ratnaker (2019), Dr. Bezbaruah 2 (2023), Sikar (2024), and many more. He was not just an actor but often the director, producer, and scriptwriter. Mission China, his ambitious 2017 project, became a landmark in Assamese cinema, showing that regional films could command blockbuster budgets and audiences.

His Bengali career too was luminous. He sang in films

like Sudhu Tumi (2004), Mon Niye (2010), and Samsara (2019). His ability to sing in languages as varied as Boro, Karbi, Tiwa, Mising, Nepali, Malayalam, Tamil, Telugu, Marathi, Sindhi, and Sanskrit gave him a pan-Indian identity. In every language, his songs carried an unmistakable emotional resonance. Yet, Zubeen was more than a performer. He was a social conscience. He founded the Kalaguru Artiste Foundation, which raised money for flood relief, provided medicines, and supported cultural initiatives. During the COVID-19 crisis in 2021, he offered his own house in Guwahati to be converted into a COVID Care Centre. He played football matches to raise funds and used films like Kanchanja to expose corruption in the Assam Public Service Commission recruitment scandal.

He was also unafraid of controversy. A declared irreligious man, he often challenged orthodoxy. In one incident, he snapped his sacred Brahmin thread during a film and later declared that "these Brahmins should be killed," a remark that forced him to apologize but never diluted his contrarian reputation. In another moment, he said that Krishna was not God but a man, a statement that earned him a ban from Majuli District Satra Mahasabha. Despite such storms, he remained an outspoken voice, most powerfully during the anti-CAA protests in Assam, where he emerged as the leading cultural figure on the streets, his songs becoming rallying cries for protesters.

Recognition was plentiful. In 2011, the Assam Convention in Chicago honored him as Guest Artist of the Year. In May 2024, the University of Science and Technology, Meghalaya awarded him an honorary Doctor of Literature (D.Litt.). He published poetry collections like Xabda Anubhuti (2009) and Zubeenor Podyo (2018, 2020 edition), earning the Seuji-Seuji award in 2017. Villagers named a bamboo bridge after him in Tengapani, and in 2022 a 20-foot statue of him was unveiled in Digboi during the Nazirating Tamuli Tourism Festival. In his personal life, Zubeen found stability with Garima Saikia, a fashion designer from Golaghat, Assam, whom he married in 2002. The couple often appeared together at cultural events, representing a partnership of creativity and quiet strength.

The news of his death in Singapore sent shockwaves across the region. Assam's Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma wrote, "Today Assam lost one of its favourite sons. Zubeen's voice had an unmatched ability to energize people and his music spoke directly to our minds and souls. He has left a void that will never be filled." Former Rajya Sabha MP Ripu Bora mourned him as "our cultural icon," while actor Adil Hussain wrote a heart-rending tribute, calling him "extraordinary" and promising that "he will live amongst us through his songs."

For Assam, the grief was not only for a man but for an era. Zubeen had been their morning radio, their late-night companion, their Bihu celebrations, their political rallies, their wedding songs, their heartbreak laments, their cinema, their poetry, their conscience. His concerts, always electric, brought together thousands not only for the music but for the shared identity he represented.

To speak of Zubeen Garg is to speak of Assam itself — its resilience, its contradictions, its joys, and its heartbreaks. His life was proof that art can cross languages, religions, and politics. His death is proof that such voices, once gone, leave a silence too deep to fill. Yet, Zubeen's story will not end in silence. His albums, his films, his poetry, and his activism have already entered collective memory. His is a voice eternal, echoing in the forests, rivers, cities, and hearts of Assam and beyond.

Even in death, Zubeen Garg will continue to sing. (The writer can be reached at dipakkurmigpltd@gmail.com)

## Immortal Strains: Zubeen's contributions to assamese soul

(CONTD FROM PAGE-1)

Named after the legendary composer Zubin Mehta, he adopted the surname Garg from his gotra, a choice that symbolized his aspiration to transcend personal boundaries and embrace a universal artistic identity. From his mother's knee, he absorbed the nuances of Assamese folk tunes, her voice a soft lilt that taught him the power of melody to heal and unite. His younger sister, Jonki Borthakur, shared this passion, blossoming into a talented singer and actress before her untimely death in a 2002 car accident near Tezpur, an event that scarred Zubeen deeply and infused his music with a poignant undercurrent of loss. Another sister, Palme, pursued Bharatnatyam, further enriching the family's artistic tapestry. These familial threads, fragile yet resilient, became the loom on which Zubeen would weave his contributions to Assamese music.

Zubeen's formal education at Tamulpur Higher Secondary School and later at B. Borooah College in Guwahati was brief; a Bachelor of Science degree gave way to the irresistible pull of music. By his school days, he was already composing, scribbling lyrics inspired by the tea gardens and monsoon rains around him. A gold medal for his Western solo performance at a 1992 youth festival ignited his professional fire, confirming what his heart had long whispered: music was his calling. That same year, at just 20, he released his debut Assamese album, Anamika, a collection that burst onto the scene like a fresh Bihu harvest. Anamika was no ordinary debut; it fused rock influences from his early band, Boom Boom, with the soulful cadence of Assamese folk, creating a sound that felt both revolutionary and rooted. Tracks like those evoking youthful longing and rural romance captured the zeitgeist of a young Assam awakening to its own voice in a rapidly globalizing India. The album's success redefined the musical landscape, proving that Assamese songs could pulse with electric energy without losing their earthy charm. It sold thousands, not just in Assam but across the Northeast, establishing Zubeen as a prodigy who could make the dotara's twang roar like a guitar riff.

This breakthrough propelled Zubeen into a prolific era, where he churned out albums at a staggering pace, each one a testament to his versatility. Asha followed, a beacon of hope with melodies that lifted spirits amid the region's socio-political turbulence in the 1990s. Maya delved into illusions of love, its haunting ballads drawing from Sufi whispers and local lore, while Mukti infused patriotic fervor, rallying listeners with anthems that celebrated Assam's unyielding freedom spirit. Meghor Boron evoked the romance of cloudy skies over the Kamrup plains, Xobdo captured the raw poetry of spoken word set to rhythm, and Rang painted life's vivid hues through folk-inflected pop. Dilruba leaned into Sufi mysticism, its qawwali-esque tracks a bold experiment that resonated deeply in a state where spirituality often intertwined with song. Not all were lighthearted; Pakhi, dedicated to his late mother, was a tearful elegy of maternal love, its tender verses like whispers from the wind-swept paddies. Xixu, born from the grief of Jonki's passing, trans-

formed personal tragedy into communal catharsis, with songs that mourned yet mended, reminding Assamese listeners that music could be a salve for the soul. These albums, numbering over 40 in Assamese alone, were not mere commercial ventures; they were cultural artifacts, preserving dialects, idioms, and emotions that might otherwise fade in the shadow of Hindi dominance.

What set Zubeen apart was his innate ability to blend genres, a skill honed by his mastery of over a dozen instruments, from the traditional dotara and dhol to the mandolin, keyboard, and percussion sets. He played them all with the fervor of a storyteller, layering Western rock's rebellion with Bihu's infectious pep and bhawaiya's melancholic sway. This fusion was revolutionary for Assamese music, which had long been pigeonholed as folkloric or devotional. Zubeen dragged it into the spotlight, making it danceable, relatable, and radio-ready. Songs like Xunore Xujuwa from his early works married Bihu beats with patriotic pride, becoming anthems for youth movements and Rongali Bihu celebrations. His voice, a baritone that could thunder like a Brahmaputra storm or hush like a dewdrop on a japi leaf, carried these innovations to every corner. He recorded more than 800 songs annually at his peak, once laying down 36 tracks in a single night, a feat that spoke to his tireless dedication. By the time of his passing, his discography boasted over 40,000 songs across 40 languages, but it was the Assamese ones, numbering in the thousands, that formed the bedrock of his legacy. They weren't just hits; they were lifelines, soundtracking weddings, protests, and quiet evenings under the stars.

Zubeen's influence extended far beyond standalone albums into the cinematic realm, where he elevated Assamese songs to new artistic heights. His foray into films began earnestly in 2000 with Tumi Mor Mado Mor, which he wrote, directed, produced, and starred in, a bold multi-hyphenate debut that showcased his holistic vision. The film's soundtrack, with its lush orchestration and heartfelt lyrics, became a blueprint for future Assamese cinema scores. He went on to compose for over 24 films, infusing them with soundscapes that amplified narratives of love, loss, and resilience. Mon Jai (2008) earned him the National Film Award for Best Music Direction, a rare honor for an Assamese project, where tracks like the title song wove classical ragas with folk motifs to mirror the film's emotional depth. Priyaar Priyo (2017) featured upbeat numbers that captured the joie de vivre of young romance, while Rodor Sithi (2014) delivered poignant ballads evoking letters from afar, a nod to the diasporic Assamese experience. His work on Ekhor Nedekha Nodir Xhipare (2012) blended ambient river sounds with acoustic strums, creating an immersive auditory journey that critics hailed as a milestone in regional sound design.

As an actor and playback singer, Zubeen brought the same authenticity to films like Mission China (2017), which he directed and which shattered box-office records as the first Assamese film to gross over 6 crore rupees, its songs fueling the action-packed narrative with high-octane fusion tracks. Kanchanja (2019) followed suit, crossing 7 crore

and featuring melodies that climbed charts nationwide. In these, his voice didn't just accompany scenes; it propelled them, turning ordinary dialogues into operatic highs. Tracks like those in Bhal Pabo Najanilu (2013) explored unrequited love with a vulnerability that resonated universally, while Ahetuk (2015) infused social commentary with rhythmic urgency. Zubeen's compositions democratized Assamese cinema music, making it accessible yet sophisticated, drawing younger audiences who might have otherwise turned to Bollywood. He collaborated with lyricists like his father and emerging poets, ensuring lyrics remained poetic anchors, rich with metaphors from Assam's bamboo groves and silk weaves. His film songs often premiered at Joonbeel Mela or Jombil Mela, cultural hubs where music and community converged, reinforcing his role as a cultural custodian.

Beyond the studio and screen, Zubeen's contributions pulsed through live performances and social impact, where Assamese songs became tools for unity and change. His concerts, from the bustling streets of Guwahati to international stages like the Assam Convention in Chicago in 2011, were electric spectacles. He honored traditions by unveiling a 20-foot statue of himself in Digboi in 2022 during the Nazirating Tamuli Tourism Festival, a symbol of gratitude, and inaugurated the Zubeen Garg Bamboo Bridge over the Na Dihing River in 2020, blending infrastructure with inspiration. Philanthropy was his quiet melody; he championed AIDS awareness, brain cancer research, and mental health initiatives, often performing benefit shows where songs raised funds and spirits. His irreligious stance, declaring no caste or creed, made his music a secular sanctuary, appealing to Assam's diverse tapestry of tribes and faiths. He mentored young talents, though not without controversy, as whispers of personal struggles like alcoholism surfaced in later years, shadows that only humanized his genius. Yet, these did not dim his light; they added depth, much like the minor keys in his ballads.

Zubeen's reach transcended Assam, with forays into Bollywood via the iconic Ya Ali from Gangster (2006), which won him a Global Indian Film Award and introduced Northeast flavors to mainstream India. He sang in Bengali, Tamil, Telugu, and more, but always returned to Assamese roots, refusing to let Hindi overshadow his origins. This fidelity preserved linguistic pride amid globalization's tide. Albums like Shishu, dedicated to children, and his devotional works for Raamdhenu (2011) bridged generations, teaching the young the value of their heritage through catchy hooks and profound choruses.

As Assam mourns, Zubeen's songs endure, from the jubilant Bihu calls that herald spring to the sorrowful strains that console in grief. He didn't just contribute to Assamese music; he redefined it, turning a regional whisper into a national roar. In every note, he captured the essence of a people: resilient, romantic, and rhythmically alive. Though his voice has fallen silent, the echoes he left will sing on, an eternal tribute to the heartthrob who made Assam's songs the heartbeat of its soul. In his memory, let us hum along, for in doing so, we keep him forever young.



# Future Trends in the consulting industry

By: Mayank Gupta

As the business world continues to evolve, so too does the consulting industry. New technologies, global challenges, and shifting client needs are reshaping how consulting firms operate and the types of services they offer. To remain competitive, consultants must stay ahead of these changes and adapt to emerging trends. In this section, we'll explore the key future trends in the consulting industry and how they'll impact both consulting firms and the professionals within them.

## The Rise of Digital Transformation

One of the biggest trends shaping the future of consulting is digital transformation. As companies increasingly rely on technology to improve efficiency, drive growth, and enhance customer experiences, consulting firms are playing a crucial role in helping businesses navigate this digital shift. Consultants are expected to have expertise in areas like cloud computing, data analytics, artificial intelligence (AI), and machine learning.

**Tech-driven Strategy:** Consultants are moving beyond traditional business strategy and incorporating technology into every aspect of their work, helping clients develop tech-driven strategies to remain competitive in a digital-first world.

**Data-Driven Decisions:** With access to more data than ever before, consultants are leveraging big data and advanced analytics to provide clients with deeper insights, allowing them to make more informed, data-driven decisions.

Automation and AI: The demand for automation and AI solutions is growing, and consultants are working with businesses to automate processes, improve operations, and reduce costs using cutting-edge technology.

Consulting firms will continue to invest heavily in developing their digital capabilities and fostering expertise in emerging technologies to stay relevant in the ever-changing landscape. For aspiring consultants, having a strong grasp of digital technologies will be essential for success in the future.

## The Shift Toward Sustainability and ESG

Sustainability is no longer just a buzzword; it has become a core focus for companies worldwide. Consulting firms are increasingly being called upon to help clients meet sustainability goals and address environmental, social, and governance (ESG) issues. This trend will only continue to grow as companies face pressure from stakeholders, governments, and consumers to adopt sustainable practices.

**Environmental Sustainability:** Consultants will play a vital role in helping companies reduce their environmental impact by developing sustainable business models, transitioning to renewable energy sources, and implementing environmentally-friendly practices.

**Social Responsibility:** ESG consulting will grow as firms help clients address social issues such as diversity, equity, and inclusion, fair labor practices, and corporate



social responsibility (CSR).

**Regulatory Compliance:** With governments around the world introducing stricter regulations on environmental and social practices, consultants will be instrumental in helping clients navigate complex compliance requirements and adapt to new laws.

**As businesses are increasingly held accountable for their social and environmental impacts, consultants who specialize in ESG and sustainability will be in high demand. This is an area where consultants can have a significant impact on the long-term future of industries and global society.**

## The Emergence of Remote and Hybrid Consulting

The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the adoption of remote work, and many firms are now embracing hybrid work models. For consultants, this shift means that working from anywhere will become more common, with an increasing number of client meetings, workshops, and presentations taking place virtually.

**Remote Consulting:** Many consulting firms have transitioned to fully remote or hybrid models, allowing consultants to work from home or travel less frequently. This shift gives consultants more flexibility and a better work-life balance while allowing them to work with clients globally.

**Virtual Collaboration Tools:** As

consulting firms continue to rely on virtual collaboration platforms, consultants will need to become proficient in using tools like Zoom, Microsoft Teams, and Slack to engage with clients and colleagues effectively.

**Global Reach:** Remote consulting will enable firms to tap into a global pool of talent and clients, offering opportunities for consultants to work with companies across the world without being confined by geographic boundaries.

This change will offer flexibility and open up new opportunities for consultants who enjoy working from different locations. However, it may also challenge consultants

and entrepreneurial expertise. As clients seek consultants who can offer specialized insights and tailored solutions, developing expertise in a niche area will help you stand out in the industry and command higher fees.

## Increased Demand for Specialized Expertise

As the consulting industry continues to evolve, firms are placing greater emphasis on specialized expertise in niche areas. While general business consulting will always be in demand, clients increasingly want consultants who have deep knowledge of specific industries, technologies, or business functions.

**Industry Specialization:** Consulting firms are increasingly hiring professionals with deep industry knowledge in areas like healthcare, technology, financial services, and energy. Consultants with specialized expertise will be in high demand as companies seek advisors who can understand their specific challenges and provide tailored solutions.

**Technical Expertise:** Consultants who can navigate complex technological areas such as blockchain, cybersecurity, data privacy, and cloud computing will be increasingly sought after. The ability to offer highly specialized services in these emerging fields will set consultants apart from their peers.

**Consulting for Startups:** As startups continue to thrive, there is a growing demand for consultants with the ability to advise young companies on scaling, fundraising, and navigating growth challenges. These specialized areas require consultants with a deep understanding of the startup ecosystem

and entrepreneurial expertise. As clients seek consultants who can offer specialized insights and tailored solutions, developing expertise in a niche area will help you stand out in the industry and command higher fees.

## Greater Focus on Diversity and Inclusion

The consulting industry is increasingly placing a strong emphasis on diversity and inclusion (D&I). As firms strive to build more inclusive cultures and ensure that their teams reflect the diverse clients they serve, there is a growing demand for consultants who are experts in D&I strategy and organizational change.

**Inclusive Leadership:** Consultants will play a critical role in helping firms develop diverse leadership teams, ensure equal opportunities for underrepresented groups, and foster inclusive workplace cultures.

**Diversity in Talent Acquisition:** Consulting firms are also focusing on improving diversity in their own ranks, recruiting professionals from diverse backgrounds, and promoting inclusivity in hiring practices.

**Workplace Equity:** As part of the broader ESG movement, diversity, equity, and inclusion will continue to be a focal point for consulting firms, and firms will increasingly look for consultants who can guide them through D&I initiatives.

Consultants who are passionate about D&I and can bring expertise in this area will be in demand, as businesses continue to make strides toward creating more diverse and inclusive environments.

## IBPS RRB Recruitment 2025 – 13217 Posts, Online Apply

Last Date: 21/09/2025.

Institute of Banking Personnel Selection (IBPS) has released an employment notification for the recruitment of 13217 Officer Scale I, II, III & Office Assistant vacancy in Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) through IBPS CRP RRB XIV. Interested and eligible candidates may apply online here.

1. Office Assistant (Multipurpose)

No of posts: 7972 posts

2. Officer Scale-I (Assistant Manager)

No of posts: 3907 posts

3. Officer Scale-II (General Banking Officer (Manager))

No of posts: 854 posts

4. Officer Scale-II (Information Technology)

No of posts: 87 posts

5. Officer Scale-II (Chartered Accountant)

No of posts: 69 posts

6. Officer Scale-II (Law)

No of posts: 48 posts

7. Officer Scale-II (Treasury Manager)

No of posts: 16 posts

8. Officer Scale-II (Marketing)

No of posts: 15 posts

9. Officer Scale-II (Agriculture)

No of posts: 50 posts

10. Officer Scale-III

No of posts: 199 posts

Preliminary Exam Center @ Assam: Dibrugarh, Guwahati, Jorhat, Silchar, Tezpur

Single/ Main Exam Center @ Assam: Dibrugarh, Guwahati, Jorhat, Silchar.

Assam Gramin Vikash Bank

# Office Assistant: 167 posts

# Officer Scale-I (Assistant Manager): 185 posts

# Officer Scale II (IT): 3 posts

# Officer Scale II (CA): 3 posts

# Officer Scale II (Law): 2 posts

Nationality / Citizenship

# a Citizen of India or a subject of Nepal or

# a subject of Bhutan or

# a Tibetan Refugee who came over to India before 1st January 1962 with the intention of permanently settling in India or

# a person of Indian origin who has migrated from Pakistan, Burma, Sri Lanka, East African countries of Kenya, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania (formerly Tanganyika and Zanzibar), Zambia, Malawi, Zaire, Ethiopia and Vietnam with the intention of permanently settling in India, provided that a candidate belonging to categories (ii), (iii), (iv) & (v) above shall be a person in whose favour a certificate of eligibility has been issued by the Government of India.

Language Proficiency

Candidates applying for the posts of Office Assistant in any particular RRB are required to possess proficiency in the local language of the State/ UT in which the RRB is situated to be eligible for interview.

Age Limit (As on 01.09.2025)

# Office Assistant (Multipurpose): Between 18 years and 28 years i.e. Candidates should not have been born earlier than 02.09.1997 and later than 01.09.2007 (both dates inclusive).

# Officer Scale-I (Assistant Manager): Above 18 years - Below 30 years i.e. Candidates should not have been born earlier than 02.09.1995 and later than 01.09.2007 (both dates inclusive).

# Officer Scale- II (Manager): Above 21 years - Below 32 years i.e. Candidates should not have been born earlier than 02.09.1993 and later than 01.09.2004 (both dates inclusive).

# Officer Scale- III (Senior Manager): Above 21 years - Below 40 years i.e. Candidates should not have been born earlier than 02.09.1985 and later than 01.09.2004 (both dates inclusive).

Age Relaxation

Category-wise age relaxation is as mentioned below.

# OBC/ MOBC: 3 years

# SC/ ST: 5 years

# PWD: 10 years

Educational Qualification

Office Assistant (Multipurpose): Bachelor's degree in any discipline from a recognized University or its equivalent

(a) Proficiency in local language as prescribed by the participating RRBs/

(b) Desirable: Working knowledge of Computer.

Officer Scale-I (Assistant Manager):

# Bachelor's degree in any discipline from a recognized University or its equivalent. Preference will be given to the candidates having degree in Agriculture, Horticulture, Forestry, Animal Husbandry, Veterinary Science, Agricultural Engineering, Pisciculture, Agricultural Marketing and Cooperation, Information Technology, Management, Law, Economics or Accountancy;

# Proficiency in local language as prescribed by the participating RRBs/

# Desirable: working knowledge of Computer.

Officer Scale-II (General Banking Officer (Manager)): Bachelor's degree in any discipline from a recognized University or its equivalent with a minimum of 50% marks in aggregate. Preference will be given to the candidates having degree in Banking, Finance, Marketing, Agriculture, Horticulture, Forestry, Animal Husbandry, Veterinary Science, Agricultural Engineering, Pisciculture, Agricultural Marketing and Cooperation, Information Technology, Management, Law, Economics and Accountancy. Two years of experience as an officer in a Bank or Financial Institution.

Officer Scale-II (Information Technology): Bachelor's degree from a recognised

University in Electronics / Communication / Computer Science / Information Technology or its equivalent with a minimum of 50% marks in aggregate. Desirable: Certificate in ASP, PHP, C++, Java, VB, VC, OCP etc. One year experience (in the relevant field).

Officer Scale-II (Chartered Accountant): Certified Associate (CA) from Institute of Chartered Accountants of India. One Year experience as a Chartered Accountant.

Officer Scale-II (Law): Degree from a recognised University in Law or its equivalent with a minimum of 50% marks in aggregate. Two years of experience as an advocate or should have worked as Law Officer in Banks or Financial Institutions for a period of not less than two years .

Officer Scale-II (Marketing): MBA in Marketing from a recognized university. One year experience (in the relevant field).

Officer Scale-II (Treasury): Chartered Accountant or MBA in Finance from a recognized university/ institution. One year experience (in the relevant field).

Officer Scale-II (Agriculture): Bachelor's degree in Agriculture/ Horticulture/ Dairy/ Animal Husbandry/ Forestry/ Veterinary Science/ Agricultural Engineering/ Pisciculture from a recognized university or its equivalent with a minimum of 50% marks in aggregate. Two Years of experience (in the relevant field).

Officer Scale-III: Bachelor's degree in any discipline from a recognized University or its equivalent with a minimum of 50% marks in aggregate. Preference will be given to the candidates having Degree/ Diploma in Banking, Finance, Marketing, Agriculture, Horticulture, Forestry, Animal Husbandry, Veterinary Science, Agricultural Engineering, Pisciculture, Agricultural Marketing and Co-operation, Information Technology, Management, Law, Economics and Accountancy. Minimum 5 years' experience as an Officer in a Bank or Financial Institutions. he online application fee for IBPS RRB 2025 is as mentioned below:

Post	SC/ST/PwBD	Others
Officer (Scale I, II & III)	Rs.175/-	Rs.850/-
Office Assistant (Multipurpose)	Rs.175/-	Rs.850/-

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

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

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

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

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

# Make payment of application fee as per your category and submit the form.

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

# Starting date of submission of online application: 1st September 2025

# Last date of submission of online application: 1st September 2025

# Download of call letters for online examination – Preliminary: November / December, 2025

# Tentative date of preliminary exam: November / December, 2025

# Result of Online exam – Preliminary: December, 2025 / January, 2026

# Download of Call letter for Online exam – Main / Single: December 2025/ January, 2026

# Online Examination – Main / Single: December, 2025 / February, 2026

# Declaration of Result – Main/ Single (For Officers Scale I, II and III): January, 2026

# Provisional Allotment (For Officers Scale I, II and III & Office Assistants (Multipurpose)):

## DHS Assam Recruitment 2025 – 191 Grade III (Non Technical) Posts, Online Apply

Last Date: 21/09/2025.

Directorate of Health Services (DHS), Assam has released an advertisement for the recruitment of 191 Grade III (Non Technical) Posts against existing vacant posts in different health institutions in the State under the establishment of the Directorate of Health Services (DHS), Assam. Interested and eligible candidates may apply online here.

1. Health Educator

No of posts: 78 posts

Category-wise vacancy:

# UR: 40

# SC: 5

# STP: 8

# STH: 4

# OBC/MOBC: 20

# OBC/MOBC (Tea Tribes & Adivasi): 1

Pay Scale: Pay Scale of ₹14,000/- to ₹70,000/-, Grade Pay of ₹7,600/- per month.

2. Junior Assistant/ Account Assistant cum LDA

No of posts: 72 posts

Category-wise vacancy:

# UR: 36

# SC: 6

# STP: 7

# STH: 4

# OBC/MOBC: 18

# OBC/MOBC (Tea Tribes & Adivasi): 1

Pay Scale: Pay Scale of ₹14,000/- to ₹70,000/-, Grade Pay of ₹6,200/- per month

3. Basic Health Worker (BHW)

No of posts: 41 posts

Category-wise vacancy:

# UR: 21

# SC: 3

# STP: 4

# STH: 2

# OBC/MOBC: 11

# OBC/MOBC (Tea Tribes & Adivasi) : 0

Pay Scale: Pay Scale of ₹14,000/- to ₹70,000/-, Grade Pay of ₹5,600/- per month

Age Limit: Candidates age should not be less than 18 years and not more than 40 years as on 1st January 2025.

Age Relaxation: Category-wise upper age limit relaxation is as mentioned below -

# OBC/MOBC: 3 years

# ST/SC: 5 years

# PwBD: 10 years

Educational Qualification: Graduate in any discipline from Government recognized University and applicant must possess minimum 6 (six) months diploma in Computer application.

Employment Exchange Registration: The candidates must possess valid Employment Exchange Registration Certificate of the State of Assam.

Application Fee: No application fee is to be paid the applicants.

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

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

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

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

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

# At the end, submit the form.

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

• Starting Date of online application submission: 12th September 2025

• Last Date of online application submission: 21st September 2025

## DEE Assam Recruitment 2025 – 228 Special Educator Posts, Online Apply

Last Date: 30/09/2025.

Directorate of Elementary Education (DEE), Assam has released two employment notifications for the recruitment of 228 Special Educator posts in Lower Primary and Upper Primary schools under the Directorate of Elementary Education, Assam. Eligible candidates may apply online here.

Name of posts: Special Educator

No of posts: 228 posts

Category-wise vacancy: # Lower Primary (LP) Schools: 120

# Upper Primary (UP) Schools: 108

Pay scale: LP: Pay Band – 2 (PB-2) @ Rs. 14,000/- to Rs. 70,000/- plus Grade Pay Rs 7400/-

UP: Pay Band – 2 (PB-2) @ Rs. 14,000/- to Rs. 70,000/- plus Grade Pay Rs 8700/-

Name of organization: Directorate of Elementary Education, Assam

Age Limit: A candidate must not be less than 18 years of age and not more than 40 years for unreserved category, 42 years for Ex-Servicemen, 43 years for OBC/MOBC and 45 years for SC/ST(P)/ST(H) and 50 years for Persons with Disability (PwD), as on 1st August, 2025.

Small Family Norms: No person having more than two living children on or after 01.01.2021 from a single or multiple partners shall be eligible for appointment as per the Govt. policy on Small Family Norms.

Citizenship: Candidates must be an Indian Citizen as defined in Article 5 to 8 of the Constitution of India and permanent residents of Assam.

Educational Qualification:

# Special Educator (LP School):

a) Senior Secondary (or its equivalent) with at least 50% marks and a 2-year Diploma in Education (Special Education), recognized by the Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI).

b) The candidate must have the ATET/CTET passed certificate for LP Schools.

# Special Educator (UP School):

a) Graduate with at least 50% marks and B.Ed. (Special Education), recognized by the Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI).

b) The candidate must have the ATET/CTET passed certificate for UP Schools.

Medium of Instruction: Either the Language-I or the Language-II of both ATET and CTET candidates shall match the medium of instruction of the School wherein the candidate wishes to apply.

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

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

# Click on the "Online Application Form" and complete the registration process by clicking "Click Here to Register".

# In the next stage, fill your all personal and educational details and upload necessary documents.

# At the end, submit the form.

# After submitting the online application, the candidates will get a Unique Number against the submitted application and will keep the printout of the unique Number for all future references.

Following documents need to be submitted in colour along with online application form a. Passport Size Photograph.

b. HSLC Admit Card.

c. HSSLC Mark-sheet and Certificate.

d. Any other Mark-sheet and Certificate of higher education.

e. B.Ed. in Special Education Mark sheet and Certificate (Recognized by RCI).

f. Document in support of Permanent Resident of Assam.

g. Certificate and Mark sheet of ATET/CTET.

h. Candidates with disabilities will have to enclose certificates of disabilities issued by Govt. authority.



# Nepal observes 10<sup>th</sup> Constitution Day, PM Karki calls for dialogue for finding solutions

The recent Gen Z movement was a result of the dissatisfaction and expectations of the younger generation

**KATHMANDU, Sept 19:** Nepal Prime Minister Sushila Karki on Friday said the protection and successful implementation of the Constitution adopted 10 years ago is the responsibility of all Nepalis, asserting that democracy is a system of dialogue and finding solutions.

Karki was speaking at the main event organised here in view of the Constitution Day, also celebrated as the National Day across Nepal. However, unlike in the past, the celebrations this year are scaled down as the country mourns the death of 72 people in the violent protests by Gen Z that led to regime change last week.

Nepal's Constituent Assembly delivered the Constitution on Asoj 3, 2072 Bikram Samvat, as per the country's national calendar, or September 20, 2015, years after the erstwhile monarchy was abolished.

"Listening to the voice of the people is the soul of democracy," Karki, Nepal's first woman prime minister, said.

Recalling that the Constitution of Nepal is the result of "the sacrifice, struggle, and



movement" of the Nepali people, Karki said "its protection and successful implementation is the common responsibility of all Nepalis."

The recent Gen Z movement was a result of the dissatisfaction and expectations of the younger generation, Karki explained and made it clear that her government is committed "to listening to and addressing the voices of the people, as democracy is a system of dialogue and finding solutions."

Karki, 73, became prime minister on September 12, ending days of political uncertainty after the ouster of Prime Minister K P Sharma Oli following youth-led Gen Z protests against his government over corruption and a ban on social media.

The main celebrations were held at Tundikhel Open Ground here. Besides President Ramchandra Paudel, who was the chief guest, and Prime Minister Sushila Karki, the function was attended by Chief Justice Prakash Man Singh Raut, Speaker Devraj Ghimire, National Assembly Chairman Narayan Prasad Dahal and other dignitaries.

President Paudel said the present Constitution has integrated Nepali society having ethnic, lingual, religious, cultural and geographical diversities into the broader national unity by ending all forms of discrimination and oppression resulting from centralised state systems.

He also called on all Nepalis to stay united to realise the aspirations of sustainable peace, good governance, development and

prosperity through the federal democratic republic systems.

"The Constitution has set a broader goal to create an egalitarian society based on social justice and socialism-oriented economy," he pointed out. Separately, a group of Gen Z members too organised a rally at Maitighar Mandala, the same place where the protests had gathered on September 8 and 9, and vowed to safeguard the achievements made by the Gen Z movement. The two main political parties, the Communist Party of Nepal-United Marxist Leninist (CPN-UML) and the Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist Centre also organised separate programmes at their respective party head offices in Kathmandu. While former Prime Minister Pushpakamal Dahal 'Prachanda' addressed the programme at the Maoist Centre party's central office, deposed Prime Minister Oli was absent during his party's programme. Later in the afternoon, President Paudel hosted a special function at the President's Office, which was attended by Prime Minister Karki, ministers and other dignitaries. (PTI)

## Hungary, following Trump, will designate Antifa terrorist organisation, Orban says

**BUDAPEST, Sept 19:** Hungary will replicate a policy announced on Thursday by US President Donald Trump and designate Antifa a terrorist organisation, Prime Minister Viktor Orban said on Friday.

Antifa, short for "anti-fascist," is an umbrella term for loosely affiliated far-left activists and groups that resist fascism, fascists and neo-Nazis, especially at demonstrations.

It resembles more an ideology than an organisation, though some have embraced militant tactics. Orban, a right-wing populist and strong Trump ally, said in comments to state radio on Friday that he was "pleased" by Trump's announcement that he plans to designate Antifa as a "major terrorist organisation" in the United States.

"Antifa is indeed a terrorist organisation," Orban said. "In Hungary, too, the time has come for us to classify organisations such as Antifa as terrorist organisations, following the American model."

It was unclear what prompted Orban's decision to make the move.

Antifascist groups rarely engage in political actions in Hungary, where Orban and his party have held near-total power for more than 15 years.

Yet in his statements on Friday, Orban referenced a 2023 incident in which Antifascist activists engaged in assaults against several suspected participants in an annual far-right event in Budapest.

One of the alleged assailants, Italian Antifascist activist Ilaria Salis, was jailed in Hungary for over a year following the assaults, resulting in a diplomatic dispute between Rome and Budapest over her treatment in detention.

Salis was released to house arrest in May 2024 before winning a seat in the European Parliament, as a result of which she gained legal immunity.

Hungary continues to demand that she be returned to face trial, where prosecutors have sought an 11-year sentence. (AP)

## Thailand's king endorses new Cabinet led by Prime Minister Anutin Charnvirakul



**BANGKOK, Sept 19:** Thailand's king endorsed on Friday a new Cabinet headed by Prime Minister Anutin Charnvirakul after a court order removed his predecessor due to ethics violations and public outrage over a deadly border dispute between the Southeast Asian country and its neighbour, Cambodia.

The Cabinet, which includes several non-politicians, is expected to take office next week after taking an oath in front of King Maha Vajiralongkorn.

Anutin, head of the Bhumjaithai Party, was elected premier by Parliament last month. He succeeded Pheu Thai Party's Paetongtarn Shinawatra, who was dismissed after being found guilty of ethics violations over a politically compromising phone call with neighbouring Cambodia's Senate President Hun Sen.

The call was followed by a border clash between Thailand and Cambodia in July, which killed dozens.

Most of Anutin's Cabinet positions went to members from his party and two other parties, Klatham and the military-backed Phalang Pracharath, which make up the main part of his minority coalition government.

Many of the newly appointed ministers, including Anutin himself, had served in the Pheu

Thai-led Cabinet after the 2023 general elections.

The Pheu Thai Party holds no position in the current Cabinet. It had previously said it would become an opposition party.

Anutin will serve as both prime minister and interior minister. He held the latter position under Paetongtarn's government.

Six members of the Cabinet hold the deputy prime minister jobs. One of them is Thamanat Prompao of the Klatham Party, an influential politician who was convicted and jailed in Australia in 1994 in connection with heroin smuggling.

He will also serve as the agriculture minister.

Several non-politicians nabbed ministerial positions, including Ekniti Nitithanprapas, a former Director-General of the Revenue Department, who has economics degree from the US, was appointed to both deputy prime minister and finance minister positions.

Suphaje Suthumpun, a former CEO of major Thai hotel business Dusit Thani, will serve as commerce minister.

Veteran diplomat Sihesak Phuanketkeow was appointed as foreign minister.

He had served in many posts in the foreign ministry, including as its permanent secretary, vice minister and spokesperson. He was also a former Permanent Representative of Thailand to the United Nations Office in Geneva, and was chosen as President of the UN Human Rights Council in 2010.

Anutin was able to secure the prime minister position after appealing to the People's Party, the country's main opposition party, by promising to dissolve Parliament within four months and organise a referendum to draft a new constitution by an elected constituent assembly.

The People's Party runs on progressive platforms and has long sought changes to the constitution, imposed during a military government, saying they want to make it more democratic. (AP)

## Entry of other Arab countries in Pak-Saudi defence pact not ruled out: Asif

**ISLAMABAD, Sept 19:** The entry of other Arab countries in the mutual defence deal between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia is not ruled out, Defence Minister Khawaja Asif has said, adding that "doors are not closed" for such developments.

Pakistan and Saudi Arabia on Wednesday signed a "strategic mutual defence" agreement, which declares that any attack on either country will be considered "an aggression against both".

The deal was signed by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman during the Pakistani leader's day-long visit to the Gulf Kingdom, according to a joint statement.

The deal comes days after an Israeli attack on the Hamas leadership in Qatar, a key US ally in the Gulf region.

Responding to a question whether more Arab nations could become part of the deal, Asif said: "I cannot prematurely answer this, but I will definitely say the doors are not closed."

Asif, during an interview to Geo News on Tuesday, said he had always called for a similar arrangement like NATO since there was greater vulnerability for Pakistan.

"I think it is a fundamental right of the countries and people here, particularly the Muslim population, to together defend their region, countries and nations," Asif said.

He said there was no clause in the deal that ruled out the entry of any other nation or that Pakistan could not sign a similar agreement with anyone else.

Asked whether Pakistan's nuclear assets were also up for use under the agreement, Asif said: "What we have,

our capabilities, will absolutely be available under this pact."

Asif said Pakistan had always offered its nuclear facilities for inspection and never committed any violation.

Questioned about whether any attack on one country would lead to the involvement of the other and vice versa, the minister said: "Yes, absolutely. There is no doubt in this."

Asif further said it was not an "aggressive pact" but a defensive arrangement, similar to that of NATO.

He added that Pakistan had also been involved in training Saudi forces for quite a while and the recent development was only a formalised "extension" of all that.

"If there is aggression, whether against Saudi Arabia or Pakistan, we will jointly defend against it," he said.

He said Pakistan had always had a

large military and air force contingent present in Saudi for many decades.

"I think that (pre-existing) relationship has been more defined now and that understanding has been given the form of a defence agreement," he said. Responding to the deal, External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal has said India will study the implications of the move for its national security as well as for regional and global stability. Jaiswal said the "government remains committed to protecting India's national interests and ensuring comprehensive national security in all domains".

Questioned about whether the US was taken into confidence on the matter, Asif said he felt there was "no ground or justification" for any other third party to be involved in the development. (PTI)

## World shares are mixed after Intel helped drive Wall Street to more records

**MANILA, Sept 19:** World shares were mixed on Friday, with most Asian stocks down and European indexes higher after Wall Street rose to more records.

In early European trading, Germany's DAX rose 0.3 per cent to 23,736.30. The CAC 40 in Paris added nearly 0.9 per cent to 7,922.50 while Britain's FTSE 100 edged up 0.1 per cent to 9,238.90 as investors assessed a slew of recent monetary policy decisions, including those by the Bank of Japan, the Federal Reserve and the Bank of England.

Futures for the S&P 500 slipped less than 0.1 per cent, while that for the Dow Jones Industrial Average was up less than 0.1 per cent.

Japan's Nikkei 225 switched from gains to losses, closing nearly 0.6 per cent lower to 45,045.81, after the BOJ decided to keep its benchmark short-term interest rate unchanged at 0.5 per cent and announced plans to start selling its exchange-traded fund holdings and real-estate investment trusts. Data released Friday also showed the country's annual inflation in August slowed to a 10-month low at 2.7 per cent, from 3.1 per cent the previous month.

In Chinese markets, Hong Kong's Hang Seng index shed less than 0.1 per cent to 26,537.97 while the Shanghai Composite index edged down less than 0.1 per cent to 3,829.34. Investors are awaiting a phone call later Friday between US President Donald Trump and China's President Xi Jinping on tariffs and finalising a deal to allow TikTok to keep operating in the United States.

Australia's S&P/ASX 200 climbed 0.3 per cent to 8,773.50 after losses a day earlier, when data indicated the jobs market was showing signs of softness.

South Korea's Kospi fell nearly 0.5 per cent to 3,445.24. India's BSE Sensex edged down 0.4 per cent, trimming earlier gains. Taiwan's TaieX dipped 0.7 per cent.

Wall Street rolled to more records Thursday as Nvidia and Intel led a rally for technology stocks on the announcement of their deal that includes a USD 5 billion investment.

The S&P 500 rose 0.5 per cent and is on track

for a third straight winning week. The Dow Jones Industrial Average added 124 points, or 0.3 per cent, and the Nasdaq composite climbed 0.9 per cent. All three set all-time highs.

Intel soared 22.8 per cent for its best day since 1987 after Nvidia said it would buy USD 5 billion of the chipmaker's stock. It's part of a collaboration where the pair will develop products for data centres and personal computers. Nvidia climbed 3.5 per cent and was by far the strongest force lifting the S&P 500 because it's Wall Street's most valuable company.

Encouraging reports on the economy sent Treasury yields climbing in the bond market, meanwhile, including one that said fewer US workers applied for unemployment benefits last week than expected.

That could indicate the pace of layoffs is slowing, and it was a relief after the prior week's data showed a disconcerting leap to a four-year high. The job market has slowed so much that the Federal Reserve on Wednesday cut its main interest rate for the first time this year in order to give it some help.

The Fed also indicated more cuts may be on the way, though Chair Jerome Powell warned that the Fed is in a precarious position and may have to change course quickly.

That's because the economy is in an unusual situation where the job market is slowing while inflation is remaining stubbornly high at the same time.

The Fed is in charge of fixing both, but it has only one tool to do so. And helping one by moving interest rates often hurts the other in the short term.

Expectations are high on Wall Street that the Fed will keep cutting interest rates, and an unexpected halt could send stocks tumbling. Critics say stock prices have already shot too high and become too expensive, in part because of heavy bets on continued cuts in rates. On Wall Street, smaller stocks led the way.

They can be some of the biggest beneficiaries of easier interest rates, and the Russell 2000 index of small stocks rallied 2.5 per cent to join its bigger rivals in setting all-time highs. (AP)

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

NO.KAAC/HRN/S.E.-W-138(Pt)/2025-26/224

Dated: 16/09/2025

#### TENDER NOTICE

Sealed tender affixing Non refundable KAAC court fee stamp (Receipt) Rs. 10.00 (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 04/10/2025 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	Construction of Paver Block Road from Chembong Tinali to Men Rongpi Arong along with 2 nos RCC HP Culvert.	Rs.1,25,04,000.00	Rs.1,25,04,000.00	ST/SC/OBC=1% GENERAL=2%	120 days
2	Construction of Send gravalling Road from Chembong to Mekve Hidi LPs via Nihang Tokbi village along with 4 nos RCC H.P. culvert	Rs.1,04,30,000.00	Rs.1,04,30,000.00	ST/SC/OBC=1% GENERAL=2%	120 days

Detail N.I.T/ document and name of works amounts may be obtained from Office of the S.E. (Work) KAAC, Diphu during working hours on payment of Rs. 1000/-.

#### Terms & Conditions

##### N.B

- The rate to be quoted as % (Percent) above/below/as per schedule rate for building/sanitary/works for all division under CPWD-2020-21.
- 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.
- 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.
- The work must be carried on as directed by the E.E (W), KAAC Diphu Authority.
- The following up to date documents should be enclosed with the tender.
  - Professional Tax Clearance Certificate.
  - Sale Tax Clearance Certificate/GST.
  - Council Registration.
  - Call Deposit.
  - Council receipt.
  - Caste Certificate.
  - Pan Card / Adhaar Card
  - Account number
  - Payment will be made subject to availabilities of fund.
  - The undersigned is not bound to accept the lowest quoted rate.

Sd/-  
Superintending Engineer (S.E.), Work  
Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council,  
Diphu



# First 'Next Gen GST' awareness programme held in Namsai

Deputy CM Chowna Mein highlights people-centric benefits of next-generation GST reforms for middle class, entrepreneurs, women and MSMEs in Namsai

**HT Bureau**

**NAMSAI, Sept 19:** The BJP Arunachal Pradesh Namsai District unit on Friday organised the first-ever "Next Gen GST - A Citizen-Centric Reform" awareness programme at the Multi-Purpose Cultural Hall, Namsai, drawing enthusiastic participation from all sections of society including entrepreneurs, homestay owners, shopkeepers, business community members, party karyakartas and the general public.

The programme was graced by deputy chief minister Chowna Mein, who also holds the Finance and Planning portfolio.

In his keynote address, Mein described the GST reforms as a historic decision of the Modi-led government and a landmark move aimed at bringing relief to the middle class, empowering small businesses and strengthening the overall economy.

"These reforms are people-centric—reducing costs, creating opportunities, and empowering Arunachal Pradesh to achieve inclusive growth. Let us embrace this change and work together towards a Viksit Arunachal and Viksit Bharat 2047," he said.

Mein further elaborated on the next-generation GST reforms announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and approved by the 56th GST Council, expressing gratitude to the Centre for introducing these measures.

He noted that the simplified tax



structure—reduced to three slabs of 5%, 18% and 40% for luxury or harmful goods—would not only reduce compliance burdens but also ensure affordability for the common citizen.

According to the deputy CM, the reforms effective from September 22 would make daily essentials and packaged foods cheaper, provide affordable access to farm machinery and handicrafts, and exempt or reduce GST on life-saving medicines and health insurance.

He added that education, wellness, tourism and transport services would now become more affordable, while women entrepreneurs and MSMEs would receive a special boost through targeted provisions.

Expanded digital access, even in

remote districts, has also been prioritised under the reforms.

The event began with a plantation drive organised under the "Sewa Pakhwada - Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam" campaign, where dignitaries, party workers and local residents joined hands to promote environmental conservation.

Earlier, Namsai District BJP president Ningroo Ong Maio extended a warm welcome to the gathering.

Chau Zingnu Namchoom, MLA, State BJP vice-president and advisor to the Home Minister (RWD, Sports and Youth Affairs), highlighted the objectives of the awareness programme, stressing its importance for grassroots stakeholders such as small shop owners, farmers, women entrepreneurs and youth-led startups.

Tojir Kadu, MLA Nari-Koyu and co-convenor of "Next Gen GST," shared insights on how the reforms would energise local entrepreneurship, provide relief to small traders, and boost the regional economy of Arunachal Pradesh.

The gathering was further enriched by the participation of several prominent leaders and community representatives.

Among them were Namsai ZPC Nang Urmila Mancheikhun, State BJKM general secretary Chau Sujana Namchoom, ZPMs, TKSC members and a wide representation of business community leaders and homestay owners from Namsai, Mahadevpur, Chongkham and Wakro.

Their presence, along with the enthusiastic participation of the public and party karyakartas, reflected the significance of the reforms at the grassroots level.

The State BJP unit extended congratulations to the Namsai district unit and convener Chow Ratna Longkan for successfully organising the programme and spreading awareness on this major citizen-centric financial reform.

The event not only underlined the economic benefits of the reforms but also demonstrated the BJP's effort to engage directly with citizens at the district level, ensuring that complex policy changes are clearly understood by those most impacted.

# Governor stresses geo-smart technologies for efficient governance



**ITANAGAR, Sept 19:** Arunachal Pradesh Governor Lt Gen (Retd) K T Parnaik on Friday underscored the importance of adopting geo-smart technologies to strengthen governance systems, improve efficiency, and find innovative solutions to the state's pressing challenges.

Participating in a presentation by Geospatial World at Raj Bhavan here, the Governor said such technologies must be tailored to the state's requirements, an official statement said here.

"Technologies, when adopted, must facilitate the state government in analysing existing systems, strengthening their efficiency, and finding innovative solutions to its pressing challenges," Parnaik remarked.

This, Parnaik said, would enable the administration to review them according to local needs and realities.

The governor observed that geo-smart technologies can transform the way governments deliver services.

"Geo-smart technologies can enhance governance, enable analysis, and remotely monitor the progress of planned projects. The integration of technology into governance holds the promise of transforming service delivery and enhancing the quality of life for people across the state," he said.

The presentation was delivered by Geospatial World president Annu Negi and director Swati Mittal, who elaborated on the scope of geospatial applications and their potential as facilitating tools for the government.

Geospatial World is a premier global platform advancing geospatial technologies and applications. It connects professionals,

researchers, and policymakers to share innovations in GIS, remote sensing, and mapping, driving smarter decisions in sectors like urban planning, disaster management, agriculture, and defence.

The session was followed by an interactive discussion with the state administration.

Chief Minister Pema Khandu, who also attended the event, said he looked forward to harnessing the immense potential of such technologies for development planning and service delivery.

"Looking forward to the immense possibilities that geospatial technologies offer in improving public services, enhancing planning, and driving sustainable development for the people of Arunachal," Khandu later wrote in a post on X.

State Chief Secretary Manish Gupta and other senior officials also took part in the deliberations, sharing perspectives and highlighting key issues and priorities for the state. (PTI)

# Sports Complex inaugurated at Tuting under Operation Sadbhavana



**HT Correspondent**

**TUTING, Sept 19:** A state-of-the-art sports complex was recently inaugurated at Tuting in Upper Siang district under the Indian Army's flagship community initiative, Operation Sadbhavana.

The facility, comprising a futsal court and two volleyball courts, was dedicated to the people of the Vibrant Village Tuting by deputy commissioner Talo Jerang in collaboration with the Army's Spear Corps.

The project seeks to encourage fitness, teamwork and a vibrant sporting culture among youth in one of Arunachal Pradesh's most remote border regions.

The inauguration ceremony witnessed enthusiastic participation from villagers, school students, teachers, panchayat members, district officials and personnel of the Indian Army.

Addressing the gathering, DC Jerang underscored the role of accessible sports infrastructure in

nurturing young talent and thanked the Army for supporting the aspirations of border communities.

He described the facility as "a platform for growth, discipline and healthy competition."

Officials of the Spear Corps said the initiative was part of the Army's broader effort to strengthen its ties with locals and inspire youth to adopt active and positive lifestyles.

Equipped with FIFA-standard all-weather surfaces and eco-friendly design, the complex will host training sessions, friendly matches and inter-village tournaments. It will also serve as a venue for cultural and social events, reinforcing the bond between the Indian Army and the people of Upper Siang.

The new facility stands as a symbol of cooperation, resilience and opportunity, reflecting the shared commitment of the civil administration and the Indian Army towards nation-building and community empowerment along India's northeastern frontier.

# Hindi Saptah concludes at JNC, Pasighat



**HT Correspondent**  
**PASIGHAT, Sept 19:** The Department of Hindi, Jawaharlal Nehru College (JNC), Pasighat, on Friday organised the closing ceremony of Hindi Saptah (Hindi Week), marking the culmination of a week-long celebration that began on September 14, Hindi Diwas.

The programme commenced with the ceremonial lighting of the lamp by Principal Dr Tasi Taloh, accompanied by faculty members and dignitaries.

Students of MA 3rd Semester presented the state song Arunachal Hamara as a welcome gesture, followed by the felicitation of distinguished guests.

Coordinator Dr Zebina Taki delivered the welcome address and outlined the day's proceedings.

During the week, the Hindi Department organised essay writing, poetry writing and extempore speech competitions.

Winners were felicitated at the closing event.

In extempore speech, Tilung Borang secured the first position, while Yayok Nyitan stood second.

In essay writing, Tarh Tabang and Lomti Lego won the first and second prizes respectively.

The poetry writing contest was won by Kenum Ete, with Ilma Muskan placed second. Invited speakers inspired the

gathering with their addresses. Dr SK Sinha, HoD of English, elaborated on the global status of Hindi and spoke on World Hindi Day, quoting verses of poet Gajanan Madhav Muktibodh.

Dr KK Mishra, HoD of Geography, recited a Hindi poem, while chief guest Dr DP Panda, IQAC Coordinator and HoD of Commerce, traced the roots of Hindi to Sanskrit and encouraged its daily use.

Vice-Principal Dr Leki Sitang highlighted how the Arunachali form of Hindi connects diverse tribes of the state.

In his concluding remarks, Principal Dr Taloh lauded the Hindi Department for successfully organising the celebration and urged students to embrace Hindi with pride.

The event also featured cultural performances by students.

The programme concluded with a vote of thanks by Dr HN Pandey, HoD of Hindi.

Faculty members Dr Tokpet Pertin, Dr Munni Perme, Dr Ing Perme and Dr Usum Jongkey, along with coordinator Dr Zebina Taki, played key roles in organising the event.

Madhurjya Kamal Hazarika served as rapporteur.

# Professor arrested for molesting student in Arunachal

**ITANAGAR, Sept 19:** A professor of a private university was arrested in Arunachal Pradesh's Namsai district for allegedly molesting a student, officials said on Friday.

The professor, who worked at the Arunachal University of Studies, was arrested around midnight on Thursday after members of the Tai Khampit Youth Organisation (TKYO) handed him over to the police.

The student had sought clarification from the professor regarding her pending thesis and two examination papers. The professor asked for her phone number, promising to help with the thesis, and called her to his residence, according to the complaint.

When the student visited his residence, located about a km away from the campus, he allegedly assured her of academic favours despite her admission that

she had left the answer sheets blank, it said.

As she tried to leave, he allegedly blocked the door and molested her. She managed to escape and later confided in a friend, who alerted the TKYO, it added.

TKYO president Sengkhun Manchey Tai claimed preliminary findings suggest the professor may have been a repeat offender, luring students with promises of academic favours. (PTI)

# CM Pema Khandu inspects IG Park ahead of PM Modi's visit

**HT Correspondent**  
**ITANAGAR, Sept 19:** Chief Minister Pema Khandu on Friday afternoon inspected IG Park in Itanagar to review preparations for the proposed visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Arunachal Pradesh on September 22.

The Chief Minister was accompanied by Itanagar MLA and Urban Affairs Minister's Advisor Techi Kaso, Chief Secretary Manish Gupta, DGP Anand Mohan, Commissioner to CM Sonam Chombey, Itanagar Capital Deputy Commissioner Toko Babu, and senior officers from various departments involved in the event

preparations. In a social media post, Khandu said, "Walking through IG Park, Itanagar, overseeing preparations for PM Narendra Modi Ji's visit," he added, "Never before has Arunachal seen such consistent attention from a Prime Minister, showing real care for the dreams and development of our people. We are eager to welcome Hon'ble PM Modi Ji as he inaugurates and lays the foundation for key projects, and witness the transformative impact these initiatives will bring to every corner of Arunachal."

Preparations for the visit are in full swing, with massive manpower engaged in cleaning, sweep-

ing, and painting stretches of the National Highway from Donyi Polo Airport, Hollongi, to Itanagar, as well as the route from Raj Bhawan to IG Park. Officers are also overseeing painting of dividers and clearing vegetation along NH-415 to ensure the city is clean and presentable.

The visit underscores Prime Minister Modi's focus on the North East, with Arunachal Pradesh receiving significant attention and developmental support. Officials are working on a war-footing basis to ensure the city is ready to host the Prime Minister and showcase the state's progress and potential.

Golden Jubilee outreach programme at Daporijo engages students in debate, dialogue and democratic learning

# APLA@50 Outreach Connect inspires students at Daporijo

**HT Correspondent**

**DAPORIJO, Sept 19:** The golden jubilee celebration of the Arunachal Pradesh Legislative Assembly (APLA) reached another milestone recently with the successful conduct of the sixth edition of the APLA@50 Outreach Connect Programme at the Government Model Degree College, Daporijo.

Organised in collaboration with Rajiv Gandhi University's Centre for Distance and Online Education (the nodal institute), the initiative reaffirmed the Assembly's vision of nurturing youth as active participants in the democratic journey of the state.

The day-long event drew an enthusiastic response from students, faculty, panchayat members, invited dignitaries and resource persons, reflecting the growing impact of the outreach programme across Arunachal Pradesh.

The gathering resonated with the spirit of celebration, awareness and civic engagement that underpins the Assembly's

golden jubilee theme: Celebrating Democracy and Inspiring Future Leaders.

The programme opened with a spirited debate competition on the theme "Integrating Customary Law into the Formal Legal System of Arunachal Pradesh."

Participants displayed clarity, confidence and logical reasoning, engaging with the complexities of governance and cultural preservation.

Their performance was widely appreciated for reflecting both preparation and passion, and left the audience inspired by the commitment of young minds to civic discourse.

The formal proceedings began with the rendition of the National Anthem, followed by a welcome address from Principal Dr Tagio Kodak.

He underlined the importance of the Assembly's 50-year journey and the responsibility of today's students to embrace democratic values, leadership and public service.

"Platforms like these allow our youth



not only learn about governance but also develop the confidence to contribute meaningfully in the future," he remarked.

Felicitations of distinguished guests followed, symbolising mutual respect between the organisers and contributors. Dr Nyajum Lollen, Assistant Professor at RGU's Centre for Distance and Online Education, then addressed the gathering.

He explained that the APLA@50 Out-

reach Connect Programme was more than a commemoration of the Assembly's golden jubilee—it was an effort to sensitise students about their role as responsible citizens. "This initiative bridges the Assembly with classrooms, ensuring our youth see themselves as the future architects of Arunachal Pradesh," he said.

The keynote address delivered by Prof Ashan Riddi of RGU's History Depart-

ment proved to be the highlight of the day. Tracing the trajectory of APLA over the last five decades, Prof Riddi spoke about the Assembly's legislative excellence, evolving responsibilities and its role in shaping Arunachal Pradesh's identity within the Indian Union.

He urged students to carry forward the democratic legacy of the state while remaining rooted in cultural traditions.

"Preserve your heritage, but engage fearlessly with the challenges of modern governance. This balance will define the future of our democracy," he said, calling upon students to view themselves as agents of change.

Winners of the debate competition were felicitated with prizes, receiving encouragement to continue honing their skills in reasoning, articulation and public speaking.

The recognition not only celebrated individual achievements but also symbolised the Assembly's intent to nurture young talent.

The event concluded with a heartfelt vote of thanks by APLA Librarian Dedu Poyom, who expressed gratitude to the organisers, faculty, participants and dignitaries for making the programme a success. The closing moments, marked by light refreshments, provided an opportunity for students and guests to interact informally, fostering camaraderie and dialogue beyond the stage.

With each edition, the APLA@50 Outreach Connect Programme has strengthened its impact across Arunachal Pradesh's higher education institutions.

It continues to serve as a bridge between the Assembly and the state's youth, inspiring students to see democracy not as a distant institution but as a living process they can actively shape.

The next edition will be held at Government Model College, Basar, on September 19, further extending the programme's reach to another section of the state's young citizens.



# Tribunals uphold ban on two JK groups

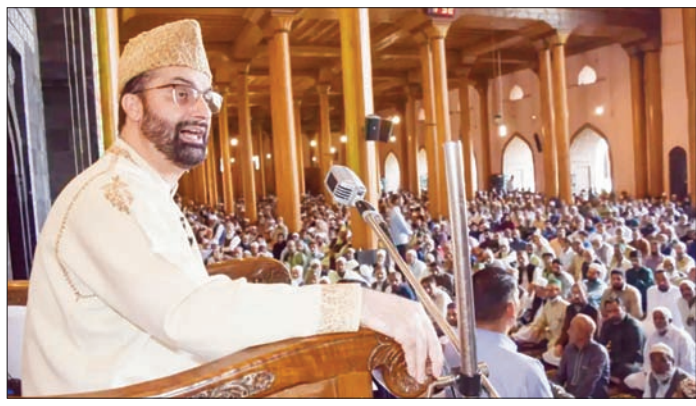
**Tribunals declare Awami Action Committee and Ittihadul Muslimeen unlawful associations under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967**

**NEW DELHI, Sept 19:** Two Delhi High Court tribunals have upheld the ban imposed by the Centre on the Awami Action Committee headed by Kashmir's influential cleric Mirwaiz Umar Farooq and Shia leader Masroor Abbas Ansari-led Jammu and Kashmir Ittihadul Muslimeen.

The tribunals, headed by the same judge — Justice Sachin Datta — observed that based on the material and evidence placed before them, there is ample justification to declare the two groups as unlawful associations under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967.

"Thus, this Tribunal, having followed the procedure laid down in the UAPA and its Rules and having independently and objectively appreciated and evaluated the material and evidence on record, is of the firm and considered view that there is sufficient cause for declaring the organisation as an unlawful association under Section 3(1) of the UAPA," the identical order issued by the tribunals read.

On March 11, while declaring the two groups banned, the Union home ministry said that the Awami Action Committee (AAC) and the Jammu and Kashmir Ittihadul Muslimeen (JKIM) were indulging in unlawful activities that were prejudicial to the integrity, sovereignty and security of the country.



It said the leaders and members of the two groups have been involved in mobilising funds for perpetrating unlawful activities, including supporting secessionist, separatist and terrorist activities in Jammu and Kashmir.

The members of these groups show sheer disrespect towards the constitutional authority and constitutional setup of the country through their activities. The outfits were involved in promoting and aiding the secession of Jammu and Kashmir from India by involving in anti-national and subversive activities and sowing seeds of disaffection amongst people, the ministry said. The AAC and the JKIM were exhorting people to destabilise law and order, encouraging the use of arms to separate Jammu and Kash-

mir from the Union of India and promoting hatred against the established government, it said.

The tribunal referred to a chargesheet filed by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) in a case pertaining to terrorist and secessionist activities that have plagued Jammu and Kashmir since the late 1980s and the early 1990s.

Among the materials submitted by the government before the tribunal were the NIA chargesheet filed before a court which mentioned the spate of violence unleashed in the valley involving attacks on civilians and security forces alike since the last many decades.

It also mentioned that Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) was actively supporting numerous terrorist organisations, such as

Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), Hizb-ul-Mujahideen (HM), Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF), Harkat-ul-Jihad-al-Islami, Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) etc., which were involved in the attacks.

"Pakistan has not only been training the terror groups but also supporting them financially and diplomatically. Amidst the violent activities of the terrorists and mass exodus of the minority community from J&K, the All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) was formed as a conglomerate of 26 political/social/religious organisations in the year 1993 which gave a political front to the secessionist activities," the chargesheet said.

It said the investigation in the NIA case uncovered a conspiracy involving various terrorist organisations, such as JKLF, HM, and LeT, in collusion with secessionist group comprising the APHC, funded by Pakistan and its agencies.

The aim was to wage war against the Indian government and advocate for the secession of Jammu and Kashmir from India. The APHC, initially formed as a political front, was found to be actively involved in inciting violence and unrest in Kashmir to further their secessionist agenda, the NIA noted.

The tribunal also took note of the intelligence reports submitted before it. (PTI)

# Oct '23 blasts: Kerala police to seek US help in probe into BJP leader's FB post

**KOCHI, Sept 19:** The Left government in Kerala has granted sanction to the state police to seek US assistance in the probe into a Facebook post allegedly made from the account of BJP leader Rajeev Chandrasekhar, following the twin bomb blasts at a Jehovah's Witnesses convention in Kalamassery that killed eight people on October 29, 2023.

Chandrasekhar, a former union minister, is currently the president of the BJP's Kerala unit. The case concerning the post allegedly made from Chandrasekhar's Facebook page was registered by Ernakulam Central Police two days after the incident, based on a complaint from the Ernakulam Cyber Cell.

The FIR alleged that the Facebook post, purportedly from Chandrasekhar's account, attempted to disturb communal harmony and carried a provocative remark mentioning the Palestinian terrorist group Hamas in the background of the blasts at Kalamassery.

The post blamed the Congress and the CPI(M), claiming that they were indulging in appeasement politics, with the hashtags HamasTerrorist and KochiTerrorAttacks.

It was purportedly pointing fingers towards Hamas leader Khaled Mashal, who virtually attended a pro-Palestine protest held in Kerala, a day before the blast.

According to a Government Order issued on September 8, the State Police Chief had sought permission on July 17, 2025, to submit a Mutual Legal Assistance (MLA) request through the online portal in connection with Crime No. 3408/2023 registered at Ernakulam Central Police Station.

"The Government is pleased to accord sanction to the State Police Chief to send Mutual Legal Assistance in Crime No. 3408/2023 to the Ministry of Home Affairs through the online portal for obtaining legal assistance from the competent authorities in the United States of America," the order said.

The Inspector General of Police, Crime Branch, who is the state's Interpol liaison officer, has been directed to take steps to submit the request in line with



central guidelines, it said.

A police source, speaking exclusively to PTI, said MLA is being sought to obtain details from social media platforms based in the US, including Facebook and X (formerly Twitter).

"The MLA request will be routed through the CBI, which is India's Interpol nodal agency. The Interpol agency in the US will facilitate the request by collecting information from the concerned social media firms there," a police officer said.

Police had also registered another case (Crime No. 3418/2023) against Chandrasekhar and BJP national secretary Anil Antony on similar charges over posts taking the name of Hamas.

Both cases were filed under IPC Sections 153 (provocation with intent to cause riot), 153A (promoting enmity between groups on grounds of religion, race, language or caste), and Section 120(6) of the Kerala Police Act (causing nuisance).

Chandrasekhar later approached the Kerala High Court, which directed police not to take any coercive action against him. The investigation in these cases is still on, a police officer said.

Hours after the deadly blast, Palarivattom native Joseph Martin surrendered before a court in Thrissur district, taking responsibility for the incident. (PTI)

## Continued need to probe 'Modani Scam' in all dimensions: Cong on SEBI clean chit to Adani

**NEW DELHI, Sept 19:** A day after the SEBI's clean chit to the Adani Group in the Hindenburg matter, the Congress on Friday said there is a continued need to investigate the "scam" in all its dimensions as it extends far beyond the scope of investigations by the market regulator. Congress general secretary in-charge communications Jairam Ramesh said in a statement that contrary to the managed headlines, the commercial partner in "Modani Enterprises" has now received a "clean chit" from SEBI only in two of the 20 matters being investigated by it under a Supreme Court-mandated probe. In a statement, Ramesh said there is continued need to investigate the "Modani Scam" in all its dimensions.

He also shared a set of questions the party had posed in the 100-question-series "Hum Adani Ke Hain Kaun" (HAHK), and said they remain unanswered. The Congress leader noted that the Supreme Court on March 2, 2023 had directed SEBI to "conclude the investigation within

two months" following the Hindenburg Report. "Yet, the first SEBI orders were delivered only after two years and seven months, following repeated extensions and delays.

"We now await SEBI's findings on the remaining 22 matters, which include allegations of insider trading in Adani Group companies, violations of rules relating to minimum public shareholding, and the 13 'suspicious transactions' that SEBI told the Supreme Court on August 25 2023, that it was investigating. These involve offshore dealings by close Adani associates Nasser Ali Shaban Ahli and Chang Chung-Ling," he said. "The Modani scam, however, extends far beyond the scope of SEBI's investigations," he asserted.

Raising the issues the Congress had flagged in its list of hundred questions in the HAHK series of questions to the prime minister, he said it also encompasses the alleged misuse of agencies such as the ED, CBI, and Income Tax Department to "force" companies to sell off their assets to the Adani Group. (PTI)

## 5 more bodies found in rain-ravaged Chamoli, death toll rises to 7, 2 missing

**GOPESHWAR (U'KHAND), Sept 19:** Five more bodies were found from the rain-ravaged villages in Uttarakhand's Chamoli district on Friday as rescue teams dug through debris and waded through sludge in search of the missing.

With this, the death toll due to landslides and flooding in the area has climbed to seven. Two bodies were found on Thursday, officials said.

As rescuers pulled out the bodies, the family members of the victims broke down.

Four of the five bodies were found from Kuntari Laga Phali village on Friday and one was pulled out of the rubble in neighbouring Kuntari Laga Sarpani, the State Emergency Operation Centre (SEOC) in Dehradun said.

Landslides and flooding

triggered by heavy rain hit four villages -- Kuntari Laga Phali, Kuntari Laga Sarpani, Sera and Dhurma -- in Chamoli's Nandanagar area, about 260 km from state capital Dehradun and 50 km from the Chamoli district headquarters at Gopeshwar, on Thursday.

A total of 45 houses and 15 cowsheds were damaged in the incidents.

Nandanagar is already reeling from land subsidence.

The bodies found from Kuntari Laga Phali were identified as those of Deveshwari Devi (65), Kanta Devi (38) and her sons Vikas and Vishal, both aged 10. Kanta Devi's husband, Kunwar Singh (42), was rescued alive miraculously 16 hours after the incident on Thursday evening.

The body found from Kuntari Laga Sarpani was identified as that of Bhaga Devi (65).

Two persons are still missing in Dhurma and the search continues for them.

Chamoli District Magistrate Sandeep Tiwari is in Nandanagar to oversee the search-and-rescue operations.

On Thursday, 12 people were injured, including five rescued alive from Kuntari Laga Phali and Dhurma. Those seriously injured are undergoing treatment at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in Rishikesh, officials said.

They said 95 people have been shifted to the relief camps set up at Maria Ashram and Gala Godown with adequate supply of food and medicines. (PTI)

## Accept leadership failures instead of blaming institutions: Rijju on Rahul's 'vote theft' claims

**NEW DELHI, Sept 19:** Union Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijju on Friday said Congress leader Rahul Gandhi should accept responsibility for his repeated electoral defeats instead of targeting institutions.

His remarks came a day after Gandhi accused Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar of protecting those behind "vote theft" and claimed that names of Congress voters were being systematically deleted from the electoral roll in Karnataka.

The Election Commission dismissed the charges as "incorrect and baseless", stating that no deletion of votes can take place without due process.

"If you lose elections repeatedly, you should acknowledge your weaknesses and accept the failure of your leadership. But instead, ...you start blaming institutions. Is

that the right way?" Rijju asked on the sidelines of a FICCI FLO event here.

The Union minister accused the leader of opposition in the Lok Sabha of trying to divert attention from his failures.

"Just to cover up his failures in elections, Rahul Gandhi cannot target any other institution or shift the focus elsewhere," Rijju said, adding that such attempts would not be accepted by the people.

The minister further claimed that Gandhi's remarks often mirrored anti-India propaganda.

"Whatever narratives Pakistan creates, the same narratives are propagated by Rahul Gandhi and his company here in India. For many years now, what Rahul Gandhi and his group say is found to be used by anti-India groups and elements in Pakistan," Rijju asserted. (PTI)

## Rahul speaks like an 'urban Maoist': Fadnavis on his Gen Z post

**MUMBAI, Sept 19:** Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on Friday accused Rahul Gandhi of speaking like an "urban Maoist", claiming that the Congress leader asked Gen Z to overthrow a democratically elected government.

Gandhi does not believe in the Constitution and rejects the

institutions, the CM said, adding that his advisors also have "urban Maoist" mindset.

His remarks came a day after Gandhi launched his fresh offensive against the Election Commission of India (ECI) and reiterated his "vote chori" allegations. (PTI)

### OFFICE OF THE PRINCIPAL

#### BELOGURI HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL BELOGURI, HOWRAGHAT, KARBI ANGLONG ADVERTISEMENT

Date: 18-09-2025

This is for general information to all concern that the off line application prescribed standard forms with self attested copies of all certificate and invited for eligible candidates for filling up of teaching staff post on purely temporary basis at Beloguri Higher Secondary School, Beloguri, Howraghat, Karbi Anglong, Assam.

SL NO	Name of Post	Subject(S)	No. of Post vacancy	Minimum educational qualification
1	Subject Teacher	Mathematics	1(One)	Post Graduate from any recognized university with B.Ed.
2	Demonstrator	Chemistry	1(One)	B.Sc in Chemistry

#### Terms and Conditions

- Candidates should not be less than 21 years of age and not more than 40 years as on 01-01-2024 for General/OBC/MOBC and up to 45 years for SC/ST.
- The ST/SC/OBC/MOBC candidates need to submit their caste certificate along with their application form.
- Incomplete application shall be rejected summarily.
- Applicant must secure at-least 60% marks in Master degree for General/OBC/MOBC and 45% marks for ST/SC and first preference will be given to a local qualified candidate.
- Application must reach to the office of the principal Beloguri Higher Secondary School on or before 7th Oct/2025.
- Candidates must have at least 3 years teaching experience will be given preference.
- No TA/DA will be admissible for appearing in the test/interview.
- Date of interview is 13th Oct/2025 by 10 am.

N.B: Copy for notice board at I/S office and School notice board.

Sd/-  
Principal  
Beloguri Higher Secondary School  
Howraghat, Karbi Anglong

#### NOTIFICATION

Applications in standard form from eligible candidates who are citizen of India and ordinary residence of Assam are invited to fill up the following posts on purely contractual basis under Per Drop More Crop (PDMC) and Mission Organic Value Chain Development for North East Region (MOVCD-NER) schemes implemented by the Directorate of Horticulture and Food Processing, Assam, Khanapara, Guwahati-22. The Advertisement, Terms of References (ToR) etc are available in the website <http://dirhorti.assam.gov.in> and may be downloaded from there.

Sl. No	Name of the Vacancy	Eligibility Criteria	Number of post	Remuneration per month (Rs)	Name of the scheme
1	Technical Executive (Agri Engg.)-HQ	<b>Qualifications:-</b> Degree/Diploma in Mechanical/ Agriculture Engineering with 2 years' post qualification experience preferably in irrigation sector and knowledge of computer <b>Age limit:</b> 23-38 years as on 31 <sup>st</sup> August 2025, Minimum 55% marks or 5.5/10 CGPA or equivalent marks in at Graduate/Diploma level	1	25,000/-	PDMC
2	Technical Executive (Agri)-HQ	<b>Qualifications:-</b> Degree in Agriculture/ Horticulture with 2 years' post qualification experience in field works and knowledge of computer. <b>Age limit:</b> 23-38years as on 31 <sup>st</sup> August 2025 Minimum 55% marks or 5.5/10 CGPA or equivalent marks in graduate level	1	25,000/-	PDMC
3	Accounts Assistant-HQ	<b>Qualification:-</b> B. Com or equivalent with specialization in Accounting and Finance with 1(one) year post qualification experience in maintaining Accounts both in Digital & Manual mode. <b>Age limit:</b> 21-38 years as on 31 <sup>st</sup> August 2025 Minimum 55% marks or 5.5/10 CGPA Or equivalent marks at graduate level	1	22,000/-	PDMC
4	Technical Executive (Agri Engg.) – District level	<b>Qualifications:-</b> Degree/Diploma in Mechanical/Agri Engineering with 2 years' post qualification experience preferably in Irrigation sector and knowledge of computer <b>Age limit:</b> 23-38years as on 31 <sup>st</sup> August 2025 Minimum 55% marks or 5.5/10 CGPA or equivalent marks at graduate/diploma level	6	Rs. 25,000/- + Fixed TA of Rs.7500/-	PDMC
5	MIS Executive	<b>Qualification:-</b> BCA/ B Sc IT with minimum 5 years work experience preferably handling of MIS in govt scheme. <b>Eligibility criteria:-</b> He/she must be ordinarily resident of Assam. <b>Age limit:</b> Maximum 38years as on 31 <sup>st</sup> August 2025 Minimum 55% marks or 5.5/10 CGPA or equivalent marks at graduate level	1	30,000/-	PDMC
6	State Consultant-Market Development	<b>Qualification:</b> Degree from a Govt recognized University <b>Age:</b> 65 years on 31 <sup>st</sup> August 2025	1	45,000/-	MOVCD

Last date of receipt of application along with relevant documents through email [pmsydpdmassam@gmail.com](mailto:pmsydpdmassam@gmail.com) for PDMC and [movcdassam@gmail.com](mailto:movcdassam@gmail.com) for MOVCD-NER or physically at the Directorate of Horticulture & FP, Assam, Khanapara, Guwahati-22 is 07/10/2025

DIPR /D/ HLT 171 20-Sep-25

Sd/-  
Director of Horticulture & Food Processing  
Assam:Khanapara:Guwahati-22



# Why should the Assembly not function just because the Prime Minister is visiting, asks Oppn Tripura Assembly session cut short amid PM Modi's visit

**HT Correspondent**  
AGARTALA, Sept 19: The Tripura Assembly on the first day on Friday witnessed heated exchanges after the Business Advisory Committee (BAC) decided to reduce the number of sitting days in the ongoing session, citing Prime Minister Narendra Modi's scheduled visit to the state.

Tripura assembly session begins today and would end on September 23.

Raising objections, Congress MLA Gopal Chandra Roy alleged widespread corruption across government departments and demanded that the session be extended by at least three more days to allow discussion. CPI(M)

MLA Shyamal Chakraborty backed the demand, while Roy questioned the rationale behind keeping the House adjourned on Monday.

"For us, the issues of farmers, unemployed youths and common people are equally important. Why should the Assembly not function just because the Prime Minister is visiting?" he asked.

Chief Whip and BJP legislator Kalyani Roy countered the opposition's charge, pointing out that Congress members had skipped the BAC meeting despite being served prior notice.

Former minister and Congress MLA Sudip Roy Barman also criticized the decision, noting that As-



Assembly sessions in Tripura are already limited. "The BAC shifted Monday's business to Tuesday since the PM will be in Tripura. But this sets a bad precedent. Perhaps the Prime Minister himself is unaware of it — otherwise, he might have advised that the House continue," he said.

sembly sessions in Tripura are already limited. "The BAC shifted Monday's business to Tuesday since the PM will be in Tripura. But this sets a bad precedent. Perhaps the Prime Minister himself is unaware of it — otherwise, he might have advised that the House continue," he said.

Leader of the Opposition Jiten- dra Chaudhury echoed similar concerns, remarking that adjourning the House during the PM's visit does not reflect well on the state.

Defending the government, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Ratan Lal Nath argued that most senior officials, secretaries and department heads would be preoccupied with the Prime Minister's programme. "If they are absent, who will respond to members' queries in the House? The decision was taken unanimously in the BAC after discussion. I assure that the next session will have more days," he said.

Later, Deputy Speaker Ram Prasad Paul tabled the BAC report, which was adopted by the House through voting.

## Call for collective efforts to ensure child rights

**HT Correspondent**  
DIMAPUR, Sept 19: The Nagaland State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NSPCPR), in collaboration with the District Child Protection Unit (DCPU) Dimapur, organised an awareness programme "child rights & child protection" here on Friday, calling for collective efforts to ensure that child rights are protected.

In his keynote address at the programme, NSPCPR chairman Alun Hangsing said those countries that took cognizance of child rights, especially European and Western countries, are the most advanced countries in the world.

He stressed that it is the responsibility of every stakeholder to protect child rights, even as the NSPCPR is there to monitor that the rights of children are protected.

Addressing the event, Dimapur DC Tinojongshi Chang

stressed the need for collective responsibility in safeguarding child rights.

He pointed out the rising cases of child abuse, domestic violence, sexual abuse, and child labour, urging government departments, organisations, and individuals to work together in providing a safe and supportive environment to all children.

Legal consultant, NSPCPR, Lichani Murry gave an overview of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act with special focus on adoption rules, while member, NSPCPR, Akumla Longchari elaborated on the POCSO Act and rights of trafficked victims.

Longchari underlined the importance of preventive measures, such as discouraging child labour and training teachers and Anganwadi workers.

The resource persons also highlighted various child-related legislations and protection

mechanisms.

Another NSPCPR member Aying Wangsha highlighted the Right to Education Act 2009 and the Child Labour Amendment Act 2016, stressing the prohibition of child labour and the importance of free and compulsory education for children aged 6-14 years.

Presenting a district report, district child protection officer Dimapur Avika Zhimomi said from September 2023 to August 2025, a total of 310 cases of children in need of care and protection were produced before the Child Welfare Committee, while 499 cases were received through the Childline 1098 helpline. He noted that Dimapur, being the state's commercial hub, faces unique challenges such as trafficking, abuse, and abandonment, and called for collective efforts to strengthen child protection systems. The programme concluded with an open house discussion.

## Manipur govt not to register deeds for land transfer from indigenous people to outsiders

**IMPHAL, Sept 19:** The Manipur government has prohibited registration of deeds for the transfer of land from indigenous people to outsiders, according to a notification.

However, the government has allowed registration of deeds related to the transfer of land from an indigenous person to a non-indigenous one on condition that the transferee must be a permanent resident of the state.

In a notification issued on Thursday, the Land Resources Department said, "No deed shall be registered for the transfer of land (by gift, sale, or mortgage) from an indigenous person to a non-indigenous person."

But there is an exception to the restriction, according to the notification. Notwithstanding the restriction on transfers to non-indigenous persons, registration may be permitted "if the persons involved in the land transfer

(by gift, sale, or mortgage) are permanent residents of the state of Manipur", it said.

The notification came into effect immediately. Those who intend to purchase land in Manipur are required to approach the deputy commissioner of the district concerned.

The DCs have been asked to verify applications related to buying land and send them to the administrative secretary (Land Resources), it said.

An internal committee of the Land Resources Department will verify each application before presenting it to a panel of officers who are responsible for recommending to the government the grant of permission for the sale deed registration of land, the notification said. "The recommendation is made under the Manipur Regulation of Sale Deed Registration (Amendment) Rules, 2023," it said. (PTI)

## Five detained B'desh nationals to be sent back to their country

**AGARTALA, Sept 19:** Five Bangladeshi labourers, who were detained in Tripura's Gomati district recently, will be sent back to their country, a senior police officer said on Friday.

The officer said the detained Bangladesh nationals claimed they had entered Indian soil a few days ago and were engaged in construction and furniture work at Maharani under RK Pur police station area of the district. During a check at Maharani, police stopped an auto-rickshaw on Thursday and conducted a search. On suspicion, five passengers were detained, Udaipur SDPO Debanjali Ray told PTI.

"Today, the five labourers were taken to a state government-run home in West Tripura. The BSF will take up the issue with its Bangladesh counterpart to send them back to their country", she said.

Ray said the state has already received communication from the Centre to house the illegal Bangladeshi nationals in a government-run home, instead of arresting them immediately. In Tripura, where infiltration remains a major challenge, law enforcement agencies previously used to arrest Bangladeshi nationals under the Indian Passport Act for entering Indian territory illegally and produce them before a local court for further legal action. (PTI)

## Six militants arrested in Manipur

**IMPHAL, Sept 19:** Security forces have arrested six militants belonging to different proscribed outfits from three Imphal Valley districts of Manipur, police said on Friday.

The arrests were made on Thursday.

Three active cadres of the banned Kangleipak Communist Party (PWG) outfit were arrested from their respective residences in Imphal West district. They were identified as Leishangthem Tondon Singh (34), Leishangthem Anand Singh (34) and Heikham Hemchandra Singh (41), a police statement said. Two SLR rifles, two modified .303 rifles, one INSAS rifle, nine magazines of different types and 99 cartridges were seized from their possession. Another cadre of the same outfit was arrested from Andro in Imphal East district. He was identified as Taorem Tomchou Meitei alias Pena (45). One active cadre of the proscribed PREPAK (PRO) outfit was arrested from Ichan Khunou in Thoubal district. Police arrested an active cadre of the banned SOREPA outfit from Samaram Mayai Leikai in Thoubal district. He was identified as Khoinaijam Bhumeswar Singh (24). One dummy gun and three cartridges were seized from his possession, it said. (PTI)

## Mon district records highest employment rate at 91.08% 71,034 registered unemployed in Nagaland, says report

**HT Correspondent**  
DIMAPUR, Sept 19: There are 71,034 unemployed youth registered with employment exchanges in Nagaland as of March 31, 2025, according to a survey report on employment, unemployment, skills and migration in the state.

The report of the directorate of economics & statistics was officially released at a programme at the directorate's conference hall in Kohima on Friday.

Speaking at the programme as the special guest, advisor, economics & statistics and evaluation, H Sethrongkyu Sangtam said the report would help the state government formulate effective policies to tackle unemployment.

He stressed that without quality district-level data, balanced regional development and the vision of a "Viksit Nagaland" could not be achieved.

Sangtam reiterated the government's commitment to addressing the unemployment problem, recalling that the matter was deliberated in the recent session of the Nagaland Legislative Assembly.

Calling the survey report the first of its kind under the Nagaland Sample Survey Unit, he said it would serve as a critical basis for framing labour policies and harnessing the state's demographic dividend. He



added that district-wise socio-economic data in the report would help address unique challenges in each district while strengthening policy implementation.

Neidilhou Keditsu, director, economics & statistics, presented the key findings of the survey report.

The survey reported that the average household size in Nagaland is four members, with household sizes ranging from one to 11. The average monthly household expenditure was estimated at ₹ 16,522, with the lowest at ₹ 1,133 and the highest at ₹ 3,61,647. The average age of people in the working-age group stood at 34 years.

On education, residents had an average of 11 years of formal schooling, with a minimum of one year and a maximum of 22 years. About 16% of respondents studied up to graduation,

4% were postgraduates and above, while 2% were illiterate.

The findings also revealed that 92% of residents did not have any technical education or vocational/technical training.

The labour force participation rate in Nagaland was recorded at 56%. The employment rate was estimated at 83.92%, while the unemployment rate stood at 16.07%.

Wokha had the highest labour force participation rate with 75%, while Tuensang registered the lowest at 41%.

Mon district recorded the highest employment rate at 91.08%, while Phek reported the lowest at 75%. In contrast, Phek registered the highest unemployment rate at 25%, while Mon had the lowest at 8.92%.

On migration, the survey revealed that 55% of migrant respondents had moved from rural to urban settlements.

## Party stands with people: Tipra Motha

**Party to raise Tripartite Agreement, infiltration concerns in Assembly**

**HT Correspondent**  
AGARTALA, Sept 19: Ahead of the ongoing Tripura Legislative Assembly session, the Tipra Motha Party (TMP) — a partner in the state government — announced that it will seek clarifications on two crucial issues: the status of the tripartite agreement and the measures being taken to curb illegal infiltration.

Addressing a press conference on Friday, Forest Minister and senior TMP leader Animesh Debbarma said the party would move a "short notice discussion" in the House to directly question the concerned ministers.

"Even though we are part of the government, many things remain unknown to us. It is our duty to raise the questions of the people, and we will do so inside the Assembly," Debbarma said, adding that the Assembly should be seen as a platform for debate, not confrontation.

Anticipating criticism, he clarified that the party's stance should not be misread as opposition to the government.

"Some may argue that TIPRA Motha is speaking against the government despite being part of it. That is not true. We are a small constituent of the ruling alliance, and naturally, certain decisions are beyond our knowledge. As people's representatives, it is our responsibility to seek answers on their behalf," Debbarma explained.

He stressed that TMP's priority remains the protection of the rights and interests of the indigenous Tiprasa community, which he said often feels neglected in governance.

"Our demand for answers in the Assembly is not for our party's benefit, but for the marginalized voices that deserve to be heard," he asserted.

### CONSTRUCTION OF PARCEL SHED AT DIMAPUR

E-Tender Notice No. LMG/Engg/66 of 2025, Dated: 15-09-2025. E-tenders are invited by the undersigned for the following work: **SN. 1. Brief Description of Item:** Construction of 2 bay Parcel Shed at both ends of each platform for loading & unloading of parcel packages at Dimapur under jurisdiction of ADE/Dimapur. **Tender Value:** ₹1,45,01,996.79. **Earnest Money:** ₹2,22,500/- E-tenders will be closed at 15:00 hrs. on 09-10-2025 and opened at 15:00 hrs. on 10-10-2025. The complete information with tender documents of above e-tender will be available upto 15:00 hrs. of 09-10-2025 in website <http://www.reps.gov.in>.

### REPLACEMENT OF LEAKY ROOFING SHEETS

E-Tender Notice No.: 39 of 2025 Dated: 18-09-2025. E-Tenders are invited by the undersigned for the following works: **SN.1. Tender No. DENGHY-54-2025. Name of work & Location:** Kamakhya-Guwahati-Easement of slope of cutting. **Tender Value:** ₹3,78,46,488.25/- **Earnest Money:** ₹3,39,200/- **SN.2. Tender No. DENGHY-55-2025. Name of work & Location:** At Guwahati-Replacement of leaky roofing sheets at PF-1, 2 & 3, 4 & 5 and 6 & 7 and damaged kota stone flooring by Industrial flooring at PF-1 both end, improvement of water vats for better drinking water facilities, Renovation of waiting halls at PF-1 and other miscellaneous works at Guwahati Railway Station under the jurisdiction of SSE/W/Guwahati. **Tender Value:** ₹3,93,50,305.31/- **Earnest Money:** ₹3,46,800/- **Date & Time of closing of tender:** 13:00 hrs. of 10-10-2025 **opening at 13:00 hrs. of 10-10-2025.** The complete information with the tender document of above e-tender will be available in website [www.reps.gov.in](http://www.reps.gov.in)

Divisional Engineer, Guwahati  
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### KARBI ANGLONG AUTONOMOUS COUNCIL

### DEPARTMENT OF WORKS

### KAAC:: BRANCH SECRETARIAT

### HAMREN-782486

NO.KAAC/HRN/W-114/2025-26/155 Dated: 17/09/2025

## SHORT TENDER NOTICE

It is for general information to all the concerned that Tender Notice issued vide Memo No. KAAC/HRN/W-114/2025-26/95(A) Dated:24/07/2025 for schemes under Socheng Constituency has been extended upto 03rd October 2025 at 4:00 PM for the following mentioned schemes list and will opened on the same date, place in presence of the tenderers or their authorized agencies if any.

Others terms & conditions remain the same.

SL. No.	Name of Works	Tender Amount	A/A Amount	Earnest Money	Time allowed for completion
1	Construction of Community hall at Langkircha Meghalaya border under Socheng constituency.	Rs. 21,00,000.00	Rs. 21,00,000.00	ST/SC/OBC-1% GENERAL-2%	60 days
2	Construction of playground kharvang sangkechep village at Rumphum Meghalaya border under Socheng Constituency.	Rs 8,00,000.00	Rs 8,00,000.00	ST/SC/OBC-1% GENERAL-2%	45 days
3	RCC Ring well at CNI Church at Langerdang under Socheng constituency.	Rs 1,50,000.00	Rs 1,50,000.00	ST/SC/OBC-1% GENERAL-2%	45 days
4	RCC Ring well at Catholic Church at Langerdang under Socheng constituency.	Rs 1,50,000.00	Rs 1,50,000.00	ST/SC/OBC-1% GENERAL-2%	45 days
5	RCC ring well at EFCI at Langerdang under Socheng constituency.	Rs 1,50,000.00	Rs 1,50,000.00	ST/SC/OBC-1% GENERAL-2%	45 days
6	RCC ring well at Catholic Church Arting-C under Socheng constituency.	Rs 1,50,000.00	Rs 1,50,000.00	ST/SC/OBC-1% GENERAL-2%	45 days
7	Construction of 2nos. Water reservoir at Arting-B under Socheng constituency.	Rs 8,00,000.00	Rs 8,00,000.00	ST/SC/OBC-1% GENERAL-2%	45 days
8	RCC ring well at Mokoiram weekly market under Socheng constituency.	Rs 1,50,000.00	Rs 1,50,000.00	ST/SC/OBC-1% GENERAL-2%	45 days
9	Construction of community hall at Khelimulong Meghalaya border under Socheng Constituency.	Rs 21,00,000.00	Rs 21,00,000.00	ST/SC/OBC-1% GENERAL-2%	60 days
10	Installation of solar street light for various worship place of Meghalaya border under Socheng constituency.	Rs 30,64,000.00	Rs 30,64,000.00	ST/SC/OBC-1% GENERAL-2%	60 days

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



# Adil Hussain, Vishal Mishra, Pritam mourn Singer Zubeen Garg's sudden demise

**NEW DELHI, Sept 19:** Actor Adil Hussain, musicians Papon, Vishal Mishra, Armaan Malik and Pritam on Friday expressed shock over the sudden death of renowned Assamese singer Zubeen Garg, who was known for hits such as "Ya Ali", "Piya Re" and "Jajabor".

Garg, 52, died in Singapore on Friday after sustaining injuries while scuba diving. He was rushed to a hospital and admitted to the intensive care unit, but could not be saved.

In a post on X, Hussain said he was "devastated and shocked" by the news of Garg's sudden death.

"I am so very sad... His contribution to Assamese music and culture is extraordinary... He will live amongst us through his songs... Dear Zubeen I remember you with lots of love and fondness... May his singing soul rest in peace and God bless his soul... Goodbye Zubeen... Until we meet on the other side... Keep singing with your beautiful voice and make Gods Happy," he added.

"This is so shocking! The voice of a generation! Gone so soon. At a loss of words! Lost a friend. Lost a brother. A big void. Praying for a peaceful journey of his soul," Papon said on X.

Mishra shared an old photo of Garg on Instagram and wrote, "Zubeen Da, like every one else, I loved your voice & connected to it so much! Left us all too soon." Malik tweeted, "I am devastated and in disbelief. May his soul

rest in peace.. #ZubeenGarg."

Garg, who sang many popular tracks in Assamese, Hindi and other languages, had travelled to Singapore to participate in the three-day North East Festival, which was scheduled to begin on Friday.

"It is with deep sadness that we share the news of Zubeen Garg's passing. While scuba diving, he experienced breathing difficulties and was immediately given CPR before being rushed to Singapore General Hospital. Despite efforts to save him, he was declared dead in the ICU around 2.30 pm IST," a statement issued by organisers of the North East Festival said.

"Zubeen losing his life in an accident is just the most terrible and saddest news.

I'm still trying to come to terms with it... My deepest condolences to Garima and his family. Om Shanti," Pritam shared in a post on X.

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma condoled the singer's demise, saying the state has "lost one of its favourite sons".

"I am at a loss for words to describe what Zubeen meant for the state. He has gone too early; this was not the age to go," he wrote on X.

Garg is survived by his wife. (PTI)



# SAHHER BAMBBA AND ANYA SINGH LOVED STARRY CAMEOS IN 'THE BA\*\*DS OF BOLLYWOOD'

**MUMBAI, Sept 19:** For actors Anya Singh and Sahher Bambba, the opportunity to share the screen space with legends like Aamir Khan, Shah Rukh Khan and Salman Khan -- who all feature in cameo appearances in "The Ba\*\*ds of Bollywood" -- was a dream come true moment.

Set against the glamorous yet challenging backdrop of Bollywood, the show marks the directorial debut of Shah Rukh's son, Aryan Khan. The series, which made its debut on Netflix, is a co-creation of Bilal Siddiqi and Manav Chauhan, and it seamlessly blends humor with a captivating narrative.

"Ba\*\*ds of Bollywood" delves into the life of a charming outsider (Lakshya Lalwani) as he navigates the glitzy yet challenging world of Bollywood.

Singh, who portrays the role of a manager to the newcomer, Aasmaan Singh, reflected on her experience of sharing screen with both Shah Rukh and Aamir.

"Did we want to be in a room with Mr. Shah Rukh Khan or Bobby Deol? Yes. Did we think it was achievable? I think this show kind of put all our dreams together and it's like, 'Now, go work with everyone.' It was too fleeting.

"But when you sit back with yourself, you are like, 'Wow, I got this opportunity to interact and have a conversation, and know who they are as people and not the people that are projected outside. That's just a great feeling,'" she told PTI in an interview.

For Bambba, the thrill of working with Salman Khan was a highlight. She essays the part of Karishma Talwar, the daughter of superstar Ajay Talwar, portrayed by Bobby Deol in the series.

"I think you've seen it (the scene) in the teaser, with Mr. Salman Khan. It was never there on paper. We were shooting for a scene and he just happened to come and give a shot. That was really memorable.

"Other than that, even SRK did come on set, towards the end, for a day or two. Just being in his presence was just an amazing feeling," the actor, who made her film acting debut with "Pal Pal Dil Ke Paas" opposite Karan Deol, said.

Bambba said streaming platforms have given diverse opportunities to an actor like her to shine.

She has been part of OTT shows like historical drama, "The Empire", romantic series "Dil Bekaraar", the sports drama film, "The Miranda Brothers", which released on JioCinema last year.

"There are goods and the bads (things) in the industry. I would like to focus on the good part. The fact that with the advent of OTT, a lot of people are getting more opportunities, whether it's aspiring actors, filmmakers. So, I think that's a huge shift that has happened. I'm very happy about that," she said.

"Ba\*\*ds of Bollywood" also stars Mona Singh, Manoj Pahwa, and Gautami Kapoor among others.

The show is produced by Gauri Khan under the banner Red Chillies Entertainment. (PTI)

# No casting announced for 'Shakti Shalini' and 'Maha Munjya': Maddock Films



**MUMBAI, Sept 19:** Production company Maddock Films on Friday dismissed rumours that it has finalised the cast of its upcoming movies "Shakti Shalini" and "Maha Munjya", part of the banner's ambitious horror comedy universe.

There was speculation online that Aneet Padda, the breakout star of "Saiyaara", was in talks with producer Dinesh Vijan for "Shakti Shalini". Actor Kiara Advani's name was also in the mix for the project.

In a statement, Maddock Films stated that no casting has been confirmed for "Shakti Shalini" as well as "Maha Munjya", the sequel to its 2024 hit "Munjya".

"While we truly value the excitement around our horror-comedy universe, we want to make it absolutely clear that any reports regarding the casting of the upcoming chapters, including 'Shakti Shalini' and 'Maha Munjya', are purely speculative," the statement read.

"We urge the media to avoid misinformation and to wait for official announcements from us," it said.

Earlier this month, it was reported that actor Pratibha Ranta, best known for "Laapataa Ladies", will be part of Maddock's "Maha Munjya".

"Shakti Shalini" and "Maha Munjya" are the upcoming titles in Maddock's horror-comedy universe, which includes successful films like "Stree" (2018) and "Stree 2" (2024), "Bhedhiya" (2022), and "Munjya", (2024).

The franchise's latest chapter, "Thama", starring Ayushmann Khurrana, Rashmika Mandanna and Nawazuddin Siddiqui, will come out in theatres on Diwali this year. (PTI)

# SALMAN KHAN COMPLETES SHOOTING FOR 'BATTLE OF GALWAN'

**MUMBAI, Sept 19:** Superstar Salman Khan has concluded shooting for his latest film "Battle of Galwan" after an intensive 45-day schedule.

The much-anticipated film is based on the 2020 Galwan Valley conflict between India and China and helmed by Apoorva Lakhia of "Shootout at Lokhandwala" fame.

The filmmaker announced the wrap of the shoot on his Instagram Stories on Thursday night, offering a glimpse into the high-intensity war drama filmed in Leh, Ladakh.

Mounted on a grand scale, the film promises to deliver raw action and patriotic fervour, showcasing 59-year-old Salman in a never-seen-before avatar, according to a press release.

Lakhia posted a photo with Salman and captioned it, "It's a wrap-45 days."

In another post, he said, "Froze, baked, shivered, ate sand, walked in the Indus, sucked oxygen but still leaving with all those memories that make me

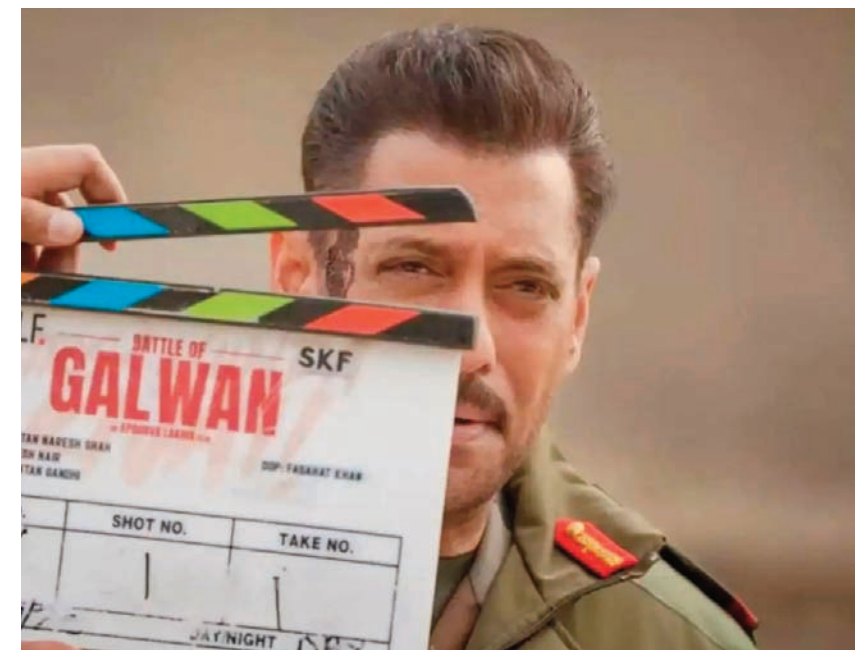
smile."

The movie will feature actor Chitrangda Singh as the female lead.

In an interview with PTI in July, Salman said "Battle of Galwan" is one of the most physically demanding films of his career.

"It is physically demanding. Every year, every month, every day it gets more and more difficult. I've to give more time now (for training). Earlier, I would do it (train) in one or two weeks, now I'm running, kicking, punching, and all that stuff. This film demands that. "For instance, in 'Sikandar' the action was different, the character was different. But this is physically difficult. Besides, shooting in Ladakh, in high altitude and in cold water (is another challenge)," Salman said.

He also said that the movie will not have the traditional release on Eid, a date often associated with his films but instead arrive in theatres in January 2026. (PTI)



# RS strengthens its cultural resonance with four new influential voices: Sidharth Malhotra, Badshah, Naga Chaitanya and Payal Dhare



**HT Bureau GUWAHATI, Sept 19:** Seagram's Royal Stag, the light-house brand in its category, announced the onboarding of four new dynamic personalities -

Sidharth Malhotra, Badshah, Naga Chaitanya and Payal Dhare as its new brand ambassadors. They now join Rohit Sharma, Jasprit Bumrah, and Suryakumar Yadav in carrying forward the

brand's legacy. Together, they embody India's most celebrated passions of Cricket, Cinema, Music, Gaming while reflecting the bold spirit, fearless choices and unapologetic ambition that

define the Royal Stag's philosophy of Live It Large.

With this the brand embarks on an exciting new chapter in its journey. These voices represent the same drive and determination that Royal Stag has always championed, the spirit of dreaming large and celebrating every milestone along the journey.

Actor Sidharth Malhotra expressed his excitement about the partnership, saying: "Royal Stag is all about what I believe in, the courage to try new things and the drive to Live It Large. It's more than a brand, it's an attitude that celebrates passion, ambition, and pushing yourself to the next level. I'm excited to be part of a journey that inspires people to dream bigger and live bolder."

Rapper Badshah shared: "Living large is all about owning who you are, unapologetically. Doesn't matter where you start from—what matters is the confidence and the hustle you carry. Royal Stag stands for that same belief, and that's why I vibe with

it. Together, we're here to celebrate individuality and push people to chase their journey, their way."

Actor Naga Chaitanya reflected on the collaboration: "Royal Stag is a brand that stays rooted in culture while constantly moving forward, and that's what makes it so relevant today. I truly connect with this philosophy, and I'm excited to be part of a brand that reflects these values and connects so meaningfully with today's youth."

Gamer Payal Dhare added: "Royal Stag embodies the fearless spirit that drives every passionate dreamer. For me, my passion has become my profession. I have broken barriers, challenged stereotypes and re-defined success on my own terms. For me, living large is about seizing every opportunity, celebrating every milestone big or small. This is just the beginning of something extraordinary."



# Champions League: Rashford stars in Barcelona win as De Bruyne lose on Man City return



**LONDON, Sept 19:** Marcus Rashford proved the perfect replacement for Lamine Yamal in Barcelona's 2-1 win at Newcastle in the Champions League and Kevin De Bruyne watched mostly from the sideline as Napoli lost 2-0 at his former club Manchester City.

With Yamal missing through injury, Rashford — a loan signing from Manchester United — got a start on his return to England and

scored both of Barcelona's goals at St. James' Park. The second took the breath away, a piledriver from 25 meters that flew in off the crossbar.

De Bruyne was also back on English soil, at the club where he spent 10 years before an emotional farewell in May.

But his Etihad Stadium return lasted 26 minutes before he was substituted following a red card for teammate Giovanni Di

Lorenzo and City wound up a comfortable winner thanks to second-half goals from Erling Haaland and Jeremy Doku.

Haaland's header put him on 50 goals in 49 Champions League appearances, with the Norway striker reaching that milestone quicker than any other player in the competition's history.

Kairat, a tournament newcomer from Kazakhstan, made what is thought to be longest ever trek for

a Champions League fixture — across three time zones and more than 7,000 kilometers (4,350 miles) — and lost 4-1 at Sporting Lisbon. Sporting scored its final three goals in a four-minute span in the second half and also had a penalty saved.

The comeback of the night went to Eintracht Frankfurt, which recovered from conceding in the eighth minute to beat Galatasaray 5-1.

England coach Thomas Tuchel was in the stands of a raucous St. James' Park to witness Rashford showcase his finishing abilities that Man United could do with right now.

His first goal was a header off Jules Koundé's cross in the 58th to put Barcelona ahead before he created space for himself with some clever footwork and blasted a right-footed shot from outside the area off the underside of the bar in the 67th.

"100%, I'm full of excitement," Rashford said after his first goals for Barcelona. "I'm very motivated and determined. The quality we have in the team, that excites me alone. It's so refreshing to play with these guys."

Anthony Gordon pulled one back for Newcastle in the 89th, putting in a low cross from substitute Jacob Murphy.

Newcastle manager Eddie Howe left record signing Nick Woltemade — the replacement for Alexander Isak — on the bench until the 63rd.

Napoli's defensive reorganization following Di Lorenzo's red card for fouling Haaland as the last man meant De Bruyne was sacrificed. Ever the team player, the Belgium playmaker took the decision well, jogging off to applause from a home crowd that once cheered his every assist and goal.

"It was the only option I could do," Napoli coach Antonio Conte said. "I was really, really sorry for him." (AP)

# Mbappé's Real Madrid hosts unbeaten Espanyol with La Liga lead at stake



**BARCELONA, Sept 19:** Few observers imagined that top spot in the Spanish league would be up for grabs when Espanyol visits Real Madrid on Saturday.

But the undefeated Espanyol is in third place and just two points behind leader Madrid, which has won all four of its La Liga games.

Barcelona is second, tied on points with Espanyol, before hosting fifth-placed Getafe at its 6,000-seat Estadi Johan Cruyff on Sunday.

The modest "parakeets" of Espanyol can dream of ending the round at the top of the standings.

A win at Madrid, combined with Getafe taking at least a point at Barcelona, would see Espanyol move into first place after five rounds.

Espanyol only avoided relegation on the last day of last season and sold star goalkeeper Joan García to rival Barcelona this summer.

But the club was bought this summer by a group that owns English club Burnley and has American shareholders, and it also made several moves in the transfer market. English winger Tyrhys Dolan has impressed and Marko Dmitrovic has filled in for García in goal.

Pere Milla has also emerged as a scoring midfielder with three goals.

Espanyol beat Madrid 1-0 at home last season and can hope to draw inspiration from that stunner.

Madrid will look to take advantage of Kylian Mbappé and his fine scoring form.

The France striker has scored six goals in five games this campaign, including a double in a 2-1 win over Marseilles in their Champions

League opener this week.

Keep an eye on Marcus Rashford after the England forward scored his first two goals — and great goals they were — for Barcelona in a 2-1 win at Newcastle in the Champions League on Thursday.

Coach Hansi Flick praised the on-loan Manchester United player for his strong performance. Rashford will likely be back in the starting 11 given the doubts regarding the fitness of Lamine Yamal.

Madrid watchers will scrutinize Xabi Alonso's starting 11 to see if he again picks Rodrygo over star forward Vinícius Júnior, who he used as a substitute against Marseille.

Yamal has missed the last two games for Barcelona with an unspecified injury "in the public area."

Madrid will be without right back Trent Alexander-Arnold, who is expected to be sidelined for several weeks because of a hamstring injury sustained against Marseille.

Barcelona is still unable to get back to playing at its Camp Nou stadium, which was supposed to have been ready by the start of the season after two years of remodeling work.

The Catalan club said Friday that its Oct. 1 game against Paris Saint-Germain in the Champions League will be played at the city's Lluís Companys Olympic Stadium, where it played the previous two seasons.

That 55,000-seat venue will at least sell many more tickets than the Johan Cruyff stadium, where Barcelona routed Valencia 6-0 last weekend in its home league opener. (AP)

# SL all-rounder Wellalage returns home from Asia Cup after father's death

**ABU DHABI, Sept 19:** Sri Lanka's Dunith Wellalage has returned home from the on-going Asia Cup after his father, Suranga, passed away on Thursday night, the same day when the all-rounder was playing a Group B league match against Afghanistan here.

Wellalage learned of his father's demise only after the match, and he left for Colombo on the earliest available flight. Suranga died after suffering a heart attack. He was 54.

It is unclear whether the 22-year-old will return for the tournament where Sri Lanka are playing Bangladesh in a Super 4 match here on Saturday.

After the game against Bangladesh, Sri Lanka will face Pakistan on September 23 and India on September 26.

"Deeply saddened by the passing of Mr. Suranga Wellalage, father of Dunith Wellalage. My heartfelt condolences to the family. Stay strong Dunith, the whole nation stands with you and your

family in this difficult time," wrote former Sri Lanka captain Lasith Malinga on X.

"Heartfelt condolences to Dunith Wellalage and his family on the loss of his beloved father. Stay strong brother," wrote veteran Afghanistan cricketer Mohammad Nabi on his X handle.

Wellalage, a left-arm spinner, bowled four overs against Afghanistan picking up the wicket of Ibrahim Zadran while conceding 49 runs.

It was the fifth T20I of his ca-

reer. Sri Lanka won the match by six wickets after wicketkeeper-batter Kusal Mendis made an unbeaten 74 off 52 balls.

Sri Lanka head coach and batting great Sanath Jayasuriya, who informed the young cricketer about the tragedy after the match, paid tribute to Wellalage's father in a social media post and promised to stand by him through the difficult time. "Dunith, your father was a cricketer himself, and he can be truly proud of the son he raised. His values, his love for

the game, and his spirit live on through you. I know how strong you are, and I have no doubt that you will continue to make him proud by winning many games for Sri Lanka," he posted on Facebook. "At this difficult moment, please remember that you are not alone. I will be there for you like a father -- guiding you, standing with you, and supporting you every step of the way. The entire team, the nation, and everyone who loves this sport are by your side," he added. (PTI)

# I let slip a World Championship medal, rues Sachin Yadav

**NEW DELHI, Sept 19:** Outperforming the likes of Neeraj Chopra and Julian Weber in his debut World Championship is a nice feeling but India's new-found javelin throw talent Sachin Yadav says it cannot make up for the disappointment of "letting slip" an unlikely bronze after a strong start.

Unheralded Yadav, participating in only his second international event, upstaged celebrated competitors like two-time Olympic medallist Chopra (84.03m), reigning Olympic champion Arshad Nadeem (82.75m) and Diamond League trophy winner Julian Weber (86.11m) in Tokyo on Thursday in a surprisingly strong show.

The Indian's first-round throw of 86.27m was a personal best, bettering the earlier mark of 85.16m recorded while winning a silver in the Asian Championships in May, which was his first international event. Curtis Thompson of the USA won the bronze with 86.67m -- 40cm better than Yadav's effort.

"The opening throw went very well. Weather conditions were good, my body was in great shape and execution was near perfect. The moment I saw my javelin land, I thought I can win a medal. I was confident I would pull off at least one throw of 87m," Yadav told PTI from Tokyo.

"I was competing against the world's best and naturally your performance gets better. But I could not improve my first throw in next five attempts despite trying my best. So, I feel I let slip a World Championships medal," the 25-year-old rued.

His second throw was a foul and the remaining four measured 85.71m, 84.90m, 85.96m and 80.95m. Three of his legal throws were better than his earlier personal best. Hailing from a farmers' family at Khekra village near Baghpat in Uttar Pradesh, Yadav also felt sad for defending champion Chopra, who was eliminated after the fifth round after an underwhelming show due to back pain.

"Me and Neeraj bhai kept talking during the final. After my first

throw, he told me we should get two medals. I knew he was dealing with a back problem but he must be hoping that he would pull off a good throw somehow.

"I was trying to better my first round throw but at the same time I felt sad for Neeraj bhai. It was the first time he was not on podium (since Tokyo Olympics in 2021). In any case, our country was to win a medal. That also did not happen, so I felt bad."

Yadav said his parents do not know much about athletics, leave alone World Championships, and they were surprised to see photo journalists at their village home after his Tokyo performance.

"I have spoken to my mother. My parents are happy but they don't think much about all this, World Championships and winning medals etc. They just wanted me to get a government job.

"They have never even seen the media. They have not seen anything. So for the first time it happened that the media went to my home and took a photo. My mother told me that some people came to our house and took photographs."

Yadav is now with the UP Police, having joined the force in 2023 under the sports quota.

His father had to take loans for his treatment after Yadav suffered an elbow injury at the start of his career in 2021.

"I am injury prone. I had elbow injury just when I started javelin and then had another in between," he said.

Early this year also, he twisted his ankle while winning gold in the Uttarakhanda National Games. He did rehabilitation and came back after lying low for around two months. "I am in TOPS (Target Olympic Podium Scheme) and I have OGG as my sponsor. So, I am better off now as far as the financial situation is concerned."

Yadav's rise has been meteoric and that too without a qualified coach in his initial years. He was introduced to javelin by his neighbour Sandeep Yadav who saw the tall youngster playing cricket for fun. (PTI)

# McLaren heads into Azerbaijan Grand Prix on verge of F1 constructors' title

**BAKU (AZERBAIJAN), Sept 19:** The Formula 1 title race is heating up, and McLaren's golden rule — "Let 'em race" — risks expanding into a whole rule book.

Asking Oscar Piastri to give up second place to Lando Norris at the Italian Grand Prix because of a slow pit stop showed how McLaren's seemingly simple approach risks being bogged down in debates about what's fair on track.

The battle between Norris and Piastri will become McLaren's sole focus if the team can wrap up the constructors' title Sunday at the Azerbaijan Grand Prix in Baku with a record seven races remaining.

McLaren leads by 337 points and takes the title if one driver wins and the other is second or third, which would end the faint

mathematical chances of Ferrari, Mercedes and Red Bull.

It's a big contrast to last year, when McLaren held off Ferrari in the final race of the season to win the constructors' title for the first time in 26 years. "It's a pretty remarkable position that we're in," Piastri said. "A very proud moment for everybody and myself included."

Was swapping the cars in Italy the best way for McLaren to make up for a team mistake beyond Norris' control? Or was Piastri punished for something that's "just part of racing," as he suggested over the radio?

The Monza decision has prompted yet more discussion at McLaren about the best way to race.

"We've again had a lot of discus-



sions about how we want to go racing and a lot of that is to stay for us," Piastri said, adding that giving away the details could allow rival teams to exploit McLaren's approach. "I do think we have enough freedom to control our own destiny in the championship."

That call left Piastri with a lead of 31 points, instead of 37. Expect to hear a lot more about it at the end of the season if that six-point swing decides the title.

"You can't plan for every single scenario that's going to happen, but I think we're very aligned," Piastri said. "Ultimately I respect the team's decisions and trust that they'll certainly do their best to make the right ones."

Azerbaijan is a place where team rivalry has boiled over before.

In 2018, it was where up-and-

coming challenger Max Verstappen collided with established contender Daniel Ricciardo. It forced Red Bull into a rethink of its "no team orders" approach — not dissimilar to McLaren's "let 'em race" — and set the two drivers on opposite trajectories.

Ricciardo was only on the podium once more that season, lost out to Verstappen by 79 points and left the team at the end of 2018. Verstappen hasn't had a teammate who's challenged him since.

The gap between him and Yuki Tsunoda is vast — 230 points to 12.

Red Bull heads into Azerbaijan widely expected to promote Isack Hadjar, whose podium finish in the Netherlands was an exclamation point in a strong rookie season, to Tsunoda's seat for 2026. (AP)

# Camp to start in October ahead of AFC Women's Asian Cup, clash with IWL avoided: Crispin Chettri

**BENGALURU, Sept 19:** Indian women's team coach Crispin Chettri on Friday said preparatory camps will be held every month from October ahead of next year's AFC Women's Asian Cup, and steps have been taken to avoid them clashing with the Indian Women's League (IWL) schedule.

Indian senior women and the U20 sides have qualified for the continental showpieces in July and August early this year.

"We have already discussed with our players, coaches of clubs and with the federation also. We'll be hosting camps, and there will be a longer camp from January before the main tournament kicks off," said Chettri in a press conference organised by the All India Football Federation here.

Chettri said the camps were not started in the immediate aftermath of the team's qualification for the marquee event, which will be held in Australia between March 1-21, 2026, because the senior women's



national championship is underway.

"The idea was to host a camp earlier (than October) but we also wanted to see more players in action during the current senior nationals, so that no individual is left out to represent our country."

"So that's the reason why we haven't hosted any camp as of now. So, from October when the senior nationals are over, we can have a few younger players in the camp. I

think we want to give them that right opportunity and that's why we have not started the camp," he said.

India have a challenging draw in the Asian Cup, getting clubbed alongside Japan, Vietnam and Chinese Taipei in Group C.

Chettri said the team has charted an extensive training programme ahead of the tournament, including friendlies against some top sides.

"From October onwards, we'll be

hosting a camp maybe for 15 days every month and before we go for the AFC we'll have a longer camp. Maybe we'll host a certain big team in October.

"Maybe in November we might go to Europe and in January, according to the weather conditions in Australia, we'll travel to Australia earlier or maybe to some place where we can have similar kind of conditions for friendly matches."

The IWL 2025-26 is scheduled to be played between October 25, 2025 and April 30, 2026 and Chettri said the management, the AIFF and the clubs have already discussed ways to avoid a schedule clash.

"We've already planned that. We had meetings with the IWL clubs. We also had a meeting with the competitions committee, and we've ensured that they don't clash, and accordingly part of the IWL will happen after the Asian Cup."

"Our only problem is East Bengal, who are going to play in two continental championships. So,

we're sort of juggling it. We just hope we get all the players. But all this has been planned with the stakeholders," he detailed.

The corresponding U20 AFC Women's Asia Cup will be held in Thailand, and India will be participating in the event after a gap of 23 years.

Head coach Joakim Andersson, who has been in charge of the side since December, 2024, said extensive steps have been taken to ensure a good outing for his wards.

"So, first of all we will go to Slovenia in October for some exposure games against good European opponents and when we come back the players will go back to their clubs and we will be using the FIFA windows to prepare with more games and camps."

"We will also invite some teams to India to play good games. So, that's how it is and from January the IWL will take a break and we'll have the last camp then," said Andersson. (PTI)



# Asia Cup: Unbeaten Sri Lanka hope to tame Bangladesh again in opening Super Four game

## Suranga's return for the Super Four game highly negotiable



**DUBAI, Sept 19:** A determined Sri Lanka will take inspiration from their unbeaten group campaign and start favourites against an inconsistent Bangladesh in the first Super Four match of the Asia Cup here on Saturday.

Aby led by Charith Asalanka, the Lankans finished on top of Group B with three wins from as many matches, ahead of Bangladesh and T20 World Cup semifinalists Afghanistan.

Sri Lanka beat Bangladesh by six wickets before defeating Hong Kong and Afghanistan by four and six wickets respectively.

But the Lankans are very capable of collapsing as well. The Islanders almost lost against Hong Kong on Monday after opener Pathum Nissanka's fifty.

A brittle middle-order is the major concern for Sri Lanka as they were on the verge of a familiar nosedive against Hong Kong, just three weeks after they were bowled out for 80 by Zimbabwe in

Harare.

Nissanka has been the standout performer for Sri Lanka with the bat, leading the run-scorers' list with 124 runs from three games, including two fifties.

After two sedate knocks, wicketkeeper-batter Kusal Mendis finally came to the party with an attacking 74 off 52 balls against Afghanistan, much to the delight of the Lankans.

Left-hander Kamil Mishara too has been in good touch but Sri Lanka would look for contributions from the likes of skipper Asalanka, senior batters Kusal Perera and Dasun Shanaka in the middle-order.

In all the three group matches, Sri Lanka thrived while chasing and one would expect the Islanders to continue the same trend if they win the toss on Saturday.

Besides batting, the Sri Lankans have also been mighty impressive with the ball and ground fielding.

Right-arm fast bowler Nuwan Thushara is the fourth highest wicket-taker in the tournament so far with five scalps. Dushmantha Chameera too has been among wickets with the new ball.

Wanindu Hasaranga, Asalanka and Dasun Shanaka have tightened the screws in the middle overs.

But Sri Lanka are will miss the services of all-rounder Dunith Wellalage as he has returned home from the tournament after his father, Suranga, passed away on Thursday night, the same day when he was playing their final Group B match against Afghanistan in Abu Dhabi.

Wellalage learned of his father's demise only after the match, and he left for Colombo on the earliest available flight.

It is also unclear whether the 22-year-old will return for the tournament or not.

Bangladesh, on the other hand, progressed to the Super Four stage

for Sri Lanka by their mercy. Had the Islanders lost against Afghanistan on Thursday, Bangladesh would have been out of the tournament.

Bangladesh started the tournament with an easy seven-wicket win over Hong Kong before going down to Sri Lanka by six wickets. They brought their campaign back on track after a narrow eight-run win over Afghanistan.

Bangladesh's inconsistent batting remains a major concern. The likes of skipper Litton Das, tournament's fourth-highest scorer with 96 runs, Saif Hasan, Tanzid Hasan and Towhid Hridoy will need to come up with consistent performances.

Bangladesh need overall improvement as their catching has also been below par and their bowlers have also often collapsed in the face of sensible and aggressive batting.

Bringing back Taskin Ahmed in place of Shoriful Islam against Afghanistan was a good move.

Bangladesh would also look towards Nasum Ahmed and Mustafizur Rahman to unsettle the Lankan batters.

**Teams :**

**Sri Lanka:** Charith Asalanka (c), Pathum Nissanka, Kusal Mendis (wk), Kusal Perera, Nuwanidu Fernando, Kamindu Mendis, Kamil Mishara, Dasun Shanaka, Wanindu Hasaranga, Dunith Wellalage, Chamika Karunaratne, Maheesh Theekshana, Dushmantha Chameera, Binura Fernando, Nuwan Thushara, Matheesha Pathirana.

**Bangladesh:** Litton Das (c, wk), Tanzid Hasan, Parvez Hossain Emon, Saif Hassan, Towhid Hridoy, Jaker Ali, Shamim Hossain, Nurul Hasan, Mahedi Hasan, Rishad Hossain, Nasum Ahmed, Mustafizur Rahman, Tanzim Hasan, Taskin Ahmed, Shoriful Islam, Mohammad Saifuddin.

Match starts 8pm IST. (PTI)

# India chase historic maiden WODI series triumph against Australia



**NEW DELHI, Sept 19:** Riding high on a record-breaking performance, India will eye a historic first ever women's ODI series win over the mighty Australia when the two sides clash in the decider of the three-match fixture here on Saturday.

The hosts have never managed to conquer the all-powerful world champions in a bilateral series, and a victory here would not only deliver that elusive triumph but also provide a timely surge of belief and momentum heading into the World Cup starting September 30.

However, it will be easier said than done.

After being outplayed in the opener, Harmanpreet Kaur and her team roared back with a stunning 102-run victory, which was Australia's heaviest defeat in terms of runs. It was also India's first win over them in 12 matches.

Yet, for all the broken records, glaring flaws remain. India's fielding was erratic as they put down as many as six catches in the second game, taking their tally of dropped chances to 10 across two matches, most of them regulation.

There were flashes of brilliance too, but the inconsistency is concerning, especially in contrast to the sharp fielding display the same

group produced in England just a few months ago.

"Today also we missed a few chances, but our bowlers kept giving us chances so that we could capitalise and keep the result in our favour," Harmanpreet admitted after the win.

Credit, though, must go to the bowlers for continually creating opportunities. Seamer Renuka Thakur, who returned to international cricket after recovering from a stress fracture, and her pace partner Kranti Goud choked the Australian top order, while the spinners kept the pressure on through the middle overs.

The inclusion of Arundhati Reddy as a third seam option also worked well for India. The hosts, however, are expected to go with a different combination once again.

"This series is where we want to give chance to each and everyone. That is something we kept in our mind -- to try a few combinations," the captain said.

With the bat, a familiar pattern has emerged. Openers Smriti Mandhana and Pratika Rawal provided brisk starts in both games, but the middle order has struggled to stitch partnerships.

Mandhana has been responsible for a major chunk of India's runs this series. With Shafali Verma no longer in the scheme of things, the vice-captain has taken on the role of the aggressor.

She cracked her 12th ODI century in the second game, the only score above 40 in India's total of 292.

It is now imperative for the likes of Harmanpreet, Harleen Deol and Richa Ghosh to step up, especially with Jemimah Rodrigues ruled out due to a viral infection.

Australia, meanwhile, will be desperate to bounce back.

Skipper Alyssa Healy admitted her side had been "outplayed" in the second ODI, and the eight-time world champions will be keen to iron out their flaws while adjusting to the sweltering Indian heat.

The loss was a rare setback for Australia, who had gone unbeaten in 13 ODIs since their defeat to South Africa in February 2024.

"We came over here with the expectations of it being a huge challenge, not just playing India, but throughout the whole World Cup," Healy said after the defeat.

"So these games are invaluable in terms of practice and getting ourselves ready for the matches to come as well."

Australia are also expected to welcome back opener Phoebe Litchfield, who missed the second game with a low-grade quad strain.

**Teams (From):**

**India:** Harmanpreet Kaur (c), Uma Chetry, Harleen Deol, Richa Ghosh (wk), Kranti Goud, Smriti Mandhana, Pratika Rawal, Sneha Rana, Arundhati Reddy, Renuka Singh, Tejal Hasabnis, Sayali Satghare, Deepti Sharma, Shree Charani, Radha Yadav.

**Australia:** Alyssa Healy (c & wk), Tahlia McGrath, Darcie Brown, Nicole Faltum, Ashleigh Gardner, Kim Garth, Grace Harris, Alana King, Charli Knott, Phoebe Litchfield, Sophie Molineux, Beth Mooney, Ellyse Perry, Megan Schutt, Annabel Sutherland, Georgia Voll, Georgia Wareham.

Match starts: 1:30pm IST. (PTI)

## PCB responds, says ICC protocols allow media managers to use cameras

**ABU DHABI, Sept 19:** The Pakistan Cricket Board on Friday defended its media manager filming a meeting between match referee Andy Pycroft and team officials ahead of their Asia Cup game against UAE, maintaining that the action was within ICC protocols.

On Thursday, ICC CEO Sanjay Gupta had written to the PCB citing "multiple violations" of the Players and Match Officials Area (PMOA) code, including the recording of the interaction that involved coach Mike Hesson, captain Salman Ali Agha, and manager Naveed Akram Cheema.

The ICC communication had also questioned a PCB press release which stated that Pycroft had apologised, clarifying that the referee had only expressed regret over a miscommunication caused by an Asian Cricket Council (ACC) venue manager.

"The team's media manager is part of the squad and has authorised access to the PMOA. His presence there is not a violation," a tournament source said, outlining the board's response.

According to the PCB, existing protocols allow media managers to use cameras in the PMOA. (PTI)

## Satwik-Chirag pair storms into China Masters semifinals; Sindhu bows out

**SHENZHEN, Sept 19:** India's top men's doubles pair Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty continued their consistent run to advance to the semifinals of the China Masters Super 750 badminton tournament but PV Sindhu bowed out after falling yet again to Olympic champion An Se Young here on Friday.

Satwik and Chirag, the former world No.1 Indian duo, who recently clinched their second World Championships bronze in Paris and finished runners-up at the Hong Kong Open last week, produced a clinical performance to outclass Chinese pair of Ren Xiang Yu and Xie Haonan 21-14 21-14 in the quarterfinals.

"We felt quite comfortable out there. Our goal was just to focus on our game and see how they responded. Right now, the way we're playing, it feels great — especially being able to play back-to-back matches freely, without any niggles, really happy with how we played today," Satwik said.

Chirag added: "I think we made it tough for them right from the start. We didn't allow them to settle into the game at all. They're definitely a strong pair, but our plan was to keep things simple and take an early lead — and we managed to do that. So yes, really happy with the performance."

Currently ranked ninth in the world, Satwik and Chirag are likely to face their arch-rivals and second seeds Aaron Chia and Soh Wooi Yik of Malaysia in the semifinals on Saturday.

Earlier, double Olympic medalist P V Sindhu's woeful run against world No.1 An Se Young continued, as the Indian suffered her eighth straight defeat against the Korean, going down 14-21 13-21 in the women's singles quarterfinals.



"Last week wasn't great for me, but this week has been really positive. Reaching the quarterfinals has been encouraging, and I think the key now is to maintain that level and stay consistent in everything I do," Sindhu said.

Satwik and Chirag got off to a flying start, unleashing a flurry of smashes to race to a 7-0 lead. A couple of errors allowed the Chinese to close in at 3-8, but the Indians maintained their rhythm to enter the interval with an 11-5 advantage.

While Ren and Xie attempted to change the pace with quick flat rallies and front-court play, the Indians remained sharp and aggressive. Chirag's flick serve made it 13-7, and another intense rally ended with the Chinese hitting wide to give India a 17-10 lead.

A sharp body attack and a precise toss saw the Indians surge ahead, and they pocketed the opening game after converting their second game point.

The second game was a closer affair in the early exchanges, with both pairs level at 7-7. However, the Indians pulled away to lead 11-9 at the mid-game interval courtesy of disciplined net play and sharp smashes. (PTI)

## West Indies have variety in pace attack to take 20 wickets in India: Sammy



**KINGSTON, Sept 19:** Head coach Daren Sammy feels West Indies possess enough "variety" in their pace attack to take 20 wickets in Indian conditions and urged his side to take inspiration from New Zealand ahead of the upcoming two-Test series.

The India-West Indies series begins in Ahmedabad on October 2, followed by the second Test in Delhi from October 10.

"We have found ourselves in a position where our seam attack could operate in any conditions. That six-to-eight-metre length works across the world. But in our fast-bowling department, we've got four different guys who have their own variety," Sammy told reporters.

The pace attack includes Alzarri Joseph, Shamar Joseph, Anderson Phillip and Jayden Seales, alongside all-rounder Justin Greaves.

"You have Shamar Joseph, who's very skiddy, Jayden, who has a strong front leg and can swing the ball both ways, then you have Alzarri Joseph with his height and the bounce he could extract," Sammy said.


"So, again, we take confidence in that, especially the way they've been bowling over the last year. The ability to take 20 wickets, because that's what you will need in India.

"If you can't take 20 wickets in India, you are on the back foot and we have a bowling line-up of that, especially from the seam department, that could take 20 wickets."

Sammy said the team is looking to follow the example of New Zealand, who beat India 3-0 late last year, as West Indies aim to end their 42-year wait for a series win in India.


"The process remains the same. The lines and lengths don't change in terms of that six-to-eight-metre length. Maybe it's just adjusting whether it's a touch fuller or touch further back into the pitch," said Sammy, who is also the coach of St Lucia Kings in the ongoing CPL 2025.

"I have full confidence in that and it makes me smile knowing that we go out bowling and we take 20 wickets. And that's the first objective in the Test match. (PTI)



অসম চৰকাৰ

# অমৰ শ্বহীদলৈ গভীৰ শ্ৰদ্ধাঞ্জলি








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