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In 1st visit to Manipur after violence, PM to unveil projects worth ₹ 8,500 cr

IMPHAL, Sept 11: Nearly two years after ethnic violence broke out in Manipur, Prime Minister Narendra Modi is scheduled to visit the state on September 13 and unveil projects valued at ₹ 8,500 crore, officials said on Thursday.

Opposition parties have been criticising the Prime Minister for not visiting the northeastern state, where clashes between Kuki and Meitei communities have left over 260 people dead and thousands homeless since May 2023.

According to officials, Modi will lay foundation stones for various development projects valued at ₹ 7,300 crore from Peace Ground in Churachandpur where Kukis are in the major-

ity. The Prime Minister will also inaugurate infrastructure projects worth ₹ 1,200 crore from the state capital Imphal dominated by the Meiteis, they said.

It was being speculated for the past few days that Modi would club his official visit to neighbouring Mizoram with one in Manipur, but no confirmation was available from either the government or the BJP.

However, on Thursday evening, the government put up a large billboard announcing the PM's programmes at Churachandpur's Peace Ground and at Kangla Fort in the state cap-

ital on September 13.

The hoarding came up at Keisampat Junction, a key location in Imphal, which is also close to the BJP's state headquarters. More such billboards are expected to be put up in the state.

Manipur is under the President's Rule since February, after the resignation of chief minister N Biren Singh.

Earlier in the day, the Manipur government issued an advisory asking the public attending a "VVIP programme" in Peace Ground on September 13 not to bring "key, pen, water bottle, bag, handkerchief, umbrella, lighter, match box, piece of cloth, any sharp objects or arms and ammunition."

A notification that did not mention the Prime Minister's name also advised the public to avoid bringing children below 12 years and sick persons to the venue.

Manipur's lone Rajya Sabha MP Leishemba Sanajaoba described the PM's visit as a "very fortunate" one for the people and the state. "It's a great fortune that Modi will be listening to the hardships faced by the people... Manipur has had a history of violent clashes in the past. However, no prime minister has visited the state during such times and listened to the people. Modi is the first PM to visit during such hard times," the BJP MP said. (PTI)

12-hour bandh hits normal life in Dhubri

Minister rushes to Dhubri after police action on Koch-Rajbongshi protesters ● Govt initiates action against several police officials

HT Bureau
GUWAHATI/DHUBRI, Sept 11: Normal life was affected in Dhubri district on Thursday due to a 12-hour bandh called by the All Koch-Rajbongshi Students' Union (AKRSU) in protest against alleged police excesses.

The bandh supporters alleged that police lathi-charged protesters during a torchlight procession taken out by AKRSU in Golakganj town in the district on the previous night.

The state government suspended the officer-in-charge of Golakganj police station, while Gauripur police station's OC has been "reserve closed" (withdrawn from duty) until further orders, a senior official said.

The bandh, which started at 6 am,



disrupted normal life in Dhubri, and security was tightened across the district bordering Bangladesh. Meanwhile, the state minister Jayanta Malla Baruah rushed to Dhubri late Wednesday night after the incident

which sparked outrage across the district.

The protesters, demanding urgent recognition as a Scheduled Tribe (ST) for the Koch-Rajbongshi community, sustained injuries and condemned the police action as excessive.

The protest, organized by the All Koch-Rajbongshi Students' Union (AKRSU) and its Dhubri West District unit, saw hundreds of community members and local residents take to the streets.

They raised slogans pressing for the long-standing demand for ST status.

Local reports stated that dozens of men and women were injured after police used force to disperse the crowd. Three injured (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

'SIT report points to serious allegations Gaurav and his British wife'

Content of report to be made public soon: CM

GUWAHATI, Sept 11: Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Thursday said the report of the Special Investigation Team (SIT), probing the alleged Pakistani links of state Congress president Gaurav Gogoi and his family, contains serious allegations, which he described as a matter of "deep concern". "I will raise the matter in the cabinet and discuss it with my ministerial colleagues", the CM said on the sidelines of the campaign for BTC elections at Udalguri.

Sarma said it had gone through a part of the report on Wednesday night and there are serious allegations against the Congress MP and his British wife.

"The content of the report will be soon made public under the legal process. I will share as much information as possible with the media barring the confidential details", Sarma said.

He claimed that the Congress leaders "are scared but ultimately the truth will prevail."

The SIT, led by Special DGP (CID)

Munna Prasad Gupta, formally submitted the report to the CM on Wednesday evening.

The CM, in a post on 'X', later said the SIT report is a 96-page document, 'prepared with limited means, yet carrying heavy truths. Just a glance was enough to stir deep pain — showing how easily roots can be cut, and legacy bartered for shadows'.

"The true sorrow is not in the fall of a father, but in the silence of two innocent children—too young to know what has been taken from them. My prayers remain with them", he added.

Speaking in Udalguri, Sarma said three members of the state Congress president's family are foreigners, but he is dancing at party programmes.

"The way he danced and celebrated yesterday appeared strange and inappropriate. If I was in the Congress today, I would have pushed him off the stage as I would have once led by people like Mahatma Gandhi, who were at the heart (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Congress has turned into a crazy party: CM

HT Bureau
GUWAHATI, Sept 11: Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Thursday launched a scathing attack on the Congress after the party claimed it was confident of winning the upcoming Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) elections by contesting all 40 seats.

Dismissing the claim as "foolish and irrelevant," Sarma said Congress's approach showed how far the party has fallen.

"The Congress has turned into a crazy party. That is why they contested all 40 seats in the BTC election. Trinamool Congress and Jai Bharat Party also distributed seats. But politics does not work like that," the Chief Minister remarked.

The BJP-led alliance, which currently governs the BTC in partnership with the United People's Party Liberal (UPPL), is preparing to defend its position in the council polls expected later this year. In this (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Shah launches faster immigration clearance programme at 5 more airports

NEW DELHI, Sept 11: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Thursday launched the Fast Track Immigration-Trusted Traveller Programme (FTI-TTP), which accelerates the immigration process of pre-verified Indian nationals and Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) card holders, in five more airports.

After launching the FTI-TTP in five airports — Lucknow, Thiruvananthapuram, Tiruchirappalli, Kozhikode and Amritsar, Shah said travellers will no longer experience long queues or manual checking and will receive immigration clearance in just 30 seconds without delays.

He said the programme has been launched aligning with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of "speed, scale and scope".

The special initiative was first rolled out at the Indira Gandhi International Airport here in July 2024 and two months later launched in seven more airports — Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Cochin and Ahmedabad.

Shah stated that the facility is now available at a total of 13 airports in the country simultaneously.

He said the facility will not only enhance the convenience of travellers but also provide an opportunity to introduce them to the changes taking place in the country.

"The next stage of enhancing travellers' convenience, aligning with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of speed, scale and scope, starts today with this programme," he said at a special programme held virtually.

The home minister said Prime Minister Modi has always emphasised that along with technological tools, efforts must be taken to act as a trust multiplier, and this initiative is a significant step in that direction.

Shah said with the FTI-TTP, seamless immigration facilities will be available at the designated airports and emphasised that merely providing convenience is not enough as action must be taken to ensure that the maximum number of travellers benefit from it.

"To achieve this, efforts should be made to enable registration at the time of issuing passports and OCI cards," he said, adding if this can be implemented, travellers don't need to return for fingerprinting or documentation and they can travel using their passports whenever they wish.

Shah said all technical possibilities should be explored to ensure that maximum number of people benefit from this programme.

"Indian citizens will certainly benefit, OCI card holders will benefit the most," he said.

Terming the FTI-TTP as a programme that enhances both convenience and national security, he said the Ministry of Home Affairs has planned to integrate this programme with the upcoming Navi Mumbai and Jewar airports.

"All those who have used this facility so far have praised it," he said. About 3 lakh travellers have registered on this portal, of which 2.65 lakh have utilised it and efforts should be (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Meeting between tribal organisations and CM held on tribal rights, land issues



HT Correspondent
KOKRAJHAR, Sept 11: A significant meeting between tribal organisations and Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma was held at Loksewa Bhawan in Guwahati on late Wednesday evening to discuss issues related to tribal rights and land protection in the state.

The meeting was attended by Education and Tribal Affairs Minister Ranaj Pegu, Chief Secretary Ravi Kota, representatives of the Coordination Committee of Tribal Organisations of Assam (CCTOA), ten tribal organisations, and several tribal student bodies from the Margherita-Tirap region, led by the Tribal Organisations Coordination Committee.

The discussions primarily focused on land rights

in the Tirap Tribal Belt and Block, and the political and land rights of the Sema, Singpho, Tai Pakke, Tangsha, and Man Tai-speaking communities.

Key demands raised during the meeting included the establishment of a Heritage Village to preserve tribal culture, the formation of an Autonomous Council, measures for land protection, and political representation in Panchayati Raj institutions.

The long-standing demand for the creation of Meeh and Hajong Autonomous Councils, along with issues concerning other tribal belts and blocks across Assam, were also deliberated upon.

The chief minister directed the organisations to submit a detailed report on the problems of the tribal people in the Tirap region within two months, following a thorough study of the issues.

Officials assured that the government would examine the demands carefully before taking further action.

ABSU President Dipen Boro stated that the meeting extensively discussed the protection of tribal rights and land issues, with particular emphasis on demands such as the Heritage Village, Autonomous Councils, land protection, and political rights in panchayats.

Boro said, "We had an important discussion with the Hon'ble Chief Minister, Assam Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma, Education and Tribal Affairs Minister Ranaj Pegu, chief (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Nagaland RMSA-2016 teachers' protest enters Day 4

KOHIMA, Sept 11: On the fourth day of the Nagaland RMSA-2016 Batch Teachers' agitation, government officials on Thursday engaged in talks with the protesting teachers at the civil secretariat, but the stalemate remained unresolved.

The protest, marked by a strong and determined turnout, saw teacher mothers holding young children in their arms, standing firm alongside their male colleagues.

The protesters, carrying placards, are demanding 'equal work, equal pay' and 'scale pay in line with their RMSA 2010-13 batch counterparts'.

The agitation comes in response to the continued inaction by the state government in implementing a long-pending decision adjudicated by the Supreme Court regarding service benefits for the teachers.

For three days, the NRMSA-2016 protested outside the Directorate of School Education. With no positive response, they intensified their agitation and shifted the venue to the civil secretariat area from Thursday. Amidst the intense protest atmosphere, a high-level meeting was (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Shillong cabinet on Thursday approved amendments to the state's excise rules, a move expected to generate an additional Rs 90 crore in revenue, officials said.

The cabinet also accepted the independent inquiry committee report on Meghalaya Energy Corporation Limited and gave its nod for the financial closure of major central power schemes.

Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma said the amendments were aimed at making the state more competitive with neighbouring

states. "We want our rates and pricing to reflect market realities. This will make us more attractive to consumers and increase our revenue," he told reporters after the meeting.

On the power sector, the CM said the cabinet has accepted the independent inquiry committee report on MeECL covering procurement, AT&C losses and HR management.

"We have directed the power department to take steps to implement the recommendations. The report will also be uploaded on the

government website to ensure full transparency," he said.

The cabinet also approved the financial closure of Saubhagya, DDUGJY and additional infrastructure schemes.

Power Minister A T Mondal noted, "MePDCL carried out multiple levels of verification before submitting the final report. With this, the schemes stand formally closed at the financial level."

Further, the cabinet cleared amendments to the Meghalaya Electronics Processes Rules, 2025, to align (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Meghalaya cabinet clears excise rule changes, accepts MeECL inquiry report

SHILLONG, Sept 11: The

Delhi Police Special Cell has busted a terror module with links to Pakistan and arrested five suspected operatives after raids across multiple states, an official said on Thursday.

The suspects, radicalised through social media by a Pakistan-based handler, were allegedly planning to acquire land, declare it a 'Khilafat zone' and wage 'jihad' in India, Additional Commissioner of Police (Special Cell) Pramod Kushwah said at a press conference here.

He said the accused were being guided to spread the idea of 'Ghazwa-e-Hind' (raid of India) and initiate violent activities.

The arrested accused have been identified as Ashar Danish alias Ashrar Qureshi (23), an English honours graduate from Ranchi; Aftab Qureshi and Sufiyan Abubakar, both from Mumbai; Mohammad Huzaiifa from Telangana, and Kamran Qureshi from Madhya Pradesh.

The module was headed by Danish, who coordinated with other members and executed tasks on behalf of the handler, who was known by code names such as 'CEO', 'Gazba' and 'Professor', Additional CP Kushwah told reporters.

He said the Pakistan-based handler provided weapon designs, ideological guidance and instructions for fabricating Improvised Explosive Devices (IED) to the module's operatives through encrypted social media chats.

Delhi Police busts 'Khilafat' terror module linked to Pakistan, 5 held

NEW DELHI, Sept 11: The

Kushwah said the operation began with the arrest of Aftab and Sufiyan near Hazrat Nizamuddin Railway Station in Delhi. The accused were in the city to procure weapons from a Mewat-based man and had been trying to leave when they were apprehended.

"Our teams had been monitoring their activities for the last six months. Two suspects were arrested when they were planning to leave Delhi. They also planned to recruit young people in their group," said Kushwah.

Based on the disclosure of the two, teams led by Deputy Commissioner of Police Amit Kaushik carried out raids at Ranchi in Jharkhand, Rajgarh in Madhya Pradesh, and Telangana, leading to the arrest of three more suspects, Kushwah said.

He said significant recoveries were made from the suspects' hideouts. The probe team found sulfur powder, sodium bicarbonate, ball bearings, gas masks, electrical wires, fuse points, cartridges and other components used in making IEDs from the raided locations. The electronic devices seized are being analysed by Central agencies.

"During the operation, we detained 11 people, who are being questioned. Of this, five people have already been arrested. They were arrested on Wednesday and will be further taken on police remand so that they can be interrogated," Kushwah said.

The accused have been receiving training (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

'Exports must be incentivised to protect India's global market share'

ATPA calls for prioritising quality to restore buyer confidence

JORHAT, Sept 11: The Assam Tea Planters' Association (ATPA) has called for prioritising quality to restore buyer confidence and stabilise production volumes to address the ongoing crisis affecting both large and small-scale tea growers in North India.

"Quality is the only way forward...The time has come for North India to make a decisive shift toward quality", ATPA chairman Samudra P Barua said in a statement issued on Wednesday evening.

Quality does not mean just taste, but it means compliance with FSSAI (Food Safety and Standards Authority of India) standards,

which is crucial for restoring credibility in the market, he said.

The oldest association representing the interests of ethnic tea planters in Assam, ATPA highlighted that the current market glut, driven by excessive cropping in recent months, has flooded the market with poor-quality teas.

"This oversupply has resulted in crippling price realisations for the plantation sector, which is already struggling with fixed production costs", Barua said.

Adding to the industry's challenges, the ATPA chairman pointed out that a significant portion of teas listed at the Guwahati and Siliguri Tea Auction Centres (GTAC and



STAC) were found to be non-compliant with FSSAI standards this year, as per FAITTA (Federation of All India Tea Traders' Association).

This non-compliance has led buyers to shift toward South Indian teas and even imported teas from

Africa, as packers face legal risks for sourcing non-compliant products, he said.

"Major packeteers are losing interest in Assam and West Bengal teas, which is an alarming trend," he warned.

ATPA proposes a minimum price of Rs 25 per kilogram for green leaf, with at least 40 per cent fine count to ensure fair compensation for growers producing compliant leaf.

"At this price point, Bought Leaf Factories (BLFs) will be compelled to reject substandard leaf, improving overall quality," Barua said. The ATPA also urged the Tea Board to (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

India-US trade pact talks progressing in positive atmosphere, says Goyal

PATNA, Sept 11: Negotiations between India and the US on the proposed trade agreement, which began in March, are progressing in a positive atmosphere and both the countries are satisfied with the progress, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said on Thursday.

He said that in February this year, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and US President Donald Trump had instructed the trade ministers of both the countries to conclude the first phase of the proposed bilateral trade agreement (BTA) by fall (November) of 2025.

"Discussions have been going on in a positive atmosphere with seriousness since March. It is progressing, and both the countries are satisfied with the progress," Goyal told reporters here.

On Wednesday also, the minister stated that India is in "active dialogue" with the United States for a trade agreement. These remarks follow the announcement by Trump that there will be "no difficulty" for the two countries to come to a successful conclusion in trade talks and he looks forward to speaking with his "very good friend" Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the coming weeks.

In a post on Truth Social on



Tuesday, the US president said he was "pleased to announce that India, and the United States of America, are continuing negotiations to address the Trade Barriers between our two Nations."

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday reacted warmly to Trump's positive assessment of trade talks between the two countries, expressing confidence that the ongoing negotiations will pave the way for unlocking the limitless potential of the partnership between them.

India and the US are close friends and natural partners, Modi has said on X, adding that both

countries are working to conclude the trade discussions at the earliest.

The two nations have been negotiating a bilateral trade agreement since March. So far, five rounds of negotiations have been completed. For the sixth round, the US team, which was to visit India last month, deferred their visit after the announcement of an additional 25 per cent tariff on Indian goods for buying Russian crude oil.

The aim of the pact is to more than double bilateral trade in goods and services to USD 500 billion by 2030 from the current USD 191 billion.

Trade relations between the two

countries have been strained due to the high tariffs. The US has imposed a steep 50 per cent import duty on Indian goods entering American markets from August 27. It is affecting exports of labour-intensive sectors such as shrimp, textiles, leather and footwear.

India has termed these tariffs as unfair, unjustified and unreasonable. So far, no new dates have been finalised for the sixth round of negotiations.

The negotiations were stalled as the US is pressing for greater market access in politically sensitive areas such as agri and dairy sectors, which India cannot accept as it affects the livelihood of small and marginal farmers.

India on multiple occasions stated that it will not compromise the interests of farmers and cattle rearers.

The US is India's largest trading partner. In 2024-25, the bilateral trade in goods stood at USD 131.8 billion (USD 86.5 billion exports and USD 45.3 billion imports).

America is also the third-largest investor in India, with USD 76.26 billion FDI coming into India during April 2000 and June 2025. America accounts for 10 per cent of the total FDI India has received during the period. (PTI)

Contd. from Page 1...

12-hour bandh hits

protesters are under treatment, while the others were discharged after receiving treatment. Both AKRSU units condemned the police action as unwarranted and pledged to continue their agitation, which also includes the demand for a separate Kamatapur state.

Following the incident, chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma instructed minister Mallabaruah to immediately visit the district and assess the situation. After his visit, the minister confirmed that action has been taken against the police officials involved and directed the DIG to submit an inquiry report within five days.

Public anger intensified when protesters blocked the vehicle of Dhubri's Superintendent of Police, Leena Doley, late Wednesday night, chanting slogans and confronting the police chief.

Educational institutions, including Agomani Higher Secondary School, remained closed, and transport services were largely suspended on Thursday. While the bandh caused inconvenience, the protesters reiterated that the agitation is essential to highlight their long-pending demands. The district remains tense as residents await further government action. (With inputs from PTI)

Content of report to be

of India's freedom struggle', the CM said. Gogoi was seen dancing Bihu with party workers at a joining ceremony of members from other political parties, including the BJP, at the Congress headquarters here.

Following the release of the report, Gogoi had said, "The people of Assam witnessed two scenes today — a mega-hit political programme of the Congress and the expected super flop show of the Assam CM."

Sarma further said the Congress president cannot fool the people of the state.

"If he really thinks that we are fools, then he should make British passports for us too. If a British passport is so valuable, then the youth from tea garden areas should also have these. Why not give these to Bodo and Rabha youth also", the CM asked.

He said Congress leaders do not care about the welfare of the country or people. Gogoi had claimed that he went to Pakistan, but not a single media house or editor asked him what he did there for 10 days, Sarma said.

"If there had been three foreigners in the house of Himanta Biswa Sarma, what would the media have done then - the media would have created a huge hue and cry", he said.

Some journalists or editors may not take this seriously, but it is a serious matter for us and 'in the end, the people will decide whether this person can be their leader or not', the CM said.

On Wednesday, the CM had claimed that the SIT had established the involvement of a British national - who is also married to an Indian Member of Parliament - in the larger nefarious activities of Pakistan national Ali Tauqeer Sheikh. "The investigation also sheds light on how the Ministry of Interior, Govt of Pakistan facilitated the visit of an Hon'ble Member of Parliament from Assam in their country", the chief minister had posted on 'X', after the SIT report was submitted to him. On February 17, the Assam Cabinet constituted a SIT to investigate the anti-India activities of one Pakistani national, Ali Tauqeer Sheikh, and his associates, he said.

"During the course of this exhaustive investigation, the SIT has unearthed startling facts which point towards a larger conspiracy aimed at undermining the sovereignty of our nation", Sarma said.

Sarma has been attacking Gogoi and his British wife, Elizabeth Colburn, over the last few months, alleging that they have a connection with the Pakistani intelligence agency ISI. (PTI)

Meeting between tribal

secretary Ravi Kota and the Coordination Committee of Tribal Organisations of Assam (CCTOA), along with organisations from the Tirap area, on the protection of Tribal Tribes Belts and Blocks and the political and land rights of the Sema, Singpho, Tai Pakke, Tangsha and Man Tai-speaking people."

He further added, "The meeting discussed the demand for a Heritage Village, Autonomous Council, land protection and political rights in panchayats. We also discussed the demand for the creation of Mech and Hajong Autonomous Councils and other issues related to tribal belts and blocks in Assam."

Shah launches faster

made to continuously increase this number, he added. The home minister said under the leadership of Prime Minister Modi, over the past 11 years, there has been significant increase in international passenger traffic.

He said in 2014, the number of travellers going abroad was 3.54 crore, which increased by approximately 73 per cent to 6.12 crore in 2024.

Similarly, the number of foreign travellers visiting India was 1.53 crore in 2014, which rose by about 31 per cent to approximately 2 crore in 2024. Shah said combining both figures, the total number of passengers in 2014 was 5.07 crore, compared to 8.12 crore in 2024, representing those who either arrived from abroad or travelled overseas, indicating an overall increase of 60 per cent.

"Our goal should be to ensure that all Indian citizens and OCI card holders benefit from this facility," he said.

The FTI-TTP has been implemented through an online portal, <https://ftitp.mha.gov.in>. To enrol in this programme, applicants must register online on the portal by filling in their details and uploading the required documents. The biometrics of registered applicants are collected at the Foreigners Regional Registration Office (FRRO) or while passing through the airport. Registered travellers need to scan their boarding pass, issued by the airline, at the e-Gate and then scan their passport.

The traveller's biometrics are verified at the e-Gates installed at arrival and departure points. Upon successful verification, the e-Gate automatically opens, and immigration clearance is granted.

The FTI-TTP, aimed at facilitating international mobility with faster, smoother, and secure immigration clearance, has been started for Indian nationals and OCI card holders on a gratis basis in the initial phase.

It is similar to the Global Entry Program offered by the US that allows expedited clearance for pre-approved, low-risk travellers upon arrival in America at select airports, an official said.

The FTI-TTP will eventually be launched at 21 major airports in the country. (PTI)

Congress has turned

backdrop, Sarma's comments were aimed at downplaying Congress's announcement and highlighting what he described as the opposition's lack of strategy. Recalling his own stint in Congress before switching to the BJP, Sarma expressed regret at the party's current approach.

"What pains me is that I was once part of such a party where winning meant nothing more than distributing tickets. In such a situation, even the opposition will say they will win simply because Congress has handed out seats. Now Rahul Gandhi talks about winning on 'moral votes.' But tell me, can any party truly win just by contesting all 40 seats? This only reflects how much Congress has fallen in value," he said.

The BTC elections are being seen as a crucial test for all major parties in Assam ahead of the 2026 Assembly polls. While the BJP and UPPL are banking on development works in Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR), the Congress and Trinamool Congress are attempting to make inroads into the influential autonomous council.

Nagaland RMSA-2016 teachers'

convened by the commissioner and secretary of School Education, Kevileno Angami, along with Mission Director Samagra Shiksha Nagaland L. Jamithung Lotha and other senior officials, to engage with representatives of the Nagaland RMSA-2016 Teachers Association in an attempt to find common ground.

However, sources said the marathon meeting, which started around 11 am and concluded at 6:30 pm, reportedly ended in a deadlock as the government reiterated that a review petition filed in the Supreme Court remains pending, while also assuring that appropriate action would follow once the judicial process concludes.

Following the unsuccessful talks with NRMSATA-2016, the government convened a separate meeting with the All Nagaland School Teachers Association (ANSTA), but that too failed to break the deadlock.

Assuring the association that the department will honour the final verdict of the Supreme Court in the review petition and take up the matter with all stakeholders for its urgent implementation, the government officials requested the teachers to resume duty, he said.

However, emerging from the meeting, Imlitjen Imchen, president of NRMSATA-2016, told PTI, "We have not accepted the appeal of the department. Our demands are clear and legitimate, and we will continue this agitation unless they are met in toto." (PTI)

Meghalaya cabinet clears

them with central provisions. Officials stressed that these were minor compliance-related changes.

It also approved the appointment of former chief secretary D P Wahlang as chairperson and Dr Mihshwa Tyngkan as member of the Meghalaya State Food Commission. (PTI)

Delhi Police busts

on how to make weapons and cartridges, the Additional CP said.

The group was also in the process of raising funds to purchase land to establish a 'Khilafat zone', a model previously attempted in Maharashtra by Saquib Nachan, he said. Preliminary probe suggests that the module is a new network with no links to previously busted terror organisations. The Pakistan-based handler used social media platforms exclusively for communication and recruitment, he added.

Police said the accused are being interrogated to ascertain their wider network, sources of funding and potential targets. The arrests have averted a major terror strike in the country, they said. (PTI)

ATPA calls for prioritising

map and enforce quality parameters for green leaf sourced from regions like Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, and Bihar, which have been flagged for contributing to the quality crisis, he said.

The ATPA recommends that the Tea Board allocate maximum funds toward quality enhancement programmes for small tea growers, including subsidies for battery-operated plucking machines and other innovations that improve leaf quality.

Baruva said that to compete with cheaper teas from countries like Kenya and Sri Lanka, the government should provide incentives such as transport subsidies and enhancements in RODTEP (Remission of Duties and Taxes on Exported Products).

"Exports must be incentivised to protect India's global market share," he asserted.

The ATPA also demands stricter controls over imported teas meant for re-export to prevent leakage into the domestic market, which undermines local growers and manufacturers.

The ATPA has also called for a unified industry effort to promote Indian teas both domestically and globally. "Educating domestic consumers about the quality difference in tea is essential for better realisation of premium teas," he said. Defending industry self-regulation, the ATPA chairman also defended the industry's recent move toward 100 per cent dust auctions and early closures last year, describing it as a "self-regulation mechanism" aimed at improving quality and compliance. "These measures may face initial resistance, but they are vital for the long-term health of the industry," he added.

The ATPA appealed to all stakeholders—including the government, growers, and packers—to act swiftly to safeguard the future of Assam's tea industry as it is "not just about economics but about preserving the identity and heritage of Assam." Baruva said. (PTI)

World Gold Council launches 'The Moment Is Gold' campaign in India

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, Sept 11: The World Gold Council (WGC) on Thursday launched its latest gold jewellery campaign in India, titled 'The Moment Is Gold', aimed at deepening the emotional connection between gold and younger generations. The campaign seeks to enhance the relevance and desirability of gold jewellery among Gen Z and Millennials by showcasing gold as part of everyday experiences rather than just during weddings and festivals.

According to an official statement from the World Gold Council, the campaign promotes gold jewellery as a reflection of modern, aspirational lifestyles and encourages individuals to celebrate personal achievements, small victories, and meaningful moments with gold.

Arta Saxena, Head of Marketing, India, WGC,

said, "With 'The Moment Is Gold,' we are celebrating the richness of everyday life. Our campaign is about creating a new social currency for gold, one that resonates deeply with Gen Z and Millennials who are finding unique ways to express themselves. The campaign seeks to encourage them to cherish their personal 'gold moments'—be it a personal achievement, a small victory, a moment of connection, and by symbolizing these moments with the enduring beauty and value of gold."

The campaign is supported by the Gem & Jewellery Export Promotion Council (GJEPC) and has been conceptualised by BBDO India.

It narrates the story of a young man at a concert who momentarily loses sight of his girlfriend in the crowd and finds reassurance when he spots her wearing gold jewellery.

NAME CHANGE

I, Chutiman Dewri, S/O- Lt. Bhuban Dewri, Husband of Alaka Patar, Village- Bonpara, P.O.-Niz-Dandua, T.O.- Niz-Dandua, P.S.-Morigaon, District-Morigaon, Assam have corrected my name from Chutiman Deori to Chutiman Dewri through a notary public at Morigaon court. Chutiman Dewri and Chutiman Deori is the same and one person.

NAME CORRECTION

I, Miss Shriya Biswakarma daughter of Krishna Biswakarma resident of Village Talbalijan, Sarihajan, Bokajan would like to mention that my mother's name wrongly written as Urmila in my HSLC Certificate. My mother's Correct name is Mrs. Urmila Biswakarma.

GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM OFFICE OF THE PROGRAMME OFFICER, DIVISIONAL ICDS CELL, KARBI ANGLONG DISTRICT:::DIPHU.

No.PO(ICDS)KATender-24/45/2024-25/

Dated: Diphu the 11th Sept/2025

SHORT TENDER NOTICE

Sealed tender affixing non-refundable KAAC court fee stamp (receipt) of Rs.10 (Rupees Ten) only eventually to be drawn in the favour of Office of THE PROGRAMME OFFICER, DIVISIONAL ICDS CELL, KARBI ANGLONG is hereby invited from KAAC registered contractor/reputed firms of Works Department and will be received by the Office of the undersigned up to 4 P.M. on 20/09/2025 and will be 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 day.

The Tender Approval Committee 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 Work	Quantity	Tender Amount per AWCs (In Rs.)	A/A Amount (In lakh)	Earnest Money	Time allowed for completion
1.	Const. of Toilet at AWCs under KAAC area	250 nos.	36,000/-	90	ST/SC/OBC=1% General= 2%	60 days
2	Const. of Toilet at AWCs under KAAC area	250 nos.	36,000/-	90	ST/SC/OBC=1% General= 2%	60 days
3	Const. of Drinking Water Facility at AWCs under KAAC area	450	17,000/-	76.5	ST/SC/OBC=1% General= 2%	60 days

Detail N.I.T./documents and name of works amounts may be obtained from Office of the Programme Officer, Divisional ICDS Cell, Diphu, Karbi Anglong during working hours.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

N.B.:

- Details of tender paper works items on payment of Rs. 1,000/- (Rupees one thousand) only from the office of the undersigned during office hours from 11/09/2025.
- The rate to be quoted as % (percent) above/below/as per schedule rate for building/sanitary/works for all division under APWD-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 to inferior quality of works. The KAAC Authority will take legal action if the contractor refuses to repair/re-construct the work.
- The work must be carried on as directed by the E.E.(W),KAAC/KAAC authority.
- The following up to date documents should be enclosed with the tender.
 - Professional Tax Clearance Certificate.
 - Sale Tax Clearance Certificate /GST registration.
 - KAAC Registration (Contractual).
 - Call Deposit.
 - Caste Certificate.
 - Bank Account number & Pan Card.
- Payment will be made after submission of bill vouchers, M.B., photographs and completion certificate from Competent authority to Head Office.
- The undersigned is not bound to accept the lowest quoted rate.

Sd/-
Programme Officer,
Divisional ICDS Cell, Diphu,
Karbi Anglong.
Dated: Diphu the 11th Sept/2025

Memo No.PO(ICDS)KATender-24/45/2024-25/

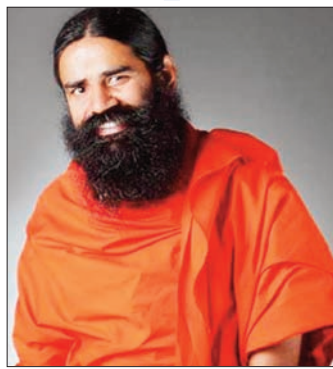
KAAC ISSUES CLARIFICATION

No land allotted to Baba Ramdev's Patanjali for oil palm cultivation

HT Bureau

DIPHU, Sept 11: The Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council (KAAC) clarified in a press conference held on September 10 at the KAAC Secretariat that no land has been allotted to the Ram Dev-owned company Patanjali for oil palm cultivation in Karbi Anglong district.

Addressing allegations made by some opposition parties, KAAC Secretary Si' em Taro stated that no official request has been received from Patanjali seeking land for palm cultivation or oil extraction. He added that while the Council is leasing land to companies approved by the Centre under State and Central government initiatives, any "back-door policies" in such matters would not be tolerated.



Taro further explained that although palm oil is an internationally demanded commodity, cultivating it without a proper marketing mechanism would not be beneficial. The Council is therefore working to establish market access close to local pro-

ducers to ensure future palm cultivation in the district is viable and profitable.

Meanwhile, Dilip Terang, Joint Secretary in charge of Agriculture, confirmed that No Objection Certificates (NoCs) have been issued for The National Mission on Edible Oil - Oil Palm (NMEO-OP) project to support farmers' rural development initiatives. Terang added that a dedicated project management team, chaired by the Principal Secretary of KAAC, has been formed to oversee the oil palm cultivation program in collaboration with implementing partners Patanjali and Godrej. So far, 1,413 beneficiaries have been selected, 1,764 hectares of land approved for cultivation, and 1,235 hectares have already been planted.

Preparations for Golden Jubilee celebrations of Paschim Nono High School underway

HT Correspondent

NAGAON, Sept 11: Paschim Nono High School, a pioneering educational institution in the greater Nono area, is gearing up to celebrate its golden jubilee this year, marking 50 years since its establishment. To commemorate this significant milestone, a 51-member celebration committee has been formed with MLA Jitu Goswami as President, former student and social worker Pratap Sarma as Working President, and Headmistress Jahnavi Devi as General Secretary.

Established in 1975 with the active cooperation of the local community, the school has grown to become a prominent educational institution in the region.

The celebration committee is making extensive preparations, and the upcoming Golden Jubilee celebrations are expected to be a grand and memorable event.

Darrang gears up for PM Modi's visit; 8,000 crore projects set to be launched

HT Correspondent

MANGALDAI, Sept 11: Excitement is running high in Darrang district as preparations are underway for Prime Minister Narendra Modi's two-day visit to Assam on September 13th and 14th, 2025. The visit will mark the launch of several major development projects, with the Prime Minister scheduled to lay the foundation stones for initiatives worth approximately 8,000 crore.

Among the key projects to be launched are the Darrang Medical College, the Kurruwa-Narengi connecting bridge, and the Kurruwa Ring Road—all aimed at improving healthcare, infrastructure, and connectivity in the region. According to a press release issued by Chandan Saikia, Media Coordinator of the Darrang District BJP, preparations for the Prime Minister's public address and foundation-laying ceremonies are nearing completion.

A massive turnout of over 1.2 lakh people is expected, reflecting the public's enthusiasm and support for the visit. The district BJP office has become a hive of activity, with party workers and local residents working together to ensure the success of the event.

Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma and State BJP President and MP Dilip Saikia are personally supervising the arrangements, urging workers to mobilize public participation for what is being described as a historic occasion.

District BJP President Mukund Deka highlighted the government's achievements in Darrang under BJP rule, citing the construction of bypass roads, a Skill University, four-lane highways, and numerous welfare schemes targeting students and marginalized communities.

The Prime Minister's visit is being seen as a significant step in the BJP's continued focus on regional development. With the launch of these major projects, Darrang is poised to become a key centre for growth in Assam.

Residents are eagerly awaiting the Prime Minister's arrival and are ready to welcome him as they look forward to a new chapter of progress and prosperity in the district.

KA administration reviews puja preparations in coordination meeting

The Additional Deputy Commissioner presented a summary of the previous year's celebrations and informed that existing guidelines will continue to apply

HT Bureau

DIPHU, Sept 11: The Karbi Anglong district administration held a review meeting on Wednesday at 11:00 a.m. in the Circuit House Conference Hall, Diphu, to discuss preparations for the upcoming Durga Puja celebrations. The meeting was chaired by Deputy Commissioner Nirola Phangchopi, ACS, and attended by Senior Superintendent of Police Sanjib Kr. Saikia, Additional Deputy Commissioner, Additional Superintendent of Police, officials from various line departments, and representatives of 152 Puja Committees.

The Additional Deputy Commissioner presented a summary of the previous year's celebrations and informed that existing guidelines will continue to apply. All Puja Committees have been instructed to install CCTV cameras and fire safety equipment at their mandaps. Electrical installations must be

carried out only by APDCL-certified electricians with valid fitness certificates. Additionally, structural fitness certificates for the Puja Mandaps have been made mandatory.

Senior Superintendent of Police Saikia emphasized the need for heightened vigilance to maintain law and order. He urged the Puja Committees to stay alert and prevent any incidents of communal or religious tension.

Deployment of trained volunteers, particularly during peak hours, was also advised.

The use of public announcement systems will be restricted between 10:00 p.m. and 8:00 a.m. during the celebrations. Police, fire service, and medical teams will be on standby, and committees were advised to contact local police stations or use designated toll-free numbers in case of emergencies.

Deputy Commissioner Phangchopi directed the Puja

Committees to apply for Mandap permissions through the "Seva Setu" portal, at local police stations, or directly through the district administration. Applications must include details and photographs of the volunteers deployed at the Mandaps. She also instructed that no shops or vendors be allowed within a 50-metre radius of Puja Mandaps. Idol immersion is scheduled to begin from 12:00 noon on the designated day, and all committees must be ready at least one hour in advance.

Committees were also reminded to follow environmental guidelines by using biodegradable idols and eco-friendly materials, in line with government directives aimed at environmental conservation. The meeting concluded with a call for cooperation among all stakeholders to ensure a peaceful and successful Puja celebration in the district.

Numal Momin extends financial aid to 83 namghars in Bokajan

HT Bureau

DIPHU, Sept 11: On the sacred occasion of the Bhado Month, Deputy Speaker of the Assam Legislative Assembly, Dr. Numal Momin, extended financial assistance of ₹3,000 each to 83 Namghars across the 108 Bokajan (ST) Legislative Assembly Constituency. This initiative reaffirms the government's commitment to preserving Assam's cultural and spiritual heritage. Namghars, the traditional prayer halls established by the saint-reformer Mahapurush Srimanta Sankardev, hold a significant place in Assamese society as centers of spirituality, culture, and community unity. The financial aid aims to strengthen their role in promoting devotion, harmony, and cultural preservation.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Momin expressed his gratitude to Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma for the initiative. "This noble step not only supports our revered Namghars but also carries forward the rich legacy of community bonding and spirituality that defines Assamese society. I am honoured to be part of this programme," he said. Community members welcomed the support, noting that the assistance will help maintain Namghars, organize religious activities, and encourage youth participation in cultural traditions.

TSA Guwahati stages protest over murder of Thadou leader

Submits memorandum to CM

HT Bureau

DIPHU, Sept 11: The Thadou Students' Association (TSA), Guwahati, staged a sit-in protest at the Chachal public dharna venue in Guwahati on September 10, demanding justice for the brutal killing of Thadou youth leader Nehkam Jomhao.

A memorandum addressing their concerns was submitted to Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma through the Commissioner of Police, Guwahati. In their protest, TSA strongly condemned what they described as the "brutal and premeditated murder" of Nehkam Jomhao on August 30 at Manja in Karbi Anglong district, allegedly carried out by armed Kuki militants.

The TSA referred to Jomhao as a "martyr" and stated that the killing was not merely an isolated crime but a deliberate attempt to silence a fearless and peace-loving Thadou voice. "This is not just a murder but a systematic attempt to suppress a community leader. There were prior threats, police complaints, and even confessions from Kuki Revolutionary Army



(KRA) and SoO-linked militants that establish the planned nature of this act," the TSA stated in its memorandum.

The incident, they noted, has instilled widespread fear and insecurity among Thadou leaders and the larger community. The TSA, in coordination with Thadou Inpi Assam, reiterated the following key demands: immediate arrest and prosecution of those involved in the murder, including leaders of KRA, KLA, UKDA, and other outfits. Abrogation of the Suspension of Operations (SoO) Agreement with Kuki militant groups involved in continued violence and declaration of such groups as ter-

rorist organisations under national law. Removal of SoO camps which allegedly serve as operational bases for militant activities. Government assurance and protection for Thadou leaders and the wider community to prevent persecution and cultural erasure.

Urgent response from the Assam and Central governments to the demands raised by Thadou Inpi Assam, which reflect the collective voice Also Justice and adequate support for the family of Nehkam Jomhao e of the community. The TSA also emphasized that the Thadou people, despite being small in number and having no armed outfits, continue to believe in democratic values and the rule of law. "We are peace-loving and responsible Indian citizens. We trust the Governments of Assam and India to act decisively against elements disrupting harmony," the memorandum stated. Terming the killing of Jomhao as a "murder of peace, identity, and harmony," the TSA urged immediate intervention from the authorities to ensure justice and lasting protection for the Thadou community.

Tezpur Medical College pays rich tribute to Dr Bhupen Hazarika on his birth centenary



HT Correspondent

TEZPUR, Sept 11: The Tezpur Medical College & Hospital branch of the Assam Sahitya Sabha, in collaboration with the Students' Union of Tezpur Medical College & Hospital, organised a heartfelt tribute ceremony to mark the birth centenary of Bharat Ratna Dr Bhupen Hazarika. Attending the event as a distinguished guest, Assam Sahitya Sabha principal secretary Debojit Bora described Dr Hazarika as an immortal figure and a symbol of the enduring pride and spirit of the people of Assam.

"Through his creations in diverse fields, Dr. Hazarika enriched not only the Assam Sahitya Sabha but also the

Assamese nation at large," Bora said. The tribute programme commenced with the ceremonial lighting of a lamp by the Principal of Tezpur Medical College, Prof Dr Karuna Hazarika.

President of the Teachers' Association, Prof Dr Dharendra Nath Choudhury, paid homage by garlanding the portrait of the musical legend. In his tribute, Prof Dr Karuna Hazarika highlighted the multifaceted contributions of Dr Hazarika and captivated the audience by reciting a poem he composed on the life and work of the iconic figure. Several dignitaries graced the event, including Assam Sahitya Sabha organising Secretary

Dulal Nath, central publicity convener Sankusiddha Nath, Swajatiya Maitribandhan sub-committee convener Ramen Bharali, and Sonitpur Zila Sahitya Sabha vice-president Prabin Kotaki.

All shared insightful reflections on Dr Hazarika's legacy.

The event was further enriched by a group performance of the song "Asom Amar Rupahi..." by students, followed by the screening of a documentary titled Bihangam Drishti Dr. Bhupen Hazarika, directed by Manoj Bora. Cultural performances, including songs, poems, and recitations, were presented by Dr. Niru Prabha Saharia, Dr Dilip Shaloi, Dr Dipika Lahon, Manoj Kumar Nath, Nipan Jyoti Sarma, Prerona Rajkhowa, Girija Kumar, and several students and faculty members. The programme, anchored by Tinkumoni Kalita and Kankana Baruah, concluded with a collective rendition of Dr Hazarika's timeless song "Manuhe Manuher Babe" ("Man is for Man"), evoking deep emotional resonance among the attendees.

A proposal was also placed during the event to host a central programme under the initiative of the newly formed Tezpur Medical College branch of the Assam Sahitya Sabha in the near future.

Mass joining programme boosts Rajior Dal

HT Correspondent

MARGHERITA, Sept 11: A special mass joining programme of Rajior Dal was held with immense enthusiasm and a large turnout at the Thakur Bari premises in Ledo, under the 83rd Margherita Constituency in Tinsukia district, on Thursday evening. Over two hundred young men and women formally joined Rajior Dal during the event, giving a significant boost to the party's grassroots presence in the region.

The programme was graced by Rahul Chetry, the proposed candidate of Rajior Dal for the 83rd Margherita Legislative Assembly Constituency. Since his nomination was announced by Sivasagar MLA and Rajior Dal chief Akhil Gogoi, Chetry has been steadily gaining popularity across the constituency, including areas like Jagun, Bargolai, Lekhapani, Inthem, Ketetong, Khumchali, and several tea garden belts.

BCPL conducts mock drill on level III emergency response

HT Correspondent

DIBRUGARH, Sept 11: Brahmputra Cracker and Polymer Limited (BCPL) successfully conducted a Level III emergency mock drill on September 11, 2025, aimed at enhancing preparedness for major gas leak incidents. The large-scale drill was conducted in coordination with the District Administration, Police Department, National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), and key mutual aid partners including Oil India Limited (OIL), Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL), Assam Gas Company Limited (AGCL), Brahmputra Valley Fertilizer Corporation Limited (BVFCL), Duliagian Numaligarh Pipeline Ltd. (DNPL), Hindustan Oil Exploration Company (HOEC), North Eastern Electric Power Corporation Limited (NEEPCO), Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC), and the Assam Fire & Emergency Services. Senior officials from the Directorate of Factories and the District Administration were also present. The exercise was carried out near the Sectionalising Valve Station (SV-01) along the Lakwa-Lepetkata underground pipeline at Jokai, in Dibrugarh district.

The scenario simulated a significant gas leak incident from the pipeline, providing a realistic environment to test and assess emergency protocols. During the drill, BCPL's emergency response teams conducted search and rescue operations, coordinated evacuation efforts, and provided medical assistance. A key objective was to evaluate the effectiveness of communication and coordination between BCPL and its mutual aid partners to ensure a swift and efficient response during real emergencies. The active participation of various agencies underscored a shared commitment to public safety and emergency preparedness. The drill also offered an opportunity to assess the performance of equipment, tools, and operational strategies under simulated high-pressure conditions. Employee involvement played a crucial role in the success of the exercise, reflecting BCPL's ongoing dedication to safety and community well-being.

Ex-Ambassador Suchitra Durai speaks

Northeast holds key to Act East Policy

HT Correspondent

TEZPUR, Sept 11: Tezpur University hosted a Distinguished Lecture on "India's Strategic Outreach: Understanding the Act East Policy" on Wednesday, featuring former Ambassador Suchitra Durai as the keynote speaker. Durai, a seasoned diplomat, has previously served as India's Ambassador to Thailand and High Commissioner to Kenya.

The event was also attended by former Ambassador R. Swaminathan, India's former Ambassador to Austria, who graced the occasion as the Guest of Honour. The welcome address was delivered by Prof. S.C. Deka, Dean of the School of Engineering, while Prof. Subhrangshu Sekhar Sarkar, Director of International Affairs, introduced the distinguished speakers. In her lecture, Ambassador Durai emphasized that the Act East Policy, launched in 2014, has become one of the core pillars of India's foreign policy. Building upon the "Look East Policy" of the 1990s, the initiative goes beyond economic engagement to include enhanced strategic, security, and connectivity ties with Southeast and East Asian nations.



She outlined what she called the "Four Cs" of India's outreach in the region: Culture, Commerce, Connectivity, and Capacity Building.

Special emphasis, she noted, is placed on the role of Northeast India, which she described as

the natural gateway to Southeast Asia. Highlighting key infrastructure initiatives such as the Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project and the India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway, Durai stated that these developments will transform the Northeast into a hub of trade and cultural exchange. This, she added, will not only boost regional development but also deepen India's diplomatic and economic engagement with neighbouring countries.

Addressing broader geopolitical dynamics, Ambassador Durai acknowledged China's growing presence in Southeast Asia through its Belt and Road Initiative but stressed that India's approach is markedly different—rooted in shared civilizational heritage, democratic values, and development-focused partnerships.

Prof. Shambhu Nath Singh, Vice-Chancellor of Tezpur University, noted that the lecture, part of the Ministry of External Affairs' Distinguished Lecture Series, reflects the University's ongoing efforts to bring eminent thought leaders and diplomats to engage with students and scholars on critical global issues.

KSA elects new office bearers for four regional committees

HT Bureau

DIPHU, Sept 11: The Karbi Students Association - Inglongpho (KSA) held elections on Wednesday for its four Regional Committees (RCs) for the 2025-2027 terms. The elections took place at respective RC offices, with office bearers and branch committee presidents and secretaries eligible to vote.

Results were declared the same evening after vote counting. For Diphu RC, Nelson Timung was elected president and Waisong Bey as secretary. In Hamren RC, Prosanto Ingty and Provenson Bey were elected as president and secretary, respectively.

Budho Terang and Govind Millick won the posts of president and secretary for Howraghat RC, while Arun Hanse and Hebrilong Teron were elected as president and secretary of Bokajan RC.



LOST

I have lost my original documents of HSLC Exam Marksheet & Pass Certificate of 2019 under Roll: B19-837, No: 0107; Registration Card No. 240463 Session 2019-20, Pass Certificate & Marks Sheet of HS Exam./2021 under Roll: 0519 No: 20007 and original Migration Certificate. Juned Hussain Kabir s/o T. Hussain, H.No. 5, Jyesh Das path, Hatigaon, Gogh-38. Ph. No. 8471923010.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

One cannot and must not try to erase the past merely because it does not fit the present. -Golda Meir

Turmoil in Nepal

The two-day uprising in Nepal on September 8 and 9 resulting in the ouster of the KPS Oli government following the attacks and burning of the Parliament Building, Supreme Court and the official and private residences of the present and former powerful ministers, was an expression of total revolt by the generation Z in this Himalayan neighbour country of India against the established political system and its symbols in the country's executive, legislature and judiciary. The uprising in Nepal by the young is different in many respects from the August 2024 developments in Bangladesh and 2022 students' revolt in Sri Lanka. In Nepal, it took a mass character in just two days, the trigger being the killing of 19 demonstrators by the police on the first day itself. The death toll has by now reached 25. Further, the anger of the students was of a violent nature burning the offices of all established political parties including the three communist parties and the Nepali Congress. Significantly, in Nepal, both in Kathmandu and the two/three other cities, the school students took part in a big way, especially the girls, many of them belonging to the elite families.

That way, the revolt in Nepal is the revolt of the Instagram, Facebook generation who are completely in a different mindset compared to the ruling elite including the communists. Both the communist parties of Nepal have a strong students' organization but they were completely neutralized in the latest uprising as the generation Z revolted as a whole against the official ban on the 26 social media platforms. In fact this ban was the prime reason for the revolt as the generation Z in Nepal are totally enmeshed in their social media life and any interference by the elders in the family or the government, they are not in a mood to tolerate. The issue of corruption and unemployment came to the focus later when the killing of the movement participants gave a completely new dimension to the revolt by turning it into a movement against the government and the political system as a whole. That was why on the second day on September 9, many seniors joined and the generation Z movement took the character of a national movement. Out of the 2.96 crore population of Nepal, 1.17 crore are below 35 and the age group of 15-24 has 57.6 lakh. This group grew up with Insta and Facebook and they are the main drivers of the September uprising in Nepal.

If we look at the turbulent politics and economy of Nepal in the last ten years, it will be seen that Nepal has not done too bad in terms of its economic development. Its growth rate has been at the level of 6 per cent in 2025. Though one in five young persons is unemployed, this unemployment issue did never emerge as a big one. Nepalese youth always look for jobs outside. On an average 4 lakh Nepalese leave for jobs outside every year. Similarly, Nepal gets huge remittances from outside and that along with earnings from tourism help the economic growth of the country.

The philosophical depth of Mahapurush Madhavdeva's 'Namghosha'

Mahapurush Madhavdeva's 'Namghosha', a cornerstone of Assamese spiritual literature, stands as a profound testament to the enduring power of devotional poetry interwoven with deep philosophical insights. Composed in the 16th century by Madhavdeva, the principal disciple of Srimanta Sankaradeva, this collection of approximately one thousand verses transcends its role as a hymnal for devotees, emerging as a philosophical treatise that encapsulates the core tenets of the Eka Sarana Nama Dharma, a monotheistic Vaishnavite tradition emphasizing exclusive devotion to Lord Krishna. Known as 'Hajari-ghosa' or the book of a thousand couplets, the 'Namghosha' blends the lyrical richness of Assamese poetry with the intellectual depth of Vedantic and Puranic thought, offering a vision of spirituality that is both accessible and transformative. This editorial delves into the philosophical resonance of the 'Namghosha', exploring its theological foundations, social implications, and enduring relevance in shaping Assam's cultural and spiritual identity.

The 'Namghosha' was born in a period of profound social and religious transformation in Assam, during the late 15th and 16th centuries, when rigid caste hierarchies and complex Vedic rituals dominated religious life. Madhavdeva (1489-1596 CE), under the guidance of his guru Sankaradeva, crafted this text to serve as both a devotional guide for communal worship and a doctrinal exposition of the Eka Sarana philosophy, which advocated a direct path to salvation through devotion to Krishna, unencumbered by elaborate rituals or social distinctions. Drawing inspiration from texts like the 'Bhagavata Purana', the 'Bhagavad Gita', and the commentaries of Srihara Svami, Madhavdeva composed the 'Namghosha' in the Assamese vernacular, ensuring its accessibility to the common people. This choice was revolutionary, as it challenged the Sanskrit-centric religious discourse of the time, making spiritual wisdom available to all, regardless of education or caste. The text, meant to be sung in communal gatherings, became a powerful instrument of spiritual and social reform, fostering unity among diverse communities in the Brahmaputra Valley during a time of political fragmentation and cultural flux.

At its philosophical core, the 'Namghosha' articulates a nuanced interpretation of Vivartanavada, a modified form of Advaita Vedanta tailored to the bhakti tradition. Unlike the strict non-dualism of Shankaracharya, which views the material world as an illusion and seeks the merger of the individual soul with the absolute, Madhavdeva's philosophy reconciles the impersonal, attributeless Brahman with the personal, attributable form of Krishna. The opening verse of the 'Namghosha' sets the tone for this synthesis, declaring a preference for blissful devotion over liberation: "I pay obeisance to that devotee who is indifferent to salvation. I seek only the blissful devotion. I worship the Lord, the creator of all Yudu or the heroic ones and the cynosure of all beings, who is subservient to own devotees." This emphasis on devotion as the ultimate goal, surpassing even the desire for liberation, aligns with the 'Bhagavata Purana's' advocacy of prema-bhakti, or loving devotion, over the path of knowledge. For Madhavdeva, the devotee's relationship with Krishna is not a means to an end but an end in itself, characterized by an intimate, emotional connection that transcends intellectual pursuits.

The 'Namghosha' presents Krishna as the supreme reality—eternal, infinite, benevolent, and all-pervading—yet accessible through His personal form. Madhavdeva describes the individual soul as an *amsa*, or a tiny part of this divine essence, inherently equal and immutable. This concept of intrinsic equality forms the philosophical foundation for the text's rejection of caste distinctions, which were deeply entrenched in 16th-century Assam. By asserting that all souls are qualitatively identical as fragments of the divine, Madhavdeva challenges the material distinctions of *vama* and *asrama*, envisioning a transcendental society where devotion to Krishna unites all beings. This egalitarian vision is not merely theoretical but practical, as the 'Namghosha' calls for the abandonment of Vedic ritualism, which Madhavdeva critiques as *vidhi kinkara*, or slavish adherence to rituals. Verses such as 127, 250, and 732 explicitly advocate for pure devotion over ritualistic practices, positioning the text as a radical critique of the social and religious status quo.

The 'Namghosha' also engages with cosmological and metaphysical questions, offering insights into the nature of *maya*, the creation of the universe, and the purpose of human existence. *Maya*, in Madhavdeva's framework, is the illusory force that binds the soul to material existence, creating a false sense of separation from God. Through the practice of *nama*, or chanting Krishna's names, the devotee can transcend *maya* and awaken their eternal connection with the divine. This process is both spiritual and psychological, as Madhavdeva describes the soul as inherently pure but clouded by ignorance and material desires. The act of singing Krishna's names, as prescribed in the 'Namghosha', purifies the mind and restores the soul's divine nature, making devotion a practical path to self-realization. Verses like "Yara Rama Krishna nama nawa bhava sindhu tari" (By chanting the names of Rama and Krishna, one crosses the ocean of material existence) underscore the simplicity and universality of this practice, which requires no esoteric knowledge or priestly mediation.

Madhavdeva's cosmology portrays the devotee as Krishna's creator, sustainer, and destroyer, yet one who is intimately involved with His devotees. The 'Namghosha' describes the universe as a manifestation of Krishna's divine will, with the soul's ultimate purpose being to cultivate *rasam*—experience, or blissful devotion, through which the devotee experiences Krishna's divine qualities in perpetuity. This vision of human life prioritizes the emotional and spiritual fulfillment of devotion over the abstract goal of liberation, offering a relatable and inspiring path for ordinary people. The text's emphasis on communal singing in *namghars*, or Vaishnavite prayer halls, further democratizes this practice, creating a shared space for spiritual expression that transcends social barriers.

The literary brilliance of the 'Namghosha' lies in its ability to convey profound philosophical ideas through the lyrical beauty of Assamese poetry. Madhavdeva's verses, rich with local idioms and metaphors, resonate with the cultural ethos of Assam while addressing universal spiritual themes. The text's rhythmic structure, designed for musical recitation, captivates both devotees and literary enthusiasts, ensuring its enduring popularity over four centuries. By choosing the vernacular over Sanskrit, Madhavdeva not only made spiritual

knowledge accessible but also elevated Assamese as a medium of high literature, contributing to the region's cultural identity. The 'Namghosha' has influenced Assamese music, literature, and performing arts, with its verses becoming an integral part of rituals, festivals, and communal gatherings.

The social impact of the 'Namghosha' cannot be overstated. By rejecting caste and ritualism, Madhavdeva and Sankaradeva's Neo-Vaishnavite movement fostered a sense of unity among Assam's diverse communities, including tribes, lower castes, and marginalized groups. The *namghars*, where the 'Namghosha' was recited, became centers of social and spiritual life, promoting equality and collective worship. This egalitarian ethos challenged the hierarchical structures of the time, laying the groundwork for a more inclusive society. The text's emphasis on devotion as the sole criterion for spiritual worth empowered individuals to transcend social limitations, creating a spiritual democracy that resonated deeply in Assam's pluralistic society.

In contemporary times, the 'Namghosha' remains a vital source of inspiration, addressing issues that continue to plague modern society. Its rejection of caste and ritualism speaks to ongoing struggles against social inequalities and exclusionary practices. The text's vision of devotion as a unifying force offers a counterpoint to divisive ideologies, fostering a sense of shared humanity. Furthermore, its reverence for Krishna as the creator of all life carries an implicit environmental ethos, aligning with modern calls for ecological consciousness. The 'Namghosha's' accessibility in English, through translations like Sanjib Kumar Borkakoti's work, has broadened its reach, introducing its wisdom to global audiences. Scholars and spiritual leaders, such as Acharya Vinoba Bhave, who wrote 'Namghosha Sar' (Essence of Namghosha), have praised its universal appeal, highlighting its ability to bridge the local and the global.

The 'Namghosha' also holds relevance in the context of modern spirituality, where individuals seek meaning amidst materialism and uncertainty. Its emphasis on *nama* as a simple yet profound practice offers a practical path for spiritual growth, accessible to people of all backgrounds. The text's psychological insights into the nature of the mind and the transformative power of devotion resonate with contemporary discussions on mental well-being and mindfulness. By advocating a life of purpose centered on devotion, the 'Namghosha' provides a timeless framework for navigating the complexities of existence.

In conclusion, Mahapurush Madhavdeva's 'Namghosha' is a profound synthesis of devotion, philosophy, and social reform, offering a vision of spirituality that is both deeply rooted in Assam's cultural context and universally relevant. Its articulation of Vivartanavada and bhakti presents a path to transcendence that prioritizes emotional intimacy with the divine over abstract liberation. By challenging caste and ritualism, the text reshaped Assam's social and spiritual landscape, fostering a legacy of inclusivity that continues to inspire. Its literary beauty, philosophical depth, and cultural significance ensure its place as a timeless guide for spiritual seekers and scholars alike. In an era marked by division and materialism, the 'Namghosha' invites us to rediscover the transformative power of devotion and the eternal unity of all souls in the divine embrace of Krishna.

The foreigners' issue in Assam, Anti-Assamese remarks

The Rights and Dignity of the Assamese Nation

By: Deborshi Gautam

Assam is a land steeped in history. Both Assam and the Assamese people have a colorful and rich heritage that has shaped and strengthened their identity through the ages, and will continue to do so in the future. Every community, tribe, language group, and religion residing in Assam is bound together by an inseparable thread of unity. Regardless of caste, creed, or religion, the greater Assamese society has always celebrated every cultural and religious festival together, side by side, from the days of the traditional Bihu to other national and spiritual occasions.

Whenever the Assamese people have felt their existence threatened, they have always come together, rising above divisions of caste, creed, and religion, to protect and preserve their identity. Time and again, various forces have tried to weaken the Assamese society. But the spontaneous uprising of the Assamese masses against these forces has been evident—from the language movement, to the historic Assam Movement, to the protests against legislations like the CAA and CAB. These movements have clearly demonstrated that Assam is not an open ground for unchecked infiltration by foreigners.

A few days ago, in the heart of Guwahati, during a public meeting, Delhi-based so-called human rights activist Syeda Hameed arrived to participate in the program. She was respectfully welcomed and given the opportunity to address the gathering from the stage. After her speech, when she stepped out of the venue, she faced questions from journalists. In that interaction, Hameed claimed that the presence of Bangladeshis in Assam was not causing any problems to anyone, arguing that the Earth was created for all humans. She further stated that the Bangladeshis living in Assam were not infringing upon the rights of the native people.

As soon as these statements were aired in the media, they triggered a wave of outrage across Assam. Even before the furor had died down, Syeda Hameed once again, sitting in Delhi, made more disparaging comments about Assam. Naturally, these statements ignited a political storm. Political parties, organizations, and representatives of the Assamese people strongly condemned her remarks, and reactions are still ongoing.

The biggest question, however, is who invited this so-called human rights activist, Syeda Hameed, to speak at an event in Assam? Before making state-

ments on such a sensitive issue, she should have first gained a thorough understanding of Assam's situation. One wonders how much real knowledge Hameed has about Assam and its complex issues. It is evident that someone must have briefed her with selective information before she made her comments in front of the media.

Hameed's attempt to equate the issues of Assam with those of Delhi shows a gross lack of understanding. She probably does not even realize that Assam witnessed a long and intense movement to expel illegal foreigners, a movement in which 855 young Assamese sacrificed their lives. The historic Assam Accord was signed only after their supreme sacrifice. By making such careless statements, Hameed has directly insulted the memory of those martyrs.

By stepping on Assamese soil and making remarks that hurt the dignity and pride of the Assamese people, one must ask: who gave Syeda Hameed that right? It is unlikely that someone from outside Assam could suddenly muster the courage to make such divisive and anti-Assamese statements without local support. Those who invited her and allowed such insults to be hurled at the Assamese identity must be held accountable. They should be ostracized from Assam's socio-political life. Otherwise, such individuals will continue to use outsiders to demean and destabilize Assam and its people for their selfish gains.

If, as Syeda Hameed claims, the presence of Bangladeshis in Assam is not a matter of concern, then what meaning does citizenship hold? If there is no distinction between a citizen and a foreigner, then how will the dignity of the Constitution and democracy of this nation be upheld? For a country to remain secure, it is essential to identify foreign elements that may disrupt peace and sow disorder. Foreign forces often attempt to create unrest and chaos within the population, and anyone trivializing the seriousness of illegal infiltration is, knowingly or unknowingly, posing a threat to the sovereignty and integrity of the nation.

Although the government, opposition, and national organizations have condemned Hameed's remarks, mere condemnation is not enough. Legal action must be taken to ensure that such individuals are prevented from disrespecting Assam and the Assamese people in the future. If this is not done, they will continue to insult and demean the Assamese identity from time to time for their political and personal agendas, without the slightest hesitation.

Assam's Tribalisation Deadlock: The Battle of six communities for recognition and justice

By: Dipak Kurmi

For more than three decades, the politics of recognition has remained one of the most polarizing and emotionally charged questions in Assam. At its core lies the unresolved demand of six major ethnic communities—the Tai Ahom, Chutia, Koch-Rajbongshi, Moran, Matak, and the Tea Garden Adivasis—for inclusion in the Scheduled Tribe (ST) category under the Indian Constitution. Their quest is not only about symbolic recognition of indigenous roots but also about accessing tangible benefits: reservations in education, employment, and political representation.

What makes this demand particularly explosive is its persistence in the face of repeated promises, committees, and even the introduction of a Bill in Parliament. Yet, year after year, the matter remains mired in a bureaucratic limbo, intensifying frustration and deepening distrust among these communities.

A Promise Deferred
The demand for tribalization is not new. For decades, these six communities have pressed their claim, each rooted in historical, cultural, and socio-economic grounds. The Tai Ahoms, who once ruled a powerful kingdom that shaped Assam's medieval destiny, now paradoxically find themselves marginalized politically. The Chutias, another community with medieval statehood, point to their linguistic and cultural heritage as aligning with tribal identities. The Koch-Rajbongshis, spread across Assam and North Bengal, highlight their socio-economic backwardness as justification.

The Moran and Matak communities, smaller in numbers but historically significant for their agrarian roots, claim recognition as vital to preserving their distinctiveness and avoiding assimilation. The Tea Garden Adivasis, descendants of indentured laborers brought by the British from central India to work in Assam's plantations, represent one of the largest working-class groups in the state. For them, ST status is crucial not just for symbolic justice but for breaking a cycle of entrenched poverty spanning generations.

Together, these six groups represent a substantial portion of Assam's population, making their inclusion a question of both cultural justice and political arithmetic. No ruling party can afford to dismiss their demands, but neither has any government resolved the issue.

The Politics of Tribalisation
In Assam, the term "tribalisation" has acquired unique political significance. Unlike anthropological usage, here it refers to the process of seeking recognition in the ST category. It underscores the fluidity of identity in a region where cultural distinctions, linguistic markers, and

historical claims are mobilized in pursuit of political recognition.

Governments, however, wield decisive power in this recognition process. The Indian state, through Office Memoranda issued in 1999 and amended in 2002 and 2022, has laid down modalities for inclusion in the ST list. Proposals must originate from state governments, be endorsed by the Registrar General of India (RGI) and the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST), and finally be legislated through Parliament. Importantly, the Constitution allows no scope for provisional or interim recognition.

This layered process, while intended to ensure rigor, has in practice become a tool for political delay. Successive governments have used procedural technicalities to defer decisions, thereby avoiding risks of alienating either the aspiring communities or the already recognized tribes who fear dilution of their rights.

Legislative Stagnation
A turning point seemed to arrive in 2019, when a Bill was introduced in the Lok Sabha to include the six communities in the ST list. Hope soared across Assam, with many believing that a decades-old demand was finally nearing resolution. But the Bill never moved forward. It became entangled in shifting priorities and bureaucratic inertia, symbolizing once again the politics of promises without delivery.

The deadlock was further exposed in September 2025, when Minister of State for Tribal Affairs, Durga Das Uikey, revealed in Parliament that although the Assam government had submitted recommendations, two critical reports from ministerial groups led by Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma had not been forwarded to the Centre. Without these, the process cannot proceed.

This revelation triggered a political storm. The Assam Pradesh Congress Committee (APCC) accused the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) of deception, arguing that committees set up in July 2024 and March 2025 had failed to produce reports deliberately. Congress leaders such as Roselina Tirkey and Bipul Gogoi denounced the government's tactics as insincere stalling, while Bedabrata Bora, APCC Media Department Chair, went further by branding the BJP a "colourful shell with an empty core."

The Double-Edged Sword for the BJP

For the BJP, the issue is both an opportunity and a risk. On one hand, promising ST recognition mobilizes vast sections of the electorate, making it an attractive electoral plank. On the other, granting the demand outright risks alienating existing Scheduled Tribes, who fear that expanding the ST pool would dilute their share of reservations and political representation.

This explains the government's careful balancing act: reconstituting committees, promising action, but avoiding final decisions. The result is a recurring cycle of agitation, assurance, and disappointment.

The Fires of Protest
By September 2025, frustration had once again boiled over. Two of the six communities—the Moran and the Koch-Rajbongshi—staged massive demonstrations in Tinsukia and Dhubri districts, renewing their decades-long demand.

In Tinsukia, the All Moran Students' Union (AMSU) led a torch rally that drew more than 20,000 participants, sweeping through Talap, Kakopathar, Margherita, and Tinsukia town. Protesters demanded both ST status and Sixth Schedule autonomy, accusing Prime Minister Narendra Modi of betraying promises first made in 2016. AMSU President Palindra Borah thundered before a charged crowd: "The BJP has ruled for 10 years. Where is the ST status they promised within the first 100 days?" He warned that unless action was taken before the 2026 elections, the movement would intensify into a statewide economic blockade, with a 75-hour ultimatum beginning September 17.

Simultaneously, in Dhubri's Golakganj area, the All Koch Rajbongshi Students' Union (AKRSU) organized a massive march demanding both ST recognition and a separate Kamatapur state. The protest escalated into violence after police attempted to block the march, resorting to lathi charge. More than 50 protesters, including women and student leaders, were injured, some critically. Several were admitted to Dhubri Medical College Hospital, prompting State Minister Jayanta Malla Baruah to visit the injured and suspend two police officers—Golokganj OC Devajit Kalita and Gauripur OC Chiranjeev Lahon—for their excesses.

AKRSU leaders condemned the violence as evidence of state apathy. "Why does the government always remember our existence only before elections?" asked General Secretary Jayakanta Rajbongshi, reflecting the deep distrust that has festered over decades of neglect.

The protests continued to swell. On the same day, an estimated 30,000 Moran demonstrators filled the streets, warning the BJP that failure to grant recognition would cost it power in the 2026 elections. Their slogans—"The Moran community will answer the fraud and injustice done to our people" and "Mere discussions are not enough, we need written assurances"—echoed across Assam. Some protesters threatened to paralyze the state's economy if ignored. "The government cannot keep making fake promises while sitting in AC rooms. From today, we intensify our protest until we get what is rightfully ours," declared one agitator. These demonstrations marked some of

the largest and most unified shows of strength by the Moran and Koch-Rajbongshi in recent years, raising the stakes for Assam's fragile political equilibrium.

The Stakes of Recognition
For the six communities, the fight is not merely electoral or symbolic. It is about dignity, recognition, and survival. For the Tea Garden Adivasis, plagued by chronic poverty, poor health, and low literacy, ST status could provide the long-denied opportunities to break free of systemic deprivation. For the Tai Ahoms, Chutias, and Koch-Rajbongshis, ST recognition is a means of reclaiming a history diminished by centuries of marginalization. For the Moran and Matak, it is about preserving cultural identity in the face of homogenization.

The demand also reshapes Assam's broader political and social landscape. Granting recognition would dramatically alter the balance of electoral power, affecting representation in the Assembly, distribution of resources, and social justice frameworks. Failure to address it risks fueling deeper alienation, with protests spilling into unrest that threatens the state's stability.

A Crossroads for Assam
As Assam approaches the 2026 Assembly elections, the tribalisation question is once again a defining political fault line. The opposition Congress seeks to corner the BJP, reminding the public that the demand originated in 1996 under Hiteswar Saikia. The BJP, in turn, continues to walk a tightrope, offering promises but withholding action.

What lies ahead depends on political will. If the state submits the long-delayed reports, if the RGI and NCST concur, and if Parliament revives the 2019 Bill, the six communities could finally see justice. If not, Assam risks entering yet another cycle of protest, promises, and betrayal.

The struggle for ST status in Assam is far more than a bureaucratic exercise. It is a battle for recognition, a demand for justice, and a plea for inclusion in India's democratic framework. For too long, these communities have lived with deferred promises. The outcome will not only shape their destiny but also determine the trajectory of Assam's fragile ethnic harmony.

As one of the most diverse and sensitive regions in India, Assam cannot afford further erosion of trust. The question before India's policymakers is whether they will continue to treat tribalisation as a political bargaining chip, or finally recognize it as a matter of historical justice that demands sincerity, fairness, and urgency. Anything less risks pushing the state further into the abyss of discontent. (The writer can be reached at dipakkurmipltd@gmail.com)

Gen Z's fight against Nepal's Political Elite

By: Satyabrata Borah

In the heart of Kathmandu, the air was thick with tear gas and the chants of thousands of young voices on September 8, 2025, when Nepal's Generation Z took to the streets in what has been dubbed the largest youth-led uprising in the nation's modern history. What began as a peaceful demonstration against a sudden government ban on social media platforms quickly swelled into a broader revolt against entrenched corruption, economic despair, and perceived authoritarian overreach. By the end of the day, at least 19 protesters lay dead, hundreds more were injured, and the capital was placed under curfew as security forces clashed with crowds of teenagers and young adults, many still in school uniforms. This Gen Z protest, as it came to be known, exposed the simmering frustrations of a generation that feels betrayed by the political elite, highlighting deep-seated issues that have plagued Nepal for years.

The immediate trigger for the unrest was the government's decision on September 4, 2025, to block access to 26 major social media platforms, including Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, X (formerly Twitter), YouTube, LinkedIn, Reddit, Signal, and Snapchat. The Ministry of Communication and Information Technology justified the ban as a measure to curb cybercrimes, fake news, and misleading content, citing the platforms' failure to register with authorities and appoint local grievance handlers by a September 3 deadline. Under the Directives for Managing the Use of Social Networks, 2023, these companies were required to comply with regulations aimed at protecting national sovereignty and user data. For a country where social media penetration is high the ban struck at the core of daily life. Young Nepalis rely on these platforms not just for entertainment and connection but for news, business, activism, and even education. The sudden blackout felt like an assault on free expression, especially in a nation

that prides itself on a vibrant democracy since abolishing its monarchy in 2008.

But the social media clampdown was merely the spark in a tinderbox of long-brewing grievances. Nepal's Gen Z, born roughly between 1997 and 2012, has grown up in the shadow of political instability and economic stagnation. The country, with a population of about 30 million, boasts a per capita income of just \$1,300 annually, one of the lowest in South Asia. Youth unemployment hovers around 20 percent, exacerbated by the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic and natural disasters like the 2015 earthquake. Many young Nepalis see their futures slipping away as they migrate abroad for low-wage jobs in the Gulf or Malaysia, leaving families behind and fueling a brain drain that deprives the nation of its talent. Protesters waved placards reading "Youths Against Corruption" and "End Nepotism," channeling anger at a political class accused of siphoning public resources while promising reforms that never materialize.

Corruption stands at the epicenter of these complaints. Nepal ranks 108th out of 180 countries on Transparency International's 2024 Corruption Perceptions Index, a slight improvement but still indicative of systemic rot. High-profile scandals have eroded public trust: the 2017 Nepal Airlines Airbus deal, where two wide-body jets were purchased amid allegations of kickbacks and overpricing, remains unresolved despite parliamentary debates. More recently, viral videos on TikTok and Instagram showcased the lavish lifestyles of politicians' children such as driving luxury cars, vacationing abroad, and flaunting wealth in a nation where basic healthcare and education are luxuries for many. These "nepo kids," as critics call them, symbolize nepotism and inequality. The son and daughter-in-law of former Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba, for instance, have been spotlighted for their opulent lives, contrasting sharply with the struggles of ordinary families. Protesters argue that such displays highlight how a small elite accumu-

lates vast estates while the majority grapples with poverty. "We are protesting against the authoritarian attitude of the government," one demonstrator told the BBC, echoing sentiments that corruption discussions in parliament rarely lead to accountability.

Economic woes compound this disillusionment. Nepal's growth has been sluggish, averaging around 4 percent annually in recent years, hampered by political gridlock and reliance on remittances, which account for nearly 25 percent of GDP. Inflation, high taxes, and rising costs of living have squeezed the youth, many of whom entered the job market during the pandemic's economic fallout. The government's failure to deliver on promises of infrastructure development, job creation, and anti-corruption measures has bred cynicism. As one expert noted in *The Kathmandu Post*, the protests represent an "outburst of accumulated frustrations" from bad governance, abuse of power, and the arrogance of successive administrations. Gen Z, tech-savvy and globally connected, draws inspiration from similar youth movements in Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, where economic hardships and corruption toppled regimes. In Nepal, groups like "Hami Nepal" organized rallies calling for student participation, framing the action as a fight for transparency and accountability.

The protests erupted nationwide but centered in Kathmandu, where thousands gathered outside the Federal Parliament building. What started peacefully escalated when demonstrators attempted to storm the complex, occupying a nearby security building. Riot police responded with tear gas, water cannons, rubber bullets, and, according to human rights groups, live ammunition. In Kathmandu alone, 17 deaths were reported, with two more in the eastern city of Itahari. Over 300 injuries were tallied, including to police officers, as clashes spread to Biratnagar, Bharatpur, and Pokhara. Protesters burned tires, vandalized government buildings, and even set fire to parts of Singha Durbar, the administrative headquarters, the Supreme Court



building, and residences of the president and prime minister. Some wielded symbols of defiance, like the Jolly Roger flag from the manga *One Piece*, evoking youth rebellions elsewhere.

The government's heavy-handed response drew international condemnation. The United Nations Human Rights Office expressed shock at the "unnecessary or disproportionate use of force," urging a transparent investigation and compliance with international standards on protest policing. Amnesty International decried the use of lethal force against mostly peaceful crowds, including children, and called for de-escalation. A joint statement from embassies of Australia, Finland, France, Japan, South Korea, the UK, and the US mourned the loss of life and emphasized dialogue over violence. Domestically, Home Minister Ramesh Lekhak resigned, citing moral responsibility, amid reports of "orders from above" to crack down aggressively. Cur-

few were imposed in Kathmandu Valley, flights suspended, and the Nepal Army deployed to enforce order.

By late September 8, the government blinked, lifting the social media ban in an emergency meeting to "address the demands of Gen Z," as Communications Minister Prithvi Subba Gurung announced. Platforms were restored overnight, but the gesture did little to quell the fury. Protests continued into September 9, with demonstrators defying curfews, burning police vehicles, and demanding Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli's resignation. Oli, a veteran leader from the Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist-Leninist), had defended the ban as protecting national dignity but faced accusations of authoritarianism. On September 9, Oli resigned along with several ministers and reportedly fled the country, plunging Nepal into a political crisis. President Ram Chandra Poudel called for talks with protesters, but calls

for parliament's dissolution and fresh elections grew louder.

The Gen Z protest reveals a generation unwilling to tolerate the status quo. Unlike past movements led by established parties, this one is decentralized, fueled by social media and a sense of shared injustice. Experts warn that ignoring these voices could lead to further instability, as youth demand not just policy tweaks but systemic overhaul. In a country still healing from a decade-long civil war and monarchy's end, the uprising underscores the fragility of Nepal's democracy. As one protester, Pabit Tandukar, who was shot in the leg, told Al Jazeera, "We want mass resignations. This is about our future." With 19 lives lost and a nation on edge, Nepal's youth have forced a reckoning, but the path to meaningful change remains fraught. The international community watches closely, hoping dialogue prevails over division in this Himalayan crossroads.

A new era of GST: Towards a taxation revolution

By: Lalit Garg

The introduction of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) was a historic and revolutionary milestone in India's taxation system. It sought not only to simplify the complex web of indirect taxes but also to curb corruption and bureaucratic high-handedness in governance and administration. Yet, despite its intent to provide relief and convenience, the system remained riddled with complexities and burdensome tax slabs that weighed heavily on the public. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government had long recognized this, and during his Independence Day address from the Red Fort this year, he announced plans to make GST simpler and more people-friendly. Acting on this vision, the government has now streamlined GST into just two slabs, while significantly reducing the rates. This step, focused especially on middle- and lower-income households, ensures families will have more disposable income to spend on other goods and services. Increased consumption, in turn, will boost economic activity and accelerate growth. These bold reforms herald the dawn of a new taxation era—one that is simpler, more transparent, and better aligned with people's needs.

Following the 56th meeting of the GST Council, the government announced that the new GST rates will take effect from September 22. The existing 12% and 28% slabs have been replaced with just 5% and 18%. Additionally, a new 40% slab has been introduced for luxury items. While the opposition has dismissed this as a delayed move, the government has projected it as a major stride in economic reform. Some economists also view it as a protective measure in the backdrop of Trump's tariff wars, aimed at boosting domestic consumption and bridging the export deficit. Others see it as a festive-season gift from the government ahead of Navratri and Diwali. Multiple tax slabs had long been a source of confusion and burden for consumers. Frequent rate revisions created uncertainty within the business community. The new two-slab system will largely eliminate such ambiguities, offering consumers a fairer and more predictable tax regime. This will stabilize prices, encourage consumption, and ease business operations, giving industry renewed momentum.

It would not be wrong to say that under Prime Minister Modi's leadership, several effective measures have been taken to curb corruption. Digitization, direct benefit transfers, Aadhaar linkage, and transparent systems have built confidence in governance. GST has strengthened the concept of "One Nation, One Tax." Yet the reality is that the GST department has not entirely freed itself from the grip of corruption. Small traders and entrepreneurs still find themselves ensnared in notices, investigations, and complicated procedures. At times, corrupt practices exploit this to instill fear and extract undue benefits. This undermines the very spirit of GST



reforms. If taxation is to be truly revolutionary, the GST system must be made completely corruption-free.

India's tax departments have long been regarded as hubs of corruption, sustained by complex laws and multiple tax categories. A transparent, simple structure minimizes unnecessary interaction between officials and businesses, building greater trust among citizens and small entrepreneurs. Going forward, the government must strengthen GST technologically and administratively. Artificial intelligence and digital tracking can help curb tax evasion while checking arbitrary practices and bribery. Protecting taxpayers' rights, ensuring a fear-free environment for honest businesses, and offering relief to consumers will be the hallmarks of GST as a revolutionary reform. The new phase of GST brings relief and signals positive change. The next step must be to rid the system of corruption entirely, thus winning the confidence of honest taxpayers. Only then can India claim to have decisively moved toward "One Nation, One Tax, and One Transparent System."

In a nation's economic journey, certain decisions are not just policy shifts but turning points in history. The latest reforms in GST are such a decisive step. Simplifying taxation and directly benefiting citizens reflect not just bureaucratic will but a vision of public welfare. Since independence, India's tax system has been mired in complexity, burdens, and corruption. Both small traders and ordinary consumers suffered in this maze of indirect levies. While the introduction of GST was already a transformative move, further reducing it to two slabs makes it truly revolutionary. This will ease the burden on consumers, enhance the ease of doing business, and energize the economy. The true engine of growth is the common citizen's wallet. When consumers save more, they spend more. Increased consumption drives industries, boosts production, and generates employment. This is the real impact of GST reform—it will give wings to economic activity and help propel India towards becoming the world's third-largest economy.

In any democracy, governance is judged by how far it prioritizes the interests of its citizens. Through GST reform, the Modi government has demonstrated that its policies are not merely about numbers but about easing everyday life. The reform offers not just financial relief but psychological reassurance. Challenges, however, remain—such as compensating states for revenue losses, integrating small businesses into the new system, and ensuring transparency in tax administration. If these issues are addressed, GST reform will firmly set India towards a stronger, more transparent, and growth-oriented economy. It would not be wrong to call this reform a "gift" for the people. It is more than just a change in taxation—it is an attempt to improve the standard of living. It signifies that government policies are designed not merely to run the machinery of state but to provide real relief to citizens and accelerate national progress. The crucial question now is whether the benefits will truly reach the common consumer. Much depends on whether industries pass on the tax cuts to customers and whether regulators enforce compliance effectively. The new era of GST has opened a window of hope. If carried forward with integrity, it could well transform India's taxation system into one of the most transparent and people-centric models in the world.

Nepal's democracy: From old dominance to new challenge

Will the new generation be able to change the caste structure with faces like Balen Shah?

After the restoration of democracy in 1990, Nepal has seen 13 Prime Ministers so far. Of these, 10 were hill Brahmins and 3 were Kshatriyas. No one from the Madhesi, tribal, Dalit and women community has been able to become the Prime Minister. The participation of these communities in the Parliament and bureaucracy is also very limited. About 35% of Nepal's population is of Madhesis, but their influence in power is almost negligible. In this background, the rise of Kathmandu Mayor Balen Shah is not just a political event, but a symbolic challenge against ethnic inequality, which the young generation is accepting wholeheartedly

By: Dr Satyawan Saurabh

Nepal is a small country located in the lap of the Himalayas. It may be small in size, but in terms of politics and caste equations, its complexity is no less than that of any big country. Nepal has been experimenting with democracy for the last three decades, but the truth is that this democracy is still incomplete. Power and resources are controlled by only one class—Pahadi Brahmin and Kshatriya castes. From the parliament to the administration and the army, these castes dominate everywhere, Madhesis, tribals, Dalits and women are still standing at the bottom of the ladder of power.

In 1990, multiparty democracy returned to Nepal. The public hoped that now there would be diversity in power and every community would get equal opportunity. But the exact opposite happened. Since 1990, Nepal has seen 13 prime ministers. Out of these, 10 were hill Brahmins and 3 were Kshatriyas. That is, despite the Madhesi population being 35%, not a single Madhesi could become the prime minister. Tribal and tribal groups are present in the parliament, but their leaders remained limited to only symbolic posts. Dalits and women are still at the margins of power. This picture shows how Nepal's democracy suffers from deep caste inequality. Faces changed in the name of democracy, but the character of power remained the same—Brahmin and Kshatriya centric.

More than half of Nepal's population is under the age of 35. This is the new generation called Generation-Z. It is connected to social media, pop culture and global politics. For them, caste and clan politics are old and irrelevant. This generation wants transparency, equal opportunities and most importantly, it not only thinks about change but also demands it. This is why Kathmandu Mayor Balen Shah has become a symbol of change among the youth of Nepal today.

When Balen Shah won the Kathmandu mayoral election in 2022, it was not just an election, but a direct attack on old notions of power. Kathmandu was considered a stronghold of mainstream parties—Nepali Congress, UML and Maoist Center—for decades. But Shah surprised everyone as an independent candidate. He neither came from traditional politics nor was associated with any ethnic lineage. His background was that of a hip-hop artist and engineer. He is both Madhesi and Buddhist. That is, in every respect, completely different from the mainstream politics of Nepal. His victory gave the message that the public now wants an alternative. Especially the younger generation, which is tired of politics driven by repeated ethnic arithmetic.

Balen Shah's influence is not limited to politics. He is very active on social media and knows how to communicate directly. While Nepal's current politics still relies on speeches and rallies, Shah is doing politics in the digital age. His music, his frank words and his independent image instantly attract

the youth. This difference is very important, because for the first time in Nepal's politics, a face has emerged who is making politics cool.

But the question is, will Nepal's old power structure break so easily? Parties like Nepali Congress, UML and Maoists have been in power for decades. Their leaders come from Brahmin and Kshatriya communities and their hold extends to the administration, army and bureaucracy. This entire structure can stand like a wall for a leader like Balen Shah. It is likely that attempts will be made to dismiss Shah as "inexperienced" or "populist". His independent identity will be questioned. And the biggest thing is that people in power never leave their chair easily.

If Nepal gives a chance to a leader like Balen Shah to become the Prime Minister, it will not just be the victory of an individual but a historic one. Nepal will see a non-Brahmin/Kshatriya Prime Minister for the first time. It will send a message that democracy is not just in name but inclusive in reality. Madhesi, tribal and Dalit communities will get the confidence that they too have a share in power. The youth will feel that their voice matters.

But if this demand for change is suppressed, the consequences will be severe. The young generation is already impatient. They are sharing their resentment and dreams on social media. If their voice is suppressed, the discontent can turn into a street movement. Nepal has seen mass movements before and history is a witness that when the public wants, no power structure can remain permanent.

Nepal today stands at the crossroads. On one side is old politics, where power is divided among a few castes. On the other side is new politics, which is inclusive, transparent and connected to the youth. Balen Shah is a symbol of this change. But the real question is not whether Shah will become the Prime Minister or not. The real question is whether Nepal will be able to move beyond caste-based politics or not.

If Nepal takes this step, it can become an example in South Asia. In countries like India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, politics is often entangled in dynastic and caste equations. If Nepal comes out of this framework, it will be an inspiration for the entire region. But if the old power structure remains, democracy will remain incomplete. The trust of the youth will be broken and this breaking of trust is the most dangerous situation for any democracy.

Nepal's politics has been dominated by the hill Brahmin and Kshatriya castes for decades. Democracy came, faces changed, but the character remained the same. Today's generation is challenging it. Balen Shah is its face. This generation does not want to accept the old structure of caste, lineage and power. Nepal's democracy is now standing at a historic turning point. Either it will be inclusive and give equality to everyone, or it will continue the old inequality.

The decision of the future is now in the hands of the new generation of Nepal and their demand is clear—this time politics is for everyone, not just for Brahmins and Chhatris.

When teachers leave: The silent global exodus

By: Sakshi Sethi

Classrooms are losing their torchbearers. As teachers pack their bags for foreign shores, what is left behind are empty desks, struggling schools, and futures at risk. In an age when education is celebrated as the cornerstone of national progress, the exodus of trained educators raises an unsettling question: Are we truly valuing those who shape young minds, or are we allowing global labour markets to drain the very lifeblood of our classrooms?

India's story is particularly revealing. Each year, a steady stream of teachers leaves for the Gulf, the United Kingdom, and Southeast Asia, lured by salaries and conditions far superior to what they encounter at home. Kerala, often praised for its educational achievements, embodies the paradox most starkly. A size-

able proportion of its trained teachers migrate abroad, while rural and tribal schools within the state struggle to fill vacancies. It is a cruel irony: The very land that supplies teachers to international schools cannot fully staff its own. This dilemma is not India's alone. Across Africa and the Caribbean, education systems are destabilised as teachers depart en masse.

Even Britain, ironically both a recruiter and a victim of teacher migration, loses thousands of educators to Australia and the Middle East even as it actively recruits from Jamaica and India. Such global circulation may momentarily plug shortages in one nation, but it simultaneously deepens crises in another, creating a cycle that is as unsustainable as it is unjust.

The drivers of this exodus are no mystery. Teachers in their home countries grapple with

meagre pay, poor infrastructure, excessive workloads, and a lack of professional recognition. Abroad, they are offered precisely what they are denied at home: Stability, dignity, and respect. This imbalance transforms educators into commodities traded in a global market rather than guardians of knowledge within their own societies. The debate is not whether teacher migration is a concern—it undeniably is—but how we choose to confront it.

Some optimists suggest that migration can foster brain circulation, with returning teachers enriching domestic systems with global experience. Yet, for most developing nations, the pattern is not circulation but haemorrhage—one that drains classrooms and deepens inequality.

India stands at a crossroads. UNESCO estimates that more than a million additional teach-

ers will be required by 2030 if the country is to meet the Sustainable Development Goals. If migration continues unchecked, this vision will remain a mirage. The solution lies not in closing doors abroad but in elevating the teaching profession at home: ensuring fair salaries, real career progression, supportive policies, and, above all, restoring the cultural reverence that once placed the guru above all else.

Teacher migration is not merely about statistics or staffing; it is about values. It reflects how societies perceive those entrusted with shaping the next generation. When a teacher migrates, it is not only a professional loss—it is a generation betrayed. Unless nations learn to honour their educators as the architects of progress, they will continue to export teachers and import decline. (Courtesy: *The Pioneer*)

Three dead in clashes in Nepal prison, over 15,000 inmates escape from different jails amid unrest

The Department of Prison Management stated that it was still compiling final figures from all provinces

KATHMANDU, Sept 11: At least three inmates died during clashes with security personnel in a Nepal jail on Thursday while more than 15,000 prisoners escaped from more than two dozen prisons across the country since the violent anti-government protests erupted in the Himalayan nation.

These latest deaths take the number of inmates who died during clashes with security forces to eight since violence erupted on Tuesday as part of the massive anti-government demonstrations led by Gen Z group across Nepal.

The violent agitation forced prime minister K P Sharma Oli to resign on Tuesday, following which the Nepal Army imposed restrictions due to a serious law and order situation across provinces.

On Thursday morning, three inmates were killed and 13 others injured after a violent clash broke out between prisoners and security personnel at the Ramechhap district prison in Madhesh province, the police source said.

The confrontation began when inmates attempted to break out of the facility by causing an explosion using a gas cylinder. Security forces opened fire in order to regain control when three of the inmates were killed, the source said.

The injured were taken to Ramechhap District Hospital, police said.



Since the violence erupted on Tuesday, more than two dozen prisons across the country witnessed clashes and breaks with mass escapes with thousands of inmates fleeing amid arson attacks and riots, a media report said Thursday.

"The jailbreaks began when youth protesters stormed multiple prison facilities, setting administrative buildings ablaze and forcing open prison gates. By Wednesday evening, preliminary reports confirmed that over 15,000 inmates had fled from more than 25 prisons, with only a fraction returning voluntarily or being rearrested," newspaper The Kathmandu Post said, quoting police.

In Gandaki province, the Kaski District Prison which saw 773 escapees, jailor Rajendra Sharma

said among the escapees were 13 Indian nationals and four other foreigners.

The Department of Prison Management stated that it was still compiling final figures from all provinces, the news report said. Director General Lila Prasad Sharma confirmed that security forces—including the Nepal Army, Armed Police Force, and Nepal Police—had been deployed nationwide to re-arrest escapees and restore order.

"We are mobilising all available resources to re-arrest them as quickly as possible," the Kathmandu Post quoted DG Sharma as saying.

Earlier, five juvenile inmates died in a clash with security personnel at the Naubasta Correctional Home in Naubasta Regional Jail located in Bajinath Rural Mu-

nicipality-3 of Banke in western Nepal on Tuesday night.

The five juvenile inmates were killed and four were seriously injured when police opened fire during a clash that broke out when inmates tried to take over the weapons of security personnel of the correctional home, the Naubasta Juvenile Correctional Home office said.

Among the major prison escapees listed by the newspaper were the Banke Juvenile Reform Centre (122), the Banke District Prison (436), and Kathmandu Valley's Central Jail in Sundhara (3,300), Nakkhu Prison in Lalitpur (1,400) and Dillibazar Prison (1,100).

Other facilities included Mahotari's Jaleswar Prison (575), Jhumka Prison in Sunsari (1,575), Chitwan (700), Kapilvastu District Prison (459), Kailali Prison (612), Kanchanpur (478) and Sindhuli Prison (500), the news report added.

Meanwhile, India's paramilitary force, Sashtra Seema Bal (SSB), on Thursday took control of 13 prisoners near Baiganiya check point as they were trying to cross over the southern border, according to the Nepal Police source.

They were among the scores of prisoners who broke the Gaur prison in Rautahat district near the India-Nepal border.

South Korea says detained Korean workers released from Georgia facility before flight home

SEOUL, Sept 11: South Korea's president said on Thursday that Korean companies will likely hesitate to make further investments in the United States unless Washington improves its visa system for their employees, as US authorities released hundreds of workers who were detained at a Georgia factory site last week.

In a news conference marking 100 days in office, Lee Jae Myung called for improvements in the US visa system as he spoke about the September 4 immigration raid that resulted in the arrest of more than 300 South Korean workers at a battery factory under construction at Hyundai's sprawling auto plant in Georgia.

South Korea's Foreign Ministry later confirmed that US authorities have released the 330 detainees — 316 of them Koreans — and that they were being transported by buses to Atlanta, where they will board a charter flight scheduled to arrive in South Korea on Friday afternoon.

The massive roundup in Georgia and the US authorities' release of video showing some workers being chained and taken away sparked widespread anger and a sense of betrayal in South Korea. The raid came less than two weeks after a summit between US President Donald Trump and Lee, and just weeks after the countries reached a July agreement that spared South Korea from the Trump administration's highest tariffs, but only after Seoul pledged USD 350 billion in new US investments.

Lawmakers from both Lee's liberal Democratic Party and the conservative opposition decried the detentions as outrageous and heavy-handed, while South Korea's biggest newspaper compared the raid to a "rabbit hunt" executed by US immigration authorities in a zeal to meet an alleged White House goal of 3,000 arrests a day.

During the news conference, Lee said South Korean and US officials are discussing a possible improvement to the US visa system, adding that under the current system, South Korean companies "can't help but hesitate a lot" about making direct investments in the US. (PTI)

Lee: It's not like these are long-term workers

US authorities said some of the detained workers had illegally crossed the US border, while others entered legally but had expired visas or entered on visa waivers that prohibited them from working.

But South Korean experts and officials said Washington has yet to act on Seoul's years-long demand to ensure a visa system to accommodate skilled Korean workers, though it has been pressing South Korea to expand industrial investments in the US.

South Korean companies have been relying on short-term visitor visas or Electronic System for Travel Authorisation to send workers who are needed to launch manufacturing sites and handle other setup tasks, a practice that had been largely tolerated for years.

Lee said that whether the US establishes a visa system allowing South Korean companies to send skilled workers to industrial sites will have a "major impact" on future South Korean investments in the US.

"It's not like these are long-term workers. When you build a facility or install equipment at a plant, you need technicians, but the United States doesn't have that workforce, and yet they won't issue visas to let our people stay and do the work," he said.

"If that's not possible, then establishing a local facility in the United States will either come with severe disadvantages or become very difficult for our companies. They will wonder whether they should even do it," Lee added.

Lee said the raid showed a "cultural difference" between the two countries in how they handle immigration issues.

"In South Korea, we see Americans coming on tourist visas to teach English at private cram schools — they do it all the time, and we don't think much of it, it's just something you accept," Lee said.

"But the United States clearly doesn't see things that way. On top of that, US immigration authorities pledge to strictly forbid illegal immigration and employment and carry out deportations in various aggressive ways, and our people happened to be caught in one of those cases," he added. (AP)

Former president Rajapaksa to leave official mansion after new Sri Lankan law

COLOMBO, Sept 11: Mahinda Rajapaksa is set to leave his official residence on Thursday, a day after the enactment of a new Act of Parliament stripped the privileges of former presidents.

Rajapaksa's residence is located in the posh Colombo residential area of Cinnamon Gardens.

Mahinda Rajapaksa, who will turn 80 in November, has been occupying the official residence since 2015. He was president from 2005 to 2015. He was also the prime minister from 2004 to 2005 and again from 2019 to 2022.

"He (Mahinda Rajapaksa) will leave for his house at Tangalle this afternoon", an aide confirmed.

The Carlton House at Tangalle, 190 kms south of here, in Hambantota district was where Rajapaksa had launched his political career in 1970.

During the public uprising in 2022, which ousted Mahinda's younger brother Gotabaya Rajapaksa as president, both his Colombo residence and his private home at Tangalle were mobbed by the protesters. They were, however, unable to break into either of the buildings.

On Wednesday, the Sri Lankan parliament voted 151-1 in favour of the bill to strip privileges for former presidents, one of the popular pre-election pledges by the incumbent National People's Power (NPP) government.

The bill titled 'Presidents' Entitlement (Repeal) Act No 18 of 2025' to repeal the Presidents' Entitlement Act No 4 of 1986 became a law, a day after the Supreme Court ruled that the bill to withdraw presidential privileges extended to all former presidents and widows can be approved in parliament with just a simple majority.

The Supreme Court thus overruled an attempt by the Rajapaksa party, the Sri Lanka People's Front, commonly known by its Sinhalese name Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna (SLPP), to thwart the bill by challenging its constitutionality.

The country currently has five living former presidents and a widow of another. Only three of them were availing the facilities when the government introduced the bill in parliament. (PTI)

Qatar official says Netanyahu 'killed any hope' of hostage release with its strike in Doha on Hamas

DOHA, Sept 11: Qatar's prime minister said Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu "killed any hope" of releasing hostages still held in the Gaza Strip after Israel attacked Hamas leaders in Doha.

The comments from Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani, ahead of appearing at the United Nations on Thursday, underscored the wider anger among Gulf Arab countries over Israel's strike that killed at least six people.

"I was meeting one of the hostage's families the morning of the attack," Sheikh Mohammed told CNN in an interview aired late Wednesday. "They are counting on this (ceasefire) mediation, they have no other hope for that."

Sheikh Mohammed added: "I think that what Netanyahu has done yesterday, he just killed any hope for those hostages."

His remarks came as thousands of Palestinians sought to flee Gaza City ahead of Israel's impending offensive there. The numbers leaving the city have grown in recent days, though many have refused because they say they no longer have the strength or money to relocate.

The Israeli military's plans for the next phases of its operation in what it calls Hamas' last remaining stronghold is aimed taking over the largest Palestinian city that's already devastated from earlier raids and experiencing famine.

The plans have drawn widespread condemnation and add to Israel's already unprecedented global isolation, which intensified further this week following the strike on Qatar.

Qatar's diplomatic push

The attack on the territory of a US ally alarmed countries in the Mideast and beyond. It also marked a dramatic escalation in the region and risked upending talks aimed at ending the war and freeing hostages still held by Hamas in Gaza.

Sheikh Mohammed was expected to attend a U.N. Security Council meeting later Thursday, part of a diplomatic push by Qatar after the strike, and Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif was set to visit Doha to underscore Pakistan's support for Qatar's security and sovereignty.

Hamas said Tuesday that its top leaders survived the strike but that five lower-level members were killed, including the son of Khalil al-Hayya — Hamas' leader for Gaza and its top negotiator — as well as three bodyguards and the head of al-Hayya's office.

Hamas, which has sometimes only confirmed the assassination of its leaders months later, offered no

immediate proof that al-Hayya and other senior figures had survived.

Qatar and Egypt have been key mediators to try and reach a ceasefire in the war in Gaza. Qatar has hosted Hamas' political leadership for years in Doha, in part over a request by the US to encourage negotiations between the militant group and Israel.

There was no immediate reaction to Sheikh Mohammed's remarks from Netanyahu, whose government has engaged in wars across the region since Hamas' October 7, 2023, assault on Israel.

However, Netanyahu has continued to defend the strikes and threatened further action against Qatar a day after US President Donald Trump had sought to ease tensions between the US allies, including by assuring the Gulf nation that there would be no more such strikes on its soil.

"I say to Qatar and all nations who harbor terrorists, you either expel them or you bring them to justice," Netanyahu said. "Because if you don't, we will."

Displaced Palestinians forced to live on the streets

An estimated 1 million Palestinians — around half of Gaza's overall population — live in the area of north Gaza around Gaza City, according to the Israeli military and the United Nations. On Wednesday, dozens of vehicles, motorbikes, and donkey carts loaded with belongings lined the city's coastal road as they tried to leave.

Amal Sobh, displaced from Beit Lahia with 30 relatives — including 13 orphans — said the three-wheel vehicle carrying their belongings broke down and they had no fuel, leaving the family stranded.

After one of her boys came down with a fever, the only food or medicine they were able to get was bread that a passerby gave to them.

"I have 13 orphans. The one who is in my lap, his temperature is high like fire," she told The Associated Press. "I don't have money to buy medicine for him."

Umm Mohamed al-Boghdady said her family lost their tents and belongings in an Israeli strike.

"The tents are gone, and nothing is left of it, not even clothes and belongings. We only left with a basil plant."

Meanwhile in Muwasi, an area at the southern end of the strip where Israel has encouraged people to move, displaced Palestinians from northern Gaza struggled to find shelter due to overcrowding and lack of adequate resources. Many have been forced to live on the streets. (AP)

US inflation worsened last month

WASHINGTON, Sept 11: Inflation moved higher last month as the price of gas, groceries, hotel rooms and airfare rose, along with the cost of clothes and used cars.

Consumer prices rose 2.9 per cent in August from a year earlier, the Labour Department said Tuesday, up from 2.7 per cent the previous month and the biggest increase since January. Excluding the volatile food and energy categories, core prices rose 3.1 per cent, the same as in July. Both figures are above the Federal Reserve's 2 per cent target.

The reading is the last data the Fed will receive before its key meeting next week, when policymakers are widely expected to cut their short-term rate to about 4.1 per cent from 4.3 per cent. Still, the figures underscore the challenges the Fed is facing as it experiences relentless pressure from President Donald Trump to cut rates.

Even as inflation has ticked higher, recent government reports have also shown that hiring has slowed sharply in recent months and was lower than previously estimated last year. The unemployment rate ticked up in August to a still-low 4.3 per cent. And weekly unemployment claims rose sharply last week, a sign layoffs may be picking up.

Typically the Fed would cut its key rate when unemployment rose to spur more spending and growth.

Yet it would do the opposite and raise rates — or at least keep them unchanged — in the face of rising inflation. Last month, Chair Jerome Powell signalled that Fed officials are increasingly more concerned about jobs, and are likely to cut their rate when they meet next week. Yet stubbornly high inflation could keep the Fed from cutting very quickly. (AP)

Belarus frees 52 prisoners, Lithuanian president says



VILNIUS (LITHUANIA), Sept 11: Belarus has freed 52 prisoners, and they have crossed into Lithuania, the Lithuanian president said on Thursday.

In June, Belarus freed Sjarhei Tsikhanouski, a key dissident figure and the husband of exiled opposition leader Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya, and 13 others following a rare visit by a senior envoy from the Trump administration.

Last month, US President Donald Trump spoke to Belarus' authoritarian president, Alexander Lukashenko, about the release of more prisoners. "I am deeply grateful to the United States and personally to President Trump for their continued efforts to free political prisoners. 52 is a lot. A great many. Yet more than 1,000 political prisoners remain in Belarusian prisons, and we cannot stop until they see freedom!" Lithuanian President Gitanas Nausėda wrote on X. Nausėda said the prisoners, who included six Lithuanians, safely entered Lithuania, "leaving behind barbed wire, barred windows and constant fear."

Lukashenko has ruled the nation of 9.5 million with an iron fist for more than three decades, relentlessly cracking down on the opposition and independent media.

But his rule was challenged in the aftermath of Belarus' presidential election in August 2020. Tens of thousands of people poured into the streets to protest Lukashenko's reelection in a vote widely seen as rigged, triggering the largest protests in the country's history. In the ensuing crackdown, tens of thousands were detained, with many beaten by police. Prominent opposition figures either fled the country or were imprisoned. Almost 1,200 political prisoners remain behind bars in Belarus, according to human rights group Viasna. Lukashenko has since extended his rule for a seventh term following a January 2025 election that the opposition called a farce. Since July 2024, he has pardoned nearly 300 people, including imprisoned US citizens, seeking to mend ties with the West. (AP)

Ghana receives 14 West African nationals deported from US

ACCRA (GHANA), Sept 11: A group of 14 West Africans deported from the US arrived in Ghana, the country's president said. The country joins Eswatini, Rwanda and South Sudan as African countries that have received migrants from third countries who were deported from the US, a controversial approach whose legality lawyers for the deportees have questioned.

"We agreed with (Washington) that West African nationals were acceptable because all our fellow West African nationals don't need a visa to come to our country," President John Mahama told reporters late Wednesday.

The deportees had arrived in the country and included Nigerian and Gambian nationals who planned to return to their countries, he added.

US President Donald Trump, in his second term, has been aggressively cracking down on immigrants he says are criminals and from countries whose nationals have overstayed their visas in the US.

However, there have been concerns about the conditions facing some deportees sent to Africa. Lawyers and activists have also questioned the legality of the deportations and argued that Trump's administration appears to be making such requests to the nations most affected by his policies on trade, migration and aid.

The five men deported to Eswatini in July have

been held in a maximum-security prison for seven weeks without charge or explanation and with no access to legal counsel, their lawyers said last week.

Rights groups have also argued that most of the African countries that have received such deportees have one thing in common: A poor human rights record with government critics often targeted.

In July, Trump hosted five West African presidents — from Senegal, Mauritania, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia and Gabon — at the White House to discuss whether the countries would be open to accepting deportees from the US.

Nigeria, whose nationals comprise the bulk of deported migrants to Ghana, said at the time that African countries were under "significant pressure" to receive migrants and that it would not agree.

Ghana is the first West African country to announce it has entered into such an agreement with the US to receive deported foreign nationals.

Mahama did not say whether the 14 deportees had a criminal history.

"West Africa has a protocol of free movement. Any West African is welcome in Ghana," Mahama said.

(A previous version of this article incorrectly reported that Uganda has received third-country deportees from the US.) (AP)



DENPASAR (INDONESIA), Sept 11: Rescuers on Thursday searched in rivers and the rubble of devastated villages for survivors of devastating flash floods that struck two provinces in Indonesia a day earlier, as waters began to recede.

Torrential rains beginning Monday caused flooding and landslides on the tourist island of Bali and in East Nusa Tenggara province, killing at least 15 people and leaving 10 missing.

Rain caused rivers to burst their banks, tearing through nine cities and districts on Bali. Mud, rocks and trees tumbled onto the moun-

tainside hamlets and rising rivers submerged at least 112 neighbourhoods, resulting in several landslides, Bali's Disaster Mitigation Agency said in a statement.

As river levels returned to normal on Thursday, people in Denpasar, Bali's capital, left crammed emergency shelters. They found streets covered in mud and debris, cars lying upside down in parks or piled up in narrow alleys, and sidewalks strewn with sandals, pots and pans and old photographs.

Authorities took advantage of the receding waters to begin clearing away mud and removing piles of wet garbage from the streets, and electricity was restored to tens of thousands of residences and businesses.

Heavy seasonal rain from about September to March frequently causes flooding and landslides in Indonesia.

Suharyanto, the head of the National Disaster Mitigation Agency, told a news conference late Wednesday that the threat of flooding in Bali is over.

The floods in Bali swept away people and about 474 kiosks and small shophouses in art and public markets, killing at least six residents and submerging hundreds of houses and build-

ings, forcing more than 800 residents to flee to temporary government shelters, said Suharyanto, who goes by a single name like many Indonesians. He said up to 600 rescue workers, police, and soldiers have been deployed since Wednesday to search for six people reportedly still missing in Bali, as the floods have also damaged roads, bridges and other infrastructure. Scores of rescue personnel were searching through a river around the remote village of Mauponggo in East Nusa Tenggara, where floods left tons of mud, rocks and trees.

Rescuers were focused on finding four people, including two toddlers, who were swept away by floods along with 35 houses, said local police chief Dewa Putu Suarawan. Six other villagers were pulled out of floodwaters or mud on Wednesday. Local Disaster Mitigation Agency head Agustinus Pone said the severe weather and rugged terrain that hampered rescue efforts were exacerbated by the disruption of electricity, clean water, and telecommunications networks in 18 villages by flash floods.

He said that flooding and landslides in the area also destroyed two bridges, two government offices, a plantation, rice fields, and killed livestock. (AP)

Union cites fear among locals and constitutional rights violation in its call for action

AdiSU presses for paramilitary exit, land rights in Siang

HT correspondent

ITANAGAR, Sept 11: The Adi Students' Union (AdiSU) on Wednesday reiterated its demands for the immediate removal of paramilitary personnel stationed at Bomkikir Mission School in Boleng, Siang district, and for the eviction of illegal encroachments on government land belonging to various higher secondary schools in the district.

Addressing the media at the Arunachal Press Club in Itanagar, AdiSU representatives stated that they have submitted a seven-day ultimatum to the Government of Arunachal Pradesh (GoAP), urging swift action on their demands.

The union warned that failure to address these issues would compel them to launch a democratic movement aimed at the removal of the Central Armed Police Force (CAPF) from the Siang district. The union expressed concern that the prolonged presence of CAPF personnel had created an atmosphere of fear and unrest among local residents.

The apex student body representing the Adi community also demanded the revocation of the suspension order issued against eight Gaon Burahs (GBs) of Siang district by the Deputy Commissioner (DC).



According to the union, the suspension order unjustly restricts the right of these village heads to voice their opinions against the construction of the Siang Upper Multi-Purpose Project (SUMP), thereby violating Article 19 of the Constitution, which guarantees freedom of expression.

Further emphasising the importance of community consent, the union called for proper consultations with affected villagers before any activities related to the Pre-Feasibility Report (PFR) for the SUMP project are initiated.

The union asserted that the voices of genuine land-affected families must be heard and respected in all decision-making processes related to the project.

The AdiSU stated that its demands are rooted in the need to safeguard the rights and welfare of local communities and ensure that development initiatives are undertaken in a manner that is both inclusive and respectful of constitutional freedoms.

The union's statement concluded with a firm call on the state government to act decisively and address the concerns raised by the students and local residents before the situation escalates further.

Governance must be practical, people-centric and future-focused: Guv



HT Correspondent

ITANAGAR, Sept 11: Administrative reforms in Arunachal Pradesh must be practical, people-oriented, and future-driven to ensure that governance reaches every corner of the State, including the most remote areas, the Governor of Arunachal Pradesh, Lt General KT Parnaik, PVSM, UYSM, YSM (Retd), emphasised in an official statement issued by Raj Bhavan.

The Governor's remarks came during a meeting with the Chairperson of the Administrative Reforms Commission, Promod Jain, IAS (Retd), at Raj Bhavan, Itanagar, on September 11, 2025.

The two senior leaders deliberated on various measures through which administrative reforms can strengthen public trust, empower grassroots institutions, and improve service delivery, thereby paving the way for inclusive growth and good governance across the State.

In the official statement, the Governor underlined the need to fortify the administrative framework of Arunachal Pradesh in line with the aspirations and expectations of its citizens.

He stressed that reforms should foster participatory governance, modernization of administration, transparency, accountability, and sustainable development.

Such an approach, he noted, would not only improve governance but also enhance the State's ability to address emerging challenges and opportunities.

The Governor further observed that Arunachal Pradesh, with its unique geographical terrain, rich cultural diversity, and strategic significance, requires an administrative model that is both efficient and sensitive to local customs and traditions.

He highlighted the importance of adopting reforms that respond to the specific needs of citizens while remaining aligned with long-term developmental goals.

The Governor's message clearly emphasized that administrative reforms must be grounded in practicality, centred around people's welfare, and oriented toward future sustainability.

He reiterated that only through such reforms can governance be extended effectively to remote regions, ensuring that all communities benefit from progress and development.

The official statement described the meeting as an important step toward shaping an administrative system that reflects the ethos of Arunachal Pradesh while empowering its people to participate in decision-making and growth initiatives.

Universal Brotherhood Day celebrated with enthusiasm at VKV Itanagar



HT Correspondent

ITANAGAR, Sept 11: Vivekananda Kendra Vidyalaya (VKV), Itanagar, commemorated Universal Brotherhood Day on September 11 with zeal and devotion, reaffirming the enduring relevance of Swami Vivekananda's teachings.

The observance, as stated in an official release by the school authorities, drew a large gathering comprising about 100 parents, 60 teaching staff members, and nearly 300 students, along with distinguished guests and Karyakartas associated with the Vivekananda Kendra.

The event, organised under the leadership of Principal A Krishnan and coordinated by Anjan Purkayastha, aimed to reinforce the spirit of harmony and universal love envisioned by Swamiji.

Specific duties were assigned to teachers to ensure smooth and effective conduct of the program.

The celebrations commenced with the ceremonial lighting of the lamp, followed by the chanting of Omkaras and "Sahanabhavatu" by the chief guest, Jumar Basar, Superintendent of Police, Itanagar Capital Complex, alongside Principal A Krishnan, Adarniya Reena Didi, Education Officer of the Papum Pare cluster, Kalyan Dutta, Junior Engineer, and other dignitaries.

This opening ritual set a solemn and inspiring tone for the day's proceedings.

A major highlight of the event was the inauguration of VK-VAPT's annual magazine, Arohi - The Ascent, by the guest of honour, Taba Tatup ji, Prant Pramukh - Karyapaddhati.

The chief guest and principal also joined the ceremony, unveiling the magazine in front of an attentive audience.

The release of Arohi added academic and cultural depth to the celebration, reinforcing the school's commitment to holistic education. In his welcome address, Principal A Krishnan paid tribute to the teachings of Swami Vivekananda and the pioneering work of Eknathji Ranade.

He elaborated on the purpose of Universal Brotherhood Day as a reminder of the values of compassion, service, and unity.

A detailed speech on Swamiji's life and teachings was delivered by teacher Keshab Upadhyay.

He highlighted Swamiji's spiritual journey under the guidance of Ramakrishna Paramhansa, the founding of the Vivekananda Rock Memorial, and the historic 1893 Chicago address that introduced the message of universal brotherhood to the world.

Adding a creative touch to the proceedings, a student portrayed Swamiji's iconic appearance and enacted his Chicago speech, captivating the audience with a powerful performance that reflected the spirit of the day.

The guest of honour, Taba Tatup ji, in his address, provided an insightful overview of the mission and vision of Vivekananda Kendra.

He spoke about the organisation's foundational aim of "Man-Making and Nation-Building," the establishment of VKVs in 1977, and its initiatives in promoting women's empowerment and youth development.

He elaborated on the six guiding principles—Bhasa (language), Bhusa (knowledge), Bhojan (nutrition), Bhajan (spirituality), Bhraman (exploration), and Bhavan (thought)—as guiding elements for a purposeful life.

Adding further inspiration, Tai-

lyang Rilung, a Class IX student, recited Vivek Vani along with interpretations, demonstrating deep understanding and reverence for the teachings.

In his address, chief guest Jumar Basar lauded VKV's efforts to instill moral and ethical values among students.

He urged the younger generation to embrace Swamiji's call to "Be and Make," encouraging them to contribute positively to society.

Addressing the senior students, he underscored their responsibility to lead by example, while cautioning them about distractions.

Speaking to the younger students, he emphasised the importance of cultivating good character as the foundation for personal growth.

He also referenced recent events in Nepal to stress that real change begins with individual self-transformation.

Following the formal addresses, the celebrations continued with vibrant cultural performances.

Students presented action songs, Bharatnatyam sequences, dramatizations of Swamiji's life, patriotic dances, and traditional dances representing the Nyishi, Apatani, Manipuri, Galo, and Bangla communities, among others. Several performances also showcased Swamiji's message in local dialects, earning enthusiastic applause from the audience.

The event concluded on a spiritually uplifting note with a heartfelt vote of thanks delivered by Vice Principal VN Uthaman, who acknowledged the efforts and contributions of dignitaries, parents, staff, and students in making the celebration successful.

The program was anchored confidently by Class X students Jessica, Tumyir, Sanvi, and Gichik, who ensured the smooth flow of events.

The ceremony ended with the chanting of three Omkaras, "Bhadram Karnehvih," and the Kendra Prarthana, reinforcing the spirit of harmony and service.

According to the official statement released by the school, the celebration not only honored Swami Vivekananda's immortal message of universal brotherhood but also inspired the younger generation to uphold values of unity, service, and cultural pride.

The event stood as a testament to the enduring relevance of spiritual ideals in shaping responsible and compassionate citizens.

Khandu pays tribute to Vivekananda

ITANAGAR, Sept 11: Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu on Thursday paid tributes to Swami Vivekananda on his historic address at the World's Parliament of Religions in Chicago in 1893.

In a post on X, Khandu recalled the powerful opening words of Vivekananda's speech, "Sisters and Brothers of America," which won a thunderous response from the global audience and marked a turning point in the way India's spiritual wisdom was received worldwide.

"That one sentence broke barriers and touched hearts across the world," Khandu wrote in the post, stressing that Vivekananda's message of universal harmony continues to be relevant in today's divided times.

The chief minister underscored that the monk's guiding philosophy, "Unity in diversity is not just a slogan, it is the way forward", should inspire people to rise above divisions of religion, race, and background.

He said reviving Swamiji's timeless wisdom was essential to strengthen the social fabric and build a more harmonious future.

Khandu called upon citizens to rededicate themselves to the ideals of fraternity and compassion that lie at the heart of India's cultural ethos.

Universal Brotherhood Day, observed every year on September 11, commemorates Vivekananda's address that emphasised the values of tolerance, mutual respect, and unity among all faiths and communities.

Across the country, educational institutions, youth organisations, and cultural bodies mark the day by reflecting on the ideals of inclusivity and service to humanity. (PTI)

IMD forecasts heavy rain in Arunachal till Sept 15

ITANAGAR, Sept 11: The India Meteorological Department (IMD) on Thursday predicted heavy to very heavy rainfall in many parts of Arunachal Pradesh till September 15, and issued warnings for vulnerable districts.

The weather office predicted widespread rainfall in several districts during the day, with heavy showers most likely over Tawang, West Kameng, Papum Pare, East Kameng, Lower Subansiri, East Siang, West Siang, Dibang Valley, and Anjaw. Thunderstorms and lightning strikes were also expected at isolated locations, prompting a 'yellow' warning (be aware) for multiple districts.

The IMD issued a 'yellow alert' for several districts, warning about possible waterlogging and disruption of local transportation.

The intensity of rain is forecast to increase further on Saturday.

Namsai, Changlang, Tirap, Lohit, and parts of Lower Dibang Valley may experience heavy rainfall with thunderstorms, it said.

Community-led conservation key to future sustainability: Arunachal minister

ITANAGAR, Sept 11: Arunachal Pradesh Forest and Environment Minister Wangki Lowang has said that community-led conservation efforts are key to future sustainability.

Speaking at the 37th annual day celebration of the Northeast regional centre of the GB Pant National Institute of Himalayan Environment (GBPNIHE) here on Wednesday, the minister lauded the active role of the communities in the state in protecting wildlife.

He underlined the role of fallow periods in shifting cultivation for soil recovery, and called for identifying sustainable alternatives to ease pressure on forests.

Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (Wildlife and Biodiversity), Ngilyang Tam, in his address, de-

scribed Arunachal Pradesh as a biodiversity hotspot, with nearly 79 per cent of its area under forest cover, the highest in India, an official statement said on Thursday. Tam pointed to the 'Pakke Declaration' on climate change as a milestone, and highlighted ecotourism, carbon sequestration, and community-led management of sanctuaries as key pathways to sustainable development. Delivering the 12th Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant Himalayan Popular Lecture, Professor Padma Raj Gajurel of Northeast Regional Institute of Science and Technology (NERIST) spoke on "diversity of wild edible plants in the eastern Himalayan region -- management and conservation priorities for sustainable development". (PTI)

According to a forecast issued by the meteorological centre here, East Kameng, Papum Pare, Pakke-Kessang, West Kameng, East Siang, and Dibang Valley districts are expected to witness scattered to fairly widespread rainfall, accompanied by thunderstorms and lightning on Friday.

The weatherman issued an 'orange alert' (be prepared) for parts of central and eastern Arunachal Pradesh, advising residents to stay prepared for potential flooding in low-lying areas, and rising river levels. By Sunday, rainfall is expected to be more widespread, covering western Arunachal, including Tawang, West Kameng, and East Kameng, along with Upper Subansiri, West Siang, and Upper Siang.

The IMD forecast very heavy rainfall in isolated pockets and moderate to heavy rain across most other districts. An 'orange' warning was issued for several regions, urging precautionary measures. (PTI)

Khandu greets RSS chief on birthday, lauds his visionary leadership

ITANAGAR, Sept 11: Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu on Thursday extended warm greetings to Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) chief Mohan Bhagwat Ji, on his birthday, describing him as an inspirational figure whose contributions to nation-building continue to motivate millions across India. "On the auspicious occasion of the birthday of Aadaraniya Sarsanghachalak Shri Mohan Bhagwat Ji, I extend my heartfelt greetings and pranam. His visionary leadership and relentless dedication towards nation-building, social harmony, and cultural preservation continue to inspire millions across the country," Khandu said in a post on X.

"May Maa Bhagwati bless you with good health, long life, and continued strength in carrying out your noble service for a strong, united, and prosperous Bharat. Jai Hind, Jai Bharat," the chief minister added. Khandu's greetings reflect the growing resonance of Bhagwat's leadership, which has long emphasised strengthening grassroots initiatives, promoting cultural values, and fostering unity across communities.

The chief minister highlighted the role of such a vision in shaping an inclusive and stronger nation. Bhagwat, born on September 11, 1950, at Chandrapur in Maharashtra, is the sixth chief of the RSS. He took over as RSS chief in 2009, succeeding K S Sudarshan. (PTI)

Glacier retreat in Arunachal's Mago Chu basin poses flood risk: Scientist

'With winter snowfall almost absent, these glaciers are losing their natural recharge system'

ITANAGAR, Sept 11: A new study has found evidence of rapid glacier retreat, expanding high-altitude lakes and enhancing flood risk in the Mago Chu sub-basin of western Arunachal Pradesh, one of the most ecologically significant headwater zones of the Brahmaputra river, a scientist said.

It shows that the glaciers of the basin have lost nearly 28.5 per cent of their area between 1988 and 2019, equivalent to more than 15 square kilometres of ice.

The research was carried out by the Centre for Earth Sciences and Himalayan Studies (CESHS) here in collaboration with the National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research (NCPOR), IIT Roorkee, IIT Guwahati and other partner institutions.

Larger glaciers have fragmented into smaller ones, particularly on the south-west facing slopes, where ice loss has reached almost 50 per cent, the study said.

The Equilibrium Line Altitude (ELA), a critical indicator of glacier health, has risen by about 137 metres in the same period, confirming that the glaciers are not being replenished and remain in a state of negative mass balance, the researchers found.

"Glaciers in the Mago Chu are retreating faster than many parts of the Western Himalaya. What is more concerning is that large glaciers are breaking down into smaller and unstable fragments that are more vulnerable to melt and collapse," said Centre for Earth Sciences and Himalayan Studies (CESHS) Director Tana Tago told PTI.

The glacial retreat is not only a warning for Arunachal Pradesh but for the entire Brahmaputra basin across India, Bhutan and Bangladesh, he said.

"Strengthening our scientific capacity, engineering solutions, and community resilience is the only



way forward to safeguard both local heritage and downstream livelihoods," the director added.

He noted that the Mago Chu basin is "dominated by summer-accumulating glaciers, dependent on the monsoon for replenishment,

barely 900 millimetres. With winter snowfall almost absent, these glaciers are losing their natural recharge system," the director said.

The decline in ice cover has been accompanied by a dramatic growth in glacial lakes. In 1988, the basin had 15 lakes covering 0.71 sq km.

By 2017, the number had nearly doubled to 29, with a combined area of 2.11 sq km.

Four of these lakes are listed among the National Disaster Management Authority's 'high-risk' sites in the state, he said.

"We are now dealing with lakes that did not even exist a few decades ago. Some have grown from tiny depressions into reservoirs larger than 0.8 sq km. Without detailed bathymetry and moraine stability studies, it is difficult to say when or how these lakes might breach," Tago cautioned.

Recent field investigations have

confirmed the pace of change. CESHS researchers recorded nearly one metre of ice loss on Khangri Glacier during the last winter season with negligible snow accumulation, pointing to strong melt acceleration.

An automatic weather station and automatic water level recorder now provide real-time observations on climate and hydrology, the first such continuous data from this remote frontier, he said.

"For the first time, we are able to study glacier-climate interactions in real time in one of the easternmost high-altitude basins of the Himalaya. These observations validate what remote sensing has long indicated, that the glaciers are losing mass rapidly," he said.

The risks for downstream settlements are serious.

According to the scientist, hydrodynamic models suggest that a full breach of one of the high-risk

glacial lakes could release flood waves exceeding 12,000 cubic metres per second, inundating villages such as Mago, Thingbu and Chagzum and threatening hydropower installations along the valley.

"Science alone cannot save lives. We need to integrate our data with community preparedness, evacuation drills and early warning systems. The people of Tawang and neighbouring valleys have lived with these landscapes for centuries, and their resilience and knowledge must be part of the solution," Tago stressed.

Plans are also underway to establish a prefabricated permanent base camp in the state to support long-term cryosphere monitoring, he said.

According to the director, the Mago Chu basin is both a sentinel of global climate change and a testing ground for adaptation strategies. (PTI)

Two railway parcel vans to take Valley's fruits to Jammu

SRINAGAR/NEW DELHI, Sept 11: Indian Railways will operate two parcel vans to transport fruits from Kashmir Valley to Jammu and Delhi from Thursday, officials said.

The move will bring relief to the horticulture sector in Kashmir Valley, which has suffered losses due to the prolonged closure of the National Highway 44, or the Srinagar-Jammu highway, due to torrential rains and floods in the Union Territory, they said.

Meanwhile, Union Railways Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said that with the Jammu-Srinagar railway line now being operational, a parcel train will be introduced to transport apples daily from Budgam station in Kashmir to Adarsh Nagar in Delhi from Saturday.

Railway officials said, "Today, two parcel vans will depart from Budgam station: one bound for Delhi and the other for Jammu, both laden with the season's finest Kashmiri apples." This marks the advent of a transformative era in Kashmir's logistics, offering a faster and more reliable route for the Valley's celebrated horticultural produce to reach national markets, the officials said.

"By reducing the dependence on vulnerable road routes, these direct rail services signify a bold new chapter for commerce in the region -- invigorating the horticulture sector and providing fresh impetus to the economy of Kashmir as a whole," they added. Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said the move will empower the Valley's apple growers. (PTI)

Nitish Kumar 'medically alive' but 'brain dead', alleges RJD MP Sudhakar Singh

NEW DELHI, Sept 11: Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar is only "medically alive" but "brain dead", and imposing him on the people of Bihar would be an insult to them, Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) MP Sudhakar Singh said, expressing confidence over the Mahagathbandhan getting a two-thirds majority in the upcoming Bihar polls.

In an interview with PTI, Singh also said the Supreme Court's direction to include Aadhaar as one of the documents for the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) is a major victory for the marginalised sections, who faced the threat of being out of the voter list amid the exercise which seeks voters to submit documents establishing their citizenship of India.

Asked about the upcoming polls in Bihar, Singh, a Lok Sabha MP from Buxar, said Kumar has "mentally retired".

"People are going to vote for the next generation leadership of Tejashwi Yadav. Mahagathbandhan will come in the government with a two-thirds majority," Singh said.

"If you look at the Mahagathbandhan, we were only 12,000 votes behind the NDA even in the 2020 Bihar polls (despite all the manipulations by them). We were defeated by 12 votes in one seat, and in some other seats, we were defeated by 250 or 500 votes.

"But in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls, we improved our performance. Earlier, the RJD had one MP

India, Mauritius to facilitate bilateral trade in local currencies: PM Modi

India has always supported decolonization and the full recognition of Mauritius's sovereignty

VARANASI, Sept 11: India on Thursday announced an over USD 655 million special economic package for Mauritius and signed seven pacts to further expand bilateral ties in several critical sectors with Prime Minister Narendra Modi describing the two countries as not just partners but a family.

Following talks with his Mauritius counterpart Navinchandra Ramgoolam, Modi said a free, open, stable and prosperous Indian Ocean is a shared priority for both sides and India remains fully committed to strengthening the security of Mauritius's exclusive economic zone.

Modi also said that both sides will work towards enabling bilateral trade in local currencies following successful launch of UPI and RuPay cards in Mauritius.

Under the special economic package, India will assist Mauritius implement at least 10 projects that include strengthening key infrastructure like port, airport, and roads and to set up new schools and hospitals.

"This package is not an assistance. It is an investment in our shared future," Modi said in his media statement.

The seven agreements will facilitate



boosting cooperation in areas of education, power, hydrography and space research.

The most important pact signed following the Modi-Ramgoolam talks appears to be the one on hydrography under which both sides will work together on joint surveys, navigation charts, and hydrographic data of the exclusive economic zones of Mauritius.

"India and Mauritius are two nations, but our dreams and destiny are one," Modi said.

In his remarks to the media, the prime minister also congratulated Ramgoolam and the people of Mauritius on the conclusion of the Chagos agreement, describing it as a "historic victory" for the island nation's sovereignty.

"India has always supported decolonization and the full recognition of Mauritius's sovereignty. And in this, India has stood firmly with Mauritius," he said.

In May, the United Kingdom decided to hand over the sovereignty of Chagos Islands including tropical atoll of Diego Garcia to Mauritius under a historic deal.

The UK is giving up the rights of the islands after more than 50 years.

Under the agreement, the UK will have full responsibility for security of strategically-located Diego Garcia.

Ramgoolam, currently on a state visit to India from September 9 to 16, said India-Mauritius ties have entered into a dynamic and forward

looking phase. Modi also referred to close cooperation between the two countries in the maritime sphere.

"India has always stood as the first responder and a net security provider in the Indian Ocean region. The refitting of the Mauritius Coast Guard ship is being undertaken in India. In addition, 120 of their officers are also being trained in India," he said.

"Today, an agreement has been concluded on cooperation in the field of hydrography. Over the next five years, we will work together on joint surveys, navigation charts, and hydrographic data of the EEZ," he said.

The prime minister also announced a decision to establish a new directorate of science and technology in Mauritius.

"Very soon, we will also launch the training modules of Mission Karmayogi in Mauritius." The Indian Institute of Technology, Madras, and the Indian Institute of Plantation Management have entered into agreements with the University of Mauritius, he said.

These agreements will elevate our partnership in research, education, and innovation to new heights, he added. (PTI)

Modi in Uttarakhand: Announces financial assistance of ₹ 1,200 cr for disaster-hit areas

DEHRADUN, Sept 11: Prime Minister Narendra Modi here on Thursday announced a financial assistance of ₹ 1,200 crore for flood and rain-affected areas of Uttarakhand.

He also announced an ex gratia of ₹ 2 lakh for the families of the deceased and ₹ 50,000 for those left injured in a series of natural calamities that hit various districts of the hill state this monsoon.

He announced comprehensive support under the PM CARES for Children scheme to children orphaned due to the recent floods and landslides in the state.

The prime minister also met the affected families and offered his condolences.

He interacted with NDRF, SDRF personnel and disaster volunteers who lent a helping hand at ground zero during the disasters and praised their efforts.

The central government assures full support for the restoration and rebuilding of infrastructure in the affected regions, he said.

Earlier, Prime Minister Modi on Thursday reached Dehradun, where he was received at the Jolly Grant Airport by Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami.

Dhami said in a social media post soon after receiving the PM at the airport, "The prime minister's presence in the midst of the af-

ected people at this difficult time of disaster shows his sensitivity towards them."

Heavy rains, cloudbursts and landslides have ravaged various parts of Uttarakhand this monsoon including Dharali-Harsil in Uttarakashi, Tharali in Chamoli, Chenagad in Rudrapur, Sainji in Pauri, Kapkot in Bageshwar and parts of Nainital district.

According to an official estimate, natural disasters in Uttarakhand since April this year have so far claimed 85 lives, injured 128 people and left 94 missing.

The prime minister's visit follows a recent visit by an inter-ministerial team from the Centre to the affected areas of the state to assess the damage.

Prime Minister Modi arrived in Uttarakhand from his parliamentary constituency of Varanasi, where he met his Mauritius counterpart Navinchandra Ramgoolam.

On Tuesday, Modi was on a day-long visit to Himachal Pradesh and Punjab to review the flood situation in the two states. He took stock of the flood situation and also conducted aerial surveys of the flood-ravaged areas in the two states.

He announced a ₹ 1,600-crore assistance for flood-hit Punjab in addition to the ₹ 12,000 crore already in the state's kitty. (PTI)

J'khand BJP stages protests seeking CBI probe into Surya Hansda 'encounter death'

RANCHI/JAMSHEDPUR, Sept 11: Members of BJP's Jharkhand unit on Thursday staged demonstrations in all the district headquarters and 264 blocks of the state, demanding a CBI probe into the death of Surya Hansda in an alleged encounter.

The protesters also demanded the return of the land "forcibly" acquired from tribal farmers in Ranchi's Nagri area for the extension of the Rajendra Institute of Medical Sciences (RIMS).

In state capital Ranchi, the Akrosh march was led by state BJP president and leader of opposition Babul Marandi.

The march began at the zila school ground and concluded at the district collectorate, where a public meeting was held.

"The demonstration was staged across the state on two important issues: the 'encounter' death of Surya Hansda and forcible acquisition of land by the government in the name of RIMS-2 project. We are also submitting a memorandum to the governor through the block development officers and deputy commissioners," Marandi said.

Hansda, who contested multiple assembly polls and was also wanted in several criminal cases, was arrested from Nawadih village in Deoghar on August 10.

He died in an alleged encounter that took place while he was being taken to Rahadbadia hills by police to recover hidden weapons.

Hansda had allegedly snatched a weapon from police personnel and fired at them while attempting to flee the spot. The policemen retaliated, which resulted in his death, Godda police claimed.



Marandi said, "Hansda was a social and political leader. He was vocal against mafias. So, he was murdered under a well planned conspiracy."

On "forcible" acquisition of land by the government in Nagri for a hospital project, Marandi said, "We demand that the land be returned to the tribal farmers."

Former chief minister Raghubar Das, who led the march at Ranchi's Kanke block, said it was a token protest to warn the Hemant Soren government.

"If government did not take cognisance, the movement will be strengthened," Das added.

In Ghatsila sub-division, former chief minister and BJP leader Champai Soren strongly criticised the Hemant Soren-led coalition government for its alleged inaction while "outsiders" were grabbing land from poor tribals in the state through daanpatra

(deed of covenant).

Addressing a gathering during the Akrosh march at Dhalbhumgarh block office in Ghatsila sub-division, Soren alleged, "Outsiders, including Bangladeshis, are forcibly acquiring Adivasi land at throwaway prices using daanpatra, yet the Mahagathbandhan (Grand Alliance) government has failed to take any action."

Soren also accused the state government of turning a blind eye to critical issues affecting tribals and women.

"Women are being forced to take to the streets and shut down liquor shops. Instead of addressing the issue, the government is pushing youth towards addiction by opening liquor outlets even in Scheduled Areas," he said.

The BJP leader further claimed that the population of Bangladeshi infiltrators has increased significantly across the state, includ-

ing in the Santhal Pargana region, while the tribal population has been steadily declining.

"Does the government want to fill up the state with illegal Bangladeshi nationals and destroy the social fabric of Jharkhand?" Soren asked, challenging the intent of the ruling coalition.

Referring to Nagri, where land is being acquired for the RIMS-II project, Soren alleged that the government has installed wire fencing around the land without proper consultation.

"Villagers made several attempts to meet the CM, but he had no time for the past four months. This forced us to launch an agitation last month," he said, adding that tribals will strongly oppose the construction of RIMS-II on their agricultural land. Regarding the controversial encounter death of Hansda, Soren said, "He was a social activist who motivated tribal children to study. He had even built a hostel for them using his own resources. He was falsely implicated in criminal cases because he raised his voice for labourers, poor Adivasis, Dalits, and against illegal mining. He was murdered in a fake encounter orchestrated by the state government."

Reacting to BJP's protest, Jharkhand Congress alleged that the saffron party was trying to give a political colour to Hansda's case. "The BJP took to the streets to encourage criminal forces. For BJP, criminals are more important than the state's people. Hansda encounter was a part of police action. BJP is trying to give it a political colour to create confusion among people," Jharkhand Congress general secretary and media in-charge Rakesh Sinha said. (PTI)

The experts said India is witnessing a sharp rise in overweight and obesity across all age groups UNICEF flags sharp rise of obesity across all age groups in India



NEW DELHI, Sept 11: Experts from UNICEF India on Thursday highlighted that the country is witnessing a sharp rise in obesity across all age groups due to factors including sedentary lifestyle and a high consumption of ultra-processed foods.

According to UNICEF's Child Nutrition Global Report 2025 released on Thursday, obesity has, for the first time, surpassed underweight globally as the most common form of malnutrition among school-aged children and adolescents.

The experts said India is witnessing a sharp rise in overweight and obesity across all age groups -- from young children to adults.

One in ten children worldwide, nearly 188 million, now live with obesity, they said, adding that once considered a condition of affluence, obesity is spreading rapidly in low and middle-income countries, including India.

Countries in South Asia had the lowest prevalence of overweight in 2000, but by 2022, the prevalence increased almost fivefold among children and teenagers aged 5-19.

In India, the National Family Health Survey (NFHS) data shows a sharp surge in overweight and obesity among under-five children, with prevalence rising by 127 per cent (from 1.5 per cent to 3.4 per cent between NFHS-3 in 2005-06 and NFHS-5 in 2019-21).

and obesity increased by 125 per cent in girls (2.4 per cent to 5.4 per cent) and a striking 288 per cent in boys (1.7 per cent to 6.6 per cent).

In adults, obesity rose by 91 per cent among women (12.6 per cent to 24.0 per cent) and 146 per cent among men (9.3 per cent to 22.9 per cent), pointing to a nationwide health crisis.

By 2030, India is expected to be home to over 27 million children and adolescents (5-19 years) living with obesity, accounting for 11 per cent of the global burden, according to experts.

The Indian Economic Survey 2024-25 highlighted the role of UPFs in this epidemic. UPF consumption surged from USD 900 million in 2006 to USD 37.9 billion in 2019, growing at over 33 per cent annually.

Between 2011 and 2021, retail sales of UPFs grew at a compound annual growth rate of 13.7 per cent.

The experts said that these foods -- high in fat, sugar, and salt -- are increasingly replacing fruits, vegetables, and traditional diets, while aggressive marketing campaigns and their easy availability are shaping food choices.

The Child Nutrition Report points to early life factors contributing to rising obesity, including inadequate maternal nutrition, insufficient breast-feeding, and poor childhood dietary practices.

Social and gender norms also play a role, with adolescent girls and women often eating least and last. UNICEF's global U-Report poll found that over two-thirds of

young people are exposed to unhealthy food marketing, with 75 per cent seeing advertisements, mostly on social media, for sugary drinks, fast food, or snacks in the week prior to the poll.

"With this high level of media exposure and easy access to unhealthy food, India is also following the same global trend with rapid rise in children and adolescents with overweight and obesity," said Marie-Claude Desilets, Chief Nutrition at UNICEF India.

"The country is beginning to face the triple burden of malnutrition, stunting and wasting, micronutrient deficiencies and obesity.? Often coexisting in the same family or even the same person," she said.

Desilets said that India has a unique opportunity to act now to prevent children from obesity.

The economic costs are equally alarming. The World Obesity Federation estimated obesity-related costs at nearly USD 29 billion in 2019, or 1 per cent of India's GDP.

By 2060, this figure is projected to reach USD 839 billion (2.5 per cent of GDP) unless urgent measures are taken. Poor diets are now the leading contributor to India's disease burden, accounting for 56 per cent, according to ICMR-National Institute of Nutrition (2024).

Dr. William Joe, Assistant Professor at Delhi's Institute of Economic Growth, noted that once established in childhood or adolescence, obesity is extremely difficult to reverse and often persists into adulthood, leading to diabetes, car-

diovascular disease, hypertension, and some cancers.

"The economic and psychological impacts are severe,? from draining household savings to stigma and low self-esteem," he added.

The government has launched several initiatives to address the challenge, including the Fit India Movement, Eat Right India campaign, POSHAN Abhiyaan 2.0, and school-based health and wellness programmes.

Measures such as guidance to reduce sugar and oil intake in schools and offices, along with trans-fat regulations, have also been introduced.

India has been acknowledged as the first lower-middle-income country to adopt WHO's best-practice policy to limit trans-fat, while promoting healthier diets through "Eat Right" schools. Experts and partners, including the Let's Fix Our Food (LFOF) consortium led by ICMR-NIN and UNICEF, have recommended policies such as health taxes on high-fat, sugar, and salt foods along with front-of-pack nutrition labelling, restrictions on junk food marketing, double-duty actions in public-funded programmes, and improved nutrition literacy among children and youth.

"Malnutrition today is no longer only about undernutrition, the rapid rise of obesity, fuelled by unhealthy foods and beverages, is driving non-communicable diseases even among children and young people," said Arjan De Wagt, UNICEF India's Deputy Representative for programmes. (PTI)

Primary, upper primary teaching job aspirants protest before WB Assembly

KOLKATA, Sept 11: Around 200 candidates, all claiming to have qualified the Teacher Eligibility Test (TET) exam of 2022, demonstrated before the West Bengal Assembly on Thursday, demanding immediate recruitment in primary and upper primary schools across the state.

The protesters, who held a rally from Dorina Crossing at Esplanade to the Assembly, scuffled with police as cops tried to stop them as they approached the assembly gates.

Protesters carrying placards were later detained and bundled into police vans after being removed from the high-security zone.

They also met the leader of Opposition and BJP leader Suvendu Adhikari who voiced solidarity with the agitators.

"We have been waiting for three years, but the government is yet to initiate the interview process for over 50,000 vacant teaching posts. They continue to assign academic responsibilities to para teachers and part-time instructors, while eligible candidates like us are kept waiting," said Soumya Burman, a TET 2022 qualifier.

"We are with you. This corrupt TMC regime has pushed you to such a situation. They have lost all credibility among educated youth of the state," Adhikari told the protesting TET candidates. (PTI)

No. SLRC-G-III/91/Advertisement/2023/94,

NOTICE

In continuation to No. SLRC-G-this Commission's advertisement III/91/Advertisement/2023/2, dated 30/10/2023 and subsequent Notice No. SLRC-G-III/91/Advertisement/2023/86, dated 19/06/2025, it is hereby informed that candidates, whose Roll numbers are available in the official website of Assam State School Education Board (ASSEB) www.sebaonline.org vide Notice No.SLRC-G-III/91/Advertisement/2023/93, dated 11/09/2025 will have to appear for further verification of their documents on 16/09/2025 as per details mentioned in the notice.

Sd/-
Secretary,
State Level Recruitment Commission for Class-III Posts
AASC, Khanapara, Guwahati-22.
DIPR /D/HLT/161/12-Sep-25

Normal life affected in Tripura's Kailashahar due to bandh

AGARTALA, Sept 11: Normal life was affected due to a 12-hour bandh called by the Tripura unit of the Congress in Kailashahar in Unakoti district on Thursday.

The Congress called the bandh, which started at 6 am, in support of its 11-point charter of demands, including the revival of Kailashahar airport and extension of the railway link to the town, which is the district headquarters of Unakoti.

No untoward incident has been reported during the bandh so far, police. Congress leaders and workers blocked roads in some areas by burning tyres.

Educational institutions and markets were shut, while vehicles remained off the roads, and attendance in government offices was thin. Banks and other financial institutions also remained closed.

"As of now, the situation in Kailashahar is peaceful and under control. We have asked the political party to observe the bandh peacefully. Police will take strict action if any attempt is made to incite violence," Unakoti SP Subhambika R told reporters.

Congress Legislature Party leader Birajit Sinha claimed the bandh was successful with people's support.

"The revival of Kailashahar airport is important because of the changing security challenges in the border town. Bangladesh has reportedly developed an airbase at Samsarganj, which is on the other side of the border. Therefore, we demand the revival of our dormant airport due to strategic reasons," he said.

Sinha claimed that at least 250 Congress workers, including district president Badruzzaman, have been detained by the police for enforcing the bandh. (PTI)

PM to visit Manipur on Saturday Security measures beefed up in Manipur



IMPHAL, Sept 11: Security measures have been tightened in Imphal and Churachandpur district headquarters town ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's likely visit to Manipur on Saturday, officials said.

Both state and central forces personnel have been deployed in large numbers in and around the nearly 237-acre Kangla Fort in Imphal and Peace Ground in Churachandpur, where a grand stage is being constructed for the prime minister's function.

Modi is likely to arrive in Manipur from Mizoram, but there has been no official announcement regarding it, either from New Delhi or Imphal. Several preparatory meetings have been held in the state in view of the visit.

This would be Modi's first visit to Manipur after ethnic violence broke out between Kukis

and Meiteis in May 2023. Over 250 people have been killed and thousands rendered homeless as a result of the violence.

Frisking and checking have been intensified at Sanjenthong, Minuthong and Moirangkhom areas, which all lead to Kangla Fort.

Central security teams, accompanied by state personnel, are conducting round-the-clock inspection of Kangla Fort and boats of the state disaster management force have been employed for patrolling the moats which surround the fort.

Kangla Fort served as the ancient seat of power for the then Manipuri rulers before the annexation of the princely kingdom in 1891. The fort, which is surrounded by moats on three different sides and Imphal river on the Eastern side, encloses a large polo field, a small forest,

ruins of temples and state archaeological offices.

A central security official told PTI, "Sniffer dogs and advanced tools are being used to detect any unwanted materials. Security personnel are taking turns to patrol the periphery and premises of the fort on foot to scan for any unwanted signs. Entry of all to the fort is being registered and checked, and tourist access to the fort has been restricted.

Another official said that "maximum alert has been issued and drills are being conducted under the supervision of high-ranking officials." Daily meetings of security officials are also underway to oversee the situation, the official said.

Meanwhile, an advance team of central security officials also landed in Churachandpur.

Police and paramilitary forces have been deployed and bamboo barricades constructed along the route leading to the Peace Ground, where the Prime minister is likely to address a public meeting.

Barricades are being constructed on both sides of the road with bamboo from the BSF Camp to the Peace ground. The entire road stretch has been decorated with flowers.

Security forces have been deployed at Peace ground.

Elsewhere in the state, security forces also intensified search operations and area domination throughout all vulnerable and fringe areas of the state.

Temporary checkpoints have been installed by state forces and CRPF, both in the hills and valley districts, to check the movement of anti-social elements.

Three militants were arrested in the last 48 hours as the crackdown on anti-socials intensified in the state. One cadre of the banned PREPAK was arrested with a 9mm pistol from his Langthabal Kunja residence in Imphal West district.

A militant of the proscribed United National Liberation Front (Koireng) was also arrested from Sunusiphal in Bishnupur district. Another cadre of the banned KCP (Taibangganba) was arrested from Wangkhei in Imphal East district on Tuesday. (PTI)

UNC suspends blockade

SENAPATI, Sept 11: The United Naga Council (UNC) has "temporarily suspended" its indefinite "trade embargo" or economic blockade from 6 pm of September 11 following a written assurance from the government that "there will be prior consultations with the UNC and other stakeholders" before taking up works pertaining to the issue. The "trade embargo" was enforced by the UNC on the issues concerning the Free Movement Regime (FMR) and border fencing work.

The decision to suspend the blockade was taken during the "emergency presidential council meeting" on Thursday in UNC office, Senapati.

Following this development, UNC leaders confided to Newmai News Network tonight that they will make a proposal to the government to resume the dialogue in the fourth week of September, 2025, and that the dialogue should be held in "Naga areas". The proposal to hold the dialogue in "Naga areas" was pressed when the UNC leaders met the Manipur Governor last month.

Meanwhile, in a press statement issued this evening, the UNC said, "On receipt of the Government of Manipur letter No. H-802/6/2025-HD-HD dated 10th September, 2025 for resumption of tripartite meeting of the United Naga Council

(UNC) with the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), Government of India, and the Government of Manipur on the issue of abrogation of Free Movement Regime and border fencing along the imaginary Indo-Myanmar border in Naga areas, an emergency presidential council meeting of the

United Naga Council was held on September 11, 2025 at Tahamzam (Senapati)". According to the UNC statement, the meeting appreciated the government's acknowledgement of the past engagements of the UNC and the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) and also their confirmation of receipt of memoranda/representation on the "above issues". The assurance of the government that there will be prior consultations with the UNC and other stakeholders before the "stated works are taken up was well received", said the UNC statement. In view of the above, the "presidential Council" resolved to suspend the "ongoing trade embargo in Naga areas temporarily with effect from 6 pm of September 11, 2025", the statement also said.

The UNC, through this statement, said that kit "places on record its appreciation to all the tribe, women, student and youth organizations and the Naga public in general for their support and solidarity towards the effective observation of the trade embargo". (NNV)

Manipur gov bans air guns in Churachandpur

IMPHAL, Sept 11: The Manipur government banned air guns in Churachandpur district in view of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's likely visit on September 13, according to an order. The order issued by District Magistrate Dharun Kumar S said the "use, carrying and brandishing" of air guns in Churachandpur district have been banned with immediate effect and until further orders under Section 163 of the BNS. "VVIP is scheduled to visit Churachandpur district, and elaborate security arrangements are being made to ensure smooth conduct of the programme. It has been observed that the carrying, use or brandishing of air guns may cause alarm, confusion or pose a potential security threat during the VVIP movement," the order said on Wednesday. (PTI)

Security beefed up in Mizoram ahead of PM's visit

AIZAWL, Sept 11: Security has been beefed up across Mizoram in view of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to the state on Saturday when he will inaugurate a railway line and flag off new trains, a senior police officer said here.

Mizoram Inspector General of Police (Law and Order) H Ramthlangliana told PTI that all police units across the state have been alerted, and elaborate security arrangements were made in the state capital Aizawl.

Additionally, two companies each of Border Security Force (BSF) and Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) will also be deployed in Aizawl apart from the state police, he said.

Ramthlangliana said that strict vigilance is being maintained in the areas where the Prime Minister's entourage will move.

Aizawl Senior Superintendent Ruatsanga Ralte notified traffic regulations as part of the security arrangement.

"No vehicles should be parked and no material or stuff should be placed along the stretch of Thuampui to Venghlui area via Ramhlun and Chaltlang, and along the road from Lengpui airport to Edenthar in Aizawl on Saturday between 6 am and 1 pm, which can obstruct movement of the PM's escort," the notification said. It said that no vehicles will be allowed to ply on the road from Falkland junction near Thuampui to Sikulpukaw junction in the southern part of Aizawl via Ramhlun and Chaltlang between

8:30 am and 1 pm on Saturday. Vehicles should also not ply on the road between Bawngkawn junction and Thuampui junction via helipad between 6 am and 1 pm on Saturday and all heavy vehicles, medium vehicles and mini trucks should not enter Aizawl from 7 pm on Friday till 7 pm on Saturday, it said.

Aizawl Municipal Corporation (AMC) also told residents to close all roadside shops and private offices along the Thuampui-Lammual road where the PM's entourage will pass till he leaves the state on Saturday.

Modi will inaugurate the new Bairabi-Sairang broad-gauge railway line, which will link Aizawl to the rest of the country, officials said. He will also flag off the first Rajdhani train service between Aizawl and Delhi and two more train services between Aizawl and Kolkata, and Aizawl and Guwahati, they said.

The Prime Minister is expected to arrive at Lengpui airport, about 37 km from Aizawl, around 9 am.

From Lengpui, he will be airlifted to Thuampui helipad by a helicopter.

He will address a public meeting at Aizawl's Lammual at 10 am and inaugurate the railway line, according to officials.

The PM will also inaugurate two educational institutions and lay the foundation stones for six projects besides flagging off three train services -- Aizawl-Delhi, Aizawl-Kolkata and Aizawl-Guwahati during his visit, they said. (PTI)

Advisory for people from Nagaland stranded in Nepal

HT Correspondent DIMAPUR, Sept 11: The Nagaland government said the Union ministry of external affairs has issued an advisory for emergency and other support for any person from Nagaland stranded in Nepal in view of the developing situation in the country.

According to Nagaland principal secretary Abhijit Sinha on Thursday, the stranded people from the state have been advised to contact the state emergency operation centre (SEOC), Nagaland State Disaster Management Authority, under the home department seoc.ndma@gmail.com or sdma.nagaland@gmail.com or 0370-2291122/2291120/2291123.

They have also been advised to contact the Embassy of India, Kathmandu, at helpline numbers 977-9808602881/977-981032613.

Further, the people from Nagaland presently in Nepal have been urged to take shelter in their current places of residence, avoid going out onto the streets and exercise all due caution.

They have also been asked to follow local safety advisories from Nepal authorities as well as the Embassy of India in Kathmandu.

On Wednesday, the Naga Students' Federation (NSF) appealed to the Nagaland government for its urgent intervention in facilitating the return of the Naga students and youth, who are currently stranded in Nepal. Expressing deep concern over their plight, NSF president Mteising and general secretary Kenlio Kent urged the state government to coordinate with the Union ministry of external affairs and other relevant agencies to arrange necessary travel support, documentation and transit assistance to ensure their safe return to the state.

Joint survey of enemy property begins in Tripura's Sepahijala

BISHRAMGANJ (TRIPURA), Sept 11: A two-member team of Custodian for Enemy Property for India (CEPI) has begun joint inspection along with state Revenue department of identified enemy property in Tripura's Sepahijala district, an official said on Thursday.

Under the Enemy Property Act, 1968, the CEPI, which functions under the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), is the custodian of property in India owned by

Pakistani nationals.

"Following directive from the Centre, we have identified as many as 2,249 enemy properties measuring approximately 27 acres of land across the district. Out of which, altogether 615 plots have been vested to the CEPI after fulfilling all procedures in the past six months, while the process is on to hand over the remaining plots," District Magistrate (DM), Sepahijala, Siddharth Shiv Jaiswal told PTI. (PTI)

11 best-performing Anganwadi centres and workers felicitated Wokha dist ranks 4th in PMMVY campaign in country

HT Correspondent DIMAPUR, Sept 11: Wokha district ranked 4th nationally and led Nagaland in the Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY) campaign.

The Wokha division of the state social welfare department organised a programme to mark the successful completion of the PMMVY campaign drive in the district at the DC's conference hall on Thursday.

Addressing the programme, Wokha DC and chairman of Mission Shakti Wokha Vineet Kumar acknowledged the dedication and tireless efforts of Anganwadi workers across the district.

He highlighted the multifaceted challenges faced by field workers and encouraged them to continue their transformative role in improving the lives of women and children through committed service.

Supervisor, social welfare department, Nchumthung and Anganwadi worker from Chukitong, Nchumbeni Ezung, shared their experiences in the programme, reflecting on their journey dur-



ing the campaign and the impact created at the grassroots level.

As part of their recognition, 11 best-performing Anganwadi centres and workers were felicitated with certificates and cash incentives at the programme, while five sector supervisors received certificates for outstanding performance.

The PMMVY commitment drive was conducted from July 15 to August 15 across Wokha district.

The district achieved a remarkable milestone, reflecting significant progress

and effective implementation.

The PMMVY is a maternity benefit scheme launched by the Government of India to support pregnant and lactating women, particularly from economically weaker sections.

Under PMMVY 2.0, eligible beneficiaries receive Rs 5,000 for the first child and Rs 6,000 for the second child if it is a girl.

The scheme promotes institutional delivery, proper nutrition, and early child-care.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW TRAIN SERVICES BETWEEN SAIRANG AND ANAND VIHAR TERMINAL (WEEKLY), SAIRANG AND GUWAHATI (DAILY) & SAIRANG AND KOLKATA (TRI-WEEKLY)

It has been decided to introduce Train No. 20507/20508 Sairang - Anand Vihar Terminal - Sairang Rajdhani Express (Weekly), Train No. 15609/15610 Sairang - Guwahati - Sairang Express (Daily) and Train No. 13125/13126 Sairang - Kolkata - Sairang Express (Tri-weekly). Inaugural run of the service between Sairang and Anand Vihar Terminal will be flagged off from Sairang Railway Station tentatively at 10.00 hrs. on 13-09-2025, between Sairang and Guwahati will be flagged off from Bairabi Railway Station tentatively at 10.00 hrs. on 13-09-2025 and between Sairang and Kolkata will be flagged off from Bairabi Railway Station tentatively at 10.00 hrs. on 13-09-2025. The Timings and stoppages of inaugural special and regular run are as under:

Table for Inaugural Run: 02057 Sairang-Anand Vihar (T) Inaugural Special. Columns: Stations, ARR, DEP, Day. Rows include Sairang, Bairabi, Hallakandi, Badarpur Jn., New Haflong, Hojai, Guwahati, Rangiya Jn., Barpeta Road, New Bongaigaon, New Jalpaiguri, Anand Vihar Terminal.

Table for Inaugural Run: 05609 Bairabi - Sairang Inaugural Special. Columns: Stations, ARR, DEP, Day. Rows include Bairabi, Sairang.

Table for Inaugural Run: 05610 Sairang - Guwahati Inaugural Special. Columns: Stations, ARR, DEP, Day. Rows include Sairang, Bairabi, Hallakandi, Katakhal Jn., Badarpur Jn., New Harangajao, New Haflong, Maibang, Lumding, Hojai, Chaparmukh, Jagiroad, Guwahati.

Other Commercial Stoppages: New Coochbehar, Malda Town, Sahibganj Jn., Bhagalpur, Jamalpur Jn., Patna Jn., Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Jn. and Kanpur Central.

COMPOSITION: AC first Class (One), AC-2 Tier (Four), AC-3 Tier (Twelve), AC Hot Buffet Car (One), Brake, Luggage cum Generator Car (Two) = 20 Coaches.

REGULAR RUN

Table for Regular Run: Train No. 20507 Sairang - Anand Vihar (T) Rajdhani Express (Weekly) w.e.f. 19-09-2025 and Train No. 20508 Anand Vihar (T) - Sairang Rajdhani Express (Weekly) w.e.f. 21-09-2025. Columns: Day, ARR, DEP, STATIONS, ARR, DEP, Day.

REGULAR RUN

Table for Regular Run: Train No. 15609 Guwahati - Sairang Express (Daily) w.e.f. 13-09-2025 and Train No. 15610 Sairang - Guwahati Express (Daily) w.e.f. 14-09-2025. Columns: ARR, DEP, STATIONS, ARR, DEP.

Other Commercial Stoppages: Sahibganj Jn., Bhagalpur, Jamalpur Jn., Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Jn. and Kanpur Central.

COMPOSITION: AC first Class (One), AC-2 Tier (Four), AC-3 Tier (Twelve), AC Hot Buffet Car (One), Brake, Luggage cum Generator Car (Two) = 20 Coaches.

INAUGURAL RUN

Table for Inaugural Run: 03126 Bairabi-Kolkata Inaugural Special. Columns: Stations, ARR, DEP, Day. Rows include Bairabi, Hallakandi, Badarpur Jn., New Haflong, Hojai, Guwahati, Kamakhya, Goalpara Town, Abhayapuri Asam, Bilasipara, Gauripur, Golakganj Jn., Tufanganj, New Coochbehar, New Jalpaiguri, Kishanganj, Malda Town, Azimganj Jn., Kolkata.

REGULAR RUN

Table for Regular Run: Train No. 13125 Kolkata - Sairang Express (Tri-Weekly) w.e.f. 16-09-2025 and Train No. 13126 Sairang - Kolkata Express (Tri-Weekly) w.e.f. 18-09-2025. Columns: Day, ARR, DEP, STATIONS, ARR, DEP, Day.

Other Commercial Stoppages: New Farakka Jn., Jangipur Road, Murshidabad, Berhampore Court, Krishnanagar City Jn. and Naihati Jn.

COMPOSITION: AC-2 Tier (Two), AC-3 Tier (Five), AC-3 Tier Economy (Two), Sleeper Class (Seven), General Second Class (Four), Brake, Luggage cum Generator Car (One) & SLRD (One) = 22 Coaches.

Other Commercial Stoppages: Naihati Jn., Krishnanagar City Jn., Berhampore Court, Murshidabad, Azimganj Jn., Jangipur Road, New Farakka Jn., Malda Town, Kishanganj, New Coochbehar, Tufanganj, Golakganj Jn., Gauripur, Bilasipara, Abhayapuri Asam, Goalpara Town and Kamakhya.

COMPOSITION: AC-2 Tier (Two), AC-3 Tier (Five), AC-3 Tier Economy (Two), Sleeper Class (Seven), General Second Class (Four), Brake, Luggage cum Generator Car (One) & SLRD (One) = 22 Coaches.

General Manager (Operations) NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAYS "SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE"

NEW DELHI, Sept 11: Actor Siddharth will feature alongside Freida Pinto in "Unaccustomed Earth", the upcoming series adaptation of author Jhumpa Lahiri's short story collection of the same title.

Described as an "epic, soapy, and culturally vibrant drama about a tight-knit Indian American community navigating love, desire, and belonging", the eight-episode project comes from streaming service Netflix, a press release said.

"When a star-crossed romance between a devoted wife and her long-lost love comes to light, a scandalous affair is born and new battle lines are drawn in this intensely interconnected immigrant community," the official logline read.

Pinto, known for starring in critically-acclaimed and award-winning movies such as "Slumdog Millionaire", "Rise of the Planet of the Apes", "You Will Meet a Tall Dark Stranger" and "Love Sonia", will essay the role of Parul Chaudhury.

Siddharth, who has featured in movies such as "Rang De Basanti", "Chithha" and "Bommarillu", will portray Amit Mukherjee, a warm-hearted Bengali American man, born and raised in Cambridge, Massachusetts, who wears his emotions openly and gives of himself freely, sometimes to his own detriment.

"The friend all his own friends turns to in a crisis, Amit is dependable in moments of need but struggles to find stability in work or love. Just as his latest relationship begins to feel promising, his carefully balanced world unravels with the unexpected return of his long-lost love," according to the character description.

The series will be written by John Wells, best known for developing hit American show "Shameless" and directing

SIDDHARTH TO CO-STAR WITH FREIDA PINTO IN NETFLIX SHOW 'UNACCUSTOMED EARTH'



movies such as "August: Osage County" and "Burnt", in collaboration with Madhuri Shekar, who will serve as the showrunner. Ritesh Batra, the director of "The Lunchbox" and "Photograph", will helm and executive produce the first and second episodes.

Filmmaker Nisha Ganatra, who had originally optioned the book and developed the series, will also executive produce. Lahiri will executive produce as well, along with Erica Saleh, Erin Jontow and Celia Costas. Her 2003 novel "The Namesake" was famously adapted into a 2006 film by Mira Nair, starring Kal Penn, Tabu, and Irrfan Khan.

"Unaccustomed Earth" will be produced by Warner Bros Television, where Wells is under an overall deal. (PTI)

Tiger Shroff's 'Baaghi 4' earns ₹ 50.74 crore at box office



NEW DELHI, Sept 11: Tiger Shroff-starrer "Baaghi 4" has crossed ₹ 50 crore mark at the domestic box office, the makers announced on Thursday.

Produced by Sajid Nadiadwala's banner Nadiadwala Grandson Entertainment, the film also features Sanjay Dutt alongside Sonam Bajwa and former Miss Universe Harnaaz Sandhu. The action thriller movie, directed by popular Kannada director A Harsha in his Hindi film debut, was released in theatres on September 5.

Production banner shared the latest box office numbers on its social media handles, featuring the film's poster. It stated that the movie has earned ₹ 50.74 crore in net box office collection.

"From the first punch to every packed house, it's your love that powers #Baaghi4 every single day," read the caption.

"Baaghi 4" features Tiger as Ronny, a man who, after surviving an attempted suicide by train, descends into chaos as reality blurs.

It also stars Shreyas Talpade and Saurabh Sachdeva in pivotal roles.

The film is the fourth instalment in Tiger's "Baaghi" franchise, which started with 2016's "Baaghi", followed by "Baaghi 2" (2018) and "Baaghi 3" (2020). (PTI)

Shah Rukh Khan's Meer Foundation extends relief to flood-hit families in Punjab



MUMBAI, Sept 11: Bollywood superstar Shah Rukh Khan's Meer Foundation has reached out to families affected by the recent floods in Punjab and distributed essential relief kits to support their rehabilitation, the organisation said on Thursday.

Punjab is reeling from one of its worst flood disasters in decades, triggered by the swelling of the Sutlej, Beas and Ravi rivers, along with seasonal rivulets, following heavy rainfall in their catchment areas in Himachal Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir.

The initiative, undertaken in partnership with local NGOs, will cover 1,500 households across Amritsar, Patiala, Fazilka and Ferozepur districts, the foundation said in a statement.

The relief kits include medicines, hygiene supplies, food items, mosquito

nets, tarpaulin sheets, folding beds and cotton mattresses, among other essentials. The drive aims to address the immediate health, safety and shelter needs of flood-affected families while helping them rebuild their lives with dignity, it added.

Last week, Shah Rukh had extended support to the people of Punjab in a post on social media platform X.

"My heart goes out to those in Punjab impacted by these devastating floods. Sending prayers and strength. The spirit of Punjab shall never break. May God bless them all," the 59-year-old actor wrote in the post.

Meer Foundation, a philanthropic initiative founded by Khan, has in the past supported disaster relief efforts and social campaigns across different parts of the country. (PTI)

Actor Pooja Hegde to star opposite Dulquer Salmaan in upcoming film

NEW DELHI, Sept 11: Actor Pooja Hegde will star alongside Dulquer Salmaan in his next feature film, the makers have announced.

The yet-untitled movie is Salmaan's 41st feature project and will be directed by Ravi Nelakuditi, who earlier helmed Mahesh Babu-starrer "Sarkaru Vaari Paata" (2022). It will be produced by SLV Cinemas.

The banner shared a video on Instagram from the sets of the upcoming film on Wednesday to announce Hegde's casting.

"Welcoming the enchanting @hedgepooja on board for #DQ41. DQ and Pooja's chemistry will be magical on the big screens," the studio captioned the post.

The video showed Salmaan and Hegde looking at their camera footages and some behind the scenes banter among the stars while the words "Welcome on board Pooja Hegde" flashed across the screen. Hegde was last seen in the 2025 Tamil film "Retro", co-starring Suriya, and the Hindi film "Deva" with Shahid Kapoor. Salmaan most recently appeared in a cameo in Kalyani Priyadarshan's superhero movie "Lokah: Chapter 1 - Chandra", which he also produced through his production company Wayfarer Films. (PTI)



Not a global citizen if I don't talk about uncomfortable things: Anuparna Roy on her speech after Venice win

MUMBAI, Sept 11: She had no speech ready but Anuparna Roy, the first Indian to win the Orizzonti Award for Best Director for her debut film "Songs of Forgotten Trees" at the recent Venice International Film Festival, knew exactly what she would say if given the mic -- and the stage.

It had to be about Palestine.

"If I have a mic and I'm not talking about these uncomfortable things, I won't consider myself a global citizen. I'll be just a random bourgeoisie ignoring everything possible happening around. I don't have the power to change the global politics of India or Palestine but it is my responsibility to point it out," Roy told PTI in a virtual interview.

Not unexpectedly, Roy hit the headlines. For her award and for her fiery acceptance speech from the global stage in Venice.

"It's a responsibility at the moment to stand by Palestine. I might upset my country but it doesn't matter to me anymore," she said on the stage, describing her film as a tribute to "every woman who's ever been silenced, overlooked, or underestimated".

Recalling that unforgettable September 6 evening, Roy said she had no script in hand and others around were ready with what they would talk about.

"I'm like 'I know I'm going to ruin it and I might end up crying'. I talked with my producers and they were

also worried about it but they said 'just say whatever you feel like'. They gave me the courage to talk about it. It was not planned. I was shaking," she said.

In fact, her sari, which was designed by Assam's Muskan Mittal and features a tribal painting from her home in Purulia, also has a Palestine flag in the border.

The glittering stage in Venice is miles away -- literally and metaphorically -- from Narayanpur village in West Bengal's Purulia where Roy grew up. She graduated in English literature from Kulti College under Burdwan University before moving to Delhi to study mass communication before finally pursuing her cinema dreams in Mumbai. Encouraged by her parents, the self-taught filmmaker found her voice and her medium.

Before her lyrically titled debut feature made a splash, her short film "Run to the River" was selected in the Cheboksary Festival in Russia in 2023.

The short film, Roy said, was inspired from the works of Satyajit Ray, Ritwick Ghatak and Jafar Panahi, and primarily comes from the life of her maternal grandmother who kept talking about rivers familiarly though she had never seen one due to her marriage at the age of nine.

"It was my first film. But the urge of telling the story of my nani was very personal, I sort of ended up



making it political, just like any cool filmmaker," she said.

"I never thought I'd get into filmmaking. I thought I'll end up writing a script. I ended up writing a very bizarre script, it was my first script ("Run to the River")." The "Songs of Forgotten Trees" takes that sensibility further.

It follows the story of Thooya, a migrant and aspiring actor who survives the city by leveraging beauty and wit. She meets a fellow migrant working a corporate job and sublets her sugar daddy's upscale apartment to her. The two women -- seemingly from different worlds -- discover a silent empathy.

The film, initially titled "White

Ghost", also draws inspiration from the life of her childhood friend Jhuma and her grandmother, both married off young but in different eras.

Roy's initial idea was to "find her friend Jhuma through a documentary", but since she didn't get funding to make it, things didn't take off.

"The moment I was about to make something which is about women's intimacy, a sense of reference to her was there inside my head. Jhuma's character was invisible in the film, but it was very prominent. It was one of the first inspirations, one of the first instincts where I felt like, 'Oh, I'm going to talk about it. If not a docu-

mentary, then it has to be a fiction where I am going to mention this girl!," she said.

Roy has already shifted her focus towards her next projects.

"I'm developing something that will talk about British Bengal... We will talk about my grandmother and her stepdaughter's era... The work is going on. I am also going to shoot something soon, a quirky, fast-paced movie, which will talk about "marginalised people and their desperation in Bombay", she said.

The director also credits mentors like Bengali film editors Anirban Maity and Paresh Kamdar, along with director Neeraj Sahai, who played a crucial role in guiding her

and introducing her to world cinema. Anurag Kashyap, whose "Gangs of Wasseypur" she said blew her mind with its story and craft, is also a presenter on the movie.

Roy, who also worked in a call centre and later in IT sales, said she discovered that films could serve as a mirror reflecting issues that demand attention after she saw the 2004 war-drama "Turtles Can Fly" by Bahman Ghobadi.

She is among the growing breed of female voices in cinema that are making India proud in international film festival circuits. Most recently, Payal Kapadia became the first filmmaker from India to win the Grand Prix at Cannes for "All We Imagine As Light".

The filmmaker said Payal was among the industry people who were first to congratulate her on the win. She also received wishes from filmmakers Kiran Rao, Zoya Akhtar, Rima Das and Vikramaditya Motwane.

Roy is now back in Mumbai, still reliving the memories of screening her film and the win at the prestigious film gala -- the packed hall, the spotlight on her and a seven minute standing ovation.

"I realised that this is not just bringing the recognition but it is also bringing in a lot of responsibility to make cinema even when I'm uncomfortable. So the feeling is yet to sink in. I am still processing it," she said. (PTI)

Davis Cup: Bold move by India, captain Rajpal fields Dhakshineswar against Switzerland

BIEL (SWITZERLAND), Sept 11: In a bold move, India have thrown young Dhakshineswar Suresh in the ring along with comeback man Sumit Nagal for the World Group I indoor tie against formidable hosts Switzerland, beginning here on Friday, as they eye a Davis Cup Qualifiers spot. Captain Rohit Rajpal convinced the coaches of Dhakshineswar in the US to let him fly to Switzerland for the tie and the 6-foot 5-inch tall Madurai-born player responded well by putting on an excellent show during the

training week.

Flat hitting and big serve is key on indoor courts and Dhakshineswar ticked both the boxes, which easily convinced the non-playing captain that he will be more suitable as second singles player.

Dhakshineswar (ranked 626) will open the tie against world number 155 Jerome Kym.

"We are taking decisions based on performance, there is nothing whimsical about it," Rajpal told PTI. "Dhakshineswar has a huge serve and it's a huge weapon in in-

door court ties. There were visa issues so I had requested Dhakshineswar's coaches in US College to prepare him on indoor courts.

"I was in constant touch with them. When Dhakshineswar came here, he had nicely shaped up for the tie. I had no hesitation in picking him as our second singles player. His game is ideal for indoor courts. He has beaten a few good players recently on the Tour," added Rajpal.

"I am glad he is opening the tie. First day is always crucial, hoping to get a good start."

Nagal is returning to Davis Cup action after the home tie against Morocco in Lucknow in September 2023 where he won both his singles matches in India's 4-1 win. He did not travel to Pakistan for the historic tie in February 2024 and also missed the subsequent matches against Sweden and Togo.

Nagal has been struggling of late and is now ranked 292 following unfavourable results this season. A semifinal finish at the Trieste Challenger in Italy this month has been his best showing

this season. He plays the second singles Friday against Marc Andrea Hüsler (ranked 222).

However, India will be without top doubles player Yuki Bhambri, who could not recover from a heel injury suffered during the memorable US Open campaign where he reached the semifinals with partner Michael Venus.

In his absence, Rothvik Bollipalli will pair with N Sriram Balaji to take on the Swiss combo of Dominic Stricker (244 in singles) and Jakob Paul (doubles ranked 78). "It's just unfortunate that Yuki has

to miss out. He had suffered bruises in his heel and that has not healed as yet," said Rajpal.

Switzerland made a late addition to the squad in reigning junior Australian Open champion Henry Bernet.

India have entered the tie off a dominant 4-0 win over Togo in their World Group I Play-off while Switzerland fell 1-3 to Spain in Qualifiers.

India leads Switzerland 2-1 in Davis Cup ties. The last time two teams met was back in 1993 in Kolkata when India won 3-2 with

singles wins from Leander Paes and Ramesh Krishnan, and a five-setter in doubles.

The winner will move to next year's Davis Cup Qualifiers and the loser will head to World Group I Play-offs.

Indoor conditions in Biel favour flat, hard hitting. Youth and sharpness will matter, especially for resurgent Nagal and Dhakshineswar. Switzerland's depth through will test Indian singles resilience. Doubles could be pivotal: Indian pairing must match Swiss strength. (PTI)

All-rounder Aaron Hardie ruled out of Australia A's tour of India

MELBOURNE, Sept 11: All-rounder Aaron Hardie has been ruled out of Australia A's upcoming tour of India due to a shoulder niggle, adding to a growing list of players who will be skipping the assignment due to injuries.

Victoria all-rounder Will Sutherland will replace Hardie and join the squad for the second of the two four-day matches in Lucknow.

Sutherland was already a part of the one-day squad for the tour and will now also feature in the second game in Lucknow. A replacement for Hardie in the one-day squad will be named at a later date.

"It is hoped that Hardie will be able to recover in time for the early rounds of Sheffield Shield matches — Western Australia's opening game is against New South Wales at the WACA on October 4," a report in ESPN-cricinfo said.

Hardie is the latest addition to the list of injured Australian players, which includes Lance Morris, Brody Couch, and Queensland fast bowler Callum Vidler — all of whom have been ruled out with various injuries.

While Hardie is more of an all-rounder than a specialist bowler, his injury only added to Australia's already depleted fast-bowling stocks ahead of the tour.

Hardie was part of the recent T20I and ODI series against the West Indies and South Africa but had a tough outing against the latter. He was subsequently left out of the squad for the short T20I tour of New Zealand and was instead named in the Australia A side.

His availability for the upcoming white-ball series against India will depend on the progress of his recovery.

Prior to Hardie's withdrawal, Australia A had already lost Vidler from the white-ball series, and Morris and Couch from the red-ball leg of the tour of India, which starts on September 16, due to injuries.

Vidler was diagnosed with a partial stress fracture, Couch suffered a side strain, while Morris is expected to miss a year of cricketing action after undergoing back surgery. Last week, Australia's premier fast bowler Pat Cummins was ruled out of the senior team's upcoming white-ball fixtures against New Zealand and India after scans revealed a lumbar bone stress injury in his back. (PTI)

Barcelona face home game challenges with injuries and stadium issues



MADRID, Sept 11: Barcelona approaches its first home game in La Liga missing a few injured players — and a proper stadium.

Among a few off-field problems for unbeaten Barcelona, the biggest is its inability to get the newly renovated Camp Nou stadium reopened.

The permits to return to the Camp Nou have not been approved, so the Catalan club will

play its first Spanish league home game at a 6,000-seat venue, about 99,000 less than the refurbished Camp Nou offers.

On Sunday when it meets Valencia, Barcelona will use Estadi Johan Cruyff, which typically hosts the Barcelona women's team and the men's reserve and youth squads.

Coach Hansi Flick also won't be able to count on players nursing in-

juries such as Frenkie de Jong, Alejandro Balde and Gavi. De Jong's setback came while playing with the Netherlands during the international break.

Real Madrid, winner of its first three matches, on Saturday visits a Real Sociedad squad that is winless.

The Basque Country club opened with consecutive draws against Valencia and Espanyol and

lost at promoted Oviedo. Madrid routed Oviedo on the road and picked up victories against Osasuna and Mallorca.

Athletic Bilbao, the only other team to open the season with three straight victories, hosts Alaves on Saturday. Athletic has beaten Real Betis, Sevilla and Rayo Vallecano.

Athletic Madrid, off to an unusually slow start after draws against Alaves and Elche and a

loss to Espanyol, will try and earn its first victory when it hosts third-placed Villarreal on Saturday.

Real Madrid's Kylian Mbappé was last season's top league scorer and already leads again this season with three from three matches. Two others have three; Getafe's Adrián Liso and Villarreal's Tajon Buchanan.

Barcelona's Lamine Yamal and Madrid's Vinicius Junior are right behind with two each.

Real Betis is expected to debut newly signed Brazil forward Antony.

In addition to De Jong, Balde and Gavi, Barcelona also remains without goalkeeper Marc-André Ter Stegen.

New Madrid coach Xabi Alonso still can't count on Jude Bellingham, while Athletic will likely be without its star forward, Nico Williams, because of an injury while with Spain.

Barcelona said there was still no timetable on when it could get the permits for Camp Nou. The club played the last two seasons at the city's publicly owned Olympic Stadium.

"We will be back to the Camp Nou as soon as possible," club president Joan Laporta said on Thursday.

The Spanish league, meanwhile, continued to work to get the final approvals to play the Villarreal-Barcelona match in Miami in December. It hoped for UEFA's approval later Thursday. (AP)

Pooja Rani moves to semis, assured of medal at World Championships

LIVERPOOL, Sept 11: Seasoned Indian boxer Pooja Rani toiled hard for her maiden World Championships medal as she eked out a scrappy win over Emilia Koterska of Poland to move to the women's 80kg semifinals here.

The 34-year-old Pooja, who received a first round bye, relied on her vast reservoir of experience to edge past teenager Koterska 3-2 in the quarterfinals late Wednesday night.

The 80kg is a non-Olympic weight category and features 12 boxers in the ongoing competition.

With the victory, the two-time Asian champion joined Jaismine Lamboria (57kg) and Nupur Sheoran (80+kg) in assuring India of medals at this edition of the tournament.

Meanwhile, India's men's campaign suffered another setback as Abhinash Jamwal bowed out with a 1-4 split decision loss to Olympic bronze medalist Lasha Guruli of Georgia in the 65kg quarterfinals.

With his exit, only Jadumani Singh (50kg) remains in contention from the men's squad. He will face reigning world champion Sanzhar Tashkenbay of Kazakhstan in the last-eight stage.

This marks a sharp decline from the previous edition in Tashkent, where India returned with three medals - Deepak Bhoria (51kg), Mohammad Hussamuddin (57kg) and Nishan Dev (71kg) all winning bronze. (PTI)

EB to play against China's Wuhan Jiangda and Uzbek club Nasaf

NEW DELHI, Sept 11: East Bengal FC was on Thursday clubbed alongside Wuhan Jiangda FC of China, Iran's Bam Khatoon FC and PFC Nasaf of Uzbekistan in Group B of the AFC Women's Champions League group stage from November 17.

The draw was conducted at the AFC House in Kuala Lumpur.

East Bengal, the champions of the 2024-25 Indian Women's League, qualified for the group stage in their maiden continental appearance after emerging as Group E toppers in the preliminary stage, ahead of Kitchee SC of Hong Kong and Phnom Penh Crown FC of Cambodia.

Twelve teams were divided into three groups for the second edition of the AFC Women's Champions League and will bat-

tle it out in a centralised league format.

Group B will be hosted by China's Wuhan Jiangda WFC, who are also the defending champions, from November 17 to 23. East Bengal's opening game will be against Bam Khatoon. Following the group stage, eight clubs -- the top two finishers of each group and the two overall best third-placed clubs -- will advance to the knockout stage, with the single-leg quarterfinal pairings to be decided by a draw and played in March next year.

The centralised semi-finals and the final are scheduled for May 20 to 23, next year.

East Bengal FC's biggest challenge will be Wuhan Jiangda WFC, five-time champions of the Chinese Women's Super



League and the champions of the inaugural AFC Women's Champions League 2024-25.

Iran's Bam Khatoon FC are making their fourth appearance in an AFC competition and were quarter-finalists last season.

PFC Nasaf are record 16-time champions of the Uzbekistan Women's League and, like East Bengal, navigated the preliminary stage to qualify for the group stage for the first time.

AFC Women's Champions League 2025-26 group stage draw:

Group A: Melbourne City FC (AUS), Ho Chi Minh City Women's FC (VIE, hosts), Stallion Laguna FC (PHI), Lion City Sailors FC (SGP).

Group B: Wuhan Jiangda Women's FC (CHN, hosts), Bam Khatoon FC (IRN), East Bengal FC (IND), PFC Nasaf (UZB).

Group C: Suwon FC Women (KOR), Tokyo Verdy Beleza (JPN), Naegohyang Women's FC (PRK), ISPE WFC (MYA, hosts).

East Bengal FC's fixtures: November 17: Bam Khatoon FC vs East Bengal FC November 20: East Bengal FC vs Wuhan Jiangda WFC November 23: East Bengal FC vs PFC Nasaf. (PTI)

Man City and Man United move to fix problems ahead of Premier League return

MANCHESTER, Sept 11: Manchester City and Manchester United have spent fortunes on some of the world's best attacking players and yet Sunday's derby will spotlight their goalkeepers.

Both teams are likely to start with new keepers after transfer deadline day signings to solve problems in their lineups.

City secured Gianluigi Donnarumma from Paris Saint-Germain and United landed Belgium international Senne Lammens.

Donnarumma was outstanding as PSG won the Champions League last season but was let go in the summer and will replace City's long-time No. 1 Ederson.

The Italian was not a typical choice for City manager Pep Guardiola, who usually wants his keepers to operate as almost auxiliary defenders, with an emphasis on playing out from the back.

That is not Donnarumma's natural game, though he is willing to change. He said, "I always try to help the team and do what the coach asks of me. I do everything."

United dropped former No. 1. Andre Onana for all three of its league games but backup Altay Bayindir failed to impress. United plucked Lammens from Royal Antwerp. He's largely unknown outside of Belgium.

The Manchester derby at Etihad Stadium already feels like a must-win for both teams.

City, whose four-year title reign ended last season, is playing catchup after only three games (1-2). Back-to-back defeats to Tottenham and Brighton have highlighted concerns that Guardiola's squad is not equipped to mount a challenge at the top.

Arsenal lost to Liverpool last time out and faces a Nottingham Forest team with a new manager in Ange Postecoglou after Nuno Espirito Santo was fired.

Defending champion Liverpool is at newly promoted Burnley.

In the first round since transfer

deadline day there could be a host of debuts.

Alexander Isak finally arrived at Liverpool but missed the start of the season and may not have a prominent role yet. He was a late substitute for Sweden against Kosovo on Monday.

Newcastle replaced Isak with Nick Woltemade and Yoane Wissa.

Aston Villa secured late loan deals for Jadon Sancho and Harvey Elliott, and Tottenham boosted its attack with Randal Kolo Muani and Xavi Simons.

Injuries are mounting for City with Omar Marmoush injuring a knee on international duty with Egypt. Rayan Cherki will be out for around two months because of a torn left quadriceps.

New United signing Matheus Cunha hurt his hamstring against Burnley.

Arsenal's injury list includes Bukayo Saka, William Saliba and Kai Havertz.

It's a new era at Tottenham.

After nearly 25 years at the top, executive chairman Daniel Levy stood down last week and Spurs said it was setting itself up to "deliver long-term sporting success."

Fans called for Levy to go for years, even after last season's Europa League triumph ended a 17-year trophy drought. The fans have also been critical of club owner ENIC, accusing it of neglect.

After Levy's departure, campaign group Change for Tottenham said it would "continue to make sure sporting success, not just financial success, are key priorities for the club."

Nottingham Forest fans may also have something to say following the firing of Nuno this week. Nuno became a fan favorite for turning Forest from a relegation battler into a team that challenged for Champions League qualification last term.

Forest is at Arsenal on Saturday. (AP)

'Patience' is key for Kumar Kartikeya as spinner eyes bigger achievements in career

BENGALURU, Sept 11: Kumar Kartikeya has this unique ability to bowl conventional left-arm spin and its wrist-spin variety, but on Thursday "patience" was the Central Zone player's biggest ally while wrecking South Zone, a quality that he banks upon to reach higher career levels.

Kartikeya (4/53) and Saransh Jain (5/49) combined to take nine wickets among them as South were bowled out for 149 in their first innings on the first day of the five-day Duleep Trophy final here. "I have been waiting for this opportunity for a long time. In my mind, whatever chance I get, even if I get only one chance, I have to make it count," Kartikeya said after the day's play.

In his first red-ball match of the 2025-26 season, Kartikeya, who is generally dubbed as a white ball specialist, showed his versatility while bowling an impeccable spell with red ball, often keeping the batters guessing.



"I know it will not be easy because from what I have seen in the last 3-4 matches (here), the economy rate of the bowlers has been quite high. So, I have analysed that I have to keep the economy good first, so that batsmen come under pressure and something goes wrong."

"I knew that runs can be made on this pitch. But if I keep bowling in good areas, the more diffi-

cult it will be for the batters, so, I had to play with patience and it was my main motive. I benefited from it. So, I was trying to be more patient in bowling," he added.

The 27-year-old would not have got a chance in the title clash had fellow left-arm spinner Harsh Dubey not got selected for India A to play against Australia A.

Kartikeya said he was deter-

mined to make an impact in his first Duleep Trophy chance in over two seasons.

"Before this match, two years ago, I took eight wickets in a Duleep Trophy match. After that, I have not been able to perform. It's in my mind that I will have to take as many wickets as possible in domestic cricket to get a name for myself," he said.

Kartikeya, who now plays for Rajasthan Royals in the IPL after his stint with Mumbai Indians, wants to make his mark in red-ball cricket as well.

"In the last two years, I have started bowling in red-ball cricket. Earlier, I used to bowl only in white-ball cricket. When I get a flat track, where the left-arm spin is not that useful, I bowl leg-spin because leg-spin spins on any wicket. I have that extra skill and I always use it whenever I have to. I have bowled it today as well," he added.

But is there a difference while

bowling with a red ball and white ball?

"Red-ball is a little difficult to grip. But white-ball is easier. But in red-ball, the fewer runs you give, the more chances you have to get wickets."

"So, I don't think it's difficult because I have to bowl the same way. Whether you bowl red-ball or white-ball, the area is more important. But in red-ball, you need more patience," he added.

Kartikeya, as any other cricketer, wants to play for India and he knows that patience will be his trusted companion, as it was on this day, to waddle through the tough competition.

"I want to play (for India). But I can't say about the selection. I have a clear mindset that I don't say anything about the selection. I only focus on what is in my hand. I just try to give my best in bowling, and rest, let's see what happens next," he signed off. (PTI)

Pakistan open against Oman before India blockbuster in Asia Cup

DUBAI, Sept 11: Pakistan will look to fine-tune their game ahead of the high-profile Asia Cup clash against India when they face minnows Oman in their opening Group A match here on Friday.

Pakistan entered the tournament on the back of a strong performance, winning the T20 Tri-Series by beating Afghanistan by 75 runs in the final. Mohammad Nawaz's hat-trick sealed a comprehensive victory in the series, which also featured UAE.

Ranked eighth globally, Pakistan will aim to gain valuable experience before their high-voltage meeting with arch-rivals India.

The slow and sluggish pitches in the UAE prompted Pakistan to include spinners in the squad, a strategy that paid off during the Tri-Series and will be crucial in the Asia Cup.

"We wanted to prepare in a way that helps us for the Asia Cup and we've done that," Pakistan captain Salman Agha had said.

"We've been doing really well since the Bangladesh series at home. Now, we're in very good shape and fully prepared."

Group A comprises India, Pakistan, Oman, and UAE, with the marquee India-Pakistan clash scheduled for Sunday in Dubai.

Group B includes Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, and Hong Kong. The top two teams from this group will move on to the Super 4 stage, where a round-robin format will determine the finalists.

The top two teams from the Super 4 will then battle it out in the final on September 28 in Dubai.

India and Pakistan, both former champions, are strong contenders to face each other again in the Super 4 and possibly in the much-anticipated final.

Pakistan have opted for a young squad



FINAL TUNE-UP

under Agha's leadership, a move that has already yielded positive results. Players like Saim Ayub, Fakhar Zaman, Mohammad Nawaz, Sufiyan Muqem, and Agha himself are expected to be key match-winners.

The team's spin arsenal looks particularly potent, offering depth and variation ideal for UAE pitches. Under Agha's leadership, the T20I side has adopted an aggressive mindset, attacking from ball one—a strategy that could prove crucial.

With stars such as Babar Azam and Mohammad Rizwan sidelined, it will be a test of character for the Salman Agha-led Pakistan side. Oman, making their Asia Cup debut, enter the contest with little pressure but big dreams. Most players balance cricket with desk jobs, underscoring their unique journey.

"When we started, our primary job was to get a job, cricket was secondary for us," Jatinder said.

"Most boys worked in offices and then

managed cricket on the side. But I will say now that it's a dream come true to represent Oman in the Asia Cup. Our camp is really excited and looking forward to the tournament."

Teams:

Pakistan: Fakhar Zaman, Hasan Nawaz, Khushdil Shah, Saim Ayub, Salman Agha, Hussain Talat, Faheem Ashraf, Mohammad Nawaz, Mohammad Haris, Sahibzada Farhan, Abrar Ahmed, Haris Rauf, Hasan Ali

UAE: Hasan Ali, Salman Mirza, Shaheen Afridi, Sufiyan Muqem, Mohammad Wasim Jr.

Oman: Jatinder Singh (C), Ashish Odedara, Aamir Kaleem, Karan Sonavale, Hassnain Shah, Mohammad Nadeem, Vinayak Shukla, Hammad Mirza, Sufyan Mehmod, Aryan Bisht, Shakeel Ahmed, Samay Shrivastava, Mohammad Imran.

Match starts at 8 PM. (PTI)

Ayush stuns Naraoka to join Satwik-Chirag, Lakshya in quarterfinals at Hong Kong Open

HONG KONG, Sept 11: Rising Indian shuttler Ayush Shetty caused a major upset at the Hong Kong Open Super 500 badminton tournament on Thursday, ousting 2023 World Championships silver medalist Kodai Naraoka of Japan in a hard-fought three-game contest to storm into the men's singles quarterfinals.

The 20-year-old from Karnataka, who clinched the US Open Super 300 title in June, showcased his aggressive style and superior court coverage to outplay the former world No. 2 Japanese shuttler 21-19, 12-21, 21-14 in a 72-minute thriller.

Ayush will face Lakshya Sen, his compatriot and companion at Prakash Padukone Badminton Academy, in the quarterfinals.

Earlier, Lakshya reached his first men's singles quarterfinal of a top BWF World Tour event in six months, while Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty also advanced at the USD 500,000 event.

Former world championships bronze medalist Lakshya, ranked 20th, rallied past compatriot HS Prannoy 15-21 21-18 21-10 in the second round.

The 23-year-old Lakshya, who finished fourth at the Paris Olympics, has battled injuries and patchy form this season. He last made the semifinals at the All England Super 1000 in March and reached the same stage at the Macau Open Super 300.

In men's doubles, world no. 9 Satwik and Chirag, fresh from their second World Championships bronze in Paris, will next face Malaysia's Junaidi Arif and Roy King Yap.

A bronze medalist at the 2023 BWF World Junior Championships — the same year Naraoka claimed silver at the senior Worlds — Ayush has been in fine form over the past year, having also



reached the final of the 2023 Odisha Masters and finishing runner-up at events in Bahrain and the Netherlands across 2023 and 2024.

On Thursday, the lanky Indian went on a smash-hitting spree to unsettle Naraoka. It was a see-saw battle in the opening game as Ayush trailed 2-5, 9-12, and 13-15, but kept applying pressure with his booming smashes, eventually taking the game 21-19.

Naraoka bounced back in the second game, racing to an 11-5 lead at the mid-game interval as Ayush struggled to find his rhythm. The Japanese maintained the momentum to level the match.

However, Ayush regained his composure in the decider, attacking anything in his range with precision. After a 3-3 start, the Indian pulled ahead 8-4, dominating the front court with sharp smashes and forcing errors from Naraoka.

A deft tap and an angled return helped Ayush secure a five-point lead at the interval. He continued to press ahead, pushing to 17-10 with aggressive returns and a series of forced errors from his opponent.

With Naraoka hitting wide twice,

Ayush earned eight match points. He squandered two before sealing the memorable win.

In the other men's singles match, Prannoy looked in good touch as he had a smooth ride in the opening game, leading from start to finish without much ado.

The 33-year-old from Thiruvananthapuram carried the momentum initially, opening up a 4-0 lead after the change of sides, but then a six-point burst helped Lakshya topple his senior. It turned out to be a tight battle thereafter as the lead exchanged hands too frequently.

At 18-18, Lakshya clawed back with a deep smash. Prannoy smashed wide and then faltered at the front court as Lakshya grabbed two game points and converted when Prannoy went long.

In the decider, Prannoy had a 5-2 lead again but then errors started creeping in as he fell behind 9-13 after he missed the sideline and hit out. A net shot helped Lakshya move to 16-10.

As Prannoy continued to succumb to unforced errors, Lakshya soon grabbed 10 match points and sealed it when the former misused another shot. (PTI)

Inter Parish Football c'ship: Satgaon thrash Hangjanglangso 6-0

HT Correspondent

DONGKAMUKAM, Sept 11: In a high voltage football final one sided match played between Satgaon Parish versus Hangjanglangso Parish of the 5th edition of the Inter Parish Football championship, Satgaon thrash Hangjanglangso 6-0.

The final match played in front of over five thousand attendees at Japralangso playground near Bokajan in Karbi Anglong District organised by IPFF Diphu Diocese in memory of Sarthe Teron Satgaon opened its account in 14 mins through Johnny Sangma soon hereafter Tomi Marak added twice to make the tally to 3-0 before 1st half.

In the 2nd half Rebaren Sangma added thrice more (hatrick) to make the final tally 6-0.

The Diocesan cup champion was awarded by the chief guest VDC Chairman of Sarupathar, Simeon Rongphar and a cash prize of Rs 50,000 (Fifty thousand only) and a trophy was awarded. The Runner's up received Rs. 30,000 (Thirty thousand only) was given by guest of honour Fr. Robinson Teron.

Player of the tournament was awarded to Tomi Marak, highest goal scorer was Rebaren Sangma and best goalkeeper Menen Sangma.

The game also was attended by Dy Speaker A.L.A., Dr. Numal Momin, Rev. Bishop Paul Mattek of Diphu, Father's, Sister's and Florida Terompi the elder sister of Lt. Sarthe Teron.

Spinners Jain, Kartikeya give Central advantage over South in Duleep Trophy final

BENGALURU, Sept 11: Spinners Saransh Jain and Kumar Kartikeya exploited the indecisiveness of South Zone batters to share nine wickets between them to hand Central Zone advantage on the first day of the Duleep Trophy final here on Thursday.

Jain (5/49) and Kartikeya (4/53) bowled 45 overs between them, helping Central bowl out South for a lowly 149 in 63 overs.

Central reached 50 for no loss at stumps, trailing by 99 runs. Danish Malewar (28) and Akshay Wadkar (20) were at crease at the end of the day.



Jain, who bowled 24 overs on the trot, and Kartikeya, who predominantly bowled traditional left-arm spin compared to the wrist-spin variety, were the chief architects of Central's position of strength.

But the tentative approach of South batters also made the spin twins' job that much easier.

South entered the panic room as early as in the 16th over, when opener Mohit Kale (6) decided to play a reckless sweep against Kartikeya to get bowled. It started a period of fragility, as South lost three more wickets before lunch to be placed at 64 for four in 33 overs.

But the run out of a solid-looking Tanmay Agarwal (31 off 76 balls) hurt them most in

that session as the opener got run out after a mid-pitch collision with his partner Ricky Bhui (15). Kartikeya soon got rid of Mohammed Azharuddeen with a peach of a delivery that pitched on the middle stump line and turned just enough to disturb the South Zone skipper's off-stump.

But that was a rare moment of brilliance on the day, as South batters continue to live in their own castle of uncertainty even in the post-lunch session.

The dismissal of Andre Siddarth was an example of the doubt-ridden minds of South batters.

The Tamil Nadu batter, who essayed a velvety flick off Kartikeya, was deceived on the flight while on a pre-meditative charge against the left-arm spinner only to get stumped by Upendra Yadav, who did well to collect a ball that bounced well above his waist.

Salman Nizar (24) was the last hope of South Zone to push the total towards the 200-run mark, but the Kerala batter perished to a half-hearted prod against Jain.

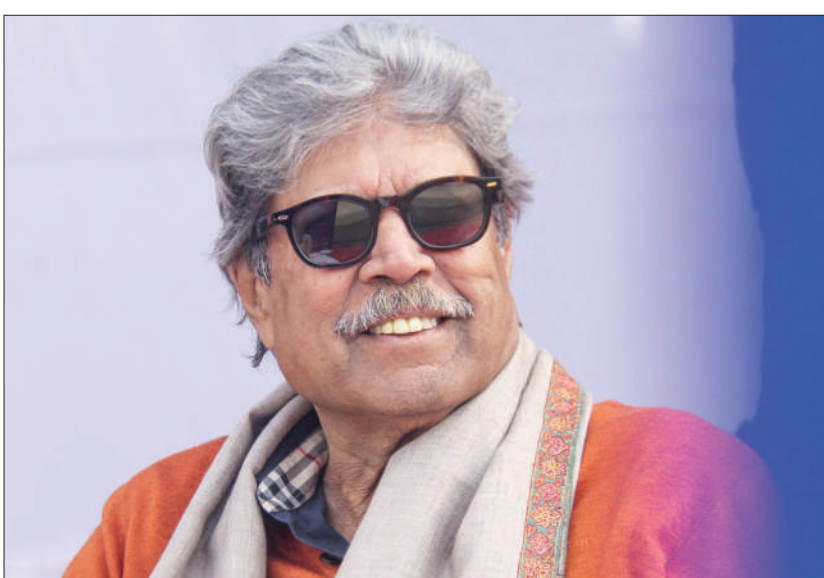
A nothing push against the off-spinner resulted in a thick edge that popped out of the silly point fielder but Central skipper Rajat Patidar at gully was too alert to miss the rebound.

Once Nizar was jettisoned, the South did not have much fight to offer as Jain duly completed his ninth five-wicket haul in first-class cricket, and second in as many matches after his 5 for 84 effort against West Zone in the Duleep Trophy semifinals here last week.

Central opens Malewar and Akshay Wadkar were everything that the South Zone batters were not on the day — confident and judging the ball path correctly.

There were occasional play and misses and loud leg before appeals as one would expect on an overcast day but that did not affect the Central batters' focus during their ongoing 50-run alliance. (PTI)

Kapil Dev urges Indian players to stay focused ahead of Pakistan clash



CHANDIGARH, Sept 11: World Cup-winning captain Kapil Dev has urged Indian players to remain focussed on performance and not get distracted by external factors ahead of their high-voltage Asia Cup clash against Pakistan on Sunday.

India and Pakistan are set to face off in Dubai for the first time since Operation

Sindoor, which was launched by India after 26 tourists were killed in a terror attack in Pahalgam earlier this year.

"The Indian players should stay focused solely on the game. They have a good team and must win," Kapil told reporters here.

"Players should concentrate only on their performance and not get distracted by anything else. Just go and win. The government will do its job, and the players should do theirs," the 66-year-old added.

In the wake of the Pahalgam attack, the Indian government has formulated a policy under which the country would not have any bilateral sporting ties with Pakistan but won't stop the Indian teams from competing against their neighbours in multilateral events.

India, the reigning world champions in the T20 format, began their campaign with an emphatic nine-wicket win over UAE on Wednesday.

"It's a good team, good luck, they won well yesterday. I hope they win the trophy too," Kapil said.

India's next match is against Pakistan. (PTI)

ICC unveil first ever all-female officiating line-up for Women's ODI World Cup

DUBAI, Sept 11: Insisting that it was more than a symbolic gesture, the International Cricket Council (ICC) on Thursday announced an all-female officials line-up for the ODI World Cup which begins later this month in India and Sri Lanka. The tournament will begin with a clash between joint hosts India and Sri Lanka in Guwahati on September 30.

The umpiring panel includes former India players Vrinda Rathi, N Janani and Gayathri Venugopalan, the first-ever female match referee GS Laksmi, also a former Indian cricketer, will be a part of the four-member match-referee panel.

The trioka of Claire Polosak, Jacqueline Williams and Sue Redfern are set to officiate in their third women's World

Cup event, the ICC said, adding that Lauren Agenbag and Kim Cotton will be at their second such event.

"The inclusion of an all-women panel of match officials is not only a major milestone but also a powerful reflection of the ICC's unwavering commitment to advancing gender equity across cricket," ICC Chairman Jay Shah said. (PTI)

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Submission Guidelines:

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- File format: JPEG / PNG / TIFF
- File Size: Minimum 1 MB and Maximum 10 MB per photo
- Color Mode: sRGB
- Orientation: Landscape or Portrait
- Watermarks: No watermarks allowed
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