

REGION 6
NATION 8

- Dual-Rate GST reform a historic, people-centric step says Debojit Mahanta
- BJP strengthens position in Margherita
- Euphoria in country, nobody stopped Cong to roll out GST: BJP on tax reforms
- Cong levels conflict of interest allegations against Gadkari over govt's ethanol push



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অসম চৰকাৰ

উচ্চ শিক্ষা আৰু বিদ্যালয় শিক্ষা বিভাগ



गुरुर्ब्रह्मा गुरुर्विष्णुः गुरुर्देवो महेश्वरः ।
गुरुःसाक्षात् परब्रह्म तस्मै श्रीगुरवे नमः ॥

৬৪ অধ্যু্যক শিক্ষক দিবস

“প্রতিগৰাকী শিক্ষকেই হ'ব লাগিব
সহানুভূতিশীল, সহিষ্ণু, নিঃস্বার্থ আৰু নিৰাভিমানে।”

-ড° সৰ্বপল্লী ৰাধাকৃষ্ণন

শিক্ষক দিবসৰ এই পৱিত্ৰ দিনটোত বিদ্বান মনীষী, শিক্ষাবিদ, দাৰ্শনিক তথা
ভাৰতৰ প্ৰাক্তন ৰাষ্ট্ৰপতি ড° সৰ্বপল্লী ৰাধাকৃষ্ণনদেৱলৈ গভীৰ শ্ৰদ্ধা
নিবেদন কৰি প্ৰতিগৰাকী চিৰনমস্য শিক্ষাগুৰুক ওলগ জনাইছোঁ

-ড° হিমন্ত বিশ্ব শৰ্মা
মুখ্যমন্ত্ৰী, অসম

তেজপুৰ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ত কেন্দ্ৰীয় অনুষ্ঠান নিৰ্বাচিত কৃতি শিক্ষাগুৰুসকললৈ ৰাজ্যিক বঁটা প্ৰদান

সম্বৰ্ধনা ভ্ৰাপন

- ▶ ‘NAAC’ৰ মূল্যায়নত ‘A’ গ্ৰেড লাভ কৰা
মহাবিদ্যালয়সমূহৰ অধ্যক্ষ
- ▶ মহাবিদ্যালয় আৰু পলিটেকনিকৰ ‘পেটেণ্ট’
লাভ কৰা শিক্ষক
- ▶ শিক্ষা সেতু এপ্ত সৰ্বাধিক উপস্থিতি দিবলৈ সক্ষম হোৱা
শীৰ্ষ তিনিখন জিলা
- ▶ শিক্ষা সেতু এপ্ত বিভিন্ন জিলাৰ উপস্থিতিৰ শীৰ্ষত থকা
বিদ্যালয়সমূহৰ মুৰব্বীসকল

মুখ্য অতিথি

ডাঃ ৰণোজ পেণ্ডু

মন্ত্ৰী, শিক্ষা ইত্যাদি বিভাগ, অসম

গৌৰৱময় উপস্থিতি

শ্ৰীঅশোক সিংহল

মন্ত্ৰী, স্বাস্থ্য আৰু পৰিয়াল কল্যাণ ইত্যাদি বিভাগ, অসম



কলাগুৰু বিষ্ণুপ্ৰসাদ ৰাভা প্ৰেক্ষাগৃহ, তেজপুৰ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়



৫ ছেপ্টেম্বৰ ২০২৫



দিনৰ ১১:০০ বজা



Sensex, Nifty close marginally higher as profit-taking in RIL, Infosys spoils GST rate cut party

MUMBAI, Sept 4: Benchmark stock indices Sensex and Nifty pared most of the early gains to settle marginally higher on Thursday as profit taking in index heavyweight Reliance Industries and Infosys took away the sheen of the GST rate cuts announced on commonly used personal items and daily essential products.

Shedding 738 points from the day's high, the 30-share Sensex finally settled 150.30 points or 0.19 per cent higher at 80,718.01. As many as 19 of its shares closed in red while 11 settled higher.

The barometer jumped 888.96 points or 1.10 per cent to a high of 81,456.67 in the opening trade as the GST Council approved a complete overhaul of the tangled Goods and Services Tax regime. However, stock markets trimmed gains later due to profit-taking in blue-chips.

The 50-share NSE Nifty ended marginally higher by 19.25 points or 0.08 per cent at 24,734.30 after surging 265.7 points or 1.07 per cent to 24,980.75 in opening trade.

"After a promising start, the domestic market closed almost flat as profit-taking emerged across the market except for consumption-oriented beneficiary sectors such as auto, finance, and FMCG. In-line outcome of GST rationalisation and ongoing tariff threats from the US exerted a negative impact on the market today," Vinod Nair,



Head of Research, Geojit Investments Limited, said.

Common use items from roti/paratha to hair oil, ice creams and TVs will cost less, while tax incidence on personal health and life insurance will be brought down to nil after the all-powerful GST Council on Wednesday approved a complete overhaul of the tangled Goods and Services Tax (GST) regime.

The GST Council approved limiting slabs to 5 per cent and 18 per cent, effective from September 22, the first day of Navaratri.

Among the Sensex firms, Mahindra & Mahindra jumped the most by 5.96 per cent. Bajaj Finance, Bajaj Finserv, Trent, ITC and HDFC Bank were also among the gainers.

However, Maruti Suzuki India, Bharat Electronics, HCL Tech,

NTPC, Power Grid, Infosys and Reliance Industries were among the laggards.

"Nifty opened on a strong note with a gap-up start, driven by optimism around the new GST rates, but profit-taking in the second half wiped out most of the early gains.

"The move triggered broad-based buying in auto, FMCG, and consumer durable stocks during early trade. However, profit-taking weighed on broader indices, dragging them down," Hariprasad K, Research Analyst and Founder - Livelong Wealth, said.

"The initial up move was driven by robust buying interest in auto and consumer staples. However, as the session progressed, profit-taking at higher levels and underperformance in select index heavyweights capped the upside,"

according to Bajaj Broking. The BSE smallcap and midcap indices ended 0.60 per cent lower each.

Among BSE sectoral indices, auto climbed 0.69 per cent, FMCG (0.31 per cent), consumer discretionary (0.24 per cent) and financial services (0.15 per cent).

Utilities dropped 1.24 per cent, power (1.05 per cent), oil & gas (1.05 per cent), BSE Focused IT (0.93 per cent), IT (0.86 per cent), realty (0.79 per cent) and tech (0.70 per cent).

As many as 2,325 stocks declined while 1,807 advanced and 148 remained unchanged on the BSE.

"The broader outlook stays vulnerable to global macro uncertainties, continued FII outflows, and persistent U.S. tariff headwinds," Ajit Mishra - SVP, Research, Religare Broking Ltd, said.

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

Markets in Europe were trading higher. US markets ended mostly higher on Wednesday.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth ₹1,666.46 crore on Wednesday, while Domestic Institutional Investors (DIIs) bought stocks worth ₹2,495.33 crore, according to exchange data. (PTI)

Polo Hotels partners with Ellenbarrie Tea to launch Polo Planters Lodge Resort in Doars

GUWAHATI, Sept 4: Polo Hotels and Resorts, the largest hospitality group in Northeast India by number of hotels as on March 31, 2025, has announced a collaboration with Varun Tea Plantations Private Limited, the owner of Ellenbarrie Tea, to set up a new luxury property in the Doars region of West Bengal.

The project, named Polo Planters Lodge Resort, is being po-

sitioned as a villa-only retreat that brings together Polo's narrative-driven hospitality with Ellenbarrie's legacy of tea craftsmanship.

According to an official statement, the resort will be developed across an expansive 20-acre estate with private villas, including pool villas, designed to offer sweeping views of surrounding tea gardens.

The property aims to recreate the ambience of planter life, blending indulgence with authenticity,

and to provide an escape where visitors can immerse themselves in the rhythm of rustling leaves, open landscapes and tea culture.

The promoters explained that the lodge will introduce "Polo-curated Experiences" crafted to highlight the cultural, culinary and wellness traditions of the region.

Guests will be offered menus that combine garden-fresh produce, heritage recipes and tea-inspired pairings.

Contd. from Page 3...

Demand for withdrawal

to safeguard its identity, he said, "We have been left with no choice but to protest and agitate for our survival." The northeastern state neighbouring Bangladesh witnessed a violent six-year-long anti-foreigner agitation, which culminated in the signing of the Assam Accord in 1985. The pact established March 25, 1971, as the cut-off date for determining the citizenship of migrants, with those arriving after this date to be detected and expelled.

The AASU was a key force behind the agitation. Sarma claimed that the Centre's order was "communal, anti-Assamese and destructive for the future of the state's indigenous people". The order was even "more dangerous" than the CAA, and both should be withdrawn from the state, he said.

"The Assam Accord had set March 1971 as the cut-off date for detecting and deporting illegal migrants, but the CAA extended it to 2014 and now this order to 2024. The Government of India has once again betrayed Assam," he said.

Regarding Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma's statement that so far only 12 people have applied for citizenship under CAA and only three have got it, the AASU President said that people are not applying due to the fear that if once the CAA is withdrawn from the state, they will be marked as foreigners.

"The chief minister himself admitted that five people became 'martyrs' during the CAA agitation in the state in 2019, then why is the state government not giving relief to their family members?" he asked.

The people of Assam have not accepted CAA, and "it must be withdrawn from the state," the AASU President asserted. Sarma said that fencing along the Indo-Bangladesh border is still incomplete and "this must be taken up on a war footing". The AASU President said that today's protest was the first phase of their agitation and will conclude on September 23 with a torchlight procession.(PTI)

Minor boy's death:

highlighting persistent risks in the city's infrastructure works. Officials said that Kumar's body was handed over to his family after a post-mortem at GMCH, and his final rites were performed at Bhootnath crematorium on Wednesday evening. The twin incidents have reinforced concerns over poor planning and oversight in Guwahati's civic management. Sarma, while expressing grief over the loss of the young boy's life, said accountability will be fixed, and steps will be taken to ensure such lapses are not repeated.

Centre asks industry

reform in the goods and services tax (GST). Prime Minister Narendra Modi always fulfils promises, he added. "What we thought could be big has turned out to be the biggest ever reform that India has seen since independence. Besides many dimensions, consumers will benefit in a very big way with the reduction in taxes across the board, on almost all items of our day-to-day needs," Goyal said.

Besides the reduction in GST rates, the minister said the changes made in the process and procedure will contribute to the ease of doing business.

"These lower rates will support the growth of demand and industry. The scale of operation in the country will grow by leaps and bounds. Greater demand will lead to greater investment, greater jobs, and the virtuous cycle of growth will get a leg up and a big boost," he said.

This Diwali gift will contribute to ease of living, better quality of life for 1.4 billion citizens, Goyal said.

Asked about the Opposition's criticism that this reform should have been brought 8 years back, the senior BJP leader attacked the Congress party for spreading negativity at a time when India is the fastest growing economy in the world.

The minister pointed out that the opposition was in its current state because of this negativity only. "Sadly, just like Rahul Gandhi, does not understand that the world's fastest growing large economy at 7.8 per cent growth in the first quarter is a matter of delight, joy and celebration," Goyal said.

"Rahul Gandhi calls India a dead economy, despite being the world's fastest-growing large economy. This is the negative thinking of a certain set of people, and I condemn this kind of negativity," he added.

Earlier, addressing the event, Goyal complimented the industry for making India the pharmacy of the world and earning the trust of the entire globe with high-quality medicines, high-quality drugs and pharmaceuticals, high quality health care. He asked the industry to maintain that trust. (PTI)

Nagaland govt closely

and ensure any plantation work is carried out jointly, with full coordination between district administrations, police, forest department and local residents, he added.

The cabinet also decided to write to the Union Home Ministry over two concerns -- the presence of 45 permanent Assam Police posts in the DAB against the 1972 Interim Agreement (Nagaland has only temporary posts after withdrawing its five permanent ones), and the control of CRPF operations resting solely with Assam Police instead of under joint command, Patton said.

He said the cabinet has agreed in principle to form a Special Border Response Force (SBRF), comprising Border Affairs, Police and Forest personnel, for quick intervention in border tensions. Appealing for caution against unverified reports, Patton said the government is actively pursuing the matter at both state and central levels to fully protect and safeguard the interests of the people living in the border areas. (PTI)

KAAC reviews progress

the council's governance framework and to continue working with dedication towards the welfare and upliftment of the people of Karbi Anglong.

Kuki-Zo groups sign

and Kuki National Organisation (KNO) and United People's Front (UPF) was held at New Delhi today. The meeting concluded with the signing of a tripartite Suspension of Operations agreement on re-negotiated terms and conditions (ground rules) to be effective from the day of signing of the agreement for a period of one year," the MHA statement said.

The other provisions include territorial integrity of Manipur will be maintained, all agreed for the need for a negotiated solution to bring lasting peace and stability to Manipur.

The KNO and UPF have also agreed to relocate seven designated camps away from areas vulnerable to conflict, reduce the number of designated camps, relocate the weapons with nearest CRPF and BSF camps, stringent physical verification of cadres by security forces to de-list foreign nationals, if any.

There are seven constituents of UPF and 16 constituents of KNO.

A joint monitoring group will henceforth closely monitor enforcement of ground rules and violations will be dealt with firmly in future, including review of the SoO agreement, the statement said.

"The Kuki-Zo Council has decided to open the National Highway-02 for the free movement of commuters and essential goods. The KZC has given commitment to cooperate with security forces deployed by government of India to maintain peace along NH-02," it said.

The SoO agreement was first signed in 2008 and was renewed periodically.

However, it has not been extended since February 2024 due to the ethnic strife in the northeastern state. Officials said the KNO and UPF as well as their constituents shall completely abjure the path of violence and abide by the Constitution of India, laws of the land, and territorial integrity of Manipur.

The SoO agreement shall be followed by tripartite dialogue with KNO and UPF to pave the way for a negotiated political settlement under the Constitution of India in a time bound manner.

The KNO and UPF as well as their constituents shall not have association either at organisation level or at individual level with any other armed group, within the country or outside, officials said.

The KNO and UPF as well as their constituents shall not undertake any offensive operations like ambush, raid, sniping and attack leading to death/injury/damage or loss of property, kidnapping, extortion, intimidation, etc. against security forces, other groups and/or the public, they said.

The security forces also will not launch operations against KNO and UPF as well as their constituents as long as they abide by this agreement. The relocation of designated camps of the Kuki groups has been a long standing demands of the Meitei groups which alleged that militants from these camps had earlier carried out attacks on people living in the valley. They also sought opening of the national highway for free movement.

Manipur is currently under President's rule which was imposed on February 13 after the then chief minister N Biren Singh resigned on February 9 following months of ethnic violence.

The state assembly, which has a tenure till 2027, has been put under suspended animation.

After the imposition of the President's rule, Governor Ajay Kumar Bhalla had taken a number of steps to restore peace and bring back normalcy, including asking those who looted arms from security forces. (PTI)

India's infant mortality

urban areas in the last five decades," it said. The report said birth rate has declined by about 14 per cent in the last decade, from 21.4 in 2013 to 18.4 in 2023 with rural areas reporting a dip from 22.9 to 20.3 (about 11 per cent decline). For urban areas, it is from 17.3 to 14.9 (about 14 per cent decline).

Bihar reported highest birth rate of 25.8 while Andaman and Nicobar islands was at the lowest with 10.1 in 2023. Death rate has gradually declined over the last five decades from 14.9 in 1971 to 6.4 in 2023.

In rural areas, it decreased from 7.2 in 2022 to 6.8 in 2023. In urban areas, it went down from 6.0 in 2022 to 5.7 in 2023. Chandigarh reported the lowest death rate of 4 and Chhattisgarh the highest of 8.3, the report said.

"Mortality is one of the basic components of population change and the related data is essential for demographic studies and public health administration. The Death Rate is one of the simplest measures of mortality and is defined as the number of deaths per thousand population in a given region and time period," the report said. (PTI)

IIF 2025 to showcase Assam and North East as emerging industrial hub

GUWAHATI, Sept 4: After the encouraging response to the India Industrial Fair (IIF) 2022, which drew participation from more than 400 MSMEs, entrepreneurs and investors across the country, Laghu Udyog Bharati (LUB), Purbottar has announced the India Industrial Fair (IIF) 2025 to be held from October 30 to November 2 at the Veterinary College Ground, Khanapara in Guwahati.

According to an official statement, IIF 2025 will be organised under the chief patronage of Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma and the patronage of Industry Minister Bimal Bora.

The event, billed as the largest industrial fair in the North East, is expected to draw more than 50,000 visitors, including senior cabinet ministers, policymakers, entrepreneurs, international delegates and representatives of industry bodies.

Laghu Udyog Bharati, with over 55,000 members spread across 695 districts and more than 850 members in the North East region, has played a key role in fostering en-

trepreneurship and industrial development nationwide.

At IIF 2025, the organisers are planning more than 500 stalls spanning emerging and traditional sectors such as artificial intelligence, drones, electric vehicles, defence, renewable energy, handloom and handicrafts, tourism and start-ups.

The fair will facilitate business-to-business and business-to-government interactions, investor summits, technology transfer sessions with IIT Guwahati, export promotion workshops and policy dialogues on industrial reforms.

The organisers stated that the upcoming edition of the fair will not only help catalyse the growth of existing businesses but also open opportunities for aspiring entrepreneurs through expert-led sessions on business planning, financing and market access.

Dedicated platforms for women entrepreneurs, start-ups and artisans are expected to provide greater exposure and collaboration, while sessions on waste-to-wealth, renewable energy and green indus-



trial practices will highlight the commitment to sustainability.

LUB's participation as MSME partner at Advantage Assam 2.0 in February 2025 was recalled as a reaffirmation of its commitment to industrial transformation and MSME empowerment in the state and region. The organisation has now extended invitations to entrepreneurs and state governments of the North East to participate in the fair and showcase their One District One Product initiatives through dedicated pavilions,

thereby contributing to shaping the industrial future of the region.

Addressing the media in Guwahati, LUB Purbottar leaders including Ashish Deorah, Manoj Lundia, Partha Pratim Pathak, Pramod Mour, Ravi Sureka and other executive members said the fair is designed to transform the industrial landscape of Assam and the North East by attracting investments, promoting local entrepreneurship and integrating the region more closely with the national and global economy.

KARBI ANGLONG AUTONOMOUS COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER.(M) TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT

KAAC::: DIPHU-782460

Email ID transportdeptkaac@gmail.com

KAAC/TRN/Gen. Corress/2010-11/1417

Dtd. 04/09/2025

NOTICE

The New KAAC (A/C) buses are ready for its operation. The buses are fully built with A/C coaches and one bus is equipped with bio-toilet facility. The new service buses will kicked off on 8th September 2025 and the ticket can be bought or booked via Red-Bus.in or by visiting KAAC counter located at ISBT, 5th Mile, Chutianala.

SL No.	Vehicle No.	Time	From	To	Contact No.
1.	AS-09BC-6238 (A/C with Bio-Toilet)	6.00 AM 1.30 PM	Guwahati	Diphu	7637049978
2.	AS-09BC-6239 (A/C)	6.00 AM 12.00 Noon	Diphu	Guwahati	Contact No.

N.B:- Enclosed.

Booking Clerk Name & Contact No.

- Sri. Prasanta Engti (Booking Clerk)
Contact No. 9395258753
- Sri. Langtuk Tokbi (Booking Clerk)
Contact No. 8638252773
- Sri. Moneswar Killing (Booking Clerk)
Contact No. 9365281938

Sd/-
Executive Engineer (M)
Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council
DIPHU

Memo No. KAAC/TRN/Gen. Corress/2010-11/

Dtd. 04/09/2025

Cheques handed over to 31,224 members of women SHGs under Mahila Udyamita Abhiyan

Women's safety and welfare top priority of govt: CM



HT Correspondent

TEZPUR, Sept 4: Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Thursday asserted that the Assam Government has made the safety, welfare and empowerment of girls and women its foremost priority. He said the state has taken decisive measures to end child marriage and launched a series of women-centric schemes to ensure financial independence, social security and dignity for women across the state.

touching ₹10 lakh a year.

The chief minister highlighted that with a revolving fund of ₹25,000 provided by the government, SHGs have been able to free themselves from the burden of high-interest microfinance loans and take up productive activities with confidence.

With 99 per cent repayment of bank loans, he expressed optimism that the remaining 32 lakh SHG members would also be able to become 'Lakshpati Baidews' in the near future.

Sarma urged the beneficiaries to channel the assistance into ventures such as dairy, beekeeping, preparation of traditional food items and strengthening of family enterprises.

Explaining the phased structure of the scheme, he said women investing the ₹10,000 seed capital productively this year would qualify for ₹25,000 next year with bank support, followed by ₹50,000 in the subsequent phase.

He noted that the implementation would involve an expenditure of ₹4,000 crore in the first stage, ₹10,000 crore in the second stage and ₹25,000 crore in the third.

Reiterating the government's commitment to women's welfare, the chief minister announced that from September 17, coinciding with the birthday of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, beneficiaries under Orunodoi 3.0 will start receiving ₹1,250 monthly assistance.

In addition, Orunodoi families will get a subsidy of ₹250 for LPG purchases. From November 1, ration card holders will also receive pulses, sugar and salt at subsidised rates along with rice.

Minister for Health and Family Welfare Ashok Singhal, MP Ranjit Dutta, MLAs Ganesh Limbu and Prithiraj Rabha, Additional Chief Secretary of Panchayat and Rural Development B. Kalyan Chakravarty, District Commissioner Ananda Kumar Das, Mission Director of Assam State Rural Livelihoods Mission Kuntal Moni Sharma Bordoloi and other senior officials were present.

On the occasion, the chief minister also laid the foundation stone of the Akshaya Patra Centralised Kitchen at Singrijan Field and inaugurated the Postcard Resort at Durrung Tea Estate in Sonitpur district.

Demand for withdrawal of CAA from Assam gets louder

AASU protests Centre's new order on foreigners in state ● We have to protest and agitate for our survival: Students' body

GUWAHATI, Sept 4: The All Assam Students' Union (AASU) on Thursday protested for 11 hours against the Centre's recent order under the Foreigners Act, allowing members of minority communities from neighbouring countries to stay in India without valid documents, and demanded that the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) be withdrawn from the state.

The influential students' body demonstrated at all district headquarters, demanding that all foreigners, along with fundamentalist elements, be sent back.

The Centre's order, issued under the recently implemented Immigration and Foreigners Act, 2025, allows members of minority communities—Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis, and Christians—from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, and Pakistan who entered India on or before December



31, 2024, to stay in the country without valid travel documents, if they fled religious persecution.

According to the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019 (CAA), which came into effect last year, similar groups who arrived in India on or before December 31, 2014, are eligible for Indian citizenship.

AASU President Utpal Sarma told reporters here that the Centre's move will open the "floodgates for settling more illegal Hindu Bangladeshis in Assam, which we cannot allow."

Noting that Assam is the only state that has been agitating since Independence (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Minor boy's death: CM Sarma orders for satellite mapping of open drains

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, Sept 4: Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Thursday directed the state's Chief Secretary to use satellite imagery to identify open drains across city areas, particularly near construction sites, after a five-year-old boy died in a tragic incident in Guwahati.

Sarma said the step was necessary not only to put in place preventive measures but also to address a worrying trend of man-hole covers being stolen at night, creating serious safety hazards for pedestrians and residents.

The directive came a day after young Sumit Kumar, a Class I student, fell into an open, under-construction drain near Vivekananda School in the city's Kalapahar locality.

According to police, the incident occurred around 3 p.m. on Wednesday while the boy was

playing near the roadside. Despite frantic efforts, his body could only be recovered by 6 p.m. with the help of Guwahati Police. Doctors at Gauhati Medical College and Hospital (GMCH) declared him dead on arrival.

The incident has triggered widespread outrage over the negligence of civic authorities, who left dangerous drains uncovered in a densely populated residential area. Concerned citizens also criticised the indifference of some locals during the rescue attempt, which they said could have cost precious time.

On the same day, another mishap was reported from Kahilipara, where an elderly man identified as Fuljeet Sharma sustained severe leg injuries after falling into a roadside drain that was under construction. The spot, meant to serve as a pedestrian pathway, was found to be unsafe and unprotected, (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

KAAC reviews progress of development projects

HT Bureau

DIPHU, Sept 4: The 21st Executive Committee meeting of the Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council (KAAC) was held on September 3 under the chairmanship of Chief Executive Member (CEM) Tuliram Ronghang at the council's conference hall in the Old Secretariat Building here.

The session was convened to take stock of ongoing projects and deliberate on future initiatives aimed at accelerating socio-economic growth in Karbi Anglong.

The meeting reviewed the status of development works across key sectors including infrastructure, road connectivity, education, health services and implementation of welfare schemes.

Detailed discussions were held on ensuring that projects taken up under both state and central government schemes are executed in a time-bound manner.

CEM Ronghang underscored the need for transparency and accountability in carrying out government programmes.

He instructed all concerned departments to expedite the completion of pending works and stressed that timely delivery of projects is essential to bring visible benefits to the people of the district.

Senior Executive Members, Members of the Autonomous Council and departmental heads participated in the session.

They offered their views and suggestions for preparing a more people-centric action plan to address developmental priorities in the coming months. The meeting concluded with a collective resolve to strengthen (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Himanta thanks PM for ushering in GST structure reforms

GUWAHATI, Sept 4: Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma has thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi for ushering in "one of the most consequential reforms" in the country's GST structure.

The GST Council on Wednesday evening approved a complete overhaul of the Goods and Services Tax regime, limiting slabs to 5 per cent and 18 per cent, effective from September 22.

"Assam extends heartfelt gratitude to Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri @narendramodi ji for ushering in one of the most consequential reforms in India's GST structure, and to the GST Council for ensuring these changes see the light of day," he said in a post on X.

Sarma said the new regime will serve as a "super booster" for the Indian economy, bringing agility to small and medium businesses, spurring job creation, driving consumption, and "most importantly, leaving more money in the hands of our people".

"Having closely followed the evolution of GST over the last 8 years, particularly during my tenure as Assam's Finance Minister, I see this as a defining moment. "India's ability to successfully implement GST and also to adapt and reform- when required- is a shining testament to the Modi Government's firm yet flexible approach to governance," he added. (PTI)

Inquiry Commission constituted to probe Umrangso Mines Tragedy

HT Bureau

DIPHU, Sept 4: The Government of Assam has constituted a One Man Inquiry Commission under Justice (Retd.) Anima Hazarika, former Judge of the Gauhati High Court, to investigate the Umrangso Mines Tragedy in Dima Hasao district, which claimed four lives and left several persons missing.

The Commission has been tasked with ascertaining the facts and circumstances leading to the incident and fixing responsibility on officers, individuals, mining companies or institutions found to be at fault.

It will also examine lapses, if any, in safety measures and compliance with regulations governing mining operations.

As part of the inquiry process, a public hearing will be conducted at the Assam Administrative Staff College, Guwahati, on September 9 and 11, 2025.

During the hearings, evidence and statements will be recorded from affected families, witnesses, organisations and other stakeholders.

The Commission has appealed to the public to participate in the proceedings so that all relevant accounts are placed on record and the causes of the tragedy can be comprehensively understood.

The findings of the inquiry are expected to provide guidance for ensuring accountability and preventing such incidents in the future.

Nagaland govt closely monitoring Assam's eviction drive at inter-state border: Dy CM Patton

KOHIMA, Sept 4: Nagaland Deputy Chief Minister Yanthungo Patton on Thursday said the state government was closely monitoring the eviction drives carried out by Assam in the Disputed Area Belt (DAB) along the inter-state border.

Speaking in the assembly, Patton said Nagaland first received reports on July 16 of surveys in the reserve forest area by Assam government officials.

The matter was immediately raised by Nagaland's Border Magistrate with his counterpart in Surapathar on July 17, followed by a joint verification and a coordination meeting of district officials from Nuland, Wokha and Golaghat on July 22, he said.

To assess the ground situation, Patton said he, along with MLA Achumbemo Kikon and representatives of Lotha Hoho, Lotha Students' Union and Western Sumi Hoho, visited the areas in Wokha and Nuland on July 24.

A week later, on July 30, the state cabinet resolved that eviction drives must be carried out jointly by both states to prevent unilateral action and illegal immigration, he said.

Patton said tensions escalated on August 21 when Assam's Forest Department began preparations for plantations and erecting boundary pillars in the evicted areas in Wokha district.

Protests by local residents prompted Nagaland's chief sec-

tary to issue a press statement, reiterating that all activities in the DAB must be done jointly.

On the same day, Wokha and Golaghat officials held a second round of talks, he said.

Patton, who is also the minister-in-charge of border affairs, said that following intervention by both chief ministers, he, accompanied by MLAs Y. Mhonbemo Humtsoe and Achumbemo Kikon, met Assam's Forest Minister and Surapathar legislator on August 23.

It was agreed that no plantations or boundary pillars would be undertaken until further discussion at the chief minister level, he said.

The Nagaland cabinet on August 26 further resolved to evict illegal immigrants (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Kerala reported a single digit IMR of 5 India's infant mortality rate touches low of 25, down from 40 in 2013

NEW DELHI, Sept 4: Infant mortality rate (IMR) in the country has touched a record low of 25, a sharp dip of 37.5 per cent from 40 in 2013, according to the Sample Registration System report for 2023 issued by the Registrar General of India.

IMR is a key public health indicator defined as number of deaths of children per 1,000 live births under one year -- the lower the number the better the health accessibility.

According to the SRS 2023 report, which took into account the data for 2023, IMR has registered a dramatic 80 per cent decline from 129 in 1971. It shows that Madhya Pradesh, Chattisgarh, and Uttar Pradesh reported the highest levels of IMR in the country at 37. The



lowest was Manipur at 3.

Kerala was the only of the 21 large states which reported a single digit IMR of 5. It is second in the

country after Manipur.

The report shows a countrywide decline of IMR from 44 to 28 in rural areas. In urban areas of the

country the numbers dipped from 27 to 18. This marks decadal drops of about 36 per cent and 33 per cent respectively.

The report also highlights decline in birth rates and death rates in the country.

Birth rate is a crude measure of fertility of a population and is a crucial determinant of population growth. It gives the number of live births per thousand population in a given region and year.

"The Birth Rate at all India level has declined drastically over the last five decades from 36.9 in 1971 to 18.4 in 2023. The rural-urban differential has also narrowed over these years. However, the Birth Rate has continued to be higher in rural areas compared to (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Kuki-Zo groups sign pact with govt

Agreement on maintenance of peace, Manipur's territorial integrity

NEW DELHI, Sept 4: Two prominent Kuki-Zo groups on Thursday signed a suspension of operations agreement with the government on re-negotiated terms and conditions under which they agreed on maintaining territorial integrity of Manipur, relocating designated camps away from vulnerable areas and working for a solution to bring lasting peace and stability in the state.

The signing of the Suspension of Operations (SoO) agreement with the Kuki National Organisation (KNO) and United People's Front (UPF) is also set to have a positive impact on peace efforts in Manipur, officials said.

Separately, civil society group Kuki-Zo Council (KZC) has decided to open the National Highway-02, which passes through Manipur for free movement of commuters and essential goods.

The move comes ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's likely visit to Manipur next week, first since ethnic violence broke out between the Meiteis and Kukis in May 2023.

The pact was signed after a series of meetings between the officials of Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) and a delegation of Kuki groups in last few days here, according to an official statement issued



by the MHA.

Manipur has been witnessing ethnic violence since May 3, 2023, after a tribal solidarity march was taken out in the hill districts, in protest against the majority Meitei community's demand for Scheduled Tribe (ST) status.

Since then, about 260 people, including members of both the Kuki and Meitei communities as well as security personnel, have been killed in the violence. However, there has been relative peace in Manipur in last few months.

"A tripartite meeting among representatives of MHA, government of Manipur (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Teaching is the Greatest Profession

By: Himangshu Ranjan Bhuyan

Teaching is a profession through which the foundation of human society is built and the highest ideals of life are established. The dignity of this profession is unparalleled compared to any other occupation, as a teacher not only imparts the light of knowledge but also serves as a guide for the future of society. Teaching is not merely a means of livelihood; it is a sacred responsibility, a philosophy of life that shapes human thought, behavior, and morality. A teacher possesses an immense power to transform an ordinary individual into an extraordinary one, awakening their potential and paving the way for societal progress. To understand the importance of this profession, one must deeply analyze the process of societal development, its dynamics of change, and the impact of teachers across various aspects of life. A teacher's role is not confined within the four walls of a classroom; their influence permeates every layer and corner of society. Through their teaching, the cultural, moral, and intellectual foundation of a society is strengthened. Through their guidance, a consciousness is awakened in students' minds, enabling them to succeed in every sphere of life.

Knowledge is the cornerstone of human civilization, upon which societal progress and advancement depend. Without knowledge, human life is akin to darkness, where the possibilities for progress are limited. A teacher's primary responsibility is to ignite this flame of knowledge and ensure its transmission from one generation to the next. However, the role of teaching extends beyond imparting textbook knowledge. Every moment of a teacher's life—their conduct, words, patience, and empathy—profoundly impacts students. A teacher's life itself is an open book from which students learn values, ethics, and a sense of responsibility. Through their teachings, students not only acquire subject-specific knowledge but also develop a new perspective on life. This perspective inspires them to face life's challenges, set goals, and achieve them. Through this role, a teacher shapes an individual's personality, enabling them to become a responsible member of society. The teacher's guidance instills a strength in students that helps them succeed in all areas of life, teaching them how to express their potential and address life's challenges. Thus, teaching cannot

A teacher leaves a profound impact on students' lives, reflected in every aspect of their existence. Through their teachings, students not only gain knowledge but also develop a new outlook on life. With a teacher's guidance, they learn how to confront life's challenges, set goals, and achieve them. A teacher's inspiration instills confidence, enabling students to succeed in every field. Through empathy and support, a teacher helps students recognize their potential and pursue their dreams. This personal influence leaves an indelible mark on students' lives, shaping their personality, thoughts, and perspectives

not be considered merely a profession of disseminating knowledge; it is a creative process that shapes the future of society. Through this role, a teacher establishes a strong foundation that propels society toward greater progress and prosperity.

It must be acknowledged that education lies at the core of any positive societal change, and at the heart of education is the teacher. A teacher plants the seeds of new ideas in students' minds, enabling them to challenge outdated beliefs, superstitions, and injustices. Through their teachings, students develop critical thinking skills, learning to question, seek truth, and stand for justice. This critical thinking paves the way for societal transformation. A teacher's education fosters a sense of social responsibility in students, motivating them to work for the betterment of society. Beyond imparting knowledge, a teacher also shoulders the responsibility of preserving and transforming society's moral and cultural values. Through their teachings, the new generation develops a consciousness that fights against injustice, inequality, and discrimination. This transformative role of a teacher makes positive societal change possible. Their education strengthens the moral foundation of society, guiding it toward a more just, equitable, and progressive direction. Through this transformative power, a teacher creates a ripple effect of positive change across all levels of society, inspiring students to contribute to societal progress.

A teacher leaves a profound impact on students' lives, reflected in every aspect of their existence. Through their teachings, students not only gain knowledge but also develop a new outlook on life. With a teacher's guidance, they learn how to confront life's challenges, set goals, and achieve them. A teacher's inspiration instills confidence, enabling students to succeed in every field. Through empathy and support, a teacher helps students recognize their potential and pursue their dreams. This personal influence leaves an indelible mark on students' lives, shaping their personality, thoughts, and perspectives. Through this role, a teacher opens the path for an individual's life, enabling them to become a responsible and successful member of society. Their teachings awaken a strength in students that aids their success in all areas, teaching them how to express their potential and solve life's challenges.

A teacher does not merely impart knowledge; they foster creativity in students' minds. Through their teachings, students develop new ideas, thoughts, and possibilities. A teacher's inspiration teaches them how to express their creativity and address life's challenges innovatively. Through guidance, students learn to find new solutions and creatively tackle life's problems. This creative role of a teacher leads to new discoveries, ideas, and possibilities in society. Their teachings awaken a strength in students that opens new paths and directions, contributing to a more ad-



vanced and prosperous society.

Through their teachings, a teacher instills values of justice, honesty, empathy, and responsibility in students. Their guidance teaches students how to become responsible citizens and contribute to societal progress. Through this moral responsibility, a teacher establishes a strong ethical foundation, making society more just and equitable. Their teachings foster a sense of social responsibility, inspiring students to work for the betterment of society. This moral role creates a robust ethical foundation, encouraging every member of society to walk the path of justice and honesty.

A teacher unites students from diverse classes, cultures, and backgrounds. Through their teachings, students develop mutual respect, empathy, and a spirit of cooperation. A teacher's guidance teaches them how to foster unity amidst diversity and respect differences. This role establishes the foundation for social cohesion, fostering a sense of unity that inspires students to work together as a collective force. Through this, a teacher builds a strong social bond, uniting people from various strata and strengthening society.

The impact of a teacher's education is not limited to a few years of a student's life; it resonates throughout their lifetime and across generations. Their teachings awaken a strength that reflects in every aspect of students' lives. Through guidance, students learn to face chal-

lenges, set goals, and achieve them. This long-term impact establishes a strong foundation, propelling society toward greater progress and prosperity. A teacher's education shapes a generation that works for societal betterment, strengthening its moral and cultural foundation. Through their teachings, a teacher fosters awareness in the new generation, inspiring them to contribute to societal progress. Their guidance teaches students how to address societal issues and work for its betterment. A teacher's education creates a consciousness that makes students aware of societal challenges, inspiring them to find solutions and contribute to progress. This role builds a strong social consciousness, motivating every member of society to work for its betterment.

From all these perspectives, it is clear that teaching is not just a profession; it is a lifelong responsibility, a sacred duty. Through a teacher's education, the future of society is shaped, its moral and cultural foundations are strengthened, and it progresses toward a more just, equitable, and advanced direction. A teacher's teachings awaken a strength in students that aids their success in every sphere of life. Their guidance teaches students how to face challenges and realize their dreams. Through this role, a teacher builds a strong generation that works for societal progress. For these reasons, teaching is regarded as the greatest profession.

'From books to screens: The true meaning of Guru in changing times'

By: Dr. Priyanka Saurabh

Teacher's Day is not just a formal occasion, but it is a day to understand the soul of the society and the nation. Whenever we take the name of Guru or teacher, a personality emerges in our mind, who is not only a teacher but also gives direction to life. In Indian culture, the teacher has been called 'Acharya', which means one who teaches through conduct. If seen from this point of view, in today's era, the responsibility of teachers has increased more than ever, because this is the time when technology and screen are affecting the thinking and sensibilities of children.

A few decades ago, the form of education was limited to books, classroom and dialogue. Students used to listen carefully to the teacher's words and those words became the basis of their life. But the digital revolution has completely changed this scenario. The growing influence of mobile phones, internet and artificial intelligence (AI) has opened countless opportunities for students, but along with it, it has also raised many challenges. An ocean of information is now available at the fingertips of every child, but in the same ocean, there is also a web of misinformation, misleading content and unlimited entertainment. In such a situation, the question arises that who will show the right path to the children in this vast and unbalanced information world? The answer to this is - teacher.

The role of a teacher is no longer limited to the textbook. He is a guide, a value creator and a personality builder. When a child is lost in the world of mobile screens, it is the teacher's responsibility to introduce him to the challenges of real life. The aim of education should not be only to get a degree or a job, but it should also be that the child becomes a responsible citizen of the society, develops compassion, sensitivity and discretion in him.

The teacher is the link that maintains a balance between home and society. Home gives love and values to the child, but the teacher makes them permanent. A teacher does not only teach his students mathematics or science, but also teaches them how to face difficulties, how to learn from failures and the importance of honesty and truth in life.

If we consider today's education system, we find that competition and the race for marks have taken over. Children work hard day and night to score more marks, parents also push them in the same direction, but in this process the founda-

In the digital age, the form of education is changing rapidly. This journey from book to screen is imparting knowledge, but culture and human values are being left behind. In such times, the importance of a teacher increases even more. Teachers are the bridges that connect children to the present and take them to a safe future. Machines can provide information, but only a Guru can instill sensitivity and build character. On this Teacher's Day, let us resolve that the rivers of culture should never dry up in the race of technology.

tion of human values is getting weakened. This is the reason why self-centered tendencies, moral degradation and insensitivity are increasing in society. If there is anyone who can remove this deficiency, it is the teacher. If the teacher wants, he can develop a sense of cooperation, service, sympathy and responsibility towards society in children.

The impact of the screen has become so deep that children are getting away from real communication. They make thousands of friends on social media, but are becoming victims of loneliness in real life. Only a teacher can help them get out of this situation. When a teacher communicates with children in the class, he does not only teach, but also touches the emotions of the children. A true teacher is one who makes students feel that they are important, their problems are heard and they will be guided.

The importance of a teacher is not limited to students only. The role of a teacher in nation building is extremely crucial. It is said again and again that the future of a country is shaped in its classrooms. This statement is not just an ideal but a harsh truth. If there are good teachers in the classrooms, who will fill the children with morality, knowledge and self-confidence, then the same children will go on to become good citizens, leaders, scientists and administrators. But if the teacher is limited only to helping the students pass the exams, then the future of the society will become dark.

Today, there is a need for teachers to adapt themselves to the times. Running away from technology is not the solution, but it is important to adopt it in a positive manner. If the teacher wants, he can make the screen and digital mediums aides in education. Technologies like online platforms,

educational videos, virtual laboratories and artificial intelligence can increase the curiosity of children. But among all these, no one can replace human interaction. Machines can impart knowledge, but only a teacher can impart values and sensitivity.

On Teachers' Day, we should also remember that respect for teachers should not be limited to formal programs. This respect will be meaningful only when we provide them with proper facilities, training and an inspiring environment. Even today, many teachers are doing wonders with limited resources. They take out extra time for their students, discover new methods and improve the lives of children. Such teachers should not only be saluted, but their hard work should be considered the biggest asset of the nation.

The great philosopher and teacher Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan said that teachers are the soul of society. Their teachings influence generations and the light that comes from their personality spreads far and wide. Today, when we are celebrating Teachers' Day, we should take a pledge that we will respect our teachers, strengthen their role and ensure that the coming generations acquire not only information but also wisdom, sensitivity and values.

Ultimately, in this fast-paced world of screens and technology, teachers are the balance that will not let the rivers of knowledge and culture dry up. They are the bridge that connects the child to today and takes him to the future. Therefore, on this occasion, we should not only respect the teacher, but also implement his message in life. This will be the true tribute to the Guru tradition, which has taught us that education is not just a means of employment, but a medium to make life meaningful and society bright.



By: Lalit Garg

Teachers are the true architects of civilization and culture. No matter how much progress science, technology, or politics may achieve, if education and teachers do not provide direction, humanity becomes directionless. This is precisely why the tradition of celebrating National Teachers' Day on 5 September began. This date marks the birth anniversary of India's former President, Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, which is observed as Teachers' Day in India. The purpose of this day is to honor the significance, contribution, and guiding role of teachers in society. It serves as a reminder to students and the community that teachers are not only knowledge-givers but also role models, inspirers, and builders of character. In today's era of creating a New India—a strong and developed India—the role of teachers has become even more relevant.

Dr Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan was born on 5 September 1888 in Tiruttani, Andhra Pradesh. He was a distinguished philosopher, scholar, teacher, and statesman. He taught philosophy at prestigious institutions like Oxford University and Calcutta University. His books Indian Philosophy, The Hindu View of Life, and An Idealist View of Life gained global recognition. He served as Vice President of India from 1952 to 1962, and as President from 1962 to 1967. In 1954, he was awarded the Bharat Ratna. When some of his students and friends wished to celebrate his birthday after he became President, he humbly suggested that instead of celebrating his birthday, the day should be observed as Teachers' Day. Since then, 5 September has been commemorated as National Teachers' Day. Dr. Radhakrishnan's message was clear: teachers are the backbone of society, and honoring them is the true foundation of nation-building. This respect is not merely ceremonial but a manifesto for the future of human civilization.

This day renews the nation's commitment to education, science, peace, and progress. India's history is deeply connected with the glorious tra-

dition of learning. Since ancient times, India has been a global center of education and has played the role of Jagatguru (World Teacher). Universities like Nalanda and Takshashila earned India this status.

The great philosopher Acharya Mahaprajna once said: "The task of building character is extremely difficult, and it can only be accomplished by a selfless and aware teacher." This reminds us that a teacher is not merely an informer, but a guide to life itself. In the ancient Indian vision, the purpose of education was expressed as "Sa Vidya Ya Vimuktaye"—education is that which liberates. But in the modern context, it has become "Sa Vidya Ya Niyuktaye"—education is that which gets you a job. That is why, despite the increase in schools and universities, crimes and corruption are also on the rise. Mahatma Gandhi's words remain relevant: "When a school opens, a hundred prisons close." Sadly, today the reverse seems to be happening.

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 has tried to change this perspective. It emphasizes not only what to study but also how to study. Critical thinking, problem-solving, entrepreneurship, and ethics have been placed at the heart of education. But the central figure in all of this remains the teacher. If teachers are uninspired, demotivated, or insensitive, no policy can succeed. Education becomes meaningful not merely through books and curricula, but through the living presence of the teacher. Former President and scientist Dr A. P. J. Abdul Kalam once said: "If a country is to be corruption-free and become a nation of beautiful minds, three key persons can make a difference—the father, the mother, and the teacher." This places teachers in the highest position of responsibility. As India moves toward Amrit Kaal, envisioning itself as a developed nation by 2047, this dream can only be realized if teachers shape a generation that is not only knowledgeable but also virtuous.

Globally too, education has a decisive role. Nelson Mandela said: "Education is the most

powerful weapon which you can use to change the world." Since seeds of war and terrorism are sown in the human mind, we must sow seeds of peace and coexistence from childhood itself. Along with patriotism, children must also be taught the spirit of universal love—humanity. Only then can war, violence, and terror be eradicated. The Indian cultural maxim "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" (the whole world is one family) can guide this path. Yet, in reality, both education and the teaching profession are gradually shifting from mission to business. Knowledge is being commercialized, and reports of distrust and even violence between teachers and students are on the rise. The responsibility of halting this commercialization and reconnecting education with human values rests foremost on teachers themselves.

Today, what we need is not only an educational revolution but also a teacher revolution. Good curricula, new technology, and modern institutions become meaningful only when they are centered around inspiring teachers who can guide students toward holistic development. Just as fields, seeds, and tools are useless without the farmer, schools, curricula, and technology are meaningless without teachers. Swami Vivekananda said: "All-round development means expansion of the heart, elevation of the mind, and greatness in action." Teachers are the ones who shape such personalities. The changing meaning of education has altered society's mindset. Today people merely want to be educated, not well-educated—that is, not virtuous and value-oriented. Their goal seems limited to intellectual growth alone. This is where teachers have to play a transformative role, and much is expected from the new education policy in this regard.

The NEP's primary aim is not just literacy but also the development of social and emotional skills. The goal of universal school education by 2030 has been set in this spirit. However, lack of resources, scarcity of trained teachers, and the challenges of a changing social environment remain major obstacles. Even so, India's ancient and rich educational tradition continues to inspire admiration among foreign scholars. F. W. Thomas wrote: "Education in India is not an exotic plant. There is no country in the world where the love of knowledge arose so early or exerted such a lasting and powerful influence." Though the role of teachers has changed with time, their importance and responsibility in shaping personalities has only grown. Without the development of comprehensive abilities, it is difficult to keep pace with the age. Strong determination and the power to act are what refine personality, and teachers are the ones who cultivate such traits.

In this modern era of economic pressure, terrorism, wars, and violence, the role of teachers has become more vital than ever. They do not just impart knowledge but also teach essential life skills. Teachers collaborate with students to instill moral values and peaceful living, which are essential for good citizenship. To ensure holistic development, teachers must prepare students who are both scientific and spiritual, whose intellectual, emotional, physical, and mental faculties are harmoniously developed. The true message of Teachers' Day 2025 should be that teachers are not merely professionals but the soul-makers of society. If India truly wishes to become a world leader once again, it will require not only a strong education policy but also a dedicated army of visionary and committed teachers.

Celebrating Teachers: The Heart of Education

By: Satyabrata Borah

Teachers Day is a special occasion celebrated across the globe to honor and appreciate the invaluable contributions of educators who shape the minds and futures of individuals and societies. This day holds profound significance as it acknowledges the tireless efforts, dedication, and transformative impact of teachers in nurturing knowledge, values, and aspirations. In many countries, Teachers Day is marked with enthusiasm, gratitude, and reflection, serving as a reminder of the pivotal role teachers play in building a progressive and enlightened world. The essence of this celebration lies in recognizing the teacher as not just an instructor but a mentor, guide, and catalyst for personal and societal growth.

The origins of Teachers Day vary across cultures, often tied to historical figures or events that symbolize the reverence for education. In India, for instance, Teachers Day is celebrated on September 5, commemorating the birth anniversary of Dr Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, a distinguished philosopher, scholar, and the second President of India. Dr Radhakrishnan, a revered teacher himself, believed that education was the cornerstone of progress. When his students proposed celebrating his birthday, he humbly suggested that the day be dedicated to honoring all teachers instead.

This gesture reflects the universal sentiment that teachers deserve recognition for their selfless service. Similarly, World Teachers Day, observed globally on October 5, was established by UNESCO in 1994 to focus on the rights and responsibilities of teachers and to highlight their role in achieving global education goals. These historical roots emphasize the timeless importance of educators in shaping civilizations.

Teachers are the architects of society, molding young minds into responsible, thoughtful, and capable individuals. Their significance extends beyond the classroom, as they impart not only academic knowledge but also life skills, ethical values, and critical thinking. A teacher's influence is profound, often leaving a lasting impact that shapes a student's worldview and character. Through their guidance, students learn to navigate challenges, question assumptions, and pursue their dreams with confidence.

The ripple effect of a teacher's work is immense, as their students go on to contribute to society in meaningful ways, whether as scientists, artists, leaders, or compassionate citizens. This transformative power underscores why Teachers Day is more than a ceremonial event; it is a tribute to the enduring legacy of those who educate.

The celebration of Teachers Day serves as an opportunity to reflect on the evolving role of teachers in a rapidly changing world. In the past, teaching was primarily about imparting knowledge from textbooks, but today, educators are facilitators of holistic development. They adapt to technological advancements, incorporate innovative teaching methods, and address diverse learning needs. In an era of digital learning, artificial intelligence, and global connectivity, teachers remain irreplaceable. They provide the human connection that technology cannot replicate, fostering creativity, emotional intelligence, and resilience in students. By celebrating Teachers Day, societies acknowledge the adaptability and resilience of educators who navigate these challenges while remaining committed to their mission.

One of the most compelling aspects of Teachers Day is its ability to foster gratitude among students, parents, and communities. For students, it is a chance to express appreciation for the patience, encouragement, and wisdom their teachers impart. Simple gestures like handwritten notes, heartfelt speeches, or small tokens of gratitude can convey the deep respect students feel for their mentors. Parents, too, recognize the partnership between teachers and families in nurturing a child's potential.

Communities benefit from the collective efforts of educators who prepare fu-



ture generations to tackle global challenges, from climate change to social inequality. Teachers Day thus becomes a collective expression of gratitude, uniting people in their shared appreciation for education's unsung heroes.

Teachers Day also highlights the need to address the challenges teachers face. Educators often work under demanding conditions, juggling administrative responsibilities, large class sizes, and the pressure to meet academic standards. In many parts of the world, teachers are underpaid and lack access to adequate resources or professional development opportunities. These challenges can hinder their ability to deliver quality education and sustain their passion for teaching. By celebrating Teachers Day, societies are prompted to reflect on these issues and advocate for better working conditions, fair compensation, and policies that empower educators. Recognizing teachers' contributions goes hand in hand with ensuring they are supported to thrive in their roles.

The significance of Teachers Day also lies in its ability to inspire future generations of educators. Teaching is a profession driven by passion, not just for

imparting knowledge but for making a difference in lives. By celebrating teachers, societies encourage young people to consider education as a noble and fulfilling career path. The stories of dedicated teachers who go above and beyond, like staying late to help a struggling student, creating innovative lesson plans, or advocating for inclusive education—serve as powerful examples of the impact one individual can have. Teachers Day showcases these stories, inspiring others to join the profession and continue the legacy of shaping minds.

Teachers Day fosters a sense of unity and shared purpose within the education community. Schools and institutions often organize events, such as award ceremonies, cultural programs, or workshops, to celebrate teachers' contributions. These events strengthen the bond between teachers, students, and administrators, creating a supportive environment where education can flourish. They also provide a platform for teachers to share their experiences, exchange ideas, and reflect on their journey. This sense of community is vital, as teaching can sometimes feel isolating, especially in challenging circumstances. By com-

ing together to celebrate, educators are reminded that they are part of a larger mission to empower and uplift society.

The global perspective on Teachers Day further amplifies its significance. While the date and customs may differ, the underlying theme of honoring teachers transcends borders. In China, Teachers Day is celebrated on September 10 with great reverence, reflecting the cultural value placed on education. In the United States, National Teacher Appreciation Week in May includes a specific Teachers Day, where communities rally to show their support. In countries like Thailand and Mexico, unique traditions, such as offering flowers or hosting ceremonies, highlight the universal respect for educators. These diverse celebrations underscore the shared understanding that teachers are the backbone of progress, regardless of geography or culture.

Teachers Day also serves as a call to action for governments and policymakers to prioritize education. Quality education, as outlined in global frameworks like the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, is a fundamental right and a prerequisite for sustainable development.

Teachers are at the heart of this mission, yet many education systems face shortages of qualified educators, particularly in underserved regions. By dedicating a day to teachers, societies are reminded to invest in teacher training, recruitment, and retention to ensure every child has access to quality education. This focus on systemic change is crucial for addressing inequalities and building a more equitable world.

The emotional resonance of Teachers Day cannot be overstated. For many, it evokes memories of teachers who made a difference in their lives—those who believed in their potential, offered encouragement during difficult times, or inspired them to pursue their passions. These personal connections highlight the unique bond between teachers and students, one that often lasts a lifetime. Teachers Day provides an opportunity to reconnect with these mentors, whether through a heartfelt message or a visit, re-

inforcing the enduring impact of their guidance. This emotional connection is what makes the day so meaningful, as it celebrates not just a profession but the human relationships that define it.

Teachers Day is a celebration of knowledge itself. Teachers are the custodians of wisdom, passing down lessons from one generation to the next. They preserve cultural heritage, advance scientific discovery, and promote critical thinking, ensuring that humanity continues to grow and evolve. By honoring teachers, societies reaffirm their commitment to learning as a lifelong pursuit. This emphasis on knowledge is particularly relevant in today's world, where misinformation and polarization pose significant challenges.

Teachers equip students with the tools to discern truth, question biases, and engage with the world thoughtfully, making their role more vital than ever. As we celebrate Teachers Day, it is also a moment to look forward to.

The future of education is filled with possibilities, from personalized learning to global collaboration. Teachers will continue to be at the forefront of these innovations, guiding students through an ever-changing landscape.

By recognizing their contributions, we not only honor their past and present efforts but also empower them to shape a brighter future. Teachers Day is a reminder that education is a collective endeavor, one that requires the support of communities, governments, and individuals to thrive.

Teachers Day is a profound celebration of the individuals who dedicate their lives to education. It is a day to express gratitude, reflect on challenges, and inspire future generations. Teachers shape not only individual lives but the very fabric of society, making their work indispensable. By honoring them, we acknowledge the power of education to transform, uplift, and unite. Whether through a simple thank you or a grand ceremony, Teachers Day reminds us to cherish the educators who light the path to a better world, ensuring their legacy endures for generations to come.

All time great teachers of the world: A Tribute

By: Diganta Barooah

Teachers are the pillars of our society and it is through their contribution that every young mind is nurtured to be a part of the promising future. They recognize the potential in each student and offer unwavering support so that every child can flourish in their life. In India, the role of a teacher has always been revered because many great minds in the country have made massive contributions to the field of education. From the ancient wisdom of Chanakya to the great mentorship of Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam, the country is rich with people who are great sources of inspiration. Great teachers of all time include figures from diverse backgrounds such as the philosophers Socrates, Confucius, and Aristotle; Indian educators and reformers like Savitribai Phule, Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, and Swami Vivekananda; and innovators such as Maria Montessori and Anne Sullivan, who each profoundly influenced education and society through their unique methods and philosophies.

International and Ancient Thinkers

Socrates (470-399 BCE):

Socrates (born c. 470 BCE, Athens [Greece])—died 399 BCE, Athens) was an ancient Greek philosopher whose way of life, character, and thought exerted a profound influence on Classical antiquity and Western philosophy. Socrates is considered as the father of Western philosophy, known for his Socratic method of teaching through questioning. Socrates lived in Athens Greece his entire life (469-399 BCE), cajoling his fellow citizens to think hard about questions of truth and justice, convinced as he was that "the unexamined life is not worth living." While claiming that his wisdom consisted merely in "knowing that he knew nothing," Socrates did have certain beliefs, chief among them that happiness is obtainable by human effort. Specifically, he recommended gaining rational control over your desires and harmonizing the different parts of your soul. Doing so would produce a divine-like state of inner tranquility that the external world could not effect. True to his word, he cheerfully faced his own death, discussing philosophy right up to the moments before he took the lethal hemlock. Through his influence on Plato and Aristotle, a new era of philosophy was inaugurated and the course of western civilization was decisively shaped.

Confucius (551-479 BCE):

Confucius was a pivotal moral educator in East Asia whose teachings continue to influence culture and ethics. Better known in China as "Master Kong" (Chinese: Kongzi), Confucius was a fifth-century BCE Chinese thinker whose influence upon East Asian intellectual and social history is immeasurable. As a culturally symbolic figure, he has been alternately idealized, deified, dismissed, vilified, and rehabilitated over the millennia by both Asian and non-Asian thinkers and regimes. Given his extraordinary impact on Chinese, Korean, Japanese, and Vietnamese thought, it is ironic that so little can be known about Confucius. The tradition that bears his name—"Confucianism" (Chinese: Ruja)—ultimately traces itself to the sayings and biographical fragments recorded in the text known as the Analects (Chinese: Lunyu).

Aristotle (384-322 BCE):

Aristotle was a polymath and student of Plato, whose wide-ranging works covered philosophy, science, and more. Aristotle is a towering figure in ancient Greek philosophy, who made important contributions to logic, criticism, rhetoric, physics, biology, psychology, mathematics, metaphysics, ethics, and politics. He was a student of Plato for twenty years but is famous for rejecting Plato's theory of forms. He was more empirically minded than both Plato and Aristotle's teacher, Socrates. As the father of western logic, Aristotle was the first to develop a formal system for reasoning. He ob-

served that the deductive validity of any argument can be determined by its structure rather than its content. Aristotle was the founder of the Lyceum, a school based in Athens, Greece; and he was the first of the Peripatetics, his followers from the Lyceum. Aristotle's works, exerted tremendous influence on ancient and medieval thought and continue to inspire philosophers to this day.

Indian Teachers

Savitribai Phule (1821-1897):

India's first female teacher, she co-founded schools for girls and championed women's rights and equality. The epitome of courage and social justice, Savitribai Phule, was India's first female and one of the best teachers in India. She fought against societal norms to make education accessible for marginalized girls. Since her birth in 1821, she faced discrimination for being a woman of a lower caste and was denied the right to education. In 1848, she opened a school in Pune for untouchable girls which was met with fierce opposition. But, she continued undeterred in her brave endeavours. Her life story continues to inspire educators and social reformers across generations. Her struggles remind us that education is not just a privilege, but a right. Let us look at some of Savitribai Phule's quotes:

"The lack of learning is nothing but gross bestiality. It is through the acquisition of knowledge that (he) loses his lower status and achieves the higher one."

"We shall overcome and success will be ours in the future. The future belongs to us."

"Sit idle no more. Go get an education."

Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan (1888-1975):

A philosopher-president of India, his birthday is celebrated as Teachers' Day, recognizing his significant impact on education and philosophy. Born in 1888, Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan completed his Master's in Philosophy at the young age of 21. He was not only a renowned philosopher and statesman but also a teacher who was widely respected for his passion and dedication. Prestigious institutions like the Mysore Presidency College, the University of Mysore, and Andhra University witnessed his career as an educator. Teacher's Day in India is celebrated on his birthday, 5th September, every year. It serves as proof of his undeniable contribution to the field of education. Some of Dr. Radhakrishnan's quotes are:

"Books are the means by which we build bridges between cultures."

"A life of joy and happiness is possible only on the basis of knowledge and science."

"We must recall humanity to those moral roots from which both order and freedom spring."

Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902):

Swami Vivekananda was a Hindu monk and philosopher who spread the wisdom of Vedanta to the West and advocated for the Gurukula system. Born as Narendranath Datta in 1863, Swami Vivekananda was a social reformer as well as one of the great teachers of India. His greatest tangible contribution is the Ramakrishna Mission which is a centre for learning and service even today. Vivekananda believed in a Gurukul system where teachers and students lived and learned together. He has also captivated audiences across the globe with his powerful lectures on faith, education, and social issues plaguing India. His teachings encouraged individuals to break free from limitations and recognize their inherent potential. He continues to remind us that true education must empower us to bring forth a change in ourselves and the world around us. Some inspiring quotes from Vivekananda are:

"Arise! Awake! Stop not until the goal is reached."

"Everything is easy when you are busy. But nothing is easy when you are lazy."

"Talk to yourself at least once a day otherwise you may miss meeting an excellent person in this world."

Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941):

Rabindranath Tagore was a poet, philosopher, and educator who founded Visva-Bharati University and believed in nurturing the mind. One of the greatest contributions of Rabindranath Tagore is the composition of India's national anthem. He also founded the Visva-Bharati University in Shantiniketan. According to Tagore, learning existed beyond the four walls of a classroom. He emphasized activities like drama, music, and even tree climbing. His innovative approach to teaching made him a famous teacher in India and a pioneer in Indian education. Even today, he continues to inspire generations to learn with joy and embrace their individuality. The following Tagore quotes are quite popular: "It is very simple to be happy, but it is very difficult to be simple."

"The highest education is that which does not merely give us information but makes our life in harmony with all existence."

"The main object of teaching is not to give explanations, but to knock at the doors of the mind."

Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya (1861-1946)

Born in 1861, Madan Mohan Malviya strongly believed that education was a tool for both individual empowerment and national progress. His most significant contribution is the establishment of the Banaras Hindu University (BHU), Asia's largest residential university. Malviya's influence spread through the national consciousness as well. He popularized the motto "Satyameva Jayate" (Truth alone triumphs). Thus, his dedication to education earned him recognition as one of India's finest educators. Generations of teachers and learners continue taking inspiration from him. Some of Malviya's famous quotes are:

"If you admit internal purity of the human soul, you or your religion can never get impure or defiled in any way by touch or association with any man."

"Fearlessness is the only way to Freedom. Be fearless and fight for justice."

"Knowledge without humility is useless."

Swami Dayananda Saraswati (1824-1883)

Swami Dayananda Saraswati was born into a religious family which fuelled his curiosity about the true essence of Hinduism. This led him to immerse himself in Vedic and Sanskrit studies, eventually becoming a renowned scholar. He founded the Arya Samaj and fought for equal rights for women, including education. He also established Gurukuls which focused on Vedas, Sanskrit, and religious knowledge. His deep understanding and ability to explain complex concepts in simple terms made him an excellent teacher. He attracted students from diverse backgrounds, leaving a permanent mark on Indian education and social reform. Some quotes of Swami Dayananda Saraswati are:

"Validation of culture of a child is itself a validation of a child itself."

"Give the world the best you have and the best will come back to you."

"The highest form of service is to help a person who is incapable of thanking in return."

Munshi Premchand (1880-1936)

Munshi Premchand started teaching around 1900 to support his family. His passion for writing increased during this period. Influenced by Swami Vivekananda's social reform ideals, Premchand began shaping his observations of rural life and societal struggles into powerful stories. He wrote numerous novels, short stories, and essays that beautifully capture the essence of everyday India with poignant realism. Today, his works are celebrated for their social commentary and literary merit, earning him the title "Man of Letters." Some wise words of Premchand include:

"To be successful in life what you need is education, not literacy and degrees."

"Wealth and compassion are opposites."

"Like timidity, bravery is also contagious."

Chanakya (c. 350-275 BCE):

Chanakya was a statesman and strategist who helped found the Maurya Empire and was known

for his teachings on economics and politics. Chanakya, sometimes known as Kautilya or Vishnugupta, was a significant figure in Indian history. His influence and contribution are found in the scholarly writings of "Nitishashtra" (Chanakya Niti) and "Arthashastra" which offer timeless insights into statecraft, diplomacy, and social conduct. These historical relics continue to inspire countless individuals even today. Chanakya wasn't just a teacher, he was also a philosopher who paved the way for success for generations of leaders, thinkers, and students. Chanakya quoted:

"No one can defeat a powerful mind."

"Education is the best friend. An educated person is respected everywhere. Education beats the beauty and the youth."

"Never settle for anything less than what you deserve. It's not pride, it's self-respect."

Gautam Buddha (563 or 480 BCE - 483 or 400 BCE)

Born as Siddhartha in 563 or 480 BC, Gautama Buddha, renounced his royal life and earthly comfort to become a teacher. His most significant teaching was the Eightfold Path, a practical framework that included the right view, intention, speech, action, livelihood, effort, mindfulness, and concentration. This path is considered to be a roadmap to ethical living, inner peace, and ultimately, liberation. To spread his message across India and beyond, Buddha established a community of disciples. His teachings gradually gave birth to the religion of Buddhism. Hence, he is not just a historical figure but also a great teacher whose lessons remain relevant. His emphasis on mindfulness, compassion, and non-violence continues to inspire millions today. A few enlightening words from Buddha are:

"You only lose what you cling to."

"Win in your mind and you will win in your reality."

"You cannot always control what goes outside, but you can always control what goes inside."

Pioneering Educators

Dr Maria Montessori (1870-1952):

Dr Maria Montessori, an Italian physician and educator, is celebrated for her innovative educational method that mirrors how children naturally learn. Her pioneering child-centered learning methods are still used today. On January 6, 1907, she opened the Casa dei Bambini (Children's House) in Rome, which quickly gained attention. Her extensive writing and travel led to the global spread of Montessori schools. Born on August 31, 1870, in Chiaravalle, Italy, Dr. Montessori was influenced by her well-educated mother and the rich educational environment of Rome. Her early immersion in libraries, museums, and schools shaped her vision and passion for learning, guiding her to develop her renowned educational approach. Maria Montessori, an exceptional student, defied traditional gender roles from an early age. At 13, she entered an all-boys technical institute to study engineering but later shifted to medicine. Despite an initial rejection by the University of Rome's medical program, Maria's perseverance led to her admission after taking additional courses. She graduated in 1896 as one of Italy's first female physicians, marking a significant achievement in a male-dominated field and showcasing her strength, dedication, and resilience. In 1907, Maria opened a full-day childcare center in San Lorenzo, Rome, for underserved children aged 3 to 7. This center, later known as the Casa dei Bambini, was Italy's first of its kind. Despite initial challenges, the children thrived with Maria's specially designed learning materials, demonstrating increased concentration and self-discipline. The success of her methods led to widespread recognition, with Montessori schools opening across Western Europe and the United States, including the first American Montessori school in Tarrytown, NY, in 1911. Some inspiring quotes of Dr.

Maria Montessori are:

"The teacher's task is not to talk, but to prepare and arrange a series of motives for cultural activity in a special environment made for the child."

"The instructions of the teacher consist then merely in a hint, a touch—enough to give a start to the child. The rest develops of itself."

"Here is an essential principal of education: to teach details is to bring confusion; to establish the relationship between things is to bring knowledge."

Anne Sullivan (1866-1936):

Anne Sullivan was known as the "Miracle Worker" for her revolutionary teaching methods that helped Helen Keller overcome her disabilities. Anne Sullivan Macy (1866-1936) was a woman whose brilliance, passion, and tenacity enabled her to overcome a traumatic past. She became a model for others disadvantaged by their physical bodies, as well as by gender or class. Anne was a pioneer in the field of education. Her work with Helen Keller became the blueprint for education of children who were blind, deaf-blind, or visually impaired that still continues today. Samuel L. Clemens (Mark Twain) dubbed her a "miracle worker." From childhood and beyond, Helen's teacher, Anne Sullivan, aided in her pupil's pursuit to understand the world. Anne utilized protactile sign language, which is orientated by touch and is used on the body, and experiential learning techniques to bring the power of words to Helen's fingertips. Her methods are still implemented today. Anne mentioned the power of experiential learning. Outdoor lessons about trees, flowers, and animals are effective in helping students learn language because these topics are all things children love and are curious about. Anne gave Helen ample opportunity to engage with her surroundings and allowed her to find excitement in obtaining new knowledge. Thus, Helen's repertoire of words was built quickly, and she maintained a lifelong love of learning. Some motivational quotes of Anne Sullivan are:

"Keep on beginning and failing. Each time you fail, start all over again, and you will grow stronger until you have accomplished a purpose—not the one you began with perhaps, but one you'll be glad to remember."

"Every renaissance comes to the world with a cry, the cry of the human spirit to be free."

"Children require guidance and sympathy far more than instruction."

Dr A.P.J. Abdul Kalam (1931-2015):

Dr A.P.J. Abdul Kalam was a renowned scientist and former President of India who inspired youth to pursue science and innovation. Though widely known as a scientist and statesman, Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam is also considered one of the best teachers in India. Despite achieving the prestigious titles of "Missile Man" and President of India, Kalam found immense joy in interacting with children. He delivered lectures across the country with utmost emphasis on equal access to education in both urban and rural areas. He also stressed the importance of basic amenities like water, playgrounds, and toilets for every student. His focus on values and ethics continues to inspire generations. His contributions are proof of how he touched countless lives without standing behind a formal podium. Some motivational quotes by Kalam are:

"If you want to shine like a sun, first burn like a sun."

"All of us do not have equal talent. But, all of us have an equal opportunity to develop our talents."

"Don't take rest after your first victory because if you fail in the second, more lips are waiting to say that your first victory was just luck."

Every great mind was once a student who was guided by a great teacher to achieve success in life. Hence, it is crucial to set a great example for the students so that they can follow in their footsteps.

Dual-Rate GST reform a historic, people-centric step says Debojit Mahanta

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, Sept 4: On 3rd September, the highest policy-making body of GST, the GST Council, in its 56th meeting, decided that from 22nd September onwards, the four-slab GST rates of 5%, 12%, 18%, and 28% would be merged into two slabs of 5% and 18%.

Terming this dual-rate GST decision as historic and revolutionary, Assam BJP Spokesperson Debojit Mahanta stated that nearly 99% of goods currently taxed at 12% GST would now come under 5% GST. As a result, more money will remain in the hands of the common people, thereby increasing their purchasing power.

Mahanta explained that GST, implemented on 1st July 2017, was a reform that consolidated 17 different indirect taxes such as State VAT, Central Sales Tax, Additional Central Excise Duty, Entertainment Tax, Entry Tax, Purchase Tax, and Lottery Tax. At that time, the Congress had mocked the BJP, calling GST a “Gabbar Singh Tax.” But today, even the Congress and states where the BJP is not in power are compelled to acknowledge GST reform as a positive step.



Speaking at a press conference at the Assam BJP State Headquarters on the history of GST, Mahanta strongly criticized the Congress, saying that the GST, which they did not dare to implement during their

rule, was finally implemented by the BJP-led government under Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Criticizing the Congress for distorting or ignoring history, Mahanta reminded that the idea of GST was first raised in Parliament by Finance Minister V. P. Singh during Rajiv Gandhi's tenure in 1986. Later, in 1991, during Prime Minister Narasimha Rao's tenure, Finance Minister Manmohan Singh brought it to the winter session for discussion. In 2005, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh accepted the Kelkar Committee report recommending GST for simplifying indirect taxation. Even in the 2006-07 Budget, Finance Minister P. Chidambaram had proposed GST implementation and allocated funds for its rollout by 2010. However, despite years of deliberation, the Congress never had the courage to implement it. It was finally the Modi-led BJP government that introduced GST in the interest of the people through the 101st Constitutional Amendment, effective from 1st July 2017.

Mahanta further stated that the new version of GST would reduce tax rates on daily essentials such as sofas, toothpaste, toothbrushes, soaps, shaving cream, butter, ghee,

cheese, snacks like bhujia and mixtures, baby napkins, etc., from the earlier 18% and 12% slabs to just 5%. The new version would also bring a major transformation in healthcare by completely removing the earlier 18% GST on premiums for personal health insurance and life insurance. Similarly, all education-related essentials such as books, notebooks, paper, pencils, erasers, etc., which previously carried 12% GST, would now be fully exempt. For farmers, tractors and other essential agricultural machinery taxed earlier at 28%, 18%, and 12% will now be taxed at just 5%. To bring smiles to the faces of ordinary people, GST on three-wheelers, two-wheelers, and four-wheelers up to 1200 cc will be reduced from 28% to 18%.

Mahanta concluded by saying that guided by the Rigveda's principle “Bahujan Sukhaya, Bahujan Hitaya” (for the happiness and welfare of the many), and inspired by the profound philosophy of Integral Humanism and Antyodaya, the BJP-led central and state governments have always worked for the welfare of the people. The historic dual-rate GST reform of 5% and 18% is a direct outcome of that vision.

Assam Government issues Eco-Friendly guidelines for Durga Puja

HT Bureau

DIPHU, Sept 4: The Government of Assam has called upon all districts, including Karbi Anglong, to observe Durga Puja in an eco-friendly manner. The Assam Pollution Control Board and the Environment and Forest Department have issued detailed guidelines aimed at reducing pollution and protecting water bodies during idol immersion.

The guidelines specify that idols must be crafted from clay and painted with biodegradable colors. The use of plaster of Paris, chemical paints, plastics, and thermocol has been strictly prohibited. Puja committees have also been advised to ensure segregation and disposal of worship materials, and to control noise levels by following permissible limits for sound systems.

On September 11 at 11.00 am in the Circuit House, Diphu the District Administration will convene a meeting with all Puja Committees of Karbi Anglong, along with police, line departments, and karmakartas. The meeting will brief stakeholders on the eco-friendly directives and outline steps for their implementation during the Puja season.

Arrangements at designated immersion sites will include barricading, safe disposal facilities, and water quality monitoring. The Assam Pollution Control Board will deploy monitoring teams to observe compliance. The Government has appealed to all Puja organisers and citizens to celebrate responsibly, preserving both tradition and the environment.

15,000 students to perform 'Manuher Babu' at Nagaon on Birth centenary of legendary singer Dr Bhupen Hazarika

HT Correspondent

NAGAON, Sept 4: In connection with the upcoming celebrations of the birth centenary of legendary singer and musical maestro Bharat Ratna Dr Bhupen Hazarika, a press conference was addressed by Nagaon District Commissioner, Debashish Sarma, at the District Commissioner's conference hall today here. The District Commissioner briefed the media about the programmes scheduled to be held in the district to commemorate the birth centenary of the legendary singer. On September 7, 2025, a cultural programme featuring Dr Hazarika's timeless songs will be organized at his residence in Kuthuri, starting from 7 pm till late night. The programme will feature invited artists from the district.

On September 10, 2025, at 11 am, a mass singing programme of Dr Hazarika's iconic song “Manuher Babu” will be held at the Nagaon Sports Association playground Nurul Amin stadium, involving around 15,000 students from universities, colleges, and schools. A 5-member team from India Book of Records, Kolkata, will be present to witness the event and consider it for inclusion in the records. The District Commissioner appealed to the public to actively participate in the programmes and light two candles each at their doorsteps on September 8, 2025, which marks Dr Hazarika's birth anniversary, as a tribute to the legendary singer. Following the press conference, the District Commissioner held a meeting with the heads of universities, colleges, and schools to review the preparations for the mass singing programme scheduled for September 10. The meeting was attended by Additional Commissioners, Inspector of Schools, District Information and Public Relations Officer, and District Cultural Development Officer, among others, an official release added here.

BJP strengthens position in Margherita, 400 plus Congress workers join party

HT Correspondent

MARGHERITA, Sept 4: In Margherita, no BJP workers have joined the Congress party as BJP MLA Bhaskar Sharma from the 83rd Margherita Legislative Assembly constituency has challenged that if anyone can prove such claims, he will resign from his MLA post as this was said on Thursday by Margherita MLA Bhaskar Sharma during a mass joining programme at Atal Bihari Vajpayee Bhawan in Margherita.

On 1st September during a party programme in Margherita former MLA and current Nagaon Lok Sabha MP Pradyut Bordoloi, in a press conference held at Margherita Congress Bhawan, claimed that over 300 BJP have joined the Congress party as refuting this claim, Margherita MLA Bhaskar Sharma labeled it as complete misinformation.

During a large-scale joining programme organised by the Margherita BJP Sadar, Town and Block Mandal at the Atal Bihari Vajpayee Bhawan in Margherita, Bhaskar Sharma criticized Pradyut Bordoloi, stating that despite being a minister and MLA for 18 years, Bordoloi failed to bring any development to the constituency.

Sharma further remarked that after losing the 2016 election, Pradyut Bordoloi fled from Margherita and is now attempting to mislead the public with false propaganda upon his return.

Sharma accused Bordoloi of staying at a safe distance during crises like floods and other disasters in the constituency, claiming that the people of Margherita no longer trust him.

Bhaskar Sharma added that no matter how many banners and

posters Pradyut Bordoloi puts up with his son Prateek Bordoloi, the public will not believe them as Bhaskar Sharma challenged Pradyut Bordoloi to contest from the 83rd Margherita Legislative Assembly Constituency seat on behalf of Congress if he has the courage.

In a significant joining programme led by Simanta Madhav Katoky Secretary of BJP Margherita Town Mandal, over 400 Congress, Rajior Dal, BJP workers and leaders from various non-political organisations formally joined the BJP as the joining programme was led by Tara prasad Dehingia, the recently resigned president of Margherita Block Congress Committee.

Addressing the media during the programme Tara prasad Dehingia said, “I left the Congress party due to family-centric politics and the lack of opportunity to express my opinions within the party as we have joined the BJP, inspired by its principles and ideology.”

Tara Prasad Dehingia expressed regret that despite years of dedicated service and sacrifices for Congress, the party leadership failed to value his contributions as he also made it clear that the primary reason for his dissatisfaction was Pradyut Bordoloi efforts to promote his son, Prateek Bordoloi, within the party.

With elections approaching, new political dynamics are emerging across the state and 83rd Margherita Legislative Assembly Constituency in Tinsukia district of Assam has once again become a focal point of political activity.

Since 2016, the constituency has been considered a safe stronghold for the BJP, with the party consistently winning elections.

National Seminar on 'Tradition and Experiment of Hindi in Northeast India' to be organised by Rabindranath Thakur Viswavidyalaya

HT Correspondent

HOJAI, Sept 4: A two-day national seminar on the topic “Tradition and Experiment of Hindi in Northeast India” will be organized by the Hindi Department of Rabindranath Thakur Viswavidyalaya, Hojai, with the support of Central Hindi Institute, Agra Guwahati Center on upcoming 14th and 15th September, 2025 in university campus.

Talking to our Correspondent, Dr. Manoj Kumar Swami, HOD, Hindi Department, RTU said that the objective of this event is to evaluate the historical tradition, literary contribution and contemporary experiments of Hindi language in Northeast India. He said that this seminar will underline the contribution of those scholars, litterateurs and institutions who have made Hindi a medium of emotional unity in this region.

Dr. Swami further said that in the seminar, while discussing the various dimensions of the Indian knowledge tradition, there will be an in-depth discussion on the interrelationships of language, literature and culture. This platform invites scholars and intellectuals from across the country for a literary dialogue, so that the feeling of sensitivity and dedication towards Hindi can be further strengthened.

This effort on the part of the Hindi Department will not only encourage regional linguistic coordination, but will also prove to be an important step towards awareness and research towards Hindi at the national level.

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Tezpur University signs MoU with Russian University

HT Correspondent

TEZPUR, Sept 4: In order to explore research work and other related areas of mutual interest, Tezpur University has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Far Eastern Federal University (FEFU), Vladivostok, Russia yesterday.

It is a prestigious public university located in Vladivostok, Russia. Established in 1899, it is one of Russia's leading educational institutions, offering a wide range of programs, including medicine, engineering, humanities, and natural sciences.

The MoU was formally signed by Prof Shambhu Nath Singh, Vice Chancellor, Tezpur University and Prof. Evgeny E Vlasov, Vice President for International Relations, FEFU. The MoU was inked on the sidelines of the Eastern Economic Forum currently being held in Vladivostok, Russia. Prof. Subhrangshu Sekhar Sarkar, Director, International Affairs, Tezpur University was also present



on the occasion.

The MoU calls for various areas of activities that include intention to establish joint dual degree educational programs in the field of Construction and Civil Engineering, intention to implement research work on Construction, Civil Engineering, Machine

Jam-e-Masjid Imam Parishad extends support to UPPL for Upcoming BTC Election

HT Correspondent

KOKRAJHAR, Sept 4: As the BTC general elections is scheduled to be held on September 22, the Jam-e-Masjid Imam Parishad extended support to the ruling UPPL party in the interest of peace, harmony, and development in Bodoland region.

Addressing the reporters at a press conference on Thursday in Kokrajhar, Sheikh Ahmed Ali, General Secretary of Kokrajhar and Chirang district committees of the Jam-e-Masjid Imam Parishad, stated that peace and communal harmony have been remained intact in the five-year rule of the UPPL government in BTR under the leadership of Pramod Boro. He emphasized that to preserve this peaceful atmosphere in Bodoland, Pramod Boro's party must be brought back to power for another five years to have good governance and healthy development in Bodoland region.

He also appealed to all communities, including religious minorities, irrespective of caste, creed, or faith, to rise above narrow interests and cast their votes for the UPPL under Pramod Boro's leadership in the BTC elections. He praised Pramod Boro's initiatives that helped restore peace in Bodoland over the past five years. The Parishad also strongly condemned BJP's tactics to capture power in BTC, warning people to remain politically vigilant and vowing to boycott the violence-prone BJP in the region.

During the press meet, the Parishad criticized BJP for branding religious minority citizens in districts like Dhubri, Goalpara, and Chapar as “Bangladeshis,” thereby humiliating, depriving, and discriminating against them. It appealed to the people not to allow such communal and violent forces like BJP to gain ground in the BTC elections.

Body recovered

HT Correspondent

DEMOW, Sept 4: A person drowned in the ditch water in Panidehing Dhali Ali near Demow while going for fishing on Wednesday morning. The victim has been identified as Nabin Konwar (45), an inhabitant of 1 No Rupabibam Gaon. According to Sources, Nabin Konwar, an inhabitant of 1 No Rupabibam Gaon, and his colleague went for fishing with nets in the ditch water in Panidehing Dhali Ali on Wednesday morning. While fishing, unfortunately, Nabin Konwar fell down into the ditch and drowned. The local People informed the Nitaipukhuri Police and SDRF.

agreed upon by both Parties. The MoU will be effective for a period of 5 years.

Prof Shambhu Nath Singh, in his speech at the MoU signing ceremony mentioned that Russia has a remarkable tradition of engineering resilience, born from experience in diverse and often extreme climatic conditions. Indian engineers, on the other hand, have honed their ability to execute large-scale projects swiftly and efficiently, often within the constraints of time and resources. He appreciates the unique opportunity to nurture a new generation of engineers—professionals who are both innovative and practical, strategic and adaptable.

He also expressed that such collaboration would also broaden the horizons of Tezpur University students. He expressed that exposure to two distinct educational ecosystems, research cultures, and societal needs would make the students more agile in responding to complex global problems.

JACAS stages motorcycle rally demanding fifth round of talks on autonomous state

HT Bureau

DIPHU, Sept 4: The Joint Action Committee for Autonomous State (JACAS) - a platform of like-minded social organisations, for negotiating with the Central government on Autonomous State, yesterday (September 4) took out a motorcycle rally from Diphu to Dokmoka market, to pressurise the Central government for resumption of fifth round of talks with the JACAS members on Autonomous State.

Before flagging off the motorcycle rally, JACAS members remembered Rahul Singnar, recognised as a martyr, who died in the police firing on July 31, 2013 agitation here.

The Chief Executive Member (CEM) of Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council (KAAC), Tuliram Ronghang in honour of late Singnar laid the foundation stone for setting up of his (late Singnar) statue at the premises of Diphu Government Boys Higher Secondary School here yesterday (September 3).

It may be noted here that the Congress government at the Centre on the night of July 30, 2013 has made an announcement to proceed with the formation of a new Telangana state. The decision reignited long-standing demand for a separate state among different ethnic groups across India, including the Karbi people in Assam.

On the following day i.e. July 31, saw mass uprising in Karbi Anglong and West Karbi Anglong demanding a separate state in line with Telangana. The district headquarter, Diphu witnessed protesters targeting government institutions. The agitators set ablaze veterinary, irrigation, agriculture, health, ICDS and PWD offices across the districts. The protesters removed a portion of the railway track between Diphu and Daldali stations and set ablaze the All India Radio Diphu Station.

As the protest turned violent in Diphu, police resorted to lathi charge and firing upon an irate mob, as a result some agitators sustained bullet injuries. Among them was Rahul Singnar, who succumbed to his injury. The July 31 agitation resulted in the formation of the Joint Action Committee for Autonomous State (JACAS) on August 3 in Diphu. It was a common platform with various social organisations. In these 13 years of Autonomous State demand the JACAS has held four rounds of talks with the Central government.

JACAS chairman, Stalyn Ingti said the motorcycle rally was taken out to pressurise the Central government for inviting JACAS for the fifth round of talks on the Autonomous state issue.

“We have completed four rounds of talks with the Central government on the Autonomous State issue, and we are now urging the government to convene for the fifth round of talks,” Ingti said.

The event was graced by the presence of Executive Member (EM) KAAC; MLA Bidya Sing Englang and JACAS chairman, Stalyn Ingti; general secretary, Roshon Teron; secretary, Tingku Engti, members Longsodar Englang and Moses Teron and former chairman, JACAS Khorsing Teron.

Mera Yuva Bharat, Hojai organized workshop on PM's flagship schemes at Kaki

HT Correspondent

NAGAON, Sept 4: A youth workshop on PM's flagship schemes was successfully concluded at Kaki Senior Secondary School, a prominent educational institution in Hojai district today.

The workshop was organized by Mera Yuva Bharat Hojai, under the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India, in collaboration with the voluntary organization “Amar Jyoti Rural Development Association”.

The workshop featured prominent resource persons, including Sunita Bordoloi, Member of the Anchalik Panchayat; Mukuta Bora, of Kaki Senior Secondary School; Dr Sujit Dev Nath, Expert Doctor and official of Amar Jyoti Rural Development Association; Kiran Kalita, research scholar at Assam University; and Dhananjay Talukdar, Accounts and Program Officer of Mera Yuva Bharat, Nagaon and Hojai. They provided insightful analysis and information on various topics, leaving the audience spellbound.

Over a hundred young participants attended the workshop, receiving training on various aspects of government schemes, including Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana, Digital India, Pradhan Mantri Surya Ghar Muft Bijuli Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana, Skill India, Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, Swachh Bharat, and Ayushman Bharat, etc.

Raj Mahmud, a journalist and youth leader, conducted the workshop. Mazidul Islam, DDU-GKY Mobilizer Head of Morkajul Marif, explained how Skill India training can help individuals secure jobs in the private sector.

Zila Sainik welfare office Diphu observes 'Data Updation Week'

HT Bureau

DIPHU, Sept 4: Zila Sainik Welfare Office, Diphu Observes ‘Data Updation Week’. The Zila Sainik Welfare Office, Diphu is observing ‘Data Updation Week’ from 26 August 2025 to 08 September 2025, with the objective of updating the records of Ex-Servicemen and their dependents. It has come to the notice of Zila Sainik Welfare Office, Diphu, Karbi Anglong that a significant number of pensioners (Army/Navy/Air Force) are neither registered with this office nor in regular communication with this office. As a result, Zila Sainik Welfare Office, Diphu, Karbi Anglong is unable to disseminate information regarding various welfare schemes offered by the Central and State Governments, thereby depriving them of the benefits of such schemes.

The ZSWO Diphu, Karbi Anglong urges all Ex-Servicemen, widows, and their families residing in Karbi Anglong and West Karbi Anglong district to update their details. The prominent citizens, local leaders, and community representatives are also requested to encourage participation among the Ex-Servicemen community so that the records of the ex-servicemen community can be updated.

As a part of this initiative, the staff of the ZSWO Diphu, Karbi Anglong will also conduct field visits in the greater areas of Bokajan, Siloni, Sarahijan, Deopani, and Japrajan under Karbi Anglong District on 06 September 2025. For any assistance or to update records, Ex-Servicemen may please contact Chandra Lal Samah, UDA (Mobile: 8638940640) and Dibyajuti Swargiary, LDA (Mobile: 7086268655).

Adi Karmayogi Abhiyan launched in Diphu

HT Bureau

DIPHU, Sept 4: The Adi Karmayogi Abhiyan, a nationwide initiative launched by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India, with the vision of empowering tribal communities through awareness and inclusion in government schemes. The central objective of the campaign is to bridge the gap between policy and people, ensuring that the most vulnerable sections of society benefit from welfare measures.

Inaugurating the programme at Diphu Orbit Bhavan, Deputy Commissioner, Nirola Phangchopi, emphasized that the core mission of the Adi Karmayogi Abhiyan is to uplift tribal communities from the grassroots level to high standard of socio-economic development.

She explained that “Adi” signifies the original or ancient, symbolising the government's responsibility to elevate tribal populations from traditional ways of life to modern progress.

The DC highlighted that department officials and staff from Education, Social Welfare, Public Health Engineering, and Health have been assigned the responsibility of spreading awareness. Their task is to inform tribal people about the intent and scope of various government welfare schemes so that no eligible beneficiary is left out.

Drawing attention to the Orunodoi scheme in Karbi Anglong district, she noted that although 91,500 beneficiaries were targeted, only 82,775 have been covered, leaving nearly 10,000 deprived. She remarked that lack of awareness often leads to missed opportunities and called on all department heads to intensify efforts to create informed communities. The Adi Karmayogi Abhiyan seeks not only to inform but to empower, ensuring that development reaches from the grassroots upward.

Civil aviation min launches new terminal at Donyi Polo airport

New terminal highlights sector's growth in NE



ITANAGAR, Sept 4: Union minister Kinjarapu Rammohan Naidu on Thursday said that civil aviation has been a key sector for the NDA government, with the number of airports, fleet of aircraft and passengers doubling in the last 11 years.

Speaking to reporters after inaugurating a new terminal of the Donyi Polo Airport at Hollongi near here, the Union Civil Aviation Minister lauded Chief Minister Pema Khandu's efforts in the completion of the project.

"The new terminal building has

a pre-covered capacity of 800 passengers, enabling it to handle up to 15 lakh people annually. This is a significant jump from the earlier temporary facility, which could accommodate just 150 passengers," the minister said.

"The Centre has laid special focus on improving air connectivity in the Northeast," he said.

The Donyi Polo Airport, which began operations in 2022, is among several airports in Arunachal Pradesh being developed, along with Pasighat, Tezu, and Ziro.

Daily flight services to Delhi will commence from Donyi Polo Airport from September 17, up from four-days-a-week services at present, he said.

"Daily flight services from Itanagar to other major cities will also commence soon," Naidu said.

At present, the airport connects Itanagar with Guwahati, Kolkata, and Tezu.

Naidu said discussions were underway to expand regional links, including the development of heliports across the state.

"This is part of the extended

UDAN scheme, which has been renewed for another 10 years to improve domestic and regional connectivity by supporting airlines on routes that were previously considered unviable," he said.

The modified scheme will place special emphasis on the Northeast, hilly states, and aspirational districts, he added.

The minister also launched several passenger-centric initiatives at the airport, including the UDAN Yatri Cafe to provide affordable food and beverages; a library allowing travelers to pick up and drop off books across airports; the AVASAR platform for self-help and women's groups to sell local products; and a new kids' store for families travelling through the airport.

"These initiatives are part of a broader plan to enhance the overall passenger experience. The government is looking at providing free Wi-Fi for both domestic and international passengers, as well as installing more charging stations and workstations," the minister added.

Khandu, state Civil Aviation Minister Balo Raja, Chief Secretary Manish Kumar Gupta, and Airports Authority of India (AAI) chairman Vipin Kumar were present. (PTI)

BJP Arunachal hails historic GST reform



HT Bureau

ITANAGAR, Sept 4: The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Arunachal Pradesh, has welcomed the historic reform of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) announced by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, describing it as a milestone for the state's economic growth and development.

In an official statement issued on Thursday, BJP spokesperson and MLA Topin Ete extended congratulations to all traders, consumers and citizens of Arunachal Pradesh, noting that the new GST framework, set to be implemented from September 22, will bring substantial relief to households and the business community.

"The reform has brought smiles to the people ahead of the festive season of Pooja and Diwali, ensuring relief and benefits for both traders and consumers," the statement said. It also appealed to all trader organisations and consumer bodies to acknowledge the initiative of the Government of India, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman.

The BJP reminded that the reform was earlier announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his 79th Independence Day address from the Red Fort, and added that the measures are aimed not only at ratio-

nalising tax rates but also at structural changes to enhance ease of living and ease of doing business.

According to the official release, the GST slabs have now been simplified into two categories, while the long-standing issue of compensation cess is being addressed.

A wide range of items has seen rate cuts, benefiting both households and industries.

Among the key highlights cited in the statement were: nil GST on UHT milk, paneer and Indian breads; reduction to 5% on food products such as namkeen, sauces, noodles, coffee, ghee, butter and chocolates; and a lowering of tax on consumer durables like air conditioners, televisions above 32 inches, dishwashers, monitors and projectors from 28% to 18%.

Other major reductions include small cars and motorcycles under 350 cc now attracting only 12% GST instead of 28%, agricultural and forestry machinery brought down to 5%, cement, buses, trucks, ambulances and auto parts reduced to 18%, and manmade fibre and yarn cut to 5%.

Life-saving medicines have also been exempted from GST, with three critical cancer and chronic disease drugs moved from the 5% bracket to nil.

Similarly, spectacles and goggles will now attract only 5% GST.

At the same time, the BJP statement underlined that luxury and sin goods would continue to be taxed at higher rates. Pan masala, gutkha, chewing tobacco, cigarettes, aerated drinks and sweetened beverages will carry a 40% GST rate, while mid-size and large cars, aircraft, yachts and other special vehicles for personal use will remain in the higher tax bracket.

In a significant relief to policyholders, GST has been exempted on all individual life insurance policies, reinsurance, and health insurance policies, including those for families and senior citizens.

Describing the reform as "landmark," the BJP asserted that the measures reaffirm the government's commitment to the welfare of the common people, the middle class, and the business community, while also strengthening the economy of Arunachal Pradesh in particular.

Arunachal minister urges Centre to strengthen air connectivity in state

ITANAGAR, Sept 4: Arunachal Pradesh Civil Aviation Minister Balo Raja on Thursday urged the Union Civil Aviation Ministry to strengthen connectivity in the frontier state by expanding routes, upgrading airports and advanced landing grounds (ALGs), and deploying CISF personnel at key airports.

"We need runway extension and Instrument Landing Systems at Tezu Airport and existing ALGs like Ziro, Aalo, Pasighat, Tuting, Walong, Vijaynagar and Mechuka," Raja said while addressing the third North-East Aviation Summit and Regional Ministers' Conference on Civil Aviation here.



"Since these ALGs serve both civilian and defence purposes, I also request induction of small aircraft with short take-off and landing (STOL) systems, which are ideal for such locations," the minister said.

On security, Raja pressed for urgent deployment of CISF personnel at Donyi Polo and Tezu airports, which are currently managed by state police.

"Airport security is highly specialised. Our police are trained for other purposes. The ministry is requested to consider early deployment of CISF personnel with proper accommodation facilities," he said.

He also suggested the creation of a State Industrial Security Force with CISF-like training, supported

by an Aviation Security Training Centre at Itanagar.

Highlighting healthcare needs, the minister proposed a dedicated helicopter ambulance service for the Northeast.

"Why can't we explore its solution by having a Helicopter Emergency Medical Service, in the form of a Helicopter Ambulance, which can be stationed at Guwahati? This would be one of the greatest achievements of summits like this," Raja said.

The minister also pitched for boosting tourism through aviation.

"Donyi Polo Airport can accommodate four big helicopters at a time. If chartered helicopters and small flights operate directly from here to tourist destinations like Tawang, Mechuka, Ziro, Namdapha and Parashuram Kund, tourists can save time and our sector will flourish," he observed.

The minister informed that air cargo operations have begun from Itanagar, with Indigo's first out-bound cargo to Delhi flagged off on August 28.

"Our local farmers can now avoid losses of their perishable items by availing this fastest mode of transportation," he said.

Expressing gratitude to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chief Minister Pema Khandu, Raja recalled how the Donyi Polo Airport was delivered swiftly.

"It was a distant dream for us to have an airport in the state capital till 2014. We could not even believe that an airport like ours could be completed and made operational within three years, that too amidst the COVID pandemic," he said. (PTI)

Chowna Mein attends 56th GST Council Meeting, hails landmark tax reforms

HT Correspondent

NEW DELHI, Sept 4: Deputy Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh Chowna Mein recently attended the 56th meeting of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) Council in New Delhi, where Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced sweeping reforms to simplify India's indirect tax regime and bring relief to households, farmers, industries and businesses.

According to an official statement, the meeting was chaired by Finance Minister Sitharaman in the presence of Union Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary.

It was attended by Chief Ministers of Delhi, Goa, Haryana, Jammu & Kashmir, Meghalaya and Odisha, Deputy Chief Ministers of Arunachal Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Telangana, the Governor of Manipur, and Finance Ministers of several States and Union Territories, along with senior officials of the Ministry of Finance.

The Council's deliberations centred on rationalising tax rates, simplifying compliance and correcting inverted duty structures.

Briefing the media after the meeting, Sitharaman announced that the new rates will come into effect from September 22, describing the package as India's next-generation GST reforms.

She informed that GST on common household items such as hair oil, soaps, shampoos, toothbrushes, toothpaste, bicycles, kitchenware and other essential articles has been reduced from 12 or 18 percent to 5 percent, while ultra-high temperature milk, paneer, chhena and all Indian breads have been brought under the nil rate.



Food items including namkeen, sauces, noodles, chocolates, coffee, cornflakes, butter and ghee will now attract only 5 percent GST instead of the earlier higher slabs.

Consumer durables like air-conditioners, televisions and dishwashing machines have been reduced from 28 percent to 18 percent.

For the agriculture sector, all equipment has been brought down to 5 percent from 12 percent.

In the automotive sector, small cars and motorcycles up to 350 cc have been lowered to 18 percent from 28 percent, and the same rate will apply to buses, trucks, ambulances, three-wheelers and all auto parts.

The health sector too has received major relief with thirty-three life-saving drugs fully exempted from GST, while three critical medicines used for cancer, rare and chronic diseases have also been moved from 5 percent to nil.

Several other medicines have been reduced from 12 percent to 5 percent. In the insurance sector, all individual life and health insurance policies, including reinsurance, family floater schemes and senior citizen policies, will now be fully exempt from GST.

The Finance Minister emphasised that the reforms have been

strongly supported by labour-intensive industries and widely welcomed by the agriculture sector.

She noted that the measures are designed to ease the burden on citizens, reduce costs for businesses, and strengthen the stability and predictability of the GST regime while ensuring that benefits reach the people at the earliest.

Speaking on the sidelines of the meeting, Deputy Chief Minister Chowna Mein expressed satisfaction with the outcome and said that the decisions taken under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman reflect the government's strong commitment to ease of living for citizens, ease of doing business for enterprises and long-term growth for the economy.

He added that the reforms will benefit farmers, MSMEs, the middle class, women and youth alike, and assured that Arunachal Pradesh will continue to play a proactive role in ensuring that these benefits reach every section of society.

The 56th GST Council meeting has been described in the official release as a landmark step in India's economic journey, aligning with the vision of Viksit Bharat by delivering a simplified, transparent and growth-oriented taxation system.

186 BN CRPF concludes Ganesh Chaturthi with visarjan ceremony at Namsai

HT Bureau

NAMSAI, Sept 4: The 186 Battalion of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) marked the conclusion of the Ganesh Chaturthi festival with the immersion of Lord Ganesha's idol in a solemn yet vibrant ceremony held on September 3 at Namsai.

The programme, which was observed with devotion and collective spirit, brought together officers, subordinate officers and jawans of the battalion in a strong display of faith and unity.

According to an official statement issued by the battalion, the idol visarjan was conducted with traditional rituals and enthusiastic participation from the personnel, who joined in prayers seeking divine blessings for peace, prosperity and harmony in the unit.

The statement highlighted that the event not only upheld religious traditions but also reinforced the CRPF's ethos of cultural inclusiveness and communal harmony. The celebration was led by Commandant DK Singh, with senior officers including Second-in-Command Sandip Sharma, Deputy Commandant KN Haldhar, Deputy Commandant Saurabh Somvanshi and Senior Medical Officer CL Mansa joining the occasion. Their presence, along with the wholehearted participation of the troops, lent greater significance to the visarjan ceremony. The official statement further noted that such observances foster a spirit of togetherness and strengthen the bonds among personnel irrespective of cultural or regional backgrounds.

By embracing the traditions of Ganesh Chaturthi, the 186 Battalion sought to underline its commitment to nurturing unity in diversity within the force. The battalion emphasised that the visarjan ceremony was not merely a religious event but a reflection of the organisation's values of solidarity, discipline and harmony.

The collective participation of officers and jawans, it added, serves as a testimony to the CRPF's dedication to building camaraderie and mutual respect among its ranks. With the successful conclusion of the festival, the 186 BN CRPF reaffirmed its resolve to continue promoting cultural harmony while discharging its professional duties, staying true to its motto of service and unity.

Vision to make NE logistics, aviation hub connecting India with Southeast Asia: Minister

ITANAGAR, Sept 4: Union Civil Aviation Minister Kinjarapu Ram Mohan Naidu on Thursday said that the Centre's vision was to make the Northeast a logistics and aviation hub connecting India with Southeast Asia. Speaking at the third Northeast Aviation Summit and Regional Ministers' Conference on civil aviation here, Naidu said that all eight northeastern states are now connected by air, with the number of operational airports in the region rising from nine in 2014 to 16 at present.

"The Centre's vision is to make the Northeast a logistics and aviation hub connecting India with Southeast Asia. By 2047, India will operate more than 350 airports. The Northeast will be central to this growth," he said.

"Aircraft movements have nearly doubled from 51,000 in 2014 to over 96,000 in 2024, reflecting the sharp increase in demand and the faith of passengers in our aviation sector," he said.

International traffic from Guwahati has already grown fivefold in the past year, driven largely by new services to Thailand, he said.

Naidu said the Udaan regional connectivity scheme has been extended for another 10 years in a modified form, calling it the "biggest catalyst of regional aviation growth". Since its inception in 2016, Udaan has enabled more than 700 new routes, many in difficult terrains like the Northeast, making air travel accessible to smaller towns.

The minister outlined several major projects in the pipeline, including a new terminal at Imphal Airport by 2025, development of Tura Airport in Meghalaya, runway extension work at Shillong Airport, and proposals for Kailashahar Airport in Tripura, a greenfield airport at Silchar, and a civil enclave at Jorhat.

The event was attended by Chief Minister Pema Khandu, Mizoram Chief Minister Lalduhoma, state Civil Aviation Minister Balo Raja, Assam minister Jogen Mohan, Sikkim Tourism Minister Tshering Thendup Bhutia, state Chief Secretary Manish Kumar Gupta, Chairman of Airports Authority of India (AAI) Vipin Kumar, and civil aviation officials from other northeastern states. (PTI)

Aalo, Namsai, Ziro to get municipalities

ITANAGAR, Sept 4: The local bodies of Aalo, Namsai, and Ziro in Arunachal Pradesh would be developed as municipalities, according to a notification. The local bodies of Aalo in West Siang district and Ziro in Lower Subansiri district were granted 'Municipal C' status under the Arunachal Pradesh Municipal Act, 2007, while that of Namsai in Namsai district was granted Nagar Panchayat status, it said.

"If any individual or any department or anybody has any objection or suggestion with respect to the intention of the government to declare the above settlements as municipal areas, the same should be sent to the concerned deputy commissioners within 30 days," it said.

"The deputy commissioners will hear and dispose of the claims and objections relating to the intention of the government to constitute municipality in the above settlements and submit the final proposal on expiry of one month," it added. (PTI)

Landslides in Arunachal's Tawang, BRO clears roads

ITANAGAR, Sept 4: Heavy rain-triggered landslides were reported near Jang town in Arunachal Pradesh's Tawang district, blocking key stretches of the strategic Balipara-Charduar-Tawang (BCT) road, a critical supply line to the frontier areas. However, the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) restored traffic movement by Wednesday midnight, ensuring uninterrupted movement of military convoys and essential supplies, a Defence spokesperson said on Thursday.

The landslides took place on Wednesday evening, blocking key stretches of the strategic road.

"Personnel of the 42 Border Roads Task Force (BRTF) launched clearance operations. Working under difficult conditions amid continuous rainfall, the teams cleared the stretches and traffic flow was restored within a short span of time," Guwahati-based Defence

spokesperson Lt Col Mahendra Rawat said in a statement. The BRO personnel also reached out to the stranded tourists, providing them with food and drinking water until the roads were declared safe. (PTI)

Modi's leadership transformed northeast, says Arunachal CM at aviation summit

ITANAGAR, Sept 4: Chief Minister Pema Khandu on Thursday said the last decade under Prime Minister Narendra Modi has brought historic transformation to the Northeast, with connectivity and development initiatives reaching even the remotest villages of Arunachal Pradesh.

Speaking at the inaugural session of the third North-East Aviation Summit and the North-Eastern Regional Ministers' Conference on Civil Aviation here, Khandu thanked Civil Aviation Minister Kinjarapu Ram Mohan Naidu and the ministry for "providing a vital platform for dialogue and policy shaping" in the sector.

"The country has transformed in civil aviation in the last decade. Similarly, when you talk about development of the Northeast, ten years back it was a different history. Today, it has totally changed. This whole credit goes to our



prime minister," Khandu said.

He recalled Modi's 2014 directive that "India will only move forward when the Northeast moves forward", noting that since then, Union ministers have made

regular trips to the region, with the prime minister himself making over 60 visits.

The CM said Modi is scheduled to visit Guwahati on September 13 and Itanagar on September 22.

The chief minister underlined Arunachal's progress in connectivity, citing highways, digital networks, railways, and air links.

"We have built the Hollongi Greenfield Airport in a record three years, along with Pasighat, Tezu, and Ziro airports, besides developing eight advanced landing grounds. Under the UDAN scheme, these airports are now connected, giving Arunachal a success story it never had before," he said.

Khandu urged the civil aviation ministry to craft a Northeast-specific policy under the renewed UDAN scheme to address challenges of terrain, weather, and runway limitations.

He suggested developing

Guwahati as a regional hub with smaller airports like Tezu, Ziro, Mechuka, Vijaynagar, Silchar, and Muksum functioning as spokes.

The chief minister also recommended higher viability gap funding (VGF) for airlines in the region, implementation of Required Navigation Performance (RNP) for safer flights, promotion of short take-off and landing (STOL) services, and the creation of a dedicated helicopter emergency medical service (HEMS) network.

"Time is money, and to save time, nothing is like civil aviation. If we work as a team, we can achieve the dream of a developed Northeast and a developed India," Khandu asserted.

The event was attended by ministers from Assam, Sikkim, Mizoram, officials of the civil aviation ministry, Airports Authority of India (AAI), DGCA, and industry representatives. (PTI)

Rahul staying in la la land: Spokesperson Sambit Patra

Euphoria in country, nobody stopped Congress to roll out GST: BJP on tax reforms

NEW DELHI, Sept 4: The BJP on Thursday hailed the GST reforms as a historic measure which will benefit every section of society and hit back at the Congress over its claim that it had been pushing for tax rationalisation, saying nobody had stopped the party in its long tenure from rolling out the unified indirect tax regime.

With some Congress leaders noting that their leader Rahul Gandhi had long favoured the two-tier tax structure as announced by the GST Council, BJP national spokesperson Sambit Patra said he is "staying in la la land" and that is not going to bring any dividend to his party.

"Who had stopped Rahul Gandhi and his party to bring the GST before 2014? It shows their own inefficiency," Patra told reporters, listing a range of items from household goods to farm sector products to medical items to highlight that these all were charged a much higher VAT when the Congress was in power compared to the proposed taxes.

The Congress ruled the country for decades and had the opportunity to simplify the complex tax regime and roll out the Goods and Services Tax but lacked courage and intention, Patra said.

With the reduced GST applicable from the first day (September 22) of Navratri, there is a sense of "eu-



phoria" in the country, as it has brought smile on everyone's face, he said.

Lauding Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Patra said his government has shown intention, courage and democratic spirit to bring consensus among all states to roll out the GST while all the Congress could do was discuss and debate.

The Congress' claim, he said, is akin to its "garibi hatao" slogan since Independence but its governments could never remove poverty, he said.

The party believes the Sun and moon moves due to the Gandhi family and there would be no India but for them, he said mockingly.

The Puri MP said it is the Congress' mindset to grieve when the

country is jubilant, be it the construction of Ram temple, repeal of Article 370 or now the GST reforms.

Patra also had a go at Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh for his criticism that the GST Council, which announced the reforms on Wednesday, was reduced to a formality as PM Modi had already conveyed the substance of the measures in his Independence Day speech.

Unlike Manmohan Singh, Modi is not an "accidental" but performing prime minister and it is but natural that he will lay down his vision that the government will execute, the BJP leader said.

Ramesh may not appreciate it because an "unconstitutional" body like National Advisory Council,

which was headed by Sonia Gandhi and was seen to have deep influence on the policy decisions of the Congress-led UPA government, would take decisions that Singh was often not aware of, he said.

In a swipe at Rahul Gandhi, Patra said the Congress leader should stop making atom bomb and hydrogen bomb and focus on his work.

If he keeps silent, then the Congress' fortunes may go up slightly as his speeches only harm his party, Patra claimed.

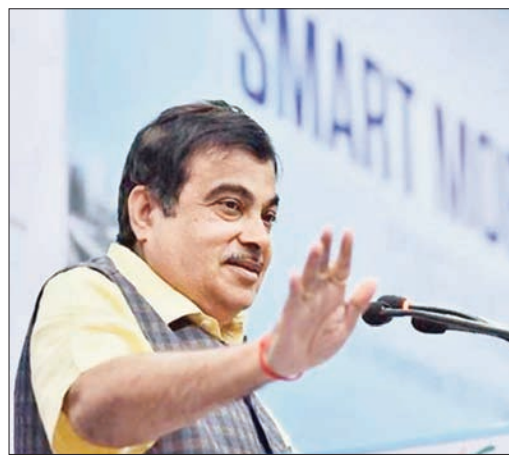
The GST Council on Wednesday approved a complete overhaul of the tangled Goods and Services Tax regime in a wide-ranging reforms which will reduce taxes on common use items from roti/paratha to hair oil, ice creams and TVs.

The Council approved limiting slabs to 5 per cent and 18 per cent, effective from September 22.

Almost all personal-use items and aspirational goods for the middle class, like ACs and washing machines, will see rate cuts as the government looks to boost domestic spending and cushion the economic blow of the US tariffs.

Premium paid for individual life insurance and health insurance (including family floater) policies too have been exempted from GST. Earlier, such policies were subject to 18 per cent GST. (PTI)

Cong levels conflict of interest allegations against Gadkari over govt's ethanol push, BJP dismisses charges



NEW DELHI, Sept 4: The Congress on Thursday levelled conflict of interest allegations against Union minister Nitin Gadkari, claiming that he has been "aggressively lobbying" for ethanol production while his two sons are involved in firms that produce ethanol and "benefitted" from government policy.

The BJP rejected the allegations and said the Congress has become like the Aam Aadmi Party which used to "make claims" about having documentary evidence of wrongdoings in its pocket but would have nothing in reality.

The Congress party's charges came days after Supreme Court rejected a PIL challenging the nationwide rollout of 20 per cent ethanol-blended petrol (EBP-20). The PIL had alleged that millions of motorists were forced to use the fuel not designed for their vehicles.

A bench comprising Chief Justice B R Gavai and Justice K Vinod Chandran did not agree to the contentions raised in the plea filed by advocate Akshay Malhotra, who sought directions to the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas to ensure availability of ethanol-free petrol at all fuel stations.

Congress' media and publicity department head Pawan Khera said, "The so-called flagbearer of 'Na Khaunga, Na Khane Doonga' - after implementing vote chori, is now implements petrol chori. The latest being the E-20 Policy to extort money."

"There is now widespread outrage around the ethanol blending policy. Union Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari has been aggressively lobbying for ethanol production since he assumed office in 2014. In September 2018, Gadkari stated that the government is setting up five ethanol production plants, where ethanol would be made from wood-based products and segregated municipal waste."

"He also mentioned that this would help make diesel available at ₹ 50 per litre and a petrol alternative at ₹ 55 per litre. It turns out that this was a 'jumlā', Khera alleged.

Despite tall claims of achieving 20 per cent ethanol blending five years ahead of schedule, the promises have fallen flat, the Congress leader said.

"Not a drop of ethanol has come from wood-based products or municipal waste as pledged, and petrol prices never touched the touted ₹ 55 per litre. Instead, the common man is left paying more - vehicles guzzle

more fuel, break down sooner, and each litre of ethanol guzzles a staggering 3,000 litres of water. Petrol prices have soared from ₹ 71.41 in 2014 to ₹ 94.77 in 2025, and diesel from ₹ 55.49 to ₹ 87.67, while sugar mills tied to ethanol production laugh all the way to the bank with record profits," he alleged.

Levelled conflict of interest allegations against Gadkari, Khera claimed that Cian Agro Industries Infrastructure Ltd is owned by his son Nikhil Gadkari, while another son Sarang Gadkari is director at Manas Agro Industries. Both firms produce ethanol, he said.

"Cian Agro's revenue jumped from ₹ 18 crore (June 2024) to ₹ 523 crore (June 2025); stock price surged 2184 per cent from ₹ 37.45 (January 2025) to ₹ 638 (August 2025). While the common man's wages have stagnated and declined, Cian Agro's financial ascent is staggering," he claimed.

Khera further pointed out that India achieved 20 per cent ethanol blending before the 2025 deadline and said this is the first time in Indian history that any policy has achieved its target before the deadline.

"Citizens' worries about engine life, mileage, and maintenance are dismissed by Mr Gadkari, who blames a petroleum lobby and calls ethanol a clean fuel," Khera said.

BJP national spokesperson Sambit Patra hit back, saying the Congress has become like the Aam Aadmi Party.

The AAP used to make claims about having documentary evidence of wrongdoing in its pocket but would have nothing in reality, he said, adding that party would be seen more on TV and less on ground.

The Congress never does a constructive press conference, he said, asserting that its pressers make no difference. The opposition party keeps levelling allegations like "vote chori" and abusing institutions without any basis, Patra claimed.

The Congress does not approach courts or departments concerned if it has facts but only makes claims before the media, he said.

Patra said the Congress should rather do a press conference on the GST reforms and tell people if they have benefitted different sections of society or not.

Khera also alleged that to fast-track this flawed agenda, the government has weakened environmental rules.

Posing questions to the government, Khera asked whether Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 2021 promise of farmer prosperity through ethanol blending turn into a "betrayal" of the middle class with reduced mileage, higher costs, and no relief at the pump, and "only benefiting BJP-RSS leaders and their companies".

If ethanol blending was meant to bring petrol down to ₹ 55, why are Indians still paying nearly double, he asked.

"Is the E-20 ethanol push a public policy or an alleged windfall for Gadkari's sons and their companies? PM Modi vows 'zero tolerance for corruption', so will the Lokpal dare investigate the allegations on Gadkari & sons, before the 130th Constitutional Amendment Bill is passed?" Khera said.

"After amassing ₹ 38.89 lakh crore from fuel cess since 2014, has BJP's ethanol blending policy become its newest blueprint for plunder at the expense of common Indians?" Khera said. (PTI)

Reluctance of Rahul, Tejashwi to condemn abuses hurled at PM regrettable: Chirag

PATNA, Sept 4: Union minister Chirag Paswan on Thursday lashed out at Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and RJD's Tejashwi Yadav for their "reluctance" to express regret over alleged abuses hurled at Prime Minister Narendra Modi during the 'Voter Adhikar Yatra' in Bihar.

Talking to reporters here, the Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas) president asserted that "silence" over the issue was tantamount to condonation of the vile behaviour, which would have "consequences" in the upcoming assembly polls.

"The Leader of the Opposition in Lok Sabha (Gandhi) has been using disrespectful language for the PM, who is many years his senior. His own behaviour has emboldened his supporters," said Paswan, when asked about last week's incident at Darbhanga.

"What is regrettable is the reluctance, on the part of Rahul Gandhi and Tejashwi Yadav to openly condemn the incident. Their silence would be seen as a tacit approval," he claimed.

Alleged expletives were screamed into the microphone from a podium on the outskirts of Darbhanga, on a day the 'Voter Adhikar Yatra' had passed through the north Bihar town.

The accused, a 25-year-old local resident, has been arrested.

The Congress-led INDIA bloc has maintained that he was not a member of any of the constituent parties.

Paswan also claimed that last year, "abusive language was used for my mother and sisters in presence of Tejashwi Yadav, who kept silent and his party suffered consequences in the Lok Sabha polls".

"The same will happen in the assembly elections (in Bihar)," the Hajipur MP asserted. (PTI)

Shikhar Dhawan appears before ED in illegal betting app case

NEW DELHI, Sept 4: Former Indian cricketer Shikhar Dhawan on Thursday appeared before the Enforcement Directorate (ED) for questioning in an alleged illegal betting app-linked money laundering case, official sources said.

He entered the office of the federal probe agency in central Delhi around 11 am. The agency recorded his statement under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) as part of this investigation linked to an "illegal" betting app named 1xBet, the sources said.

The 39-year-old former India

opener is understood to have been linked to the app through certain endorsements. The ED wants to understand his links with this app during the questioning.

The agency is probing multiple such cases involving illegal betting apps that are alleged to have duped numerous people and investors worth crores of rupees or have evaded a huge amount of taxes.

Last month, former cricketer Suresh Raina was questioned in this case by the federal probe agency.

The Union government has banned real-money online gaming

by bringing a legislation recently.

According to estimates by market analysis firms and probe agencies, there are about 22 crore Indian users in various such online betting apps out of which half (about 11 crore) are regular users.

The online betting app market in India is worth over USD 100 billion which is growing at the rate of 30 per cent, according to experts.

The government recently told Parliament that it has issued 1,524 orders from 2022 till June 2025 to block online betting and gambling platforms. (PTI)

If betrayed over Maratha quota, we will make them bite the dust in polls: Jarange

CHHATRAPATI SAMBHAJINAGAR, Sept 4: Activist Manoj Jarange on Thursday warned that if Marathas face betrayal over quota, they will "make them (governing parties) bite the dust" in polls and asserted that all members of the community would be included under the OBC category.

The quota movement leader was talking to reporters at a private hospital in Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar, where he was admitted after calling off his 5-day-old hunger strike in Mumbai to press for reservation in education and government jobs for Marathas.

Jarange ended his stir on Tuesday after the Maharashtra government announced the formation of a committee to issue Kunbi caste certificates to Maratha community members with historical evidence of their Kunbi heritage, a social group classified as an Other Backward Class (OBC) in the state.

"If the Hyderabad and Satara gazettes are not implemented in a month, we will make them (ruling parties) bite the dust in the upcoming elections. Step by step, I will ensure that the entire Maratha community is included in the OBC category," he asserted.

The activist said his struggle for reservation is for Marathas from across the state.

"The agitation will continue as the Marathas in the Konkarn region are yet to be covered. The people of Konkarn should avail themselves of the reservation benefits, or else they will regret it after 40-50 years. They should not listen to anyone and put their future generations in jeopardy," he said.

When reporters asked him about the move to form a cabinet sub-committee to expedite the welfare measures for the OBCs and resolve issues related to reservation, Jarange said they had no objection. (PTI)

Nearly 47 per cent of ministers in country face criminal charges, says ADR report

NEW DELHI, Sept 4: Nearly 47 per cent of ministers in the country have declared criminal cases against themselves, including serious charges such as murder, kidnapping, and crimes against women, according to an analysis of poll rights body Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR). The report came days after the Centre introduced three bills that sought the removal of prime minister, chief ministers, and ministers arrested or detained for 30 consecutive days on serious criminal charges involving punishment of five years or more.

ADR examined self-sworn affidavits of 643 ministers from 27 state assemblies, three Union Territories and the Union Council of Ministers, and found that 302 ministers, or 47 per cent of the total, have criminal cases against them.

Of these 302 ministers, 174 face serious criminal cases, the report stated.

According to the analysis, of 336 BJP ministers, 136 (40 per cent) declared criminal cases against themselves, and 88 (26 per cent) are facing serious charges.

The Congress, which is in power in four states, had 45 ministers (74 per cent) with criminal cases, including 18 (30 per cent) with serious offences. Of 31 DMK ministers, 27 -- accounting for around 87 per cent -- face criminal charges, while 14 (45 per cent) face serious cases. The Trinamool Congress too had 13 of its 40 ministers

(33 per cent) with criminal cases, including 8 (20 per cent) with serious charges.

The Telugu Desam Party had the highest proportion, with 22 of its 23 ministers (96 per cent) declaring criminal cases and 13 (57 per cent) of them booked for serious offences. Among AAP ministers, 11 of 16 (69 per cent) face criminal cases, while five (31 per cent) are facing serious ones. At the national level, 29 of the 72 Union ministers (40 per cent) declared criminal cases in their affidavits.

In the states, 11 assemblies -- Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Bihar, Odisha, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Punjab, Telangana, Himachal Pradesh, Delhi and Puducherry -- have more than 60 per cent of ministers with criminal cases.

In contrast, ministers in Haryana, Jammu and Kashmir, Nagaland and Uttarakhand reported no criminal cases against themselves.

ADR has also come up with an analysis of the financial assets of ministers in the report. According to it, the average assets of ministers stood at ₹ 37.21 crore, with the total assets of all 643 ministers amounting to ₹ 23,929 crore.

Out of the 30 Assemblies, 11 have billionaire ministers. Karnataka leads with the highest eight billionaire ministers, followed by Andhra Pradesh with six and Maharashtra with four such ministers.

Arunachal Pradesh, Delhi, Haryana and Telan-

gana have two each, while Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Punjab have one billionaire minister each.

At the Union government, six of the 72 Union Council ministers (eight per cent) were billionaires, the report said.

Party-wise, the BJP had the highest number of billionaire ministers at 14, though this constituted just 4 per cent of its total. The Congress ranked second, with 11 of its 61 ministers (18 per cent) being billionaires, while the TDP had 6 billion-aires among its 23 (26 per cent).

The Aam Aadmi Party, Janasena Party, JD(S), NCP and Shiv Sena also have billionaire ministers. The richest minister in the country is Dr Chandrasekhar Pemmasani of the TDP, who represents Andhra Pradesh's Guntur in the Lok Sabha. He has declared assets worth over ₹ 5,705 crore.

Karnataka Congress leader and state minister D K Shivakumar follows next, with assets exceeding ₹ 1,413 crore, while Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu, who helms the TDP, has assets worth over ₹ 931 crore. Other rich ministers in the top 10 include Narayana Ponguru and Nara Lokesh from Andhra Pradesh, Gaddam Vivekanand and Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy from Telangana, Suresha B S from Karnataka, Mangal Prabhat Lodha from Maharashtra, and Union Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia. (PTI)

90 BSF posts in Punjab, Jammu damaged in deluge Floods damage 110 km of int'l border fence



NEW DELHI, Sept 4: More than 110 km of the India-Pakistan international border (IB) fence has been damaged and about 90 BSF posts inundated due to floods in the forward areas of Jammu and Punjab, official sources said on Thursday.

Of the 2,289 km IB that also runs along the states of Rajasthan and Gujarat on the

country's western side, the border force guards about 192 km in Jammu and 553 km in Punjab.

About 80 km of the IB fence in Punjab and around 30 km of it in Jammu has been damaged by the floods that have wreaked havoc. The fence at these places has either submerged, uprooted or tilted,

officials said.

Floods have also damaged or inundated about 20 Border Security Force (BSF) posts in Jammu and 65-67 in Punjab. Several forward defence points (FDPs) or high-ground located observation posts of the force have also been impacted.

The force has now begun a "mega exercise" in these two areas to restore the fence and the border outposts (BOPs) so that troops can occupy them again, an official told PTI.

The IB in these affected areas is being secured through drone surveillance, usage of large searchlights, boat patrolling and electronic monitoring. The water is receding and the BSF will be back to its position in no time, he said.

A BSF jawan drowned in floodwaters in Jammu a few days back.

Punjab is witnessing its worst floods since 1988 while Jammu has been hit by record-breaking rains as the Tawi river, popularly known as Surya Putri, has inundated hundreds of homes and several hectares of farmland. (PTI)

Centre's order on Foreigners' Act 'farcical', 'election gimmick': Mamata

KOLKATA, Sept 4: West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Wednesday launched a scathing attack on the Centre over its recent order under the Foreigners Act, allowing members of minority communities from neighbouring countries to stay in India without valid documents, terming it a "farce" and an "election gimmick".

Speaking in the West Bengal Legislative Assembly during a discussion on a government resolution condemning alleged atrocities on Bengali migrants, Banerjee claimed the Centre's move was aimed at misleading the public ahead of the upcoming elections and accused the BJP of using such tactics to polarise voters.

"This is nothing but an election gimmick, but it will not work this time," she said.

"There has been no discussion in Parliament on this new rule. How can the BJP decide such matters unilaterally? No discussion, debate or parliamentary committees to discuss or deliberate such an important issue?" the TMC supremo

asked. Referring to the implications of the Centre's order, the chief minister questioned whether those allowed to stay without documents would also be granted voting rights.

"They (the government) are saying they will allow those who came without documents to stay. So will they be allowed to vote in elections? Will they get Aadhaar and ration cards?" she asked.

"Will you provide ration, citizenship, and constitutional rights to those who came till 2024? The BJP has to clarify this as the new order doesn't mention anything about these pertinent issues," Banerjee said. The BJP had made such "fake promises ahead of 2019 and 2024 Lok Sabha polls", but in reality, how many citizenships were granted, she questioned.

The Centre's order, issued under the recently implemented Immigration and Foreigners Act, 2025, allows members of minority communities—Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis, and Christians—from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, and Pakistan who entered India on or before December 31, 2024, to stay in the country

without valid travel documents, if they fled religious persecution.

According to the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019 (CAA), which came into effect last year, similar groups who arrived in India on or before December 31, 2014, are eligible for Indian citizenship.

Banerjee reiterated her strong opposition to what she described as the Centre's arbitrary and unilateral decision-making on sensitive issues such as immigration and citizenship.

"We will not allow anyone to snatch away citizens' rights. We follow the ideals of Ramakrishna (Paramhansa), Netaji (Subhas Chandra Bose), and Rabindranath (Tagore). They have shown us the path, and we will not stray even a single step from that," she said.

In a separate issue raised during her speech, Banerjee said the recent decision by the GST Council to slash tax rates on a wide range of commonly used items, including personal health and life insurance, hair oil, corn flakes, and telecommunications, among others, was a result of her "repeated protests" over the years. (PTI)

LOS ANGELES, Sept 4: "Game of Thrones" alum Sophie Turner has been officially confirmed for the lead role in the upcoming series "Tomb Raider".

The show, based on the globally-popular video game franchise, is being developed by Amazon MGM Studios in collaboration with Crystal Dynamics and Story Kitchen. Production is set to begin on January 19, 2026.

Phoebe Waller-Bridge, known for critically-acclaimed shows such as "Fleabag" and "Killing Eve", will serve as creator, writer, executive producer and co-showrunner on the series.

"I'm so excited to announce the formidable Sophie Turner as our Lara alongside this phenomenal creative team. It's not very often you get to make a show of this scale with a character you grew up loving... Get your artifacts out... Croft is coming," Waller-Bridge said in a statement.

Turner, who broke out with her performance as Sansa Stark in HBO's epic fantasy show "Game of Thrones", will take on the role of adventurer Lara Croft, which was earlier played on the big screen by Oscar-winning stars Angelina Jolie and Alicia Vikander.

"I am thrilled beyond measure to be playing Lara Croft. She's such an iconic character, who means so much to so many - and I am giving everything I've got. They're massive shoes to fill, following in the steps of Angelina and Alicia with their powerhouse performances, but with Phoebe at the helm, we (and Lara) are all in very safe hands. I can't wait for you all to see what we have cooking," Turner said.

Jonathan Van Tulleken is the director and executive producer, while Chad Hodge has joined the project as co-showrunner

SOPHIE TURNER CAST AS LARA CROFT IN PRIME VIDEO'S 'TOMB RAIDER' SERIES FROM PHOEBE WALLER-BRIDGE



and executive producer.

Vernon Sanders, head of global television at Prime Video & Amazon MGM Studios, called Croft "one of the most recognizable and iconic video game characters of all time".

"We are thrilled to have the wonderfully talented Sophie Turner bring this character to life who is defined by her courage, strength, and unshakable resolve. Led by the brilliant Phoebe Waller-Bridge, this series will honour the beloved Tomb Raider legacy while delivering fresh adventures to fans worldwide," he added.

"Tomb Raider" will be produced by Story Kitchen, Crystal Dynamics and Amazon MGM Studios. (PTI)

Karan Johar on shelved film 'Takht': 'It was just very heartbreaking'



MUMBAI, Sept 4: Filmmaker Karan Johar on Thursday opened up about his now-shelved film "Takht", saying that he still wishes to make a period movie someday.

At the trailer launch event of the film "Mirai - Super Yodha", Johar said he spent over two years on the project and when it was shelved, he felt heartbroken.

"I was going to make a feature film (Takht) that was historical. And then for various circumstances, including the pandemic, there was a stop on that film. I researched that film for two and a half years and wrote that film. "It was just very heartbreaking when I couldn't make it at that time. So I did dabble. Every film has its own time and fate... So hopefully in my trajectory there will be such a film," Johar told reporters. The filmmaker had announced "Takht", an epic story set in the Mughal era, in August 2018.

He had also unveiled the star-studded cast for the movie -- Anil Kapoor, Kareena Kapoor Khan, Ranveer Singh, Vicky Kaushal, Alia Bhatt, Janhvi Kapoor and Bhumi Pednekar.

The movie, which would have traced the relationship between Mughal emperor Aurangzeb and his brother Dara Shukoh, had a screenplay by Sumit Roy.

Johar is currently distributing "Mirai", featuring "Hanu-Man" star Teja Sajja in the lead role.

The film, about a fearless warrior entrusted with the protection of nine sacred scriptures, is directed by Karthik Gattamneni and produced by TG Vishwa Prasad and Krithi Prasad. (PTI)

Vir Das set for residency at New York's Lincoln Center Theater with 'Hey Stranger'

NEW DELHI, Sept 4: Globally popular comedian-actor Vir Das will bring his new show "Hey Stranger" to New York's iconic Lincoln Center Theater later this year, marking a rare residency for an Indian artist at the prestigious venue.

Das, who won the 2023 International Emmy Award for Best Comedy Series for his Netflix special "Vir Das: Landing", will perform his show at the venue from October 29 and November 9. In theatre and live performance, a residency refers to an artist staging multiple shows at the same venue over a fixed period of time, rather than touring. The Lincoln Center has hosted some of the world's most celebrated artists, including Indian legends such as sitar maestro Ravi Shankar, tabla virtuoso Zakir Hussain, shehnai exponent Bismillah Khan, Carnatic vocalist M S Subbulakshmi and Pandit Ananda Gopal Bhose.

With "Hey Stranger", Das will bring Indian stand-up comedy to the landmark stage.

For the show, the 46-year-old will be collaborating with Tony Award-nominated director Moritz von Stuelpnagel and Seaview, the company behind acclaimed Broadway and Off-Broadway works such as "A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder", "Slave Play", "Good Night, and Good Luck" and "Hold On to Me Darling".

"There is nothing more exciting than the bottom of a ladder. Where you're playing with people better than you, out of your depth, and you have to learn, and push your craft to meet a truly global standard. For me that's always been Broadway. In this case Broadway and 65th. It's been a dream forever to do a run. I'll be at the Lincoln Centre Theater, starting my first ever residency, doing Indian comedy for the world. I hope you'll come see," Das said in a statement. He added that performing at the same venue that has hosted Indian greats like Ravi Shankar and M S Subbulakshmi is both an honour and a responsibility.

"Comedy may be a different medium, but at its core, it is still about human connection, about reaching across cultures and languages to find what binds us together," he added. "Hey Stranger", Das said, was born out of a desire to "connect, to laugh, to reflect, and to embrace our shared strangeness". "The fact that I get to share this with an international audience, at a venue that has hosted the best of the best, is the kind of dream I couldn't even imagine when I first started out," the actor-comedian said. (PTI)

AR Rahman on teaming up with Hans Zimmer for 'Ramayana': He is a prolific composer

MUMBAI, Sept 4: "Ramayana" will bring together two powerhouse talents from the world of music -- Hans Zimmer and A R Rahman -- and the Indian maestro says they will deliver a background score that will be different yet culturally resonant.

The two musicians are hard at work for the score of "Ramayana", a live-action adaptation of the Hindu epic from filmmaker Nitesh Tiwari.

Namit Malhotra of Prime Focus Studios is producing the film, which will feature Ranbir Kapoor as Lord Ram, Sai Pallavi as Goddess Sita, and Yash as Ravana.

"Hans Zimmer is a prolific composer, who has done great things. I have known him since 2009 and he had great things to share with me. I've great respect for him. He invited me before to score but I couldn't as I was doing other things," Rahman told PTI.

Zimmer, a two-time Academy Award winner, has composed some of Hollywood's most iconic soundtracks, including those for "The Lion King", "Gladiator", "Pirates of the Caribbean", "Inception", "Interstellar", "The Dark Knight Rises" and "Dune".

Rahman, who won two Oscars for his work on the 2008 film "Slumdog Millionaire", credited Malhotra for bringing them together.

"We've had a great meeting so far. We've met three-four times. I can't say much more because it's a work in progress," Rahman added. With "Ramayana", Rahman said both him and Zimmer have tried to create music that is unique and will resonate with the global audience. "Ramayana" is part of our culture, and the music... I've studied in Padma Seshadri Bala Bhavan and every year there would be 'Ramayana' or 'Mahabharat' or 'Shakuntala' kind of plays (happening there). So, the culture is within me.

"For this, we had to be different from all the other scores which have come before because it is for a world audience. When you look at the trailer music, it shows what we're trying to do. We will hopefully (be) particular about cultural relevance, but we are careful about it," the musician said. (PTI)

'Humans in the Loop' inquires AI bias through eyes of a tribal gig worker: filmmaker Aranya Sahay

NEW DELHI, Sept 4: "If AI is going to have an impact on all of humanity, does it represent all of us?" is the question that filmmaker Aranya Sahay wanted to explore in his film "Humans in the Loop", which questions hierarchy in knowledge systems through the eyes of a tribal gig worker.

Set in Jharkhand, the story revolves around Nehma, a tribal woman who finds work at an AI data-labelling centre after her divorce. Initially enthusiastic about her job, Nehma soon finds herself at odds with the data she is given to feed the machine. The film also explores Nehma's strained relationship with her teenage daughter, who longs to go back to the city.

Sahay, who studied political science and history at St Stephen's College and followed it up with a direction course at FTII, said the basic idea of the film came from a news article about Adivasi women interacting with AI in Jharkhand but it soon became an inquiry into how artificial intelligence is "primarily being trained on first-world data". "As data labellers work with images, they go through thousands of photos and videos to tag objects in a photo. And then the algorithm begins to understand the basic difference between a chair-table, traffic lights

and other such objects. It's similar to the act of parenting. As our children are growing up, we teach them the difference between colors, objects, things," Sahay told PTI in an interview.

"And then we force our morality onto our children. So, this opens the film to a much larger conversation: 'If AI is going to have an impact on all of humanity, does it represent all of us or does it only represent a rather Euro-centric worldview?'"

"Humans in the Loop" has travelled around film festivals like MAMI, Cinevesture and won the FIPRESCI India award. "Laapataa Ladies" helmer Kiran Rao and filmmaker Biju Toppo have boarded the film as executive producers. It will next screen at the Jagran Film Festival in Delhi. The film is releasing in select theatres on September 5.

The filmmaker said he travelled to Jharkhand and spent almost a year there. The place really informed his theme and the issues he wanted to tackle in the film.

"As I was researching and travelling, I would see these old colonial structures pop up. There are single-gauge trains, arches, etc. Almost 300 years ago, there were colonists who came to these parts and deemed indigenous and tribal ways of life as primitive and tribals as savages.



"That could happen again if we had an AI which was primarily trained on first-world data. So that became the foundation of the film. And it became something more than just a revelation that this work is happening in Jharkhand," he said.

Asked whether he realised that his film was tackling AI at a time when there is a lot of anxiety about its impact on the future, Sahay said he ensured that whatever he was showing in the film was happening in real-time.

"I didn't want to keep the form

of the film futuristic because whatever is happening is happening now. So even the data labelling images are from now... I wanted to make this about today, and about how these different strands of the Adivasi reality interact with AI as of today," Sahay said.

The filmmaker's central character has a reverence for nature that's inherent to the tribal culture. Early in one of the scenes, Nehma takes her city-bred daughter for a foraging trip to the nearest jungle and tells her to

gently pull sweet potatoes from the ground or to look closely at the life around her -- from trees to the tiniest of insects.

Sahay said he wanted to contrast Nehma's knowledge about nature to what's happening around to highlight how knowledge is hierarchical and the world is still deeply imperialistic.

"Certain knowledge systems are said to be far better and more civilized. And certain knowledge systems are discarded as primitive. So that was interesting to explore. I would chat with a lot of people in Jharkhand and I remember an instance where a woman told me that when they walk on grass, they thank it whereas we feel entitled to walk on it.

"We've lost that nuance because we're so far away. So AI is going to be about binaries. There's a certain nuance when you interact with something closely. And when you are just peripherally dealing with something, you go into binaries. In that sense, we are trying to question the hierarchy of knowledge systems," he said.

Though his film is about how technology is interacting with people, especially gig workers, Sahay wanted his story to be character-driven and told through the eyes of his tribal protagonist. "Nobody is going to come and

watch a film for the theatrics of the technology that I'm using. The emotional hook of the film is the mother-daughter story. And on that string of emotional storytelling, I'm able to hang all the things I want to say about technology, about imperialism, about AI," he said, citing Denis Villeneuve's sci-fi drama "Arrival" and Christopher Nolan's "Interstellar" as his influences.

The filmmaker, who earlier made award-winning short films and worked as an assistant director, said his parents are sociologists and that has influenced the kind of stories he wants to tell.

His father has retired from the government service but his mother is still a practicing sociologist.

"That really forms the basis of anything I like doing. I like grappling with how things are. And the not so obvious interplay between different kinds of worlds. But my first love was not cinema, it was music. I learned Hindustani classical for a long time but then I felt I could not do justice to this other side of me which was oriented towards understanding society. That's why I shifted gears."

"Humans in the Loop" features Sonal Madhusankar, Gita Guha, Vikas Gupta, Anurag Lugun and Ridhima Singh among others. (PTI)

INJURY-PLAGUED INDIA EYE FRESH START IN WOMEN'S ASIA CUP HOCKEY

HANGZHOU (CHINA), Sept 4: An injury-plagued Indian women's hockey team will look to put behind past struggles and hope for a winning start against lower-ranked Thailand in its opening match of the Asia Cup beginning here on Friday.

India, ranked ninth in the world, will start favourites against world no.30 Thailand in the Pool B match.

India are the highest ranked team in the pool along side Japan (12), Thailand and Singapore (31) and are expected to top the group. Pool A consists of China, South Korea, Malaysia and Chinese Taipei.

In fact, India are the second highest-ranked side in the tournament behind world no.4 China. The Asia Cup holds great significance for all teams as it is a qualifying tournament for next year's World Cup in Belgium and the Netherlands.

After Thailand, India will take



on Japan on Saturday, followed by a final pool match against Singapore on September 8.

Injuries to key players -- veteran goalkeeper Savita Punia and ace dragflicker Deepika -- have somewhat weakened the squad.

While Savita is out with an ankle injury, Deepika, initially named in the squad, was ruled out at the last moment with a hamstring injury which she sustained during a training session.

Deepika has been replaced by Sakshi in the squad.

Deepika, a forward-cum-dragflicker, which is a rare commodity in world hockey, has been the shining star and the most improved Indian player in recent times and her absence would be felt.

In the duo's absence, the onus would be on seniors like skipper Salima Tete, Navneet Kaur, Udit, Neha, Sharmila Devi and Lalremsiami to take up the responsibility.

The Indian women have been struggling this year, having been relegated from the FIH Pro League where they finished last after a disastrous European leg.

India have won the Asia Cup twice before in 2004 and 2017, and going forward, the team will look to build on past successes in the region and redeem itself.

In Savita's absence, the goal-keeping duties will be taken by Bichu Devi Kharibam and Bansari Solanki, while the defence would be headed by Udit, Nikki Pradhan, Manisha Chauhan, Ishika Chaudhary and Suman Devi Thoudam.

The mid-field boasts of a strong line-up in Neha, Salima, Lalremsiami, Sharmila Devi, Sunelita Toppo and Vaishnavi Vitthal Phalke.

The forward-line will be spearheaded by Navneet in the company of Sangita Kumari, Mumtaz Khan, Beauty Dungdung, Rutuja Dadaso Pisal and Sakshi. (PTI)

Pragg takes on Jeffery Xiong, Gukesh meets Bacrot in the opener



SAMARKAND (UZBEKISTAN), Sept 4: Top seeded India No 1 R Praggnanandhaa will take on American Grandmaster Jeffery Xiong while reigning world champion D Gukesh is likely to come out all guns blazing against Frenchman Etienne Bacrot, in the first round of the FIDE Grand Swiss here.

As many as 116 players in the open and 56 in the women's category will battle for a combined prize pool of USD 855,000, of which USD 625,000 are for the open section.

The strongest-ever Swiss open event will miss the top three ranked players in the world despite the tournament being a part of qualification for the next Candidates. The absence of top ranked Magnus Carlsen, who has shown disliking towards the Classical chess and no longer plays in the world championship, is understandable.

Fabiano Caruana is missing this event to preserve his energies since he has already qualified for the Candidates, while the second ranked Hikaru Nakamura is banking on his rating average till January 2026 to find his place in the Candidates.

Interestingly, Nakamura played a very mediocre event in the USA and won all his games to increase his rating by five points.

There are two places up for grabs in both open and women's section from the tournament.

Nevertheless, the decision to opt out by the trio has led to top three seeds being Indian players, something that has been unheard of in any open tournament in the world.

Praggnanandhaa, the world No 4, No 5 Arjun Erigaisi, and Gukesh, currently ranked sixth on the planet, are all there to fight for the top honours.

The most notable Indian in the open is women's World Cup winner Divya Deshmukh, who has also qualified for the Women's Candidates and has opted out of the women's section to compete with the best in business.

Divya, a fierce competitor, will start her campaign against compatriot Abhimanyu Puranik.

Defending champion Vidit Gujrathi, who won the last edition in 2023, seasoned P Harikrishna, the dynamic Nihal Sareen, an in-form Pranav Venkatesh and Leon Luke Mendonca have all got what it takes to win the big event as they will compete over 11 rounds.

There are 15 Indians in the open and three in the women's section.

In the eve's section, the Indian challenge is spearheaded by D Harika. The last edition's winner R Vaishali and Vantika Agrawal complete the line up from India as Koneru Humpy has also opted out for having qualified for the Women's Candidate by reaching the finals of the women's World Cup. (PTI)

Felix Auger-Aliassime beats Alex de Minaur at the US Open to reach his 1st major semi since 2021



NEW YORK, Sept 4: Felix Auger-Aliassime got past Alex de Minaur 4-6, 7-6 (7), 7-5, 7-6 (4) at the U.S. Open across 4 hours, 10 minutes on Wednesday to reach his second Grand Slam semifinal — and second at Flushing Meadows.

The No. 25-seeded Auger-Aliassime's only other trip to the final four at a major came in New York in 2021 at age 21.

"Four years ago. It feels like more," said Auger-Aliassime, who advanced back then when Carlos Alcaraz stopped playing in the quarterfinals with an injured leg muscle. "It was a tough couple of years." Auger-Aliassime, who is Canadian, will meet No. 1 Jannik Sinner or No. 10 Lorenzo Musetti on Friday for a berth in the championship match. No. 2 Alcaraz faces No. 7 Novak Djokovic in the other semifinal.

"It's not over. There's still some tennis to play and the biggest challenges are yet to come," Auger-Aliassime said. "That's what I live for. That's what I train for." He hit 22 aces and finished with a total of 51 winners to the 29 for de Minaur, who dropped to 0-6 for his career in Grand Slam quarterfinals.

"Right now I'm looking at this like a wasted opportunity," said de Minaur. "It's tough."

Auger-Aliassime was one point from trailing two sets to none when de Minaur led 6-5 in the

second-set tiebreaker. But Auger-Aliassime erased that set point with a 120 mph ace. That began a run in which he grabbed four of five points to even the contest at a set apiece.

"Just a lot of nerves today, during the whole match. It wasn't pretty at all times," Auger-Aliassime said during his on-court interview in Arthur Ashe Stadium. "I was willing to dig really deep and do everything I can to stand here, right now."

This is the first time Auger-Aliassime has eliminated three seeded players during a single major, adding this victory over No. 8 de Minaur to wins against No. 3 Alexander Zverev in the third round and No. 15 Andrey Rublev in the fourth.

In the women's quarterfinals, Amanda Anisimova upset Iga Swiatek 6-4, 6-3 in a rematch of the Wimbledon final won by Swiatek 6-0, 6-0 less than two months ago. Four-time Grand Slam champion Naomi Osaka beat Karolina Muchova 6-4, 7-6 (3) at night to remain unbeaten when she reaches the quarterfinal stage of a major tournament.

The women's semifinals are scheduled at night, including defending champion Aryna Sabalenka against Jessica Pegula. That's a repeat from the final at Flushing Meadows last year, when Sabalenka was a 7-5, 7-5 winner. (AP)

Youngest MPCA prez Mahanaryaman's focus firmly on state cricket

NEW DELHI, Sept 4: Mahanaryaman Scindia wants to pull all his energies on improving cricket in Madhya Pradesh rather than harbour governance ambitions in the BCCI after becoming the youngest president of state body MPCA.

Taking charge of the body once led by his grandfather Madhav Rao Scindia, and father, Jyotiraditya Scindia, the 29-year-old wants to create an impact across all age-group levels. "Well, I see myself right now clearly focusing on Madhya Pradesh. I think I've got a huge mandate. I don't want to eat more than I can chew. So I'd like to try and focus on what I have in my hand right now and start creating impact on that level. Whatever comes ahead, comes ahead," he told PTI Video.

Talking about Scindia family's legacy in MP cricket, he said: "It's a position my grandfather held and created a lot of impact in terms of nurturing talent, spotting talent and



giving them the opportunity.

"It's a position where my father played a huge role in creating processes and professionalising cricket administration in MPCA. So for me, combining those two and adding more value to what my grandfather and father have done is immense pressure and immense responsibility."

Scindia believes his age brings an advantage. "Being young, you come with fresh ideas, especially because India today is a very young country, 60-70% of our population is under the age of 35."

"So coming in with that mentality and having a balanced team with different kinds of experience and exposure, I think, will add a lot

World Cup tickets initially to cost \$60-\$6,730 but could fluctuate with dynamic pricing

MIAMI, Sept 4: Ticket prices for next year's World Cup will range initially from \$60 for group-stage matches to \$6,730 for the final, but could change as soccer's top event adopts dynamic pricing for the first time.

The prices are up from a range of \$25 to \$475 for the 1994 tournament in the United States and for the U.S. dollar equivalent \$69 to \$1,607 when ticket details were announced for the 2022 tournament in Qatar.

"I think the message is Get your tickets early," especially if you know where you will be, because you live in that city, or you're a fan of the three hosting nations, and then you know already when and where they will play," said Heimo Schirgi, the World Cup's chief operating officer. "So that's the message: Get your tickets early, because anything could happen."

Next year's tournament runs from June 11 to July 19 and will be

played at 11 sites in the U.S., three in Mexico and two in Canada. The tournament expanded from 32 nations to 48 and from 64 games to 104. The initial draw period will be limited to Visa card holders and will run from 11 a.m. EDT on Sept. 10 through 11 a.m. EDT on Sept. 19. Those picked to buy tickets will be notified starting Sept. 29 and will be given a timeslot to purchase starting Oct. 1. While tickets for all 104 matches are being put on sale, receiving a timeslot does not guarantee tickets will be available. Sales will be capped at four tickets per person per match, with no person being able to purchase more than 40 for the totality of the tournament. FIFA said it has no additional details on prices to announce.

A second phase, called an early ticket draw, likely will run from Oct. 27-31, with purchase timeslots from mid-November to early December.

A third phase, termed a random selection draw, will start after the final draw of teams on Dec. 5 determines the World Cup schedule. FIFA said tickets will be available closer to the tournament "on a first-come, first-served basis."

FIFA also said it will start an official resale platform.

Hospitality packages have been sold since May. For the eight matches at MetLife Stadium in East Rutherford, New Jersey, including the final on July 19, prices range from \$3,500 to \$73,200 per person.

Fans can purchase tickets to follow a certain team, or purchase for a certain site. Dynamic pricing was also utilized for this year's Club World Cup, when tickets were cut from \$473.90 to \$13.40 for the Chelsea-Fulham semifinal at MetLife Stadium.

"It's key to highlight FIFA's mission and FIFA's objective of providing funding, providing

opportunities, providing growth to our sport across all the 211 member associations," Schirgi said. "And as part of that mission, which we take very seriously, we're looking at optimizing the revenue, but also optimizing attendance in the stadium, right? So, it's always a balance between different factors."

American Airlines announced Wednesday its AAdvantage loyalty program members can redeem miles for World Cup tickets, starting with executive platinum and concierge key members on Oct. 13, with platinum pro, platinum and gold starting the following day and all members having access on Oct. 15. Thirteen teams in the field have been determined. The U.S., Canada and Mexico all are assured World Cup spots as the host nations, while reigning champion Argentina with Lionel Messi and perennial power Brazil are among the teams that have already secured qualification. (AP)

Inaugural IGPL tour from Sept. 10; Yuvraj compares its potential impact to IPL

NEW DELHI, Sept 4: The Indian Golf Premier League (IGPL) on Thursday launched its inaugural tour starting September 10, with co-founder and brand ambassador Yuvraj Singh likening the venture's potential impact on golf to the game-changing effect the IPL had on cricket. In partnership with the Indian Golf Union (IGU) and the Women's Golf Association of India (WGAI), the IGPL tour will comprise a 10-event calendar, beginning with the first tournament scheduled at Chandigarh Golf Club from September 10 to 12.

The tour is spread across multiple cities and it will also go to Sri Lanka and UAE. Each event will be a three-day affair with no cuts, featuring a mix of young and veteran golfers alongside women professionals and amateurs.

The field size for the inaugural year will be 48 professionals: 36 men and 12 women, along with some amateurs, for a total of 54 participants.

"I'm really excited to be part of IGPL because I feel that golf needs to grow in our country. I think it should become a part of our culture. IGPL will give them a chance to be fearless and be the best in the world," former India all-rounder Yuvraj told reporters.

"When I was playing cricket, I always thought I could have played more matches and done better. But when I started playing golf, I realized that probably my biggest regret is not starting golf at a young age." Drawing from his experience as a cricketer, Yuvraj said: "Golf is such an amazing sport, but a golfer's life is tough. When you're on tour, you have to pay your own bills, and manage everything yourself. In cricket, with the BCCI, we never had to worry about daily allowances or renting rooms because everything was taken care of."

"I think IGPL is providing a format where especially the young generation coming on board doesn't have to worry about those issues.



That will give a lot of confidence to young talent to come forward. Going down to the grassroots level is very important.

"...I believe this format is going to be great. I hope it changes the momentum of golf because if you compare IGPL to IPL, the IPL changed the whole dynamics of Indian cricket and world cricket. If

IGPL can do that for golf, it will be incredible to see."

IGPL has also entered into a partnership with the Asian Tour, providing a pathway for the players, which includes allowing IGPL golfers to compete alongside the top Asian players at the Asian Tour event in India in November at Kenville Golf & Country Club.

Fitri Saari eyes HIL spot, says more Malaysian players need to play in foreign leagues

RAJGIR (BIHAR), Sept 4: Star midfielder Fitri Saari believes Malaysian players need to ply their trade in foreign leagues to raise the profile of the sport in the country while he aspires to feature in the next edition of the Hockey India League.

With his eyes firmly set on next year's HIL, Fitri, brother of striker Faizal Saari, has already registered for the mini auction to be held in the first week of October.

"Yes, I want to play in the Hockey India League. We need more players from Asia to play in the Hockey India League if we (Asia) need to beat Europe, Pan America, Australia..." Fitri told PTI in an interaction as Malaysia continued their fine run in the ongoing men's Asia Cup here with a 2-0 win over China.

"I have put my name in Hockey India League's mini auction draft already. I did that with a hope to play in the league. I hope my performances here will be noticed and I am ready to play for any team."

"I just want an opportunity and I

can prove that I am competitive and a better player," he added.

Fitri, a member of the 2018 Asian Games silver-medal winning side, said Malaysian players need exposure and that can be achieved only by playing trade in different foreign leagues.

"We need to play leagues outside of Malaysia. If we have opportunity to play in the Hockey India League, (or the) Holland league we need to go there to learn more," he said. "If 7 or 8 players from Malaysia play in different leagues of the world, including HIL, they will get more exposure, matches and learn from different players," he said.

Hockey has a storied history in Malaysia that peaked in 1980s and 1990s. The spark ignited at the 1975 World Cup at home soil, where they finished fourth.

Malaysia have qualified for the Olympics nine times, with their best result being an eighth-place finish in 1972 Munich edition.

But since 2000 Sydney Games, the Speedy Tigers have never made it to the Olympics. (PTI)

'These 25 years of my life in cricket have been nothing short of memorable'

Amit Mishra announces retirement from all forms of cricket

NEW DELHI, Sept 4: Veteran India leg-spinner Amit Mishra on Thursday announced his retirement from all forms of cricket, ending a career spanning more than two decades.

Having last played for India in 2017, the 42-year-old Haryana cricketer continued to feature in the IPL till the 2024 edition. Mishra confirmed his retirement to PTI over phone.

"I have decided to retire," said Mishra.

In a statement, Mishra said the decision was largely based on repeated injuries and the belief that the younger generation needed to take over.

Mishra represented India in 22 Tests, 36 ODIs and 10 T20s. His Test career yielded 76 wickets, while in ODIs he snared 64 scalps.

He was a classical leg-break bowler who made his Test debut against Australia in 2008, five years after he made his India debut in an ODI against South Africa in 2003.

With Harbhajan Singh and Anil



Kumble starting most of the games at home, Mishra had to wait for his Test cap.

It was a successful debut for him as he took a five-wicket haul in the first innings before picking a couple of more in the second essay. It ultimately became his only five-wicket haul in the traditional format. "These 25 years (first class debut in 2000) of my life in cricket

have been nothing short of memorable. I am deeply grateful to the BCCI, the administration, Haryana cricket association, the support staff, my colleagues, and to my family members who were with me all this while.

"I would like to thank the fans whose love and support whenever and wherever I played made the journey memorable. Cricket has

given me countless memories and invaluable learnings, and each moment on the ground has been a memory I'll treasure for life," Mishra said in a statement issued later.

His last competitive game was for Lucknow Super Giants in the 2024 IPL season. His international career stagnated after R Ashwin and Ravindra Jadeja entered the scene.

In the statement issued on Thursday, Mishra also expressed the desire to stay involved in the game via coaching and commentary.

He racked up 535 wickets in an exemplary first class career while he collected 252 and 285 in List A and T20 cricket.

In the IPL alone, he took 166 wickets at a stellar average of 23.98 and a very acceptable economy rate of 7.36, representing four teams including SunRisers Hyderabad, Deccan Chargers, Delhi Capitals and LSG. He remains the only bowler to take three hat-tricks in the IPL. (PTI)

Ruturaj Gaikwad slams ton as West reach 363/6 against Central



BENGALURU, Sept 4: Ruturaj Gaikwad compensated for the failure of Yashasvi Jaiswal and Shreyas Iyer, compiling a wonderfully paced 184 as West Zone fought back to reach 363 for six against Central Zone on the first day of the Duleep Trophy semi-final here on Thursday.

Tanush Kotian (65) and Shardul Thakur (24) were batting when stumps were drawn at the BCCI Centre of Excellence 'B' grounds, after West batted by choice.

Undoubtedly, Gaikwad, whose innings came of just 206 balls, was the star of the day, coasting to his second successive hundred after making a 133 for Maharashtra against Himachal Pradesh in the Buchi Babu tournament last month.

The right-hander carried that confidence into this match, displaying exquisite timing and footwork to resist the Central bowlers.

However, Gaikwad came to the middle with West struggling at 10 for two after losing Jaiswal (4 off 3 balls), who was trapped in front by pacer Khaled Ahmed, and Harvik Desai (1), who gave a simple catch to Yash Rathod at first slip off Deepak Chahar.

But from that point, Gaikwad constructed a handy partnership 90 for the second wicket with Aarya Desai as West gradually entered a stabilised phase.

The 28-year-old reached his first fifty in 85 balls, but he floored the pedal in the noon session to go past 100 in 131 balls — his second fifty coming in just 51 balls.

The highlight of Gaikwad's batting was the way he handled the capable spinners of Central Zone — left-arm spinner Harsh Dube and off-spinner Saransh Jain.

He often executed the late cut and square cut to perfection, amassing 15 boundaries and nearly 100 runs through those regions.

It forced the spinners to adopt a rather straight line and on a slow pitch, the Maharashtra batter had little trouble in working around them for singles or twos.

But the West had a few nervy moments soon as they lost Aarya (39), Shreyas (25) and Shams Mulani (18) in rather quick succession to be placed first at 137 for 4 and then at 179 for five.

Iyer, who was dropped on the first ball by Ahmed at deep off Harsh Dube, looked in fine fettle but an attempt to play a late cut off

Ahmed saw the ball disturbing the stumps after taking a light under edge of his bat.

The on-field umpires checked for no-ball as Iyer waited in hope but it lasted only a couple of minutes as the TV umpire ruled the ball fair.

Gaikwad needed a strong-willed partner from there, and Kotian was just that. No stranger to late order fightback, the Mumbaier gave solid support to his senior partner as they milked 148 runs for the sixth wicket that pushed the Central completely on to the back foot.

Once he reached the hundred, Gaikwad was in cruise mode moving to 150 in 178 balls (third fifty in 47 balls) as Central bowlers ran out of ideas.

Just as he was nearing his maiden first-class double hundred, Gaikwad showed a surprising moment of impatience to get stumped.

He shimmied out of crease to push spinner Jain to covers but was beaten in flight and stumper Upen- dra Yadav did the rest.

But by then West had reached a position that looked so unlikely a couple of hours ago, and Kotian in the company of his skipper Thakur saw off the rest of the day. (PTI)

IPL tickets to get costlier after Govt levies 40 % GST



NEW DELHI, Sept 4: Indian cricket fans, who love turning up for IPL matches across the country, will have to shell out more for tickets next season with government raising the Goods and Services Tax (GST) on admission to these games from 28 per cent to 40 per cent.

According to a Ministry of Finance release issued late on Wednesday, "Admission to casinos, race clubs, any place having casinos or race clubs or sporting events like IPL will have GST of 40 percent with ITC (Input Tax Credit).

An IPL ticket with a base price Rs 500 before GST till last season would ultimately cost Rs 640 with GST levied at 28 per cent. However, during the 2026 edition, the same ticket will now cost Rs 700 after imposition of 40 per cent GST by the government.

This is because IPL tickets have been classified in the 'Luxury Goods' category.

However, India's international games have been classified under other sporting events and would invite a lesser GST of 18 per cent on tickets priced above Rs 500.

Any tickets priced below Rs 500 will be exempted from GST.

The rule states: "Admission to other sporting events including recognised sporting events where the ticket price is not more than '500 continues to be exempt, and if the ticket price is more than Rs. 500, it continues to be taxed at the standard rate of 18 per cent."

As far as IPL is concerned, the ticketing is not controlled by the BCCI and every franchise decides the rates at their respective home grounds.

However, it must be mentioned that ticket sales revenue is the smallest chunk in their profit variable. (PTI)

Bhambri locks in career-best Grand Slam show, makes US Open semifinals

NEW YORK, Sept 4: India's Yuki Bhambri progressed to his maiden Grand Slam semifinal by advancing to the last four of the US Open men's doubles event with New Zealand partner Michael Venus. The Indo-Kiwi duo upset 11th seeds Nikola Pietrangeli and Rajeev Ram 6-3, 6-7(8), 6-3 in a quarterfinal clash on Court 17 to continue their impressive run on Wednesday.

Earlier, Bhambri and Venus had knocked out fourth seeds Kevin Krawietz and Tim Puetz in the pre-quarterfinals.

For Bhambri, 33, it marked a career breakthrough after years of battling injuries and transitioning

from singles to doubles.

A former junior world No. 1 and the 2009 Australian Open boys' champion, he has now achieved his best result at a senior Grand Slam. The result also extends India's legacy in men's doubles, where the likes of Leander Paes, Mahesh Bhupathi and Rohan Bopanna have excelled in the past.

The winners secured the first break of the match when Bhambri found a service return winner on Mektic's serve for a 3-1 lead. Venus' serve came under pressure in the very next game but the New Zealander managed to save, consolidating the break.

Bhambri locked the first set with

an easy volley winner on Ram's return. The Indian however lost his serve in early in the second set, allowing Mektic and Ram to make a comeback in the match. They got the break back to make it 4-4 but eventually lost the set in tie-break when Bhambri served a double fault down facing set point.

Bhambri saved a break point in game three of the decider to avert the danger.

Mektic was comfortably up 40-15 in game eight but the Indo-Kiwi pair got the break for a decisive 5-3 lead when Mektic could not return and angled backhand from the Indian after serving a double fault at deuce. (PTI)

KV Naharlagun win U-14 Boys' Football Championship



HT Correspondent

NAHARLAGUN, Sept 4: PM Shri Kendriya Vidyalaya Naharlagun, representing the KVS Tinsukia Region, has scripted history by winning the Under-14 Boys' Football Championship at the 54th KVS National Level Tournament held in Lucknow from August 29 to September 2.

The championship saw participation from 24 regional teams of Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan across the country. The Naharlagun side, comprising students of PM Shri KV No. 1 Itanagar, dominated the tournament with commanding victories - Hyderabad (8-0), Delhi (4-1), Bengaluru (3-0) and Bhubaneswar (1-0) in the semi-final—before defeating Ranchi 2-0 in the final.

Striker Techie Donal emerged as the tournament's standout performer with six goals, while captain Langpu Nikum and vice-captain

Ha Nua provided solid leadership to guide the team to the title.

On their arrival at Naharlagun Railway Station, the champions were accorded a rousing reception by parents, citizens and well-wishers.

Deputy Commissioner of KVS Tinsukia, T. Pritam Singh, hailed the achievement as a proud moment for the region, commending the school's commitment to nurturing sporting excellence. Principal Dr. Ram Kumar Singh Sikarwar congratulated the players on their success and expressed gratitude to the Regional Office Tinsukia for its constant support.

The Assistant Commissioners of KVS RO Tinsukia and the Regional Sports Cell also extended their appreciation. Coach Sachin Parihar and Physical Education Teacher Ajay Choubey attributed the victory to the team's discipline, dedication and collective spirit.

Bodoland University marks National Sports Day in Kokrajhar

HT Correspondent

KOKRAJHAR, Sept 4: The Bodoland University celebrated the National Sports Day on Tuesday at Bodoland University playground with the theme "Ek Ghanta Khel Ke Maidan Mein!" to commemorate the birth anniversary of Major Dhyan Chand, India's legendary hockey player.

The event was celebrated with a series of sports competitions including Inter-departmental Football, Kabaddi and Tug of War. Faculty members from all academic departments actively supported and encouraged their departmental players throughout the competitions.

Research Scholars, along with Integrated PG and Postgraduate students, enthusiastically participated in the different events, which added to the vibrancy and success of the celebration. The three-day programme was not only a sporting event but also a platform that fostered National Sports Day at Bodoland University.

The National Sports Day celebration began with an exciting and grand opening ceremony at Bodoland University. The event was graced by Prof. (Dr.) B.L. Ahuja, Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor Bodoland University, Dr. Prahlad Basumatary, Director of Students Welfare, Bodoland University, along with two invited guests, Mr. Babul Basumatary, Director In-charge, Sports Authority of India, Kokrajhar and Mr. Sanjay Halwandi, Senior Wushu Coach Sports Authority of India, Kokrajhar.

The President of Bodoland University Students' Union (BUSU), ex-

pressed his delight and honor in welcoming everyone to the special celebration of National Sports Day. He addressed the participants that the day was not only about celebrating the spirit of sportsmanship, but also about paying tribute to one of the nation's greatest sporting icons, Major Dhyan Chand, India's legendary hockey player.

In his welcome address, Dr. Prahlad Basumatary expressed gratitude to the chief guest, Prof. (Dr.) B.L. Ahuja, for his constant encouragement and support to the students. He warmly welcomed the invited guest Babul Basumatary and Sanjay Halwandi, for giving their valuable time to be part of the programme. Then he introduced Daisy Rabha, a sportsperson who has brought name and fame to Bodoland University thought her outstanding achievements who recently brought name and fame to the University by winning two medals—one gold and one silver at an international event in Georgia sponsored by Bodoland University throughout her participation both in national level trial and participation in international event. Prof. B.L. Ahuja, Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor of Bodoland University felicitate Miss Daisy Rabha with a traditional Aronai along with a cash award of ₹ 5,000 (five thousand rupees only) for the achievement. Her remarkable achievement was warmly acknowledged with applause from the gathering.

Dr. Sharmistha Brahma Kour, Assistant Professor, Department of Biotechnology and Convener of the Organising

Committee of National Sports Day, delivered an inspiring speech on the life and achievements of hockey legend Major Dhyan Chand. She began by reminding that National Sports Day is celebrated every year on August 29th to mark the birth anniversary of Major Dhyan Chand, who is widely regarded as a true icon of Indian sports. She briefly spoke about his early life, dedication to hockey and extraordinary achievements that brought India global recognition in the field of sports. She concluded her speech telling the honors and recognitions conferred upon him the prestigious "Padma Bhushan".

On the final day of the National Sports Day celebration students once again gathered at the University Playground at 3:00 P.M on 31st August, 2025. The Day three programme included the finals of the Inter-Departmental Football (Male), Kabaddi (Female) and Tug of War (Male & Female), followed by the Prize Distribution Ceremony.

The first sports event was the Tug of War (male and female), played between the Department of Economics & Zoology and Department of Bodo & Geography respectively. After a tough competition, the Department of Economics and Bodo secured 1st position, while the Department of Zoology and Geography stood at 2nd position. The Inter-Departmental Football final was then played between the History Department and Bodo Department. It was an intense match, the History Department scored two goals in the second tiebreaker and won first place.

Being in and out of team was frustrating, but I stayed focused: Amit Mishra

NEW DELHI, Sept 4: Amit Mishra's start-stop international career had two distinct phases.

First was spent dealing with the immense pressure of expectations that came with replacing the legendary Anil Kumble. The second part was about dealing with the competition that came with the emergence of Ravichandran Ashwin and Ravindra Jadeja — one an off-spinner and other a left-arm slow orthodox, who suited Mahendra Singh Dhoni and Virat Kohli's plans to the 'T'.

The grammar of Test match batting had changed by then and hence Mishra's 76 wickets in 22 Tests won't be a fair assessment of his skills as a bowler, who had a sharp leg-break and an enticing googly but became the sparsely used third option behind Ashwin-Jadeja.

"It was a very disappointing thing. Sometimes you're in the team, sometimes you're out. Sometimes you get a chance in the playing eleven, sometimes

you don't. Of course, it's frustrating, and I was frustrated many times, no doubt," Mishra told PTI Videos in an exclusive interview after announcing his retirement from competitive cricket.

"But then you remember that your dream is to play cricket for India. You are with the national team, and millions of people are working so hard just to be there. You are one of the 15 players on the Indian team. So, I tried to stay positive," he added.

Despite his evident talent, Mishra admitted that being in and out of the Indian team was mentally tough.

"Whenever I was frustrated, I thought about what I could improve on. Whether it was my fitness, batting, or bowling, I always focused on getting better. Whenever I got a chance to play for the Indian team, I performed well, and I'm very happy about that. I never shied away from hard work," he added.

Mishra was always good but someone

else would always show up brilliant — like Ashwin and Jadeja in red-ball cricket.

Ironical as it might seem, the last international match for Mishra was a T20I against England in Bengaluru in 2017 where he took 1/23 in four overs at the Chinnaswamy Stadium which is a batting paradise. If looked at in isolation, these are brilliant figures.

But in the same match, another leg-spinner Yuzvendra Chahal took 6 for 25. Mishra never played for India after that even in T20Is despite being an IPL legend — 174 wickets in 162 games, including a hat-trick in the first edition in 2008.

Mishra credits IPL for his Test comeback because suddenly performances got noticed. "I'd say the defining moment was the hat-trick I took in the 2008 IPL, where I also took five wickets in the match. From there, I made a comeback to the Indian team. Before that, I was consistently performing well in domestic

cricket, taking 35-45 wickets every season, but I couldn't get back into the national team.

"That IPL hat-trick changed things for me. I had also performed well in Syed Mushtaq Ali the preceding year taking 25 wickets, which helped me get an IPL contract (Delhi Daredevils).

"After that hat-trick, I was back in the Indian team continuously and my career in T-20 also started. So, that hat-trick with five wickets in 2008 will be a defining moment of my life," he said.

Mishra put forth his perspective about various captains having their preferred choice of bowlers and also that there was nothing wrong in it.

"Some players are captain's favourites. But that doesn't matter much. You just have to prove yourself whenever you get a chance. As I said, these things don't matter. Sometimes a player who performs better than you is liked more, but when you start performing, it all

changes." He always found bowling to Indian batters more challenging than overseas players in the IPL.

"Whenever I took the wicket of a well-known Indian player, I felt proud. Someone like Virat Kohli, Rohit Sharma, Yuvraj Singh, Gautam Gambhir, or Virat Kohli—they are the kind of players who can change the game at any moment.

"You can trouble a foreign player with your skill, but with these guys, you know them in and out. When you get one of their wickets, you get a different, very positive feeling. I would say all Indian batsmen are difficult for a spinner to bowl against."

While taking a trip down memory lane, he remembered how skipper Anil Kumble informed him prior to the Mohali Test against Australia in 2008 about his debut.

"Anil Bhai told me in the morning of the match that he was injured. I played that match against Australia and took five wickets, which was a huge moment for

me. It was a big thing to fill the shoes of Anil Kumble. There was pressure and I am glad that I won Player of the match on debut."

Despite the rollercoaster ride, Mishra said he is bidding adieu without regrets.

"I've played cricket for 25 years across three decades with legends like Sachin Tendulkar, under leaders like MS Dhoni, and with current stars like Rohit Sharma. Now that I'm slowly stepping away, it's emotional, of course. Cricket gave me everything — respect, identity, and purpose." He knows where he stands and is practical about moving away from the game quietly.

"Not everyone gets a grand farewell or big press conference, and that's okay. What matters to me is that I gave everything I had. I played with heart. I performed whenever I got the opportunity.

"And I've earned the love of fans and the respect of my peers — that's my biggest achievement." (PTI)