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Need no lessons from terror sponsor: India slams Pak at UN

GENEVA, Sept 10: India has slammed Pakistan at the UN Human Rights Council, saying it doesn't need lessons from a "terror sponsor" that continues to finance and shelter the very networks that threaten global security.

"We are compelled, once again, to address provocations from a country whose own leadership recently likened it to a "dump truck", perhaps an inadvertently apt metaphor for a state that continues to deposit recycled falsehoods and stale propaganda before this distinguished Council," Kshitij Tyagi,

Counsellor, Permanent Mission of India, Geneva, said on Tuesday.

Tyagi delivered India's Right of Reply at the General Debate on the oral update by the High Commissioner at the 60th Session of the Human Rights Council after remarks regarding India were made by Pakistan. In the stern message, Tyagi recalled the "carnage" of Pahalgam, where Pakistan-sponsored terrorists turned a meadow of joy into a killing field in April this year.

"Lest we forget 9/11, as the world marks its an-

niversary tomorrow, even as we witness today the hypocrisy of those who sheltered its mastermind and glorified him as a martyr," he said, referring to slain Al Qaida leader Osama bin Laden, who was killed in a US Navy Seal raid in Pakistan's Abbotabad. "Lest we forget Pulwama, Uri, Pathankot, Mumbai... The list is endless," he added.

Tyagi said that despite this, Pakistan "demonstrates the audacity to take the floor today, feigning moral outrage while continuing to finance and shelter the very networks that threaten global security.

The international community recognises this charade for what it is."

Asserting that the world and India will not forget, Tyagi said India's "measured and proportionate" response to the Pahalgam attack made that sufficiently clear. "We need no lessons from a terror sponsor; no sermons from a persecutor of minorities; no advice from a state that has squandered its own credibility," he said.

"Pakistan's systematic abuse of this forum, coupled with its routine manipulation of the OIC (Or-

ganisation of Islamic Cooperation) as its mouth-piece, has become a familiar pattern. Its pathological fixation on India appears to provide it with existential validation. Yet, we must respond, lest we forget," he said. He added that India will continue to protect its citizens with unwavering resolve and will defend its sovereignty without compromise. "And we will continue to expose, time and again, the elaborate deception of a failed state whose survival depends upon trafficking in terror and tragedy," he said. (PTT)

BTC polls: Parties intensify campaigning across BTR



HT Correspondent
KOKRAJHAR, Sept 10: With just 12 days remaining for the BTC Elections 2025, political campaigning has gained significant momentum across the Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR) districts.

Political parties and candidates are leaving no stone unturned to connect with voters ahead of the September 22 polls, apart from the ruling UPPL, other major parties including BPF, BJP, and Congress are actively campaigning.

On Wednesday, Assam Cabinet minister Urkhao Gwra Brahma addressed an election rally at Dotma constituency in support of Chief Executive Member (CEM) of the Bodoland Territorial Region and UPPL President Pramod Boro, who is contesting the council elections from Dotma.

Addressing the gathering, Brahma said the love, trust, and energy of the people have infused fresh strength into the

party's campaign.

He added that under the bold leadership of Pramod Boro, the UPPL remains committed to ushering in peace, progress, and prosperity for every household in the BTR.

With political temperatures rising, the stage is set for an intense electoral battle in the days ahead.

CEM Pramod Boro also addressed rallies at Goreswar in Tamulpur district and Dimakuchi in Udalguri district in support of UPPL candidates.

The rallies witnessed large participation from people across communities.

The UPPL has been emphasising welfare and upliftment, rendering relentless services to society.

Pramod Boro stated that the UPPL has received tremendous support and love from communities across the Bodoland region. He added that the BTR government and the UPPL party have (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

SIT submits report on Gaurav Gogoi's Pakistan link • Govt to study findings in detail

Probe findings suggest larger conspiracy, claims CM

HT Bureau
GUWAHATI, Sept 10: Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Wednesday said the Special Investigation Team (SIT), constituted by the state Cabinet earlier this year, has unearthed "startling facts" in its probe into the anti-India activities of Pakistani national Ali Tauqueer Sheikh and his associates.

In a post on X, Sarma said the SIT, which was set up on February 17, 2025, has revealed disturbing details that suggest a larger conspiracy to undermine India's sovereignty.

"The SIT has also established the involvement of a British national - who is married to an Indian Member of Parliament - in



the nefarious activities linked to Ali Tauqueer Sheikh," the Chief Minister said.

Sarma further claimed that the

SIT has found evidence of Pakistan's Ministry of Interior facilitating the visit of a sitting MP from Assam to that country. "The role of

Pakistan's official machinery in enabling such engagements is a matter of serious concern," he noted.

The Chief Minister said the state government would study the SIT's findings in detail before placing the report before the Cabinet. "Once the matter is discussed, the information gathered during the enquiry will be made public," he assured.

Earlier, Sarma had indicated that the probe into alleged Pakistan links of Congress MP Gaurav Gogoi and his wife Elizabeth Coleman might be handed over to the National Investigation Agency (NIA) once the SIT completes its work.

Admitting the limitations of the current probe, Sarma said the

Assam SIT has only a restricted mandate, particularly in accessing communication records. "The SIT in Assam has a very limited scope. It cannot access telephonic records or connections beyond two years," he explained.

He added that the broader aspects of the case - such as citizenship issues and alleged connections with the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) - fall under the jurisdiction of the Union Ministry of Home Affairs.

Sarma also pointed out that central agencies like the NIA have the capacity to retrieve data going back to 2010-2011. "No such request has been made so far. We will take a final decision after the SIT submits its report," he said.

Delegation from KA calls on Rijiju

HT Bureau
DIPHU, Sept. 10: A delegation led by Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council Chief Executive Member Tuliram Ronghang called on Union Minister for Parliamentary and Minority Affairs Kiren Rijiju in New Delhi on Tuesday to advocate for key development initiatives in Karbi Anglong.

The delegation proposed the establishment of multipurpose convention centres in minority areas across all constituencies, as well as entrepreneurial and tourism projects.

They also sought a special package for the Aronbarim Indigenous Faith Centre at Langvoku.

In response, Minister Rijiju directed the submission of a Rs 300 crore concept note titled "Integrated Minority Development Clusters," focusing on education, skill development, (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Himanta reviews preparations for PM's visit to Numaligarh

HT Bureau
GUWAHATI, Sept 10: Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Wednesday visited Golaghat district to review the preparations for Prime Minister Narendra Modi's much-anticipated visit to Numaligarh.

An official statement from the state government informed that the Prime Minister is scheduled to visit Assam on September 14, during which he will inaugurate the newly built bamboo-based ethanol plant at Numaligarh and launch projects worth over ₹18,000 crore, expected to give a major boost to the state's socio-economic development.

During his visit, Sarma thoroughly inspected the arrangements for the public meeting scheduled to be held at the Tanker Stand within the premises of the Numaligarh Refinery Limited (NRL).

He directed district officials and various agencies involved in the event's organisation to ensure all logistical aspects, including drinking water supply, sanitation facilities, vehicle parking, and first-aid services, are adequately provided for the massive gathering expected to exceed one lakh people.

The chief minister also reviewed security arrange-

ments and instructed the police and district administration to take proactive measures to prevent traffic congestion near the venue during the Prime Minister's programme.

The chief minister also participated in a high-level review meeting attended by Cabinet Ministers, Members of Parliament, Members of the Legislative Assembly, district officials, and representatives from concerned agencies overseeing the event's preparations.

The gathering underscored the government's commitment to ensuring a smooth and successful event that reflects Assam's hospitality and organisational capability.

Speaking to the media, Sarma highlighted the significance of the bamboo-based ethanol plant, which has been built at an estimated cost of ₹5,000 crore.

He further informed that along with this project, the Prime Minister will inaugurate and lay the foundation for projects worth over ₹18,000 crore from Numaligarh and Mangaldai.

These initiatives, the Chief Minister remarked, are expected to open new avenues (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Assam stands firmly with Himachal CM

GUWAHATI, Sept 10: Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Wednesday said that the state stands "firmly with the sisters and brothers of Himachal Pradesh in these testing times".

A total of 378 people have died in rain-related incidents and road accidents in Himachal Pradesh since the onset of monsoon on June 20 this year.

"3.5 cr people of Assam extend their prayers and solidarity in these times," Sarma said in a post on X.

Assam Power minister Prasanta Phukan handed over the cheque of ₹ 5 crore to Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu in New Delhi.

"On behalf of the people and Govt of Assam, we've contributed ₹ 5 crore to the Himachal Pradesh CM Relief Fund. In these testing times, Assam stands with Himachal, sharing their grief and offering our heartfelt support as they rebuild lives and communities," Phukan posted on X.

The Assam Cabinet on Tuesday had approved financial assistance of ₹ 5 crore to Himachal Pradesh from the Chief Minister's Scheme for (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Amit Shah to launch faster immigration clearance programme at 5 more airports

NEW DELHI, Sept 10: A special programme under which the immigration clearance process of pre-verified Indian nationals and Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) cardholders is fast-tracked will be rolled out on Thursday in five more cities, including Lucknow and Thiruvananthapuram, officials said.

The Fast Track Immigration-Trusted Traveller Programme (FTI-TTP) will be launched in Lucknow, Thiruvananthapuram, Trichy, Kozhikode and Amritsar international airports by Union Home Minister Amit Shah at a special programme to be held virtually.

While the special initiative was first rolled out at the Indira Gandhi International Airport here in July 2024, it was subsequently launched in seven more airports - Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Cochin and Ahmedabad in September 2024.

The programme ensures faster immigration clearance, and so far, several thousand passengers have been granted faster immigration clearance through e-Gates, officials said.

The FTI-TTP aims to facilitate international mobility with faster, smoother, secure immigration clearance. In the initial phase, it has been started for Indian nationals and OCI cardholders on a gratis basis.

The FTI-TTP is similar to the Global Entry Program offered by the United States that allows expedited clearance for pre-approved, low-risk travellers upon arrival in America in select airports, another official said.

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

It is designed for faster, smoother and safer immigration clearance for international travellers. Eligible passengers will be allowed to utilise e-gates and bypass regular immigration queues for a seamless journey.

Eligible individuals will need to apply online and submit their biometrics (fingerprint and facial image) along with other required information as specified in the application form.

The FTI registration will be valid for a maximum of five years or until the validity of the passport, whichever comes first. A traveller can avail the facility by applying through the government website - www.ftitp.mha.gov.in and providing the required details, which will be verified by the Bureau of Immigration.

Approved applications would receive a message to schedule an appointment to provide their biometrics details.

Applicants may provide their biometrics at designated international airports in India or the nearest Foreigners Regional Registration Office (FRRO) according to the prior appointment schedule.

Biometrics is compulsory for the completion of the application processing.

The applicants may ensure a minimum passport validity of at least six months while applying for the FTI-TTP. The membership of programmer will be co-terminus with passport validity.

The programme will run on e-gates or automated border gates which will minimise human intervention in the immigration clearance process, the official said.

The programme will be implemented (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Surgery performed by Made in India SSI Mantra robotic system

Eastern India's first remote robotic gallbladder surgery performed in Guwahati hospital

GUWAHATI, Sept 10: The first remote robotic gallbladder removal surgery in Eastern and Northeastern India was performed on two patients at a private hospital here, an official claimed on Wednesday.

The operations were carried out on both patients using the Made-in-India SSI Mantra robotic system, with lead surgeon Prof Subhas Khanna Khanna controlling the robot from Gurgaon and performing the surgeries from nearly 1,950 km away on Tuesday.

Both patients are recovering well and are fit to be discharged within 24 hours, Khanna told reporters on Wednesday.

"Convincing patients of something new and innovative is not easy. I am grateful to both my patients for the blind faith they placed



in me as I was not physically present near them, but they trusted me and happily agreed to undergo the surgery," Khanna said.

This facility will now help patients get the best treatments even

in small cities through tele-connectivity, he added.

Remote robotic surgery is not entirely new to the world, with the first such procedure - the famous "Lindbergh Operation" - carried

out in 2001 when a surgeon in New York removed a patient's gallbladder in France's Strasbourg, Khanna said.

Since then, progress has been slow due to high costs and connectivity challenges, but with advances in robotics, secure networks, and high-speed data transmission, there has been a resurgence of global interest, he pointed out.

Remarkably, such procedures have not yet been attempted in many leading corporate hospitals across India, making the achievement at Swagat Super Speciality Hospital particularly significant, Khanna said.

For Assam and the Northeast, this step carries far-reaching implications, the (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

RPF seizes ganja worth over ₹6.20 lakh

HT Bureau
GUWAHATI, Sept 10: In a series of intensified operations against contraband smuggling, the Railway Protection Force (RPF) of the Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) has seized ganja worth over ₹6.20 lakh and apprehended three women and one man involved in its illicit transport.

An official statement released by NFR informed that these actions are part of the force's ongoing efforts to combat illegal activities along railway premises and ensure passenger safety.

According to the statement, over the past few days, RPF teams carried out multiple successful drives at various locations under NFR jurisdiction.

These operations resulted in the recovery of approximately 59 kilograms of ganja and the arrest of individuals linked to the smuggling network.

On September 9, 2025, the RPF team at the Kamakhya post apprehended one person during a routine check and seized nearly 6 kilograms of ganja valued at



around ₹60,000.

The seized items and the individual were subsequently handed over to the Government Railway Police (GRP), Guwahati, for further legal proceedings.

Earlier, on September 8, 2025, a joint operation by the RPF, Dog Squad, and GRP at Agartala led to the recovery of 27 kilograms of (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Sensex rises 323 pts, Nifty rallies for 6th day amid optimism over US-India trade talks

MUMBAI, Sept 10: Benchmark Sensex rose by 323 points while Nifty closed higher for the sixth consecutive day on Wednesday following buying in IT, select financial and capital goods shares amid renewed optimism over a successful conclusion of India-US trade talks.

The 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 323.83 points or 0.40 per cent to settle at 81,425.15, registering its third straight day of gain. During the day, it jumped 542.56 points or 0.66 per cent to 81,643.88.

Rising for the sixth consecutive day, the 50-share NSE Nifty rallied 104.50 points or 0.42 per cent to close at 24,973.10.

A rally in IT and capital goods shares and hopes that the US Federal Reserve will cut interest rates next week also instilled optimism in the markets, analysts said.

Signalling a thaw in the bilateral chill between India and the US, President Donald Trump has said he feels "certain" that there will be "no difficulty" for the two countries to come to a "successful conclusion" in trade talks and he looks forward to speaking with his "very good friend" Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the coming weeks. Responding to the post, Prime Minister Modi on Wednesday expressed confidence that the ongoing negotiations will pave the way for unlocking the limitless potential of the partnership between them. Among Sensex firms, Bharat Electronics rose the most by 4.26 per cent. HCL Tech gained 2.57 per cent, Bajaj Finance by 2.19 per cent, TCS by 1.99 per cent, Tech Mahindra by 1.88 per cent and Infosys by 1.85 per cent. Gains in Axis Bank and State Bank of India also supported the rally.

However, Mahindra & Mahin-



dra emerged as the biggest loser, falling by 2.47 per cent. Maruti dropped 1.53 per cent and Tata Motors by nearly 1 per cent due to profit-taking. UltraTech, Eternal and Power Grid were also among the laggards.

"Renewed optimism around ongoing trade negotiations between India and the US lifted market sentiment. Anticipation of stronger H2 FY26 earnings, driven by GST rationalisation and the benefits of monetary easing, is providing resilience to valuations," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Investments Limited, said. He further said that the IT index extended its outperformance on hopes of a potential Fed rate cut next week and a revival in technology spending.

"Investors remain focused on the progress of India-US trade talks for signals of a constructive resolution to tariff-related issues," he said.

The BSE midcap gauge jumped 0.84 per cent and smallcap index climbed 0.72 per cent.

Among sectoral indices, BSE Focused IT surged 2.52 per cent, IT jumped 2.48 per cent, capital goods (1.88 per cent), tech (1.59

per cent), industrials (1.20 per cent) and realty (1.15 per cent).

Auto declined 1.21 per cent, consumer discretionary (0.52 per cent), consumer durables (0.22 per cent) and telecommunication (0.10 per cent).

"The uptrend was supported by renewed optimism over progress in India-US trade negotiations, alongside positive foreign flows in the cash market after a period of continuous decline, which further lifted sentiment," Ajit Mishra - SVP, Research, Religare Broking Ltd, said.

"US political signals added optimism for Indian equities. Donald Trump noted that the US and India are 'continuing negotiations to address trade barriers,' while reaffirming his ties with Prime Minister Modi. The comment fueled strength in IT stocks, with investors eyeing potential tailwinds for the export-driven sector," Hariprasad K, Research Analyst and Founder - Livelong Wealth, said.

As many as 2,410 stocks advanced while 1,717 declined and 155 remained unchanged on the BSE. (PTI)

'Aim to make India's auto industry no. 1 globally in 5 years'

NEW DELHI, Sept 10: The government's aim is to make India's automobile industry number one in the world within five years, Union Minister Nitin Gadkari said on Wednesday.

The future of Indian automobile industry is very good as the country has trained manpower, Gadkari said while addressing an event here, highlighting that all big automobile companies are present in the country. "Within five years, our target is to make India's automobile industry the number 1 in the world... it is difficult, but not impossible," the road transport and highways minister said.

Gadkari pointed out that the quality of vehicles manufactured in India is good and cost is less, so all top automobile companies are present in the country.

"When I took charge as transport minister, the size of Indian automobile industry was ₹ 14 lakh crore. The size of Indian automobile industry now is ₹ 22 lakh crore," Gadkari said. Presently, the size of the US automobile industry is ₹ 78 lakh crore, followed by China (₹ 47 lakh crore) and India (₹ 22 lakh crore).

Gadkari noted that India is spending ₹ 22 lakh crore for importing fossil fuels and because of import of fossil fuels, "we are facing problem of pollution".

The minister said Indian companies are manufacturing electric cars, buses and trucks as they are very cost-effective.

"The cost of lithium-ion battery is also reducing. In due course of time, the price of petrol, diesel vehicles and electric vehicle will be the same," Gadkari observed. The minister pointed out that manufacturing capacity of electric buses in India was 50,000-60,000 per year, but the country's requirement is 1,00,000 buses per year. (PTI)

Corporates may return to banks for credit due to hardening of bond yields: SBI official

KOLKATA, Sept 10: Corporates may return to commercial banks to meet their credit needs due to hardening of bond yields in the debt market, an official of State Bank of India (SBI) said on Wednesday.

Rama Mohan Rao Amara, managing director (international banking and global) markets of SBI, said that corporates are now coming to banks to meet their credit demands.

"What we have seen is that issuance of debt paper volumes has come down in the current quarter. In the first quarter, issuances were to the extent of Rs three lakh crore, which has come down in the current quarter as yields are hardening," Amara told reporters on the sidelines of a CII event

here. He said, "Ten-year yields have gone up by 6.6 per cent, while that of 30-year bonds of the state governments has gone up to 7.5 per cent. If the yields continue to rise like this, corporates will come back to the banks for credit."

This is a dynamic situation and needs to be assessed, he said.

Regarding the imposition of higher tariffs by the US, he said its impact can be ascertained in the current quarter.

Earlier, Amara said that the domestic banks have adequate capital to finance growth. The banks are keen to lend to sunrise sectors like renewable energy and start-ups.

Director (banking), Department of Financial Services of the fi-

nance ministry, Hardik Mukesh Sheth, said the credit to GDP ratio for India is 65 per cent to 70 per cent, while that of the developed countries is almost 100 per cent.

He said that the digital public infrastructure like the UPI (unified payments interface) is gaining popularity, and there has been a big shift in customer behaviour which is seeing increasing adoption of digitalisation.

Sheth said that in the last eight years, the public sector banks (PSBs) have gone for technology modernisation and digitalisation. The return on assets of PSBs has gone up significantly. The PSBs need to face the dual tasks of managing compliance and meet technology costs. (PTI)

Contd. from Page 1...

BTC polls: Parties

been working dedicatedly for the development and welfare of society since being voted to power in the region.

He expressed confidence that the party would win a majority of seats among the 40 constituencies in the council.

"Each and every election campaign has stamped its support on UPPL's mission of peace, unity, and progress. The blessings of the people of 30 No. Goreswar (ST) constituency are with us, nothing stands in the way of our victory and this time UPPL government," Boro said.

Meanwhile, BPF President Hagrama Mohilary expressed confidence that his party would win the majority of seats in the BTC elections.

He informed that the BPF's central election steering committee office was inaugurated on Wednesday in Kokrajhar.

He also said that the committee was formed with Pradip Kumar Brahma as chairman and Prabeen Boro as chief convenor along with 60 other members.

Leaders of BJP, Congress, and APB parties are also actively campaigning in support of their respective candidates at various locations across the region.

Proactive measures in

situation but is taking concrete actions to secure the border," he asserted. He also underlined that discussions on the issue have reached the "highest level" with the Union Government, reflecting the seriousness with which the state has approached the matter.

At the same time, Sangma said certain aspects of internal security operations cannot be shared in the public domain for strategic reasons.

However, he reassured the Assembly that the government remains fully committed to safeguarding the state's territorial integrity and ensuring peace in border areas.

The issue of illegal immigration has remained a sensitive subject in Meghalaya, particularly in districts bordering Bangladesh, where concerns over demographic changes and security threats have repeatedly been flagged by civil society groups and political parties alike.

Amit Shah to launch

in two phases. In the first phase, Indian citizens and OCI cardholders are covered and in the second phase, foreign travellers will be covered.

The objective of this programme is to make international travel easy and secure by developing world-class immigration facilities through an accelerated immigration pathway for international travellers screened through automated gates (e-Gates).

The FTI-TTP will be implemented through an online portal and Bureau of Immigration will be the nodal agency for fast track immigration of various categories of travellers under this programme.

After necessary verification, a White List of 'Trusted Travellers' will be generated and fed for implementation through e-Gates. Biometrics of the 'Trusted Traveller' passing through e-Gates will be captured at the FRRO office or at the time of passage of the registered traveller through the airport.

Under the process, as soon as registered passengers reach the e-gates, they will scan their boarding pass issued by the airlines at the e-gates to get the details of their flight. The passport will also be scanned and the biometrics of the passengers will be authenticated at the e-gates.

Once the genuine identity of the passenger is established and biometric authentication is done, the e-gate will open automatically and immigration clearance will be deemed to have been granted.

The Union home ministry also shared a support help desk email ID -- india.ftitp-boi@mha.gov.in (PTI)

Assam stands firmly

Public Emergency, Assam, to alleviate the suffering caused by the monsoon rains in that state. (PTI)

Himanta reviews preparations

for industrial growth, employment generation, and infrastructure development in the state.

As a gesture of goodwill and advance welcome to the Prime Minister, Sarma planted a neem sapling along the Letekujan-Tanker Stand connecting road during his visit.

The act symbolised the state's commitment to sustainable development and environmental conservation.

The official statement also mentioned the presence of senior political and administrative leaders during the inspection and review meeting.

Agriculture minister Atul Bora, finance minister Ajanta Neog, MP and state BJP president Dilip Saikia, MP Kamakhya Prasad Tasa, and MLAs Mrinal Saikia, Bhabendra Nath Bhargali, Manab Deka, and Biswajit Phukan were among the dignitaries who participated. Golaghat District Commissioner Pulak Mahanta, along with other senior officials, was also present to coordinate the preparations.

The chief minister's visit reaffirmed the state government's resolve to ensure the smooth execution of the Prime Minister's programme while providing every facility required to welcome guests and citizens.

The state administration's meticulous planning reflects Assam's readiness to host a historic event that marks a significant milestone in its development journey.

Delegation from KA

health, and livelihood. The initiative aligns with Clause 2.4 of the Tripartite MoS (2021), which entrusts the Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council with minority welfare responsibilities.

The delegation comprised MP Amarsing Tisso; MLAs Darsing Ronghang, Bidya Sing Englang and Rupsing Teron; Executive Members Surjya Rongphar and Lunsing Teron; former Executive Member Rensing Bey; and Tripartite MoS 2021 signatories Rijak Dera and Thong Teron, among others.

RPF seizes ganja worth

unclaimed ganja from a coach panel at the Agartala yard.

The contraband, valued at approximately ₹2.70 lakh, was later transferred to GRP, Agartala, for disposal under the law.

In another major action on September 7, 2025, the RPF team at Dimapur seized about 16.4 kilograms of unclaimed ganja from the B4 compartment of train number 15946.

Valued at around ₹1.64 lakh, the recovered contraband was handed over to GRP, Diphu, for appropriate legal action.

On the same day at Agartala, an RPF team working with the Dog Squad and GRP apprehended two women passengers with a total of 4.69 kilograms of ganja valued at approximately ₹88,400.

The accused and the seized items were transferred to GRP, Agartala, for further action.

On September 6, 2025, another operation at Agartala railway station led to the arrest of a woman carrying 4.180 kilograms of ganja worth about ₹41,800.

The seizure was made during a routine check, and the accused was subsequently handed over to GRP, Agartala, for investigation and prosecution.

The official statement concluded by reiterating the RPF's vigilance and dedication in curbing crimes such as smuggling, theft, and human trafficking.

It also highlighted the force's commitment to assisting passengers in distress during their travels.

Rail users are urged to remain alert and report any suspicious activities by dialing the toll-free helpline number 139 for immediate support.

These operations reflect NFR's resolve to create a safer and more secure environment for railway passengers and staff alike.

Eastern India's first

surgeon said. 'It promises to deliver specialist surgical care to patients without the need for long and difficult travel, offers hope for soldiers and citizens living in remote border areas, and enables real-time collaboration between experts across different geographies,' he added. Most importantly, it positions Assam as a pioneer in cutting-edge surgical technology in India, he said.

The critical IT backbone was coordinated by Anvesh from Gurgaon, along with Binay and Amandip from the hospital in Guwahati.

On-site surgical support was provided by doctors Areendam Barua, Pranab Das, and Supriya Choudhary, while anaesthesia care was led by Kanineeka Das.

Robotic scrub nurses Vidya Devi, Alvanisha Dkhar, Reena Pradhan, and Lipika, together with biotechnician Jintu, ensured seamless execution of the procedures. (PTI)

No. E-628253/117

NOTICE

In continuation to this Office's earlier Notice issued vide No. E-628253/24 Dtd.27/05/2025, No. E-628253/50 Dtd.19/06/2025, No. E-628253/90 Dtd 23/07/2025 and No. E-628253/112 Dtd 14/08/2025; regarding document verification process for the candidates for selection to GT and PGT posts of TCR 2024 under the Directorate of Secondary Education, Assam, it is hereby informed that candidates whose Application Numbers will be available in the official website of the Directorate of Secondary Education, Assam i.e. <https://madhyamik.assam.gov.in> from 11 a.m. onwards of 13-09-2025, will have to appear at the Office of the Director of Secondary Education, Assam, Kahilipara, Ghy-19 for Re-verification/Further Verification to examine issues that arose during the document verification process. Candidates will be informed of these issues in their Admit Cards which will be available for downloading in the official website of the Directorate of Secondary Education, Assam i.e. <https://madhyamik.assam.gov.in> from 11 a.m. onwards of 13-09-2025. Other details such as date and time for Reverification/Further Verification etc. will be mentioned in the Admit Cards.

The candidates can download their Admit Cards by using their Application No. and Password used while filling up of the forms when applying for the posts.

Technical support toll free number- 08042303631 (10 A.M. to 5 P.M.) (Monday to Saturday)

Sd/-
Director of Secondary Education,
Assam
Kahilipara, Guwahati – 19

DIPR /D/HLT/159/11-Sep-25

No.DTA(P)/EMRS/Misc/Pt-II/188/2025/61

CORRENDUM

In partial modification in the Advertisement No.DTA(P)/EMRS/Misc/Pt-II/188/2025 published on 10/09/2025 for engagement of Female Staff Nurse at EMRS, the Eligibility Criteria at Sl.1 should be read as:

- B.Sc (Hons.) in Nursing from a recognized University / Institute.
OR
- Regular course in B.Sc Nursing from a recognized University / Institute.
OR
- Post Basic B.Sc Nursing from a recognized University / Institute.
- Two and Half years experience in minimum 50 bedded Hospitals.

Instead of

- B.Sc (Hons.) in Nursing from a recognized University / Institute.
OR
- Regular course in B.Sc Nursing from a recognized University / Institute.
OR
- Post Basic B.Sc Nursing from a recognized University/Institute.
- Two and Half years' experience in minimum 50 bedded Hospitals after acquiring (1) above.

and Sl. 2 should be read as

- GNM (General Nursing and Midwifery) from recognized University/Institute.
- Two and Half years experience in minimum 30 bedded Hospital.

Instead of

- GNM (General Nursing and Midwifery) from recognized University/Institute.
- Two and Half years' experience in minimum 30 bedded Hospital after acquiring(3) above.

Sd/-
Director,
Tribal Affairs (P), Assam &
Member Secretary, Assam State
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Fitch raises India's FY26 GDP forecast to 6.9 pc, domestic demand to drive growth

NEW DELHI, Sept 10: Fitch Ratings on Wednesday raised India's GDP growth forecast to 6.9 per cent for current fiscal year, from 6.5 per cent earlier, citing strong June quarter growth and domestic consumption-led demand. Fitch is the first global rating agency to have upped India's GDP growth estimates for current fiscal year after the string of downward revisions by various agencies earlier this year due to trade and tariff uncertainties.

In its Global Economic Outlook (GEO)-September, Fitch said the pace of economic activity accelerated sharply between the March and June quarters of current fiscal year. The real GDP growth in April-June rose to 7.8 per cent year-on-year, from 7.4 per cent in January-March.

In its June GEO report, Fitch had forecast a 6.7 per cent growth for the April-June quarter.

"On the back of the 2Q25 (April-June) outturn, Fitch has revised up its forecast for the fiscal year ending March 2026 (FY26) to 6.9 per cent from 6.5 per cent in the June GEO," it said. Fitch said the trade tensions with the US have increased in recent months, with the US imposing an additional 25 per cent tariff on imports from India. Effective August 27, Indian goods in US attract a 50 per cent duty.

"We expect this will eventually be negotiated lower, but the uncertainty around trade relations will dampen business sentiment and potentially investment. The government has adopted reforms to the Goods and Services Tax to be effective from September 22, which should modestly boost consumer spending over the remainder of this and

the next fiscal years," Fitch said.

Domestic demand will be the key driver of growth, as strong real income dynamics support consumer spending and looser financial conditions should feed through to investment, Fitch added.

However, Fitch expects growth to slow in the second half (October-March) of the financial year.

For the next fiscal year (2026-27), Fitch projected growth at 6.3 per cent, which would edge down to 6.2 per cent in FY28.

Fitch's FY26 GDP growth estimate for India is highest among other comparable agencies. Finance Ministry's Economic Survey had projected India's growth to be between 6.3-6.8 per cent in current fiscal year.

The Reserve Bank of India, the Asian Development Bank (ADB), and S&P Global Ratings projected India's GDP to expand 6.5 per cent in FY26.

Moody's Ratings estimates GDP to grow 6.3 per cent in 2025 calendar year.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank estimates GDP growth at 6.4 per cent and 6.3 per cent, respectively.

Fitch said it expects food price pressures to remain weak, in the context of above-average monsoon rainfall and high food stockpiles, so that inflation will only pick up to 3.2 per cent by end-2025 and 4.1 per cent by end-2026.

"We still expect the RBI to cut rates by 25bps towards the end of the year, as it assesses the impact of the policy loosening already implemented, and that rates will stay there until end-2026. We expect the RBI to start raising rates in 2027," Fitch added. (PTI)

Classic Legends prices below ₹2 lakh under GST 2.0

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, Sept 10: Classic Legends has announced new prices for its Jawa Yezdi lineup, making models like the Adventure, Roadster, Bobber, and Scrambler available at under ₹2 lakh.

Thanks to the GST 2.0 reforms that lowered the tax rate from 28% to 18% for motorcycles below 350cc, these performance classics are now more accessible than ever.

Anupam Thareja, Co-founder of Jawa Yezdi Motorcycles, welcomed the reforms, calling them a landmark shift akin to the earlier transition from 2-stroke to 4-stroke engines. He confirmed that the company will pass on 100% of the tax benefit to customers, making iconic motorcycles more affordable for young riders.

Thareja also noted that while higher cc models will face increased taxes, the move is a step toward progressive taxation. The motorcycles, powered by 293cc or 334cc liquid-cooled engines delivering up to 29PS and 30Nm, combine retro design with modern engineering optimised for Indian roads.

To further enhance customer satisfaction, Classic Legends is extending the GST benefits to after-sales components, significantly reducing ownership costs. All models are backed by the "Jawa Yezdi BSA Ownership Assurance Programme," offering a 4-year/50,000-km warranty, extended coverage up to six years, roadside assistance, and other benefits.

PhonePe launches Digital Udyam registration with SIDBI

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, Sept 10: PhonePe has launched a digital-first Udyam registration solution through the Udyam Assist Platform (UAP), in partnership with the Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI), to support informal micro-enterprises.

The launch event was attended by Union MSME Minister Jitan Ram Manjhi and SIDBI's Chief General Manager YM Kumari.

PhonePe becomes the first fintech to offer an end-to-end digital solution for Udyam registration, enabling merchants to access government schemes, tax benefits, bank accounts, and credit facilities.

As part of the launch, PhonePe and SIDBI signed an MoU to provide seamless digital lending solutions integrated with UAP.

PhonePe's CEO, Hemant Gala, highlighted that the initiative aligns with Digital India's vision by empowering small businesses and enhancing economic participation.

SIDBI's YM Kumari noted that UAP has already issued over 2.75 crore certificates and will further accelerate the formalisation of micro enterprises.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

If this is coffee, please bring me some tea; but if this is tea, please bring me some coffee.
-Abraham Lincoln

Timelines for approval

The three-month timeframe set by the ruling of a two-judge Supreme Court bench requiring governors and the President to take a decision on bills referred to them, now being re-examined by a 5-member constitutional bench headed by Chief Justice B R Gavai, appears to have entered increasingly precarious terrain. The matter, which might have seemed settled at the time of the original judgment, has acquired a sense of fragility as larger constitutional principles come into play through the hearing of the presidential reference. The sustainability of the two-judge decision looks uncertain, not only because of the larger bench's scepticism but also because of the inherent ambiguities in the April ruling that leave the door open for unintended consequences. At stake is not merely the efficiency of legislative processes but the balance between constitutional text, judicial creativity, and the risks of inadvertently creating new constitutional norms. The order mandating that governors and the President must take a decision within three months was seen as injecting accountability and preventing executive arbitrariness. Yet, while the motive seemed aligned with democratic principles, the method employed—imposing a rigid timeline not explicitly found in the Constitution—was fraught with problems.

The larger bench, now seized of the presidential reference, has already flagged this tension, cautioning that mandating timelines could effectively amount to amending the Constitution. This argument rests on the foundational principle that the framers of the document, after extensive debate, deliberately refrained from imposing such strictures on the executive authorities concerned. Instead, they relied on conventions, political responsibility, and judicial oversight in extraordinary cases to check abuse. By attempting to read a fixed period into constitutional silence, the two-judge bench may have crossed a line that even well-intentioned judicial innovation cannot justify. The bench's apprehension is that such an approach may weaken rather than strengthen the constitutional order, as it leaves open the possibility of future litigation challenging the judicially created timelines themselves, thereby generating more instability than resolution.

The April 8 judgment also suffers from ambiguities in its treatment of judicial review. It confirmed, rightly, that the governor's conduct in keeping bills pending is not beyond judicial scrutiny. This assertion is in keeping with the principle that no constitutional functionary is immune from accountability, particularly when inaction undermines representative democracy. Yet the ruling failed to demarcate clearly the scope of such review. If automatic assent is conferred without substantial review, the possibility arises that legislations of dubious constitutional merit could slip through unchecked. Conversely, if courts were to involve themselves in scrutinising content post facto, that could amount to a judicial veto, undermining the separation of powers.

Nepal's Youthquake: When digital fury turns into street revolt

Would you like me to give you a few more alternative titles—some sharper for newspapers, others more analytical for journals? Nepal has once again erupted into a storm of unrest, jolting the fragile democratic foundations of the Himalayan republic. The week began with what appeared to be a bureaucratic enforcement of regulation: the government blocked twenty-six social media platforms, including Facebook, WhatsApp, and X, citing non-compliance with a Supreme Court-backed directive requiring tech companies to register locally, appoint grievance officers, and obey national content rules. Within hours, however, what started as digital irritation had transformed into street-level fury. Thousands of young people converged on Kathmandu, stormed restricted zones, and even breached Parliament's perimeters. The state's response was fierce—teargas, water cannons, rubber bullets, and aerial firing—yet it could not stem the tide of discontent. Hospitals overflowed with the injured, curfews were declared, and the Army was deployed to control urban crowds. Nineteen lives have already been lost.

This cycle of grievance, repression, and escalation is not unique to Nepal. South Asia has seen youth-driven upheavals before: in Bangladesh in 2024, when student protests over job quotas cascaded into a nationwide crisis; in Sri Lanka in 2022, when young demonstrators forced the resignation of President Gotabaya Rajapaksa; and in parts of India during the protests against the Citizenship Amendment Act of 2019–2020. Each episode has its own local colour and proximate triggers, but the pattern is disturbingly familiar. A combustible mix of youthful anger, symbolic sparks such as an internet shutdown or a controversial policy decision, and the chronic failures of governance conspire to generate sudden political conflagrations.

Demography as Destiny

At the heart of this turbulence lies demography. South Asia is home to one of the world's largest youth cohorts. This "youth bulge," as demographers call it, can in principle be a demographic dividend—fueling economic growth, innovation, and social dynamism. But when it collides with unemployment, weak institutions, and exclusionary politics, the dividend turns into a liability. Scholarship across regions has established a correlation: countries with large concentrations of restless, unemployed, digitally connected youth face a significantly higher probability of political unrest.

Nepal fits this pattern. Its young population, shaped by two decades of political instability, civil war, and sluggish economic performance, finds itself trapped between aspiration and stagnation. Opportunities are scarce, education systems falter, and outmigration is seen by many as the only escape. The youth are hyperconnected—armed with smartphones, social media, and encrypted networks—but politically marginalized. That combination is a gift to mobilisers and a nightmare for brittle states.

Historical Memory of Instability

Nepal's democratic journey has been anything but linear. The monarchy, which lasted until 2008, presided over a society divided by geography, ethnicity, and class. The decade-long Maoist insurgency (1996–2006) killed over 13,000 people and left deep scars on state-society relations. Even after the monarchy was abolished and the republic established, chronic instability persisted. Governments changed frequently, coalition politics bred paralysis, and corruption scandals eroded public trust.

These legacies matter because they shape how institutions respond to crisis. The Nepal Army and police, having fought an insurgency, tend to view unrest through a security lens rather than as democratic dissent. Political elites, meanwhile, often fall back on nationalist rhetoric to delegitimise protesters and externalize blame. The result is a cycle of repression that neither addresses root causes nor restores durable order.

The Gene Sharp Playbook

To understand Nepal's present turbulence, one must also turn to theory. No political thinker has illuminated the mechan-

ics of leaderless, rapid mobilization better than Gene Sharp, the American philosopher of non-violent struggle. In his seminal text, *From Dictatorship to Democracy*, Sharp outlined how decentralized movements can undermine a regime's sources of authority through symbolic defiance, mass non-cooperation, and the strategic use of communication networks.

Sharp's ideas resonate across movements from Eastern Europe to the Arab Spring, and they map eerily onto South Asia today. In Bangladesh last year, what began as campus agitation against a job quota decision escalated into a national upheaval that brought down a government. The harsh crackdown, mass arrests, and abrupt political transition reverberated across the region. In Nepal now, young people have drawn upon the same playbook: symbols of defiance, rapid mobilization, and adaptation to communication restrictions. When social media platforms were shut down, encrypted and decentralized channels—the so-called "Black Net"—allowed protest coordination to continue. Sharp never predicted specific uprisings, but his framework explains how brittle power structures collapse when legitimacy erodes and coercion is seen as disproportionate.

Kathmandu in Flames

The sequence in Nepal unfolded with terrifying speed. The government's decision to ban platforms for non-compliance was read by young citizens not as regulatory housekeeping but as an assault on freedom and voice. In a country where social media functions as the primary outlet for youth expression, organizing, and even economic opportunity, the blackout was intolerable. Within hours, fury spilled from the online world into Kathmandu's streets.

Crowds stormed government zones and Parliament. Security forces unleashed teargas and water cannons, then escalated to rubber bullets and live aerial fire. Hospitals filled with the wounded, dozens critical. Curfews were declared, yet the protests spread. At least nineteen people died. In a dramatic turn, Prime Minister K. P. Sharma Oli announced his resignation, declaring it was to facilitate dialogue after protesters set fire to the homes of top leaders. Several ministers also stepped down. The ban on platforms was rescinded within a day, but by then the damage was done. Once legitimacy frays, reversals look less like concessions and more like signs of weakness.

Lessons from Dhaka and Colombo

Nepal's crisis is part of a regional continuum. Bangladesh in 2024 demonstrated how quickly a student movement could widen into a national crisis. What started as a quota protest escalated under repression into regime collapse. Heavy-handed measures deepened grievance rather than restoring order, and instability spilled across borders in the form of refugee flows, economic uncertainty, and diplomatic strain.

Sri Lanka's 2022 "Aragalaya" movement was different in context but similar in dynamics. Youth anger over economic collapse and shortages morphed into a mass uprising that ousted a president. Again, the story was one of young people leveraging networks, symbols, and sheer persistence to overcome entrenched political elites.

The lesson is clear: repression is at best a short-term fix and at worst a long-term mistake. Internet bans, curfews, and military deployment may silence protest briefly but also validate the perception that the state fears its citizens. Once that perception takes root, legitimacy erodes rapidly.

The Army in the Streets

Deploying the Army for urban crowd control is particularly perilous in Nepal. This is a country scarred by insurgency, where memories of military repression remain raw. Using soldiers against young protesters risks alienating the security forces themselves, whose cohesion depends on perceptions of legitimacy. It also hardens the resolve of demonstrators and sows lasting resentment that can destabilize politics for years. Sharp's insight applies here: coercion works only when compliance pillars remain intact. When those pillars—consent of the governed, belief in legitimacy, support of institutions—

crumble, even powerful armies cannot restore order.

India's Dilemma

What should India do? The instinct of some policymakers may be to intervene, given the long history of India–Nepal ties and the strategic importance of stability in the Himalayan frontier. But prudence demands restraint. Any overt military or political interference will be exploited by Nepalese elites to stoke nationalist sentiment, potentially pushing politics into a spiral beyond control.

Instead, India must adopt a policy of prudence and preparedness. Consular readiness for Indian citizens in Nepal must be ensured. Contingency planning in border states should be quietly ramped up. Secure communication lines with Nepal's civilian and security leaders should remain open. Public statements should urge restraint in language that explicitly respects Nepal's sovereignty. Humanitarian coordination with multilateral partners can be readied, but assistance should only be extended upon request.

Information preparedness is also crucial. Disinformation campaigns can spread rapidly in times of unrest. Indian media must avoid partisan amplification that inflames tensions. Narrative control—stressing restraint, sovereignty, and the importance of dialogue—will be the best contribution to stability.

Toward Damage Control

For Nepal itself, the way forward lies not in doubling down on repression but in immediate damage control. The government must rescind blunt measures, as it did by reversing the platform bans, and institutionalize this by committing not to weaponize communication blackouts. Impartial inquiries into the deaths must be launched, ideally with credible international or civil society involvement. Mediation platforms should be created where youth leaders, political elites, and civil society can negotiate grievances.

Confidence-building measures are vital: temporary amnesties for arrested protesters, credible programs for youth employment and education, and a clear reform roadmap. Nepal's political class must recognize that its youth are not merely agitators but stakeholders in the republic's survival.

A Regional Warning

There is a larger lesson here for South Asia. The region's youth are not going away. By 2030, nearly half of South Asia's population will be under thirty. Whether they are an engine of growth or a force of instability depends entirely on how governments treat them. Invest in education, create decent jobs, uphold credible policing and independent justice, and build peaceful avenues of grievance redressal—then youth become assets. Neglect them, suppress them, or mock their aspirations, and they become liabilities, sometimes explosively so.

The pattern is visible already. Dhaka, Colombo, and now Kathmandu have been rocked by youth-driven uprisings. Delhi, Islamabad, and Male cannot assume immunity. A region that fails to integrate its youngest citizens into meaningful political and economic life will find itself lurching from one crisis to another.

A Pivot for Nepal

Nepal today stands at a pivot. It can either pursue dialogue, reform, and inclusion—or slide further into instability, repression, and loss of legitimacy. If Kathmandu chooses dialogue, rescinds draconian measures, and invests in youth aspirations, stability is possible. If India backs this process with humility and restraint, the region's calm can be preserved. But if force and internet bans remain the instinctive reflex, we will simply see another chapter in the pattern that has already scarred Dhaka and Colombo.

The strategic lesson is stark: repression silences for a day but destabilizes for a decade. Power ultimately rests on compliance, and compliance rests on legitimacy. Once legitimacy crumbles, pillars of authority can collapse swiftly. The youth of South Asia are poised between promise and peril. Whether they become the region's greatest asset or its most dangerous liability will depend on the choices governments make today. (the writer can be reached at dipakkurmiglt@gmail.com)

Unified Payments Interface (UPI) and the Indian Economy

By: Himangshu Ranjan Bhuyan

The Unified Payments Interface (UPI) has emerged as a symbol of an unprecedented revolution in the Indian economy, ushering in profound, multifaceted, and long-term transformations in the country's financial, social, and technological framework. Introduced in 2016 by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), this system has heralded a new era in digital transactions, positioning India among the world's leading digital economies. The simplicity, speed, security, and affordability of UPI have not only streamlined individual financial transactions but also empowered rural economies, expanded business activities, enhanced the efficiency of government services, promoted financial inclusion, and opened new horizons for technological innovation.

Prior to the advent of UPI, the Indian economy was predominantly cash-dependent. The reliance on cash created multiple complexities within the economy. The lack of financial transparency led to an increase in black money circulation, which in turn contributed to a rise in economic crimes. In rural areas, limited banking infrastructure forced people to depend heavily on cash. The inadequate number of bank branches and ATMs made financial transactions a time-consuming and costly process for rural populations. Even in urban areas, the preference for cash among the masses hindered the modernization of the financial system. From the 2000s, the concept of digital payments began to emerge in India. The use of credit and debit cards gained some popularity in urban areas, but high transaction costs, complex processes, and limited acceptance among small businesses restricted their impact at the grassroots level. For instance, credit card usage was largely confined to high-income urban groups, and small merchants were unable to bear the cost of point-of-sale (POS) machines required to accept card payments.

Following the launch of the Digital India initiative by the Government of India in 2014, the emphasis on digital payments gained momentum. The initiative aimed to connect every citizen with digital infrastructure, including access to financial services. During this period, schemes like the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana enabled millions of people to open bank accounts, laying a strong foundation for digital payments. The Jan Dhan Yojana increased access to banking services among rural and low-income

populations, integrating those previously excluded from the financial system. This step created an essential prerequisite for digital transactions, as bank accounts are necessary for such payments.

The demonetization announcement in November 2016 brought a radical shift in India's financial landscape. The withdrawal of ₹500 and ₹1,000 notes created a cash shortage, compelling people to adopt digital payment methods. In the months following demonetization, digital transaction volumes multiplied, with UPI emerging as a key tool in this transformation. During this period, public interest in digital payments surged, and businesses began accepting digital payments as an alternative to cash. This situation paved the way for the rapid adoption of UPI. The policy support from the Reserve Bank of India and the government's Digital India initiative created a favorable environment for UPI's proliferation.

The primary objective of UPI was to create a simple, secure, and instant payment system capable of meeting the needs of India's vast and diverse population. The strength of UPI lies in its user-friendly platform. Through a Virtual Payment Address (VPA), individuals can transfer money instantly without sharing bank account details. This system eliminates the need for complex banking processes, making digital payments more accessible to the common person. Built on the Immediate Payment Service (IMPS) platform, UPI enables 24/7 instant money transfers. This technological framework makes UPI more efficient and reliable compared to other digital payment systems.

A deeper analysis of UPI's technological framework reveals that it is designed as an open and interoperable platform. It seamlessly integrates with various banks and third-party applications. Popular apps like PhonePe, Google Pay, Paytm, and BHIM utilize the UPI platform to facilitate transactions. This interoperability enhances user convenience, allowing transactions through preferred applications. UPI's QR code-based payment system has simplified transactions for small businesses. Customers can make payments by scanning a QR code, reducing the need for traditional POS machines. Today, even a small tea stall in a rural or semi-urban area can accept payments via QR code scans in seconds, saving time and costs for merchants. This simplicity has made UPI immensely popular among small businesses.

One of the most significant impacts of UPI is the unprecedented expansion of

India's digital economy. According to 2025 data, UPI processes over 1.3 billion transactions monthly, with a total value of approximately ₹20 lakh crore. This massive transaction volume underscores UPI's popularity and its central role in the economy. UPI adoption spans all levels, from small vendors to large corporations. Small shopkeepers, street vendors, and vegetable and fruit sellers now accept UPI payments, enhancing customer convenience and expanding their business reach. This trend is also evident in rural areas, integrating India's unorganized sector—which accounts for nearly 90% of the economy—into the mainstream digital economy. The reduced reliance on cash has increased economic transparency, curbing black money circulation and economic crimes.

The expansion of UPI is supported by the affordability of smartphones and the widespread availability of internet access. Since 2014, smartphone prices have decreased, and affordable data plans have made internet access more inclusive, even in rural and low-income communities. Telecom providers like Airtel and Jio have enabled rural youth to use platforms like UPI through affordable data plans. This has bridged the gap between rural and urban economies, fostering a more connected and inclusive economic ecosystem.

UPI's empowerment of rural economies is one of its most significant contributions to the Indian economy. Previously, limited banking services in rural areas forced reliance on cash, and the lack of bank branches and ATMs made financial transactions cumbersome. UPI has provided a simple solution to this challenge. Its user-friendly platform and the expansion of mobile banking have connected rural populations to digital transactions. Farmers can now receive payments for their produce directly via UPI. Additionally, UPI's integration with government schemes has further strengthened rural economies. Under schemes like the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi, farmers receive direct cash assistance through UPI, enabling them to purchase new agricultural tools. This process ensures swift and transparent delivery of funds to rural farmers. Moreover, small entrepreneurs, artisans, and women's self-help groups have begun leveraging UPI, expanding their business reach. For example, a women's self-help group in a village uses UPI to receive payments for handmade products, enhancing their financial independence and social status, thereby contributing to community-level economic progress.



In e-commerce, UPI has made payment processes more convenient for customers. Platforms like Flipkart, Amazon, and Myntra, as well as local businesses, have adopted UPI as a primary payment option. Its instant transaction capability has boosted customer confidence and reduced operational costs for businesses. Compared to card-based payments, UPI transactions incur lower costs, making it more profitable for small and medium enterprises. Beyond e-commerce, UPI's impact is evident in urban service sectors. Taxi drivers in various cities now accept fares via UPI, enhancing customer convenience. Similarly, restaurants, salons, and other small businesses have improved operational efficiency by adopting UPI payments. This transformation has accelerated the digitalisation of businesses and enhanced the dynamism of urban economies. UPI has also promoted digital accounting among businesses, making financial management more transparent and efficient.

Another critical aspect of UPI's economic impact is the expansion of financial inclusion. In a country like India, where a significant portion of the population was previously excluded from the banking system, UPI has played a pivotal role in bridging this gap. Through the Jan Dhan Yojana, millions have opened bank accounts, and their integration with UPI has made them part of the digital economy. The adoption of UPI among women, youth, and low-income groups is particularly noteworthy, enhancing their financial independence and social status, and contributing to community-level economic development. This financial inclusion extends beyond the individual level, boosting overall economic productivity. As more people connect with the banking system, their savings and investment capacities increase, accelerating economic growth. UPI's impact is also evident in enhancing the efficiency of government services. Through schemes like Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT), the government

can directly transfer funds to citizens' bank accounts via UPI. Benefits from programs like the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, and other welfare schemes are now delivered swiftly and transparently through UPI. For instance, a daily wage laborer in a village receives their MGNREGA wages directly into their bank account via UPI, saving time and enhancing financial security. Additionally, government departments have begun accepting fines, tickets, taxes, and other payments through UPI. Payments for railway tickets, electricity bills, and municipal services can now be made via UPI, making revenue collection more efficient and transparent.

This efficiency has increased public trust in government services. Previously, accessing government scheme benefits required long waits and was prone to corruption by intermediaries. UPI has simplified this process, improving the accessibility and efficiency of government services. For example, a woman in a Kerala village received funds from the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana directly via UPI, enabling her to begin constructing her house. Such transformations ensure that government scheme benefits reach the intended recipients.

Despite UPI's success, certain challenges cannot be overlooked. Digital literacy remains a significant barrier in rural and low-income communities. While smartphone penetration has increased, many still face difficulties navigating UPI's technical complexities. For instance, elderly citizens in rural areas struggle to use UPI applications. Addressing this requires coordinated efforts from the government and private sectors. Digital literacy programs and training in local languages can help resolve this issue. For example, in rural Gujarat, the government has organized digital literacy camps to train people in using UPI.

Cybersecurity is another critical challenge. Recent increases in phishing, fraud, and other cybercrimes pose risks to UPI's adoption. Incidents of personal information theft through fake SMS have risen. Addressing this requires robust cybersecurity measures and public awareness campaigns. NPCI and banks have introduced two-factor authentication and other security measures, but these efforts need to be scaled up. For instance, a Delhi user lost money due to a phishing scam involving fake SMS, highlighting the need for greater public awareness about cybersecurity. Additionally, limited

internet connectivity and inadequate electricity supply in rural areas restrict UPI usage. Investments in infrastructure and offline transaction capabilities are essential to address this. NPCI has already begun testing offline UPI transactions, which could resolve this issue in the future. For example, offline UPI modes could enable rural users to transact without internet access.

The future prospects of UPI are highly promising. Other countries have begun adopting UPI's model to develop their own digital payment systems. Platforms like Singapore's PayNow and Malaysia's DuitNow have adopted similar features. In India, plans for new innovations aim to expand UPI's scope. Offline transaction capabilities and integration with artificial intelligence (AI) could make UPI more robust. For instance, AI algorithms could detect fraudulent transactions. Plans to expand UPI for international transactions could open new possibilities for India's foreign trade. For example, a migrant worker in the UAE could send money to their family via UPI, reducing the costs of traditional international transfers. Another promising area is UPI's integration with AI and blockchain technology. AI could enhance transaction security and efficiency, while blockchain could improve transparency and security. Such innovations will establish UPI as an indispensable part of the future digital economy. For example, blockchain-based UPI transactions could ensure data security, boosting public trust.

The UPI system has become a cornerstone of the Indian economy. Its simplicity, efficiency, and transparency have brought positive changes across all economic levels. From rural farmers to urban entrepreneurs, small vendors to large businesses, UPI's benefits are accessible to all. Through UPI, rural economies have been empowered, urban businesses have expanded, financial inclusion has grown, and government service efficiency has improved, elevating India's economy to new heights. However, realizing UPI's full potential requires addressing challenges like digital literacy, cybersecurity, and infrastructure development. Through coordinated efforts by the government, private sector, and civil society, these challenges can be overcome. In India's journey toward a digital economy, UPI is not merely a tool but a revolution, shaping the nation's financial future. This unprecedented success of UPI is a testament to India's technological and economic potential, strengthening its position on the global stage.

Rare earth Mines in Myanmar are poisoning Thai Rivers

By: Tom Fawthrop

Mekong tributaries flowing from Myanmar to northern Thailand, once clear and pristine, have morphed into an ominous, murky shade of orange-yellow. The cause: abnormally high levels of arsenic. Satellite imaging has identified rare earth mining sites in Myanmar's Shan State as the prime cause of devastating impacts on three Mekong tributary rivers.

Aweera Pakkamart, director of Regional Environmental and Pollution Control Office 1 (Chiang Mai) reported that "the Kok River showed high arsenic levels, while the Sai and Ruak rivers, also Mekong tributaries, had even higher levels, which in turn elevated the levels in the Mekong River."

He warned, "This is no longer a local issue – it's a regional cross-border, environmental crisis. The pollutants could reach the South China Sea." Satellite images indicate that rare earth mining is taking place in two locations in Mong Yawn, southern Mong Hsat, southern Shan State about 25 kilometers from the northern Thai border, opposite Mae Ai district of Chiang Mai province. All told there are 20 rare earth mines in southern Shan State that are believed to be the source of the pollution.

Assistant Professor Satian Chunta, who lectures on natural resources and environmental management at Chiang Rai's Rajabhat University, informed The Diplomat, "The only effective way to tackle the problem is at its source, in Myanmar," a failed state whose junta has lost control of vast swathes of the country – including zones where the mines are operating.

The gold and rare earth mining zones in southern Shan State, are under the control of the United Shan Wa Army (USWA) a China-backed militia providing security for Chinese-run mining sites.

In northern Thailand, the local economy has been devastated by the mining run-off. Water tests from the Kok and Sai rivers near Thailand's border with Myanmar have revealed elevated arsenic levels, leading Thai officials to warn citizens to avoid contact with river water. Three rivers – the Kok, Sai, and Ruak – have been declared unsafe, and all living aquatic species unfit to eat.

Protests and petitions have demanded that all rare earth mines linked to the arsenic contamination of the rivers disaster be closed down.

"The Thai government has no clear action plan to solve this toxic water prob-

lem," Saengrawee Suweerakan, a river conservation activist from Thaton, one of the worst affected towns along the Kok River told The Diplomat. "We have demanded that farm crops as well as river water should be tested. But still they have not done it. They have also failed to provide a clear strategy for stopping the arsenic flow and restoring our river."

Communities living along the devastated Kok River, along with The People's Network to Protect the Kok, Sai, Ruak and the Mainstream Mekong Rivers – a northern Thailand-based coalition of environmental NGOs, scientists, and local government officials – have held several protest rallies.

On June 5, World Environment Day, a wide cross-section of Chiang Rai people assembled on the banks of the murky Kok River. A street theater performance mourned the death of the river. The People's Network handed over a petition to the Thai government's deputy permanent secretary of the Interior Ministry, Khajorn Srichanonthai, in a ceremony held halfway across the bridge over the river.

The petition, addressed to Paetongtarn Shinawatra, then the prime minister of Thailand, read: "We, the local people, recognize that this cannot continue. This is a national security crisis affecting millions of lives. We therefore urge you to take all necessary steps to immediately shut down these mining operations."

An independent online media group, Lanner, made up of former social activists and NGO workers, compiled data to assess the damage resulting from the Kok River becoming unusable. Their report pointed to significant losses across three main sectors – tourism, agriculture and fisheries – in 20 communities bordering the river. The total estimated loss reaches 1,300,006,731 baht (\$40 million) per year.

How has the Thai government responded to the public outcry?

Several piecemeal policies have been proposed by the Thai government to alleviate the crisis, including plans for the construction of underwater sediment barriers in the Kok River. These barriers aim to reduce arsenic concentrations before the water reaches local communities.

However, Dr. Suebskul Kittanugron, manager and research associate at the Area-based-Social Innovation Research Center at Mae Fah Luang University, who has been doing regular testing of Kok River pollution, was not impressed by the government's proposals. The Peoples Coalition has again urged the Thai government to drop the sediment barrier

project as ill-considered, lacking both community consultation and any environmental study.

Addressing a Chiang Rai roundtable on August 20, Suebskul commented, "We need to stop saying the pollution is within acceptable limits. People have a right to know the facts. The only real fix is to shut the mines for good and talk directly with authorities in China, and Myanmar."

The Border War Sideline the Poisoned River Crisis

At a time when northern Thailand community networks, local officials, and academics had been lobbying for the government to adopt a strong focus and clear strategy on this burgeoning crisis, the weak coalition government led by Paetongtarn – who was officially removed from office on August 29 – became embroiled in the Cambodia-Thailand border conflict, to the detriment of dealing with other emergencies.

Thailand's Dr. Pavin Chachavalponpun, a professor at the Centre for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University, told The Diplomat, "It is absolutely crucial for Thailand and Cambodia, along with the media, to prioritize cooperation on the alarming arsenic contamination of the Mekong and its tributaries over the current border conflict." He explained, "The environmental threat is a nontraditional national security issue with long-term, widespread impacts on the health, food security, and livelihoods of millions across the region," as opposed to the more narrowly defined concept of national security of the state and territorial control over its borders.

There are dire fears of contamination spreading along the mainstream Mekong. At this point it is impossible to know how far rainy season floodwaters will disseminate toxic water farther downriver, to Cambodia.

Brian Eyler, co-lead at The Mekong Dam Monitor with the Stimson Foundation, is extremely worried that the pollution so far identified in Thailand's river is just the tip of the iceberg. "At least 15 rare earth mines have also been identified on Laos' Mekong tributaries," he pointed out. "Some rivers enter the Mekong near Nakhon Phanom, Thailand, only a few hundred kilometers from Cambodia."

"It behooves the Cambodian government to begin testing for arsenic and other toxins on the Mekong mainstream and the Tonle Sap immediately, to demonstrate the extensive scale of this looming public health crisis."

So far only the Mekong River Commission (MRC) has recognized the po-



tential threat to the Mekong region. Monitoring and laboratory testing has confirmed abnormal levels of arsenic at two points between Thailand and Laos.

MRC experts downplayed the degree of the disaster, terming it as a "moderately serious transboundary environmental issue affecting all three countries." Thailand's Busadee Santipitaks, CEO of the Mekong River Commission, convened a roundtable forum with civil society organizations in Chiang Rai, where she stressed the need for regional cooperation and dialogue with China.

Pavin observed that "media attention should shift from nationalistic rhetoric to raising public awareness about this urgent ecological crisis." He added, "It's absolutely crucial for Thailand and Cambodia, along with the media, to prioritize cooperation on the alarming arsenic contamination of the Mekong and its tributaries over the current border conflict."

"A shared focus on this existential threat could not only lead to a viable solution but also build trust and de-escalate political tensions" between Thailand and Cambodia.

Can Thailand Push Back Against China's Rare Earth Imports From Shan State?

The demands of local communities and civil society in northern Thailand – that Chinese companies in Myanmar running rare earth mines that have poisoned their rivers should be shut down – clearly

run up against some formidable obstacles. China's domination of global supply chains for refined rare earth exports currently depends on Myanmar's rare earth mines, which accounted for over 57 percent of China's total rare earth imports in 2024. In other words, for Beijing, these toxic mining sites in Myanmar are an indispensable part of their domination of the global rare earth market.

The dark side of rare earth extraction previously caused environmental devastation in China, which resulted in new legislation to curb pollution. These environmental safeguards triggered many Chinese companies to move south and set up their operations across the border in Myanmar's Kachin and Shan states in order to evade the new regulations.

In response to the Thai protest petitions received by the Chinese Embassy in Bangkok in June, the embassy responded via Facebook, saying China "attaches great importance to the incident of heavy metal contamination in tributaries of the Mekong River in Thailand." Its statement called for resolution through "friendly dialogue."

Beijing's offer of "friendly dialogue" still falls far short of the call by Burmese environmental scholar Win Myo Tu that China take responsibility and ensure that its businesses in Myanmar are held accountable for their environmental impact.

China is not likely to make any concessions to the complaints of their down-

stream neighbors on the Mekong without serious pushback from the Thai government, supported by all the evidence of laboratory testing both by Thailand and the MRC. But given China's expanding influence on ethnic groups that control mining sites in Shan State – especially their long established proxy, the USWA – Beijing stands out as only party that can provide a solution in partnership with the MRC and regional governments.

"If China had the political will to address the issue, it could take several decisive actions," Pavin pointed out. "It could enforce its own stringent environmental regulations on companies operating outside its borders, ensuring they adhere to the same standards as those within China."

Other academic experts say Beijing should also provide direct financial and technical assistance to address the restoration of these rivers. China could also agree to establish joint monitoring and reporting mechanisms with the affected countries to ensure transparency and build confidence that the issue is being addressed seriously.

"The government keeps saying it's too hard [to deal with China], but it hasn't tried. What are we afraid of?" asked Suebskul, the academic with the Area-based-Social Innovation Research Center. "We need to do more. Villagers hit by toxic floods need answers. We want our lives back. Chiang Rai needs a center for heavy metal testing and more open reporting."

A viable solution would need to be multifaceted: it would require a global framework for supply chain traceability and certification to ensure rare earth deposits are sourced ethically and sustainably. Assistant Professor Dulyapak Preecharatch, president of the Regional Studies Association and lecturer in Southeast Asian Studies at Thammasat University, reflected on Thailand's capacity to stand up the China and the USWA. He concluded, "If we want other countries to respect us, we must leverage our power projection strategy to counterbalance our power, such as through cultural power, trade, and investment. This will make the Wa and their allies more respectful of us." Most urgently, Thailand's government needs to shift the focus away from conflict with Cambodia to the understanding that both nations must together confront a deadly common enemy: the arsenic poisoning that could kill both humans and much of the rich wildlife of the once mighty Mekong. (Courtesy: The Diplomat)

Easy homemade value added products of Mushroom

By: Dr Neethi Baruah, Dr Manjurma Gogoi

Value-added products from mushrooms include snacks and meals like pickles, jam, chips, soup, biscuits, and nuggets, as well as prepared foods like curries, papad, and preserving the mushrooms themselves in various solutions. These products are created through processes like drying, preserving, and transforming mushrooms into edible items, aiming to extend shelf life, increase profitability, and introduce new consumer options. Details of some of the easily made recipes are given below-

Mushroom Preserve (Murabba): Murabba is made from button mushrooms, by cooking it whole or in the form of pieces in heavy sugar syrup, till it becomes tender and transparent. In murabba preparation 45% of button mushroom are used for every 55% of sugar and cooking is continued till a concentration of 68% of soluble solid is reached. Fresh button mushroom are graded, washed, pricked and blanched in 0.05% KMS solution for 10 min. It is treated with 40% of its weight of sugar daily for 3 days. Then, mushroom are taken out from the syrup and 0.1% citric acid and retaining 40% of sugar is mixed in the syrup. After bring its concentration to 650 Brix, mushrooms are added in the syrup and good quality murabba is prepared.

Mushroom Soup Powder: Soups are commonly used as appetizer but also as main course by the diet conscious. Using quality mushroom powder produced from the button mushroom and oyster mushroom dried in the dehumidifying air cabinet- drier. Dried button mushroom slices or whole oyster mushroom are finely ground in a pulveriser and passed through 0.5 mm sieve. Mushroom soup powder is prepared by mixing this powder with milk powder, corn flour and other ingredients. This has to be mixed with equal quantity of water for the preparation of good quality mushroom soup with



characteristics aroma and taste.

Mushroom Biscuit: Delicious and crunchy mushroom biscuits can be prepared by using the button/oyster mushroom powder and various ingredients. For making biscuits entire ingredients are finely ground using electric mixture and cleaned with the help of fine sieve separately. The ingredients viz. Ghee and sugar are mixed for 5-7 minutes using dough kneader to make the mixture homogenous. The various ingredients required for preparation of delicious and crunchy mushroom biscuits. The ingredients like sugar gives desired

shapes of biscuits using different steel dies. These raw cut biscuits were kept in the steel trays systematic manner and then these trays in systematic manner and then these trays were shifted to hot oven (2120C) for baking purpose. After 15 minutes, baking trays are removed from the hot oven and cooled. The biscuits were ready for packaging and or for serving.

Mushroom chips: The freshly harvested button mushrooms are washed, sliced (2mm) and blanched in 2% brine solution. The mushrooms are dipped overnight in a solution of 0.1% of citric acid + 1.5 % of NaCl + 0.3 % of red chilly powder. After draining off the solution the mushrooms are subjected to drying in cabinet dryer at 600C for 8 hours. Then it is fried in refined oil and good quality chips are prepared. Garam masala and other spices can be spread over the chips to enhance the taste. After spices mixing, the chips are packed in polypropylene packets and sealed after proper labelling.

Pickling: Pickling is a method of long term storage to preserve mushrooms in an economically viable way. According to a formulation developed and standardized by NRCM, Solan, mushrooms are washed, sliced and blanched for 5 minutes in 0.05 per cent KMS solution. Then blanched mushrooms are washed in cold water for 2-3 times and the excess water is drained off. Then the mushrooms

are subjected to salt curing process, in which 10 per cent sodium chloride is added and kept overnight. The excess water oozes out of mushroom is removed on the next day and spices and preservatives are mixed to the desired taste and quality of mushroom pickle. The various spices and mustard oil are added to prepare tasty pickle are listed in table. Acetic acid and sodium benzoate are added within the permitted limits are used as preservatives. The various ingredients are required for preparing mushroom pickle using 1 kg blanched mushroom.

| Table. Ingredients for mushroom pickle | |
|--|--------|
| Ingredients | g/kg |
| Black mustard seed powder (rai) | 35 |
| Turmeric powder | 20 |
| Red Chilly powder | 10 |
| Cumin seed Powder | 1.5 |
| Fennel seed powder (Sauf) | 1.5 |
| Carom seed (Ajwain) | 10 |
| Nigella seed (Kalonji) | 10 |
| Oil | 200 ml |
| Salt | 90 |

Mushroom Candy: Mushrooms impregnated and coated with sugar and subsequently taken out and dried is called a candied mushroom. The total sugar content of the impregnated produce is kept at about 75 per cent to prevent fermentation. Button mushroom washed and sliced half and blanched in 0.05 per cent KMS for 5 min. Sugar treatment @1.5 kg/kg of blanched mushroom for 3 days. 1st day- covering blanched mushroom with 1st part of sugar for overnight. 2nd day- covering with 2nd part of sugar. 3rd day – removal of mushroom from the syrup. Addition of remaining sugar together with 0.1 per cent of citric acid to the syrup. Boiling up to 700 Brix and cooling. Addition of mushroom pieces. Boiling for 5 min to bring syrup concentration to 720 Brix. Cooling and removing of mushroom pieces from syrup. Sorting and drying at 600C for 10 h. As soon as these become crispy, all mushrooms are taken out, packed in polypropylene bags. The mushroom candy can be stored up to 8 months with excellent acceptability and good chewable taste.



Cultivating Harmony: A Natural Order in Agriculture

By: Wg Cdr HL Risanga (Retd)

Destiny brought us to this wonderful place in Yavatmal, Maharashtra which is home to 'DEENDAYAL SEVA PRATISHTHAN'. This being our first visit, we were very excited and full of enthusiasm. I was in the company of a passionate group of Social Workers & Progressive Farmers Shri Kurusar Timung from Diphu (Activist of Bharatiya Kisan Sangh, Karbi Anglong), Shri Rupak Gogoi from (Activist of Bharatiya Kisan Sangh, Tezpur) and Shri Krishna Kanta Bora from (State Organization Secretary Bharatiya Kisan Sangh Assam, Meghalaya, and Nagaland).

We had been aware of this esteemed institution and its commendable efforts to promote education, social empowerment, economic resilience, and healthcare among communities deeply affected by financial adversity. Observing its dedicated work in rehabilitating families of farmers lost to suicide, and its commitment to advancing sustainable, affordable agricultural practices, one cannot help but feel a deep sense of gratitude for such a profoundly impactful initiative.

Yavatmal has borne the weight of numerous heartbreaking tragedies. In 2017, a devastating incident—believed to be caused by pesticide poisoning—claimed the lives of over 50 farmers in vital cotton-growing areas. Then, in 2022, the region faced another painful chapter: a surge in suicides among cotton farmers, with over 800 lives lost due to challenges like poor harvests and inferior seed quality. Yet, through the transformative efforts of this noble initiative, the tide of despair has begun to turn, offering hope and healing to those who once stood at the brink.

Among the many impactful initiatives, one that stands out is the provision of re-employment opportunities for widows of farmers who tragically took their own lives due to agricultural distress. These women are empowered through sustainable farming practices and vocational training, enabling them to launch small-scale ventures such as grocery stores, tailoring services, and more. Additionally, regular health checkups are conducted, and residents can access essential primary healthcare—including medications—for a nominal fee of just ₹10.

As we arrived at the institution, our curiosity and enthusiasm grew—we were eager to delve into the innovative, affordable, and environmentally conscious farming methods developed to foster sustainable agriculture and improve farmers' livelihoods. Hailing from the northeastern region of India, our prior knowledge had been shaped solely by literature and academic study. Witnessing these practices firsthand was not only illuminating—it was an experience that left a profound and lasting impact on each of us.

Sharad Ji welcomed us upon arrival, guided the tour, and enthusiastically described every feature of the farm. He began by stressing their plan to create trenches throughout the farmland in order to absorb rainwater. By increasing the soils' moisture content, this technique also improves fertility. The trenches are made in such a way as to allow the rapidly flowing rainwater to remain on them for as long as feasible.

We were then exposed to the Green Manure, Dhaincha where Sharad Ji went on to explain how the fertility of the soil can be enhanced without using any sort of chemicals. And by organically enhancing the soils' fertility we limit our exposure to

the food exposed to harmful chemicals, which is the root cause of many of the illnesses we face today. After that, we visited the Goshala, where we were shown how the Gomutra were brought in for harvest. The Gomutra's immense utility in organic farming astounded us. It can even be used as a weedicide and natural insecticide. For us, this was a new lesson that would serve us well in life.

Among the many inspiring practices, the Indigenous Seed Storage Hut stood out as a brilliant fusion of tradition and innovation. Before witnessing it firsthand, we hadn't realized the depth of wisdom behind this method. Adjacent to a modest plot of tilled land, native seeds were carefully stored in earthen matka pots within a well-ventilated hut—a technique rooted in age-old agricultural customs. These seeds are later sown on the dedicated land, ensuring their preservation and propagation. This practice not only sustains biodiversity but also honors the ancestral knowledge that continues to shape resilient farming communities.

We made our way to the dining hall, where we were treated to a delicious and fulfilling meal. Later, we learned that the cost of the food had been graciously covered in celebration of a resident's wedding anniversary—a gesture that deeply touched us. Such acts of generosity are a cherished tradition here, fostering a profound sense of community, connection, and belonging within the institution.

We also had the good fortune to visit Padma Shri Subhash Khetulal Sharma Ji at his farm in Teosa, Maharashtra, following our trip. We had heard about this renowned individual, his groundbreaking work in natural farming, and how Deendayal Seva Pratishthan and numerous other farms have adopted his methods. In its own right, his farm was a philosophy. It was hard to imagine it had been little over eight years since he began working on the farm because every aspect of it was so beautifully planned and maintained. In his farming, Subhash Ji initially described his 2% + 3% + 30% + 65% approach. This served as the foundation for allocating the portions of his farmland. 30% of the land is set aside for fruit-bearing trees, which promote biodiversity and provide natural shade and nutrients; 3% is set aside for water conservation using trenches; and 2% is set aside for animal husbandry, which greatly contributes to the production of organic manure and pesticides. Multi-crop agriculture, which may yield constantly throughout the year, uses the remaining 65%.

He said that in order to maximize exposure to natural sunshine, trees should be oriented east-west. The planting of various fruit trees in alternate locations, some of which would last for a long period while others would not, was another amazing feature. Additionally, the short-lived tree would be removed to make room for the larger trees after it perished. He placed a strong emphasis on the value of a friendly relationship with his agricultural workers as well as the necessity of mutual respect and trust. He regarded his employees like family and credited them with making his farming business successful.

Following this encounter, we felt renewed and invigorated with passion and hope. We felt a great sense of pride and thankfulness after meeting such honorable people who were so passionate about the advancement of society, feelings that we would carry with us throughout our lives in the North-East.

Israeli attack on Hamas leaders in quiet Qatar shocks Gulf allies, tests US ties

DUBAI, Sept 10: The tiny, gas-rich Gulf Arab state of Qatar hosts the biggest US military base in the Middle East. It has evacuated tens of thousands of American citizens from Afghanistan. It has been designated a US "major non-NATO ally." It has even lavished a USD 400 million jumbo jet on President Donald Trump for use as Air Force One.

None of that protected this quiet peninsula in the Persian Gulf from coming under an Israeli aerial attack on Tuesday as it mediated US-backed negotiations to end the Israel-Hamas war.

Israel struck a meeting of Hamas' exiled political leadership in Qatar's capital of Doha, sending plumes of smoke and debris rising over a city of air-conditioned World Cup stadiums and luxury malls typically shielded by US interceptor batteries.

Since Hamas' October 7, 2023, attack

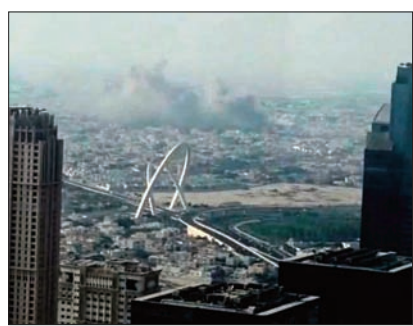
on southern Israel ignited its war in Gaza, the Israeli military has targeted Hamas leaders far afield.

But while Tehran and Beirut were seen as fair game, Israel had refrained from striking Hamas' political office in Qatar, the key mediator and US ally that Israeli leadership relied on as a back channel to the Palestinian militant group.

On Tuesday, Israel made a dangerous gamble, analysts say, poisoning Israel-Hamas ceasefire talks, sending political shock waves through the region and raising doubts about historical US security guarantees for its Gulf Arab allies.

It didn't immediately pay off for Israel: Hamas claims its senior leadership survived the strike.

"This is a broader shock for the international order, raising questions about sovereignty and the free rein being given to Israel," said Sanam Vakil, the director



of the Middle East and North Africa Program at Chatham House. "The reliability of the United States in the Middle East will be questioned."

US knowledge of attack roils its alliance with Qatar

Qatar has long come under fire for hosting Hamas and facing rising pressure to evict its top leadership.

But it was a US-supported arrangement that allowed Hamas to open its political office in Doha in 2012 as Washington sought to establish indirect lines of communication with the Palestinian militant group it designates as a terrorist organisation.

Hosting Hamas and other armed groups, such as the Taliban, has helped Qatar carve out an influential position in global conflict mediation.

Qatari officials believed that the emirate's designation as a major US non-NATO ally and its Al Udeid Air Base, regional headquarters of the US Central Command, lent it security cover that would restrain Israel.

Israeli strikes shattered that illusion on Tuesday, crashing into central Doha despite all the US missile batteries and radar systems tracking aerial threats from Al Udeid.

The US said Israel alerted it before striking. Whatever warning the White House said it passed to Qatar was too little, too late: Qatari Foreign Ministry spokesman Majed al-Ansari said his country was only notified as the bombs were falling.

Shock reverberates across Gulf Arab states

The apparent US disregard for Qatari security and sovereignty rattled nerves across the sheikdoms of the Persian Gulf, which, despite past ideological disputes over Qatar's Islamist sympathies, marshalled a strong show of unity.

"The security of the Arab Gulf states is indivisible, and we stand heart and soul with the sisterly Qatar, condemning the treacherous Israeli attack," said Anwar Gargash, a diplomatic adviser to the rulers of the United Arab Emirates.

Although the US remains the only

country willing to station thousands of troops across the Persian Gulf, the perception of Washington as an unreliable ally to Gulf Arab nations has grown in recent years, analysts say. The UAE and Saudi Arabia in particular have sought to diversify their relationships, growing closer to China and Russia.

"They don't want to rely solely on the US for security, they want ties with a range of global actors," said Will Todman, a senior fellow with the Middle East program at the Washington-based Center for Strategic and International Studies. "(Israel's) strikes will accelerate that trend."

Gulf Arab countries — with small militaries and oil-dependent economies uniquely vulnerable to shocks of any kind — now see Israel's belligerence as a source of growing concern, even more so than Iran's. (AP)

Nepal's Kathmandu airport to resume operations from 6 pm Wednesday

The airport shutdown affected both domestic and international flights



KATHMANDU, Sept 10: Nepal's Tribhuvan International Airport (TIA) has announced that it will resume services from Wednesday evening, 24 hours after closing its operations due to violent anti-government protests.

The announcement comes hours after the TIA authorities had earlier said the airport would remain closed until further notice following the massive violent protests across Nepal, leaving hundreds of foreign nationals stranded.

In a notice on Wednesday evening, the TIA management has asked the passengers concerned to contact their respective airline companies for re-confirmation (of their flights).

The flight operations would resume at 6 pm, the notice said. The decision to resume operations was made following a meeting of the airport's security committee on Wednesday, the notice said, adding, all domestic and international flights, which had been suspended since September 9, are

now cleared to operate.

"Passengers have been advised to contact their respective airlines for updated flight schedules and to confirm ticket and baggage arrangements," newspaper The Himalayan Times said.

The flight services at the airport were partially suspended in view of the protests on Tuesday after agitators tried to enter its premises.

The Nepal Army on Wednesday imposed nationwide restrictive orders followed by a curfew to quell possible violence under the guise of protest, a day after deadly anti-government demonstrations forced Prime Minister K P Sharma Oli's resignation.

The airport shutdown affected both domestic and international flights, leaving hundreds of passengers stranded.

"We had closed the airport due to security reasons as we saw smoke in some areas surrounding the airport as well as parts of the runway," said Rinji Sherpa, spokesperson of the airport.

Airlines had advised travellers to stay in contact with their respective carriers for updates.

The Nepal Army, in a statement, has asked the "foreign nationals, who are stranded due to the current difficult situation to contact the nearest security post or security people for their rescue or any other help."

It has also requested hotels, tourism entrepreneurs and related agencies concerned to provide necessary help to the needy foreign nationals.

The Hotel Association Nepal (HAN) on Wednesday urged all stakeholders to help create a tourist friendly environment for the movement of tourists.

"As the country is passing through a difficult situation and the airport remains closed, it is necessary to manage the stranded tourists," HAN said in a statement.

HAN said that it has been coordinating with Nepal Tourism Board and Nepal Army for necessary management and facilitation of tourists. It also issued a hotline contact number 9851031495 for accommodation facilities to the stranded tourists.

On Tuesday night, the Nepal Army took control of the airport after the agitators tried to enter its premises.

Air India, which operates six flights a day between New Delhi and Kathmandu, on Tuesday cancelled four flights. IndiGo and Nepal Airlines also cancelled their flights from Delhi to Kathmandu. (PTI)

250 arrested in France as protesters clash with police while Macron installs new PM

PARIS, Sept 10: Protesters blocked roads, lit blazes and were met with volleys of tear gas on Wednesday in Paris and elsewhere in France, heaping pressure on President Emmanuel Macron by attempting to give his new prime minister a baptism of fire.

The government's interior ministry announced 250 arrests in the first hours of what was a planned day of nationwide demonstrations against Macron, budget cuts and other complaints.

Although falling short of its self-declared intention to "Block Everything," the protest movement that started online over the summer caused widespread hot spots of disruption, defying an exceptional deployment of 80,000 police who broke up barricades and swiftly made arrests.

Interior Minister Bruno Retailleau said that a bus was set on fire in the western city of Rennes. In the southwest, fire damage to electrical cables stopped train services on one line and disrupted traffic on another, government transport authorities said.

Spreading protests

The protests appeared so far to be less intense than previous bouts of unrest that have sporadically rocked Macron in both his first and ongoing second term as president. They included months of nationwide so-called yellow vest demonstrations against economic injustice in 2018-2019.

After his reelection in 2022, Macron faced firestorms of anger over unpopular pension reforms and nationwide unrest and rioting in 2023 after the deadly police shooting of a teenager on Paris' outskirts.

Nevertheless, demonstrations and sporadic clashes with riot police in Paris and elsewhere on Wednesday added to a sense of crisis that has again gripped France following its latest government

collapse on Monday, when Prime Minister François Bayrou lost a parliamentary confidence vote.

Macron was installing a new prime minister, Sébastien Lecornu, on Tuesday, and the protests immediately presented him with a challenge.

Groups of protesters repeatedly tried to block Paris' beltway during the morning rush hour and were dispersed by police and tear gas. Elsewhere in the capital, protesters piled up trash cans and hurled objects at police officers. Paris police reported 159 arrests through the morning.

Around 100 others were taken into police custody elsewhere in France, according to the interior ministry count. Road blockades, traffic slowdowns and other protests were widely spread — from the southern port city of Marseille to Lille and Caen in the north, and Nantes and Rennes in the west, to Grenoble and Lyon in the southeast.

A weary nation

With France gripped by a prolonged cycle of instability, where minority governments installed by Macron have lurched from crisis to crisis, the movement also had support from people who didn't protest. "There's a lot of weariness, shared weariness, a lot of frustration that things aren't moving forward," said Lila, a Paris office worker who asked that her family name not be published. "That, in part, explains these blockades and this generalised unhappiness."

Some criticised the disruptions. "It's a bit excessive," said Bertrand Rivard, an accounting worker on his way to a meeting in Paris. "We live in a democracy and the people should not block the country because the government doesn't take the right decisions."

The "Bloquons Tout," or "Block Everything," movement gathered momentum over the summer on

social media and in encrypted chats. It's call for a day of blockades, strikes, boycotts, demonstrations, and other acts of protest came as Bayrou was preparing plans to massively slash public spending by 44 billion euros (USD 51 billion) to rein in France's growing deficit and trillions in debts. He also proposed the elimination of two public holidays from the country's annual calendar, which proved widely unpopular.

Lecornu, the new prime minister who previously served as minister of defence, now inherits the task of addressing France's budget difficulties, facing the same political instability and widespread hostility to Macron that contributed to Bayrou's undoing.

Macron's governments have been on particularly shaky ground since he dissolved the National Assembly last year, triggering an unscheduled legislative election that stacked the lower house of parliament with opponents of the French president.

A spontaneous movement

"Block Everything" grew virally online with no clearly identified leadership and a broad array of complaints — many targeting budget cuts, broader inequality and Macron himself. Retailleau, a conservative who allied with Macron's centrist camp to serve as interior minister in Bayrou's government and is now in a caretaker role until Lecornu puts his Cabinet together, alleged Wednesday that left-wing radicals have hijacked the protest movement, even though it has an apparent broad range of supporters. Appeals for non-violence accompanied its online protest calls.

Retailleau alleged that elected politicians who have backed the movement are attempting "to create a climate of insurrection in France," and he said some protesters appeared hell-bent on fighting with police. (AP)

US doesn't need unfair trade with India: Navarro

WASHINGTON, Sept 10: The US doesn't need "unfair trade" with India but New Delhi is "desperately" looking for access to the American markets, White House Trade Advisor Peter Navarro has said.

In the last few weeks, Navarro has made a series of critical remarks against India, especially for its continuing procurement of Russian crude oil.

The White House trade advisor's remarks came on a day US President Donald Trump announced that India and the US are continuing negotiations to address the trade barriers.

Trump, in a post on social media, said he was looking forward to speaking to Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the upcoming weeks. "I feel certain that there will be no difficulty in coming to a successful conclusion for both of our Great Countries!" he said.

However, Navarro, in a series of posts on 'X', hit out at India.

"The US doesn't need unfair trade with India. But India desperately needs access to US markets and schools and intends to continue taking U.S. jobs," he said.

The Trump administration official also repeated his previous allegations that India is fuelling Russia's war machinery. (PTI)

Ex-MP Tarlochan Singh exhorts parliamentarians to preserve Sikh heritage in UK

LONDON, Sept 10: Former Rajya Sabha MP Sardar Tarlochan Singh has exhorted British Sikh members of Parliament and peers to commission authoritative research into the scattered treasures of Maharaja Ranjit Singh to be appropriately catalogued and preserved at a museum for future generations.

The former chairman of the National Commission for Minorities was addressing an event hosted by the British Sikh Association in his honour at the House of Lords complex in London on Monday evening.

The 92-year-old campaigner pointed to media reports which had revealed a colonial era file that documented some of the many treasures belonging to the 19th century ruler of the Sikh Empire in India.

"A list of the treasures from Maharaja Ranjit Singh's toshakhana (treasury) should be released in order for our children to be proud of our Sikh heritage," said Singh.

"Historical records have mentioned that Guru Gobind Singh Ji's sacred plume, which adorned his turban, was kept in the toshakhana and Maharaja Ranjit Singh used to touch it every day.

"There were many such precious items. The Maharaja's golden chair is now exhibited at the Victoria and Albert (V&A) Museum in London, but there are several items just lying in storage which can be brought out to be displayed under one roof," he said.

Singh, behind a museum on Maharaja Ranjit Singh

in Amritsar, reiterated that his demand is not for repatriation of these items to India but for their appropriate care and display in the UK.

"I appeal to Sikh parliamentarians in the UK to ensure all our heritage scattered around in different collections, including at the V&A, Sandhurst and British Museum, is brought together and displayed for the younger generations," he said.

The philanthropist, who was awarded the Padma Bhushan in 2021 for his contribution to social service, also urged the British Sikh Association to commemorate the 1897 Battle of Saragarhi in London — recently portrayed in the 2019 Bollywood film 'Kesari'.

"We will be marking the 128th anniversary of this historic battle this week on September 12, when just 21 Sikh soldiers of the British Indian Army's 36th Sikh Regiment defended the Saragarhi outpost against thousands of Afghan tribesmen," said Lord Rami Ranger, chairman of the British Sikh Association.

"Sardar Tarlochan Singh has given us a lot of food for thought and the association will set up a Saragarhi Memorial Society to take this initiative forward," he said.

Lord Kuldip Singh Sahota, the India-born Labour peer in the House of Lords, spoke about a bronze statue of Haveladar Ishar Singh at Wednesfield in Wolverhampton in commemoration of his contributions during the historic Battle of Saragarhi, in the North West Frontier Province of British India. (PTI)

UN nuclear chief says agreement provides for access to all of Iran's nuclear facilities

IAEA inspectors have been unable to verify Iran's near bomb-grade stockpile since the start of the war



VIENNA, Sept 10: An agreement between Tehran and the United Nations' atomic watchdog will provide the UN agency access to all of Iran's nuclear facilities and require Iran to report on the whereabouts of material that was at sites attacked by Israel earlier this year, the head of the agency said Wednesday.

The accord was announced Tuesday after a meeting between International Atomic Energy Agency Director General Rafael Grossi, Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi and Egyptian Foreign Minister Badr Abdelattay.

Details of the agreement were not immediately released. In an address Wednesday to his agency's board of governors in Vienna, Grossi said the document "provides for a clear understanding for the procedures of inspection notifi-

cations and their implementation". The agreement "includes all facilities and installations in Iran and it also contemplates the required reporting on all the attacked facilities including the nuclear material present at those," Grossi added, noting it will "open the way for the respective inspections and access" without specifying when that would happen.

"The technical nature of this document does not diminish its profound significance. Iran and the agency will now resume cooperation in a respective and comprehensive way. These practical steps, allow me to state the obvious, need to be implemented now," Grossi told the board of governors.

President Masoud Pezeshkian on July 2 signed a law adopted by Iran's Parliament suspending all cooperation with the UN nuclear watchdog. That followed Israel's 12-day war with Iran in June, during which Israel and the US struck Iranian nuclear sites.

IAEA inspectors have been unable to verify Iran's near bomb-grade stockpile since the start of the war, which the UN nuclear watchdog has described as "a matter of serious concern".

A confidential report by the Vienna-based IAEA said that as of June 13, Iran had 440.9 kg

of uranium enriched up to 60%.

If enriched to 90%, the uranium would be enough to make 10 nuclear weapons, according to an IAEA yardstick, though creating an actual weapon would require other expertise such as adding a detonation device.

The only site inspected by the IAEA since the war has been the Bushehr Nuclear Power Plant, which operates with Russian technical assistance. Inspectors watched a fuel replacement procedure at the plant over two days starting Aug 27.

Araghchi said Tuesday that the agreement addresses his country's concerns and security challenges and lays out technical requirements for cooperation with the IAEA. But he warned that in the event of "any hostile act" against Iran, including the reimposition of UN sanctions, Tehran would regard the agreement with the IAEA as terminated.

The meeting came at a sensitive time as France, Germany and the United Kingdom on Aug 28 began the process of reimposing sanctions on Iran over what they have deemed non-compliance with a 2015 agreement aimed at preventing Iran from developing nuclear weapons. (AP)

Poland says it downed drones that violated its airspace

WARSAW, Sept 10: The Polish military said early Wednesday that it had downed drones that violated its airspace as Russia launched a wave of aerial attacks on Ukraine.

Prime Minister Donald Tusk wrote on X that he had received a report from the Operational Command of the Army about "the shutting down of drones that entered our airspace and could constitute a threat".

He said he informed the NATO Secretary General about actions undertaken by the Polish side.

Poland's armed forces were on a heightened state of alert overnight Tuesday and early Wednesday because of what they described as "further massive airstrikes against targets located in Ukraine".

Warsaw's Chopin Airport warned passengers on its website that flight operations were on hold due to closure of the airspace over part of the country, but that the airport remained open. (AP)

CM emphasises integrity and inclusive development

Arunachal Pradesh felicitates 140 new officers of APPSCCE-2024

HT Correspondent

ITANAGAR, Sept 10: In a significant move aimed at strengthening governance and administrative efficiency, chief minister Pema Khandu on Wednesday felicitated the successful candidates of the Arunachal Pradesh Public Service Combined Competitive Examination (APPSCCE)-2024 and handed over their appointment letters at a centralised function held in Itanagar.

In an official statement, the government informed that a total of 140 candidates have been recommended by the Arunachal Pradesh Public Service Commission (APPSC) for important administrative and civil service posts across the state.

During the ceremony, the chief minister extended his heartfelt congratulations to the newly appointed officers and described their achievement as a proud milestone not only for the candidates and their families but also for Arunachal Pradesh as a whole.

He reminded the officers of the pivotal role they would play as permanent pillars of governance.

While elected governments and political leadership may change over time, he underscored that officers remain the enduring force responsible for implementing government schemes and policies and ensuring that benefits reach the last citizen in line.

zen in line.

Highlighting the fact that a significant number of the newly selected officers are sons and daughters of the soil, chief minister Khandu called upon them to serve their communities with utmost dedication.

He urged them to preserve the state's unique traditions and to work toward inclusive growth that benefits every corner of Arunachal Pradesh.

He stressed that their roles carry not only administrative responsibilities but also the moral duty of contributing to the welfare and development of their people.

Providing details about the examination process, the chief minister outlined that the preliminary examination was conducted on December 15, 2024, with 22,731 candidates registered and over 17,000 appearing in each session.

The preliminary results were declared on December 25, 2024, with 1,658 candidates qualifying to move forward to the mains examination.

The main examination was subsequently held over four days – April 6, 7, 9, and 10, 2025.

The final results were announced on August 8, 2025, and the successful 140 candidates were recommended for appointment to various key posts in the state administration.

The selected candidates have been ap-



pointed across a range of departments and responsibilities. Among them are 50 Circle Officers under the Arunachal Pradesh Civil Service (Executive Grade), six Deputy Superintendents of Police under the Arunachal Pradesh Police Service (Executive Grade), 47 Assistant Section Officers, along with other important posts such as Child Development Project

Officers, District Information and Public Relations Officers, Labour Officers, and Assistant Protocol Officers.

The Chief Minister expressed particular satisfaction at the strong representation of women among the recruits. Out of the 140 candidates, 68 were girls, which he described as a testament to the growing empowerment of women in the state.

"Our girls are giving a tough competition to our boys in every field, which is a welcome trend. I congratulate the parents for keeping faith in them and supporting them throughout their journey," he remarked.

In keeping with the government's commitment to the welfare of the recruits, special arrangements were made for their onboarding process.

Mandatory medical tests were conducted at the Tomo Riba Institute of Health and Medical Sciences (TRIHS) on September 8 and 9, with provisions for medical tests on September 11 for those who could not attend earlier.

The verification of documents and issuance of appointment letters were conducted alongside the felicitation ceremony, ensuring a seamless transition into service.

Looking ahead, chief minister Khandu informed the recruits that a comprehensive combined training programme will commence in the first week of October 2025 at the Administrative Training Institute (ATI), Naharlagun.

This programme will be followed by attachments in the Civil Secretariat, field districts, and exposure visits to prestigious institutions such as the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration (LBSNAA) in Mussoorie, the National Police Academy in Hyderabad, the

Administrative Training Institute in Guwahati, and the Institute of Secretariat Training and Management (ISTM) in New Delhi.

He encouraged the new recruits to carry forward five key principles throughout their careers: integrity, innovation, dedication, compassion, and teamwork.

"Keep these key guiding principles always in mind – integrity, innovation, dedication, compassion and teamwork in your career and you will serve the people well," the Chief Minister said, urging them to make these values the foundation of their public service.

Assuring them of the government's full support, chief minister Khandu concluded by reaffirming the significance of their service.

"Your service is not just a career, it is a commitment to the destiny of Arunachal Pradesh," he remarked, encouraging the recruits to embrace their roles with a sense of purpose and responsibility that transcends individual achievement.

The government's official statement further highlighted that this initiative marks a new chapter in administrative reforms and reflects the state's efforts to create a robust, people-centric governance framework built on competence, inclusivity, and accountability.

Pema Khandu, Arunachal deputy CM congratulate Radhakrishnan on winning VP polls



ITANAGAR, Sept 10: Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu and Deputy CM Chowna Mein congratulated C P Radhakrishnan on winning the vice presidential polls.

Radhakrishnan, the NDA nominee for the VP polls, was elected as the 15th Vice President of India on Tuesday, bagging 452 votes against the opposition's candidate and former Supreme Court judge B Sudershan Reddy's 300 votes.

In a post on X, Khandu said, "My sincere congratulations to Shri C.P. Radhakrishnan Ji on assuming the high office of Vice President of India. Your extensive experience in public service, rooted in a deep connection with people, positions you well to guide the Rajya Sabha with wisdom, fairness, and dedication."

Khandu said Radhakrishnan's leadership will strengthen the country's democratic institutions

and give voice to those at the margins.

"Wishing you strength and success as you embark on this important role of safeguarding the dignity and effectiveness of our parliamentary democracy," Khandu added.

Mein also hailed Radhakrishnan's victory.

"Congratulations to Vice President-Elect Shri C. P. Radhakrishnan ji. I extend my warmest wishes on your victory in the 2025 Vice Presidential election," the deputy chief minister said in a social media post.

From Coimbatore to the Vice-President's enclave in New Delhi, the remarkable journey is a true reflection of perseverance, dedication, and a lifetime of public service, Mein said, referring to Radhakrishnan.

"May your tenure in this esteemed office be filled with success and contribute greatly to the progress of our nation," he added. Radhakrishnan, a veteran BJP leader from Coimbatore in Tamil Nadu, is a two-time Member of Parliament and has previously served as the governor of Jharkhand and Telangana.

He succeeds Jagdeep Dhankhar as the 15th Vice President of India. (PTI)

APSHRC launches three-day human rights awareness outreach programme

HT Correspondent

SANGRAM, Sept 10: In a bid to promote human rights awareness and strengthen community engagement, the Arunachal Pradesh State Human Rights Commission (APSHRC) has launched a three-day Human Rights Awareness Outreach Programme in Kurung Kumey District, beginning at Sangram.

According to an official statement, the initiative, led by Bamang Tago, Chairperson of APSHRC, aims to educate citizens about their rights and the mechanisms available to protect them.

The programme has brought together a wide array of stakeholders, including Gaon Buras, Panchayat leaders, educators, representatives from non-governmental organisations, women's groups, legal practitioners, human rights activists, district administration officials, and youth representatives.

The diverse participation reflects a collective effort to spread awareness and foster a rights-based culture in the district.

During the inaugural session, Bamang Tago delivered the keynote address, in which he provided a historical overview of the Arunachal Pradesh Human Rights Commission.

He elaborated on the commission's role in addressing human rights violations and safeguarding the interests of vulnerable populations.

He highlighted the responsibility of citizens, civil society, and administrative bodies in ensuring that the rights guaranteed under the law are effectively upheld.

The outreach team was accompanied by Adv Taba Zim, Chairperson of the Child Welfare Committee, who elaborated on the critical role played by the Child Welfare Committee in protecting the rights of children and ensuring their well-being.



She emphasised the need for collective action to address child-related rights violations and create an enabling environment for their growth and development.

Adding to the programme, Bamang Kaku, Coordinator of Arunachal Citizen Rights, conducted a session on raising awareness about HIV and substance abuse.

She highlighted the challenges faced by communities and the importance of sensitizing the public about health-related rights and support systems available to individuals affected by these issues.

Joel Angu, Research Officer of APSHRC, provided participants with a detailed account of the Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993.

He explained the legislative framework and underscored the importance of human rights education in empowering citizens to claim and

defend their rights.

He further spoke about the proactive role the commission plays in addressing grievances and promoting legal literacy.

The official statement emphasized that the programme is being conducted in collaboration with Arunachal Citizen Rights, underscoring the joint effort to enhance human rights awareness at the grassroots level.

Through this initiative, APSHRC aims to build stronger networks, encourage dialogue, and equip communities with the knowledge required to uphold human dignity and justice.

The three-day programme is expected to reach a wider audience across the district, fostering partnerships and reinforcing the state's commitment to creating a society that values equality, justice, and respect for human rights.

IMD forecasts heavy rainfall, thunderstorms over Arunachal from today

Papum Pare most likely to be heavily affected



ITANAGAR, Sept 10: The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has forecast an increase in rainfall activity across Arunachal Pradesh from Thursday, warning of heavy showers accompanied by thunderstorms and lightning over the next several days.

According to the weather office, heavy to very heavy rain is predicted at scattered places across the state between September 12 and 14. The spell is likely to continue till at least September 15.

District-specific forecasts indicate that Papum Pare is one of the areas most likely to be affected, with very heavy rainfall (11–20 cm in 24 hours) expected between September 12 and 13.

East Kameng and Anjaw are also likely to receive heavy rainfall (7–11 cm in 24 hours) during the

same period.

The forecast for September 13–14 includes heavy to very heavy rain in Papum Pare, East Kameng, Lower Subansiri, Anjaw and Changlang districts. West Kameng has also been placed under alert for very heavy rainfall between September 14 and 15.

The IMD has cautioned that the spell of heavy rainfall could trigger landslides, mudslides, flash floods and waterlogging in low-lying areas.

Disruption of traffic, damage to power and communication lines due to falling trees, and destruction of vulnerable structures such as hoardings and tents are also likely.

Standing crops, including agricultural and horticultural fields, could suffer damage due to both heavy downpour and squally

winds.

Lightning strikes during the stormy conditions may pose risks to people and cattle in open areas, the bulletin said.

Authorities have advised residents to remain cautious, avoid waterlogged and landslide-prone areas, and follow official traffic advisories.

Farmers have been urged to ensure proper drainage in cropped fields, postpone sowing of seeds, and use mulching to protect soil and crops from excessive moisture.

Meanwhile, the IMD bulletin noted that on Wednesday, thunderstorms accompanied by heavy rainfall occurred at isolated places over Arunachal Pradesh.

Dirang in West Kameng recorded 7 cm of rainfall in the past 24 hours. (PTI)

Arunachal Pradesh sanctions ₹5 crore from Chief Minister's Relief Fund

HT Correspondent

ITANAGAR, Sept 10: In a demonstration of solidarity and compassion, the Government of Arunachal Pradesh has sanctioned an amount of ₹5 crore from the Chief Minister's Relief Fund (CMRF) to assist the people affected by the recent devastating floods in Himachal Pradesh.

An official statement issued by the state government stated that the sanctioned amount will be contributed to the Himachal Pradesh Aapda Raahat Kosh-2025, which was set up by the Himachal Pradesh government to mobilise resources and provide large-scale relief and rehabilitation support to those impacted by the natural disaster.

Chief minister Pema Khandu expressed profound concern over the loss of lives, property, and livelihoods caused by the floods and extended heartfelt condolences to the

families grappling with grief and hardship.

He underscored that natural disasters do not recognise geographical or administrative boundaries and emphasised that in times of such distress, it is the moral responsibility of fellow citizens to come together and support one another.

"Natural disasters do not recognize boundaries. At such moments, it is our duty as Indians to extend a helping hand to our brothers and sisters in distress. This contribution is a humble step from the people of Arunachal Pradesh towards easing the suffering of those affected in Himachal Pradesh," he said during a press interaction.

The official statement further explained that the Government of Himachal Pradesh has launched a state-wide campaign under the Aapda Raahat Kosh-2025 to raise funds aimed at providing timely as-

sistance, medical aid, shelter, and long-term rehabilitation to the flood-affected families and communities. Arunachal Pradesh's contribution is expected to strengthen these efforts and reflects the spirit of national unity and cooperation in times of crisis.

Chief minister Khandu assured that the people of Arunachal Pradesh stand shoulder to shoulder with those in Himachal Pradesh during this challenging period.

He called upon citizens, institutions, and other states to rise in support of disaster-hit areas and reaffirmed Arunachal Pradesh's commitment to extending assistance wherever needed.

The government's statement concluded by reaffirming that the contribution represents not only financial aid but also a message of empathy and shared responsibility in times of adversity.

'Arunachal exploring ropeway to improve accessibility across its challenging terrain'

ITANAGAR, Sept 10: Arunachal Pradesh is exploring the potential of ropeway networks to improve accessibility across its challenging terrain, Chief Secretary Manish Gupta said on Wednesday.

Gupta held a meeting with National Highways Logistics Management Ltd chairman Vinay Kumar to deliberate on the possibilities of ropeway projects in the state.

"Such infrastructure could significantly enhance connectivity and accessibility across our diverse and challenging terrain, thereby supporting the inclusive socio-economic development of the state," Gupta said in a post on X.

He noted that ropeway networks, if strategically implemented, could serve remote habitations, reduce travel time, and ease the movement of both people and goods in difficult mountainous regions.

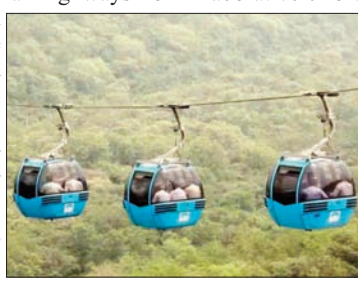
He stressed the importance of collaborative plan-

ning with central agencies to ensure feasibility, sustainability, and maximum benefits to local communities.

"We look forward to continued discussions and collaborative efforts to thoroughly explore and advance these opportunities for the benefit of our people," he said in another social media post.

Officials said the discussions mark an early stage in the process, with detailed studies and follow-up consultations expected to take place in the coming months. Arunachal Pradesh has already initiated a ropeway project in select districts to address connectivity gaps.

In Tawang, a high-altitude ropeway connects the Tawang Monastery and Gyangyong Ani Gonpa, while the ropeway project in Itanagar, which is in the final stages of planning, is aimed at improving urban infrastructure. (PTI)



Governor congratulates newly elected VP

HT Correspondent

ITANAGAR, Sept 10: Governor, Lt General KT Parnaik, (Retd), has extended his warm congratulations to Chandrapuram Ponnusamy Radhakrishnan on his election as the 15th Vice President of India.

In an official statement issued by the Raj Bhavan, the Governor described Radhakrishnan's elevation to the high office as a reflection of the trust and confidence placed in his leadership, integrity, and decades of dedicated public service. The statement highlighted that Radhakrishnan's commitment to the nation, marked by humility, wisdom, and unwavering dedication, exemplifies the values of Indian democracy.

The Governor expressed confidence that, under his stewardship, the Rajya Sabha would be enriched by deliberations characterized by dignity, inclusiveness, and a spirit of constructive dialogue, thereby contributing to the strengthening of democratic institutions and processes in the country.

Lt General Parnaik conveyed his best wishes to the Vice President-elect for a successful and fulfilling tenure, expressing hope that Radhakrishnan's guidance would further enhance the democratic ethos of the nation.

The Governor's message underlined the importance of collaborative governance and reinforced the shared responsibility of public servants to work towards the welfare and progress of the nation.

Jharkhand ATS nab 2 suspected ISIS operatives

NEW DELHI, Sept 10: Delhi Police's Special Cell, Jharkhand Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) and Ranchi police have arrested two suspected ISIS operatives in a joint operation spread across different states, an official said on Wednesday.

The prime accused, identified as Bokaro native Ashar Danish, was arrested from Ranchi, the official said.

Danish was wanted in a case registered by the Delhi Police Special Cell related to an ISIS-linked module.

Another suspect, Aftab, was apprehended from Delhi during coordinated action carried out simultaneously by the teams, according to police.

According to a source involved in the operation, five to six people have been detained from different states and the joint party is investigating their role. (PTI)

Modi to meet Mauritius PM in Varanasi

NEW DELHI, Sept 10: Prime Minister Narendra Modi will host his Mauritius counterpart Navinchandra Ramgoolam, who is on a state visit to India, in Varanasi on Thursday and hold bilateral discussions with him.

The meeting in the historic city underscores the enduring civilisational connect, spiritual bonds and deep-rooted people-to-people ties that have shaped the special and unique relationship between India and Mauritius, an official statement said.

Modi will later travel to Dehradun and undertake an aerial survey of the flood affected areas in Uttarakhand. He will chair a high-level review meeting with officials, it said. Ramgoolam, who reached Mumbai on Tuesday, will be in India till September 16. During their bilateral discussions, Modi and Ramgoolam will review the full spectrum of cooperation, with particular focus on development partnership and capacity building, the statement said. They will also discuss opportunities for expanding collaboration in health, education, science and technology, energy, infrastructure as well as in emerging domains such as renewable energy, digital public infrastructure and the blue economy, it added. (PTI)

Sonam Wangchuk, Leh Apex Body sit on fast in Leh over demand for Ladakh's statehood

NEW DELHI, Sept 10: Climate activist Sonam Wangchuk and the Leh Apex Body on Wednesday announced that they are starting a 35-day fast in Leh over their demands for Ladakh's inclusion under the Constitution's sixth schedule and statehood.

At a press conference, which was preceded by an all-faith prayer service, Wangchuk, a climate activist, educator and Ramon Magsaysay awardee, said they took the decision to go on another fast from Wednesday as no meeting has been called by the Union home ministry with them over their demands in the last two months.

Wangchuk said they are being forced to intensify the movement demanding statehood and protection under the sixth schedule of the Constitution for Ladakh as the Centre has not addressed their demands.

"The talks with the Union gov-

Doda remains tense, additional security forces deployed in sensitive areas

Demonstrations erupted after Malik was detained under the PSA

JAMMU, Sept 10: An uneasy calm prevailed in Jammu and Kashmir's Doda district where prohibitory orders remained in place on Wednesday following clashes between protesters and security forces during demonstrations against the detention of AAP MLA Mehranj Malik under the Public Safety Act (PSA).

The arch of these restrictions has been widened to Bhaderwah valley, with all shops and business establishments shut in the town.

At least eight police personnel, including two officers, were injured in the clashes on Tuesday. Demonstrations erupted after Malik was detained under the PSA and lodged in Kathua jail for allegedly disturbing public order.

The situation remained tense throughout the night in Doda dis-



trict, especially in the Doda Assembly constituency, according to reports.

Doda town and adjoining areas have been sealed and additional security personnel have been deployed in sensitive areas of the district, including Bhaderwah, Gandoh, Bhalessa, Chilli Pingal, Kahara, and Thathri, officials said.

All business establishments and

educational institutions have been closed, and people have been advised to stay indoors.

"The situation is peaceful. There are no reports of any untoward incidents from anywhere," a police officer said, adding there are no reports of fresh protests in the district.

AAP MP Sanjay Singh, who arrived here along with senior AAP

leader Imran Hussain, told reporters that Malik's detention was "illegal" and "unconstitutional".

Speaking to reporters, Singh said, "The section used against terrorists has been slapped on an elected member for raising voice for the people of his constituency. It is very wrong."

"We will fight this injustice on the streets, in Parliament, and, if necessary, in the Supreme Court," he said while accusing the BJP government and Prime Minister Narendra Modi of targeting the AAP by employing repressive tactics.

"They have previously jailed Arvind Kejriwal, Manish Sisodia, Satyendar Jain, and even me. Today, Mehranj Malik has been imprisoned," he said.

The AAP leader said they are in

Jammu to meet with party workers and strategise the next steps in their protest against "political victimisation".

Authorities in Doda district on Tuesday imposed prohibitory restrictions in view of apprehensions of breach of peace, law and order concerns, and possible unlawful assemblies.

Additional District Magistrate Doda, Anil Kumar Thakur, issued an order stating that the assembly of four or more persons is prohibited across the district until further orders.

The order further directs that no individual shall deliver provocative speeches, raise slogans, or display gestures that may disrupt peace and communal harmony. Carrying lathis or sharp-edged weapons in public has also been banned.

The Senior Superintendent of Police, Doda, has been instructed to ensure strict enforcement of these restrictions in both letter and spirit. Officials warned that any violation of the prohibitory order will invite punitive action under relevant provisions of law. As a result, shops and business establishments remained closed in Doda and Bhaderwah towns besides other towns, and traffic remained thin on the roads. Locals reported internet slowdowns, but district authorities denied any restrictions, attributing issues to technical restoration work. Protests had also rocked Jammu, Rajouri, Poonch, and Kishtwar. The National Conference, PDP, and People's Conference condemned Malik's detention, calling it an "assault on democracy." (PTI)

Uddhav, Raj meet for second time in two weeks amid alliance buzz between Sena (UBT) and MNS

MUMBAI, Sept 10: Shiv Sena (UBT) chief Uddhav Thackeray on Wednesday visited his cousin and Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) president Raj Thackeray here amid the buzz of an alliance between the two parties.

A meeting between the two party chiefs and their leaders was held at 'Shivirth', the residence of Raj Thackeray located in the city's Dadar area.

This was the second public interaction between the two once-estranged cousins in the past two weeks. Uddhav had visited Shivirth last month on the occasion of the Ganesh festival.

The two had shared a stage on July 5 in Mumbai to celebrate their "victory" after the Maharashtra government rolled back its contentious orders on three-language formula for students of Classes 1 to 5 amid charges of imposition of Hindi in the state dominated by Marathi speakers.

In July-end, Raj visited 'Matoshree', the residence of Uddhav Thackeray in suburban Bandra, to wish the latter on his birthday.

Although Raj quit the undivided Shiv Sena in 2005, blaming Uddhav for his exit, the drubbing of their parties in the 2024 assembly polls appears to have pushed the rivals to improve ties.

Both parties have dropped enough hints of forging an alliance for the upcoming local body polls, including elections to the cash-rich Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC), but have not yet announced a formal tie-up. If it happens, the BJP will be its main adversary.

Asked about the latest meeting between the Sena (UBT) chief and MNS president, BJP's Mumbai unit chief and MLA Ameet Satam on Wednesday said citizens are more concerned about development than family meetings between political leaders.

"It is not about who is meeting whom and

their family-related bonding, but it is more about who constructed Atal Setu, the Coastal Road, the redevelopment of BDD chawls in Worli and neighbouring areas, and who set up a vast network of CCTV cameras across Mumbai. These are the key issues, and Mumbaiers will vote on that basis," Satam told reporters.

He said people from across the city have supported Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis in past elections and will continue to do so.

"The Union and state governments also expedited the Navi Mumbai International Airport. Citizens want this pace of development, which was never offered during the 25 years of rule by others. Just meetings between cousins have no political value; people are more interested in who will solve their problems," he added.

BJP MLC Pravin Darekar also downplayed the meeting.

"As a junior political worker, I would be delighted to see the two cousins come together, as Maharashtra has a history of civil discourse and aligning with like-minded groups. But it is not the time to speak of their alliance," Darekar said.

He sought to know what Uddhav Thackeray's position would be in the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) if he chose to align with Raj Thackeray. "There is no point in rushing to claim that their alliance will bring Shiv Sena (UBT) and MNS to power in the BMC," he said.

Sena (UBT), Congress and Sharad Pawar-led NCP (SP) are partners in the Opposition bloc MVA.

Amid a buzz over their pan-Maharashtra alliance, the Sena (UBT) and MNS faced a setback last month in the election to the BEST Employees Cooperative Credit Society Ltd, when the panel backed by the two parties lost all 21 seats. (PTI)

Indian airlines cancel Kathmandu flights for second day

NEW DELHI, Sept 10: Air India, Air India Express, IndiGo and SpiceJet cancelled their flights to and from Kathmandu on Wednesday as the city's airport remains closed amid unrest in the neighbouring nation.

In a statement, Air India said its flights to and from Kathmandu on September 10 have been cancelled as the airport continues to remain closed. "We are closely monitoring the situation and will share further updates".

The Tata Group-owned airline operates a total of 12 flights to and from Kathmandu.

In a post on X, IndiGo said that following the extension of the airport closure in Kathmandu, all flights to and from the city will remain cancelled until 1800 hours on September 10.

"We fully understand the uncertainty this may cause and want to assure you that flexible options remain open. We continue to extend waivers on rescheduling and cancellations for travel to and from Kathmandu until September 12, applicable for bookings made on or before September 9."

"While operations are on hold, our teams are actively coordinating with the relevant authorities and remain fully prepared to restore services as soon as permissions are granted," the carrier said.

Air India Express cancelled its services to the Nepalese city on Wednesday. (PTI)

40 regional parties declare ₹ 2,532 crore income in FY 23-24: ADR

Overall income rises over 45 percent

NEW DELHI, Sept 10: Around 40 regional political parties declared a combined income of ₹ 2,532.09 crore in the financial year 2023-24, with more than 70 per cent of their funds coming through electoral bonds, according to an analysis by poll rights body Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR).

The Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) reported the highest income at Rs 685.51 crore, followed by the Trinamool Congress (TMC) with ₹ 646.39 crore, the Biju Janata Dal (BJD) with ₹ 297.81 crore, the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) with ₹ 285.07 crore and YSR Congress with ₹ 191.04 crore.

These top five parties accounted for 83.17 per cent of the total income declared by the 40 regional parties.

"The total income of the 40 regional

parties for FY 2023-24 was ₹ 2,532.09 crore. More than 70 per cent of the total income (₹ 1,796.024 crore) of the 40 regional political parties analysed for FY 2023-24 came from donations through electoral bonds," the report said.

The ADR said that audit reports of 20 regional parties were not available on the Election Commission of India's (ECI) website even 313 days after the last date for submission.

The audit reports of 20 parties out of the 40 analysed by ADR were available on the ECI website after a delay of 12 to 216 days from the due date for submission.


ADR noted that the overall income of regional parties rose sharply by 45.77 per cent, compared to FY 2022-23 when their total income stood at ₹ 1,736.85 crore.

TMC registered the largest increase of ₹ 312.93 crore, while the TDP and BJD also saw significant jumps.

The report said 27 regional parties declared that a part of their income was unspent while the expenses of 12 political parties exceeded the income collected during the year.

The BRS had ₹ 430.60 crore from its income unspent, TMC ₹ 414.92 crore, and BJD ₹ 253.79 crore.

In contrast, 12 parties, including YSR Congress, Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK), Samajwadi Party, and Janata Dal (United), spent more than their income, with YSR Congress overshooting expenses by nearly 55 per cent. The Goa Forward Party reported no income but declared expenses of ₹ 1.56 lakh. (PTI)



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(1) **Name of the Post** : Assistant Engineer (Civil/Mechanical/Chemical) under Public Health Engineering Department, Assam.

(2) **No of posts** : 50 (Fifty) nos.

(3) **Breakup of posts (Discipline wise)** :

| Name of the Service/Post | Open Category | | Reserved for OBC/MOBC | | Reserved for SC | | Reserved for STP | | Reserved for STH | | Grand Total | | Post reserved for PwBD & Type of Disability | Post reserved for Ex-Servicemen |
|---------------------------------|---------------|-----|-----------------------|-----|-----------------|-----|------------------|-----|------------------|-----|-------------|-----|---|---------------------------------|
| | Total | RFW | Total | RFW | Total | RFW | Total | RFW | Total | RFW | Total | RFW | | |
| Assistant Engineer (Civil) | 21 | 06 | 12 | 04 | 01 | 00 | 05 | 00 | 01 | 00 | 40 | 10 | Total : 05 Type of Disability: 1. Blindness & Low vision: 01 2. Deaf & Hard of hearing: 01 3. Locomotor disability including cerebral palsy, leprosy cured, dwarfism, acid attack victims and muscular dystrophy: 02 4. Autism, etc.: 01 | 02 |
| Assistant Engineer (Mechanical) | 03 | 01 | 01 | 00 | 00 | 00 | 01 | 00 | 00 | 00 | 05 | 01 | Nil | 01 |
| Assistant Engineer (Chemical) | 02 | 00 | 01 | 00 | 00 | 00 | 01 | 00 | 01 | 00 | 05 | 00 | Nil | 01 |

*PwBD – Persons with Benchmark Disabilities; RFW – Reserved for Women.
 *Reservation as per draft advertisement received from Government against total numbers of posts in the cadre.

NB: The Ex-Servicemen must upload Ex-Servicemen Identify Card issued by Zila Sainik Welfare Office of the state of Assam and Discharge Book while applying to the reserved post.

4. Scale of Pay: Pay scale + Grade Pay + Other allowances as admissible to the Assam State Government employees from time to time (per month).

| Pay scale | Grade Pay | Pay Band |
|--------------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| Rs. 30,000/- to Rs. 1,10,000/- | Rs. 12,700/- | Pay Band - 4 |

BEFORE FILLING UP THE APPLICATION FORM, CANDIDATES MUST NOTE THAT THE REQUIRED CERTIFICATES RELATING TO AGE, CASTE AND MINIMUM EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION WILL BE FETCHED FROM THE OTR PROFILE. CANDIDATES ARE TO UPDATE THE OTR PROFILE IF ANY ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS ARE TO BE UPLOADED IN SUPPORT OF THE ADVERTISED POST.

5. Eligibility Criteria:
 The candidate must be an Indian Citizen as defined in Article 5 to 8 of the Constitution of India and must be a permanent resident of Assam.
 As a domicile proof of the candidate, he/she must upload a copy of the valid Permanent Resident Certificate issued in Assam for educational purpose/Employment Exchange Registration Certificate will be treated as proof of residency.
(Upload necessary documents)

6. Education Qualification:
 i. B.E/B.Tech specifically in Civil/Mechanical/Chemical Engineering from any institute recognised by AICTE.
 Or
 ii. Part A & B of AMIE (India) in Civil/Mechanical/Chemical Engineering enrolled on or before 31.05.2013.
(Upload relevant all semester/year mark sheet/certificate reflecting the subjects)

7. Age:
 The candidates should not be less than 21 years of age and not more than 38 years of age as on **01-01-2025**. The upper age limit is relaxable:
 (i) By 5 years for SC/ST candidates, i.e. upto 43 years.
 (ii) By 3 years for OBC/MOBC candidates i.e. upto 41 years as per Govt. Notification No. ABP. 6/2016/9 dated Dispur the 25th April, 2018.
 (iii) For Ex-Servicemen, the maximum age shall be 50 years as on 01-01-2025 for Unreserved category, relaxable further by 3 (Three) years for OBC/MOBC candidates and 5 (Five) years for SC/ST candidates.
 (iv) Persons with benchmark disability (PwBD) 10 years irrespective of SC/ST/OBC and UR Category of candidates as per Govt. Memorandum No. ABP 144/95/121 dated Dispur the 28th October, 2015.
 The age limit of the candidates will be calculated on the basis of the Class-X/Class-XII Examination Admit Card/Pass Certificate/Mark-sheet issued by a recognized Central/State Board/Council where Age/Date of Birth (DOB) is clearly reflected.
 No other document shall be accepted in lieu of the above mentioned documents for age proof.
(Upload relevant documents)

8. For PwBD Category Candidate :
 To be eligible for consideration under PwBD category, a candidate must possess Benchmark Disability of 40% or more and must produce necessary certificate issued by the competent authority.
(Upload relevant documents)

9. For Government Employees of the state of Assam:
 Candidates, already in regular Government service, whether in permanent or temporary capacity other than casual/ad-hoc/daily wages/hourly paid/contract basis, in order to prove their employment, must upload a certificate against the applied post, issued by the competent authority under which he/she is working.
 However, candidates, seeking pay protection, continuation in service etc., must upload **'NO OBJECTION CERTIFICATE (NOC)'** against the applied post, issued by the competent authority under which he/she is working.
(Upload relevant documents)

10. The Small Family Norms:
 As per Govt. notification No. ABP/69/2019/17, dated Dispur, the 6th November/2019, candidates have to submit declaration regarding "The Small Family Norms" in Form - A at the time of applying for the post.
(Upload necessary documents)
 The advertisement has been issued as per draft advertisement furnished by the Government.
☐ (i) STARTING DATE FOR ONLINE APPLICATION : 15-09-2025
 (ii) CLOSING DATE FOR ONLINE APPLICATION : 14-10-2025
 (iii) LAST DATE FOR PAYMENT OF APPLICATION FEE: 16-10-2025
 NB: For detail advertisement please visit APSC's official website www.apsc.nic.in (Recruitment Advertisement link).

Sd/-
 Deputy Secretary,
 Assam Public Service Commission
 Jawaharnagar, Khanapara, Guwahati-22

DIPR /D/HLT/157/11-Sep-25

More than 260 people have been killed and thousands rendered homeless in ethnic violence

Kuki-Zo groups welcome PM's likely visit to Manipur, term it 'historic' occasion

IMPHAL/CHURACHANDPUR, Sep 10: Leading Kuki-Zo groups on Wednesday welcomed Prime Minister Narendra Modi's likely visit to Manipur on September 13, and termed it as a "historic and rare occasion".

The Kuki-Zo Council, one of the organisations representing the community, claimed that the proposed visit comes nearly four decades after a prime minister last came to the region.

The council also hoped that the PM would address the aspirations of the people belonging to the community.

"The Kuki-Zo Council (KZC), on behalf of the entire Kuki-Zo community, warmly welcomes the forthcoming visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to our land. This is a historic and rare occasion," said a statement issued by the organisation.

The people of the Kuki-Zo community have endured immeasurable hardships over the past years, it said.

Expressing "faith in the democratic spirit and leadership of India", the organisation claimed that the Kuki-Zo people have been seeking a separate administration in the form of a union territory with legislature under Article 239A of the Constitution.

Article 239A of the Constitution allows Parliament to create a local legislature, a council of ministers, or both. The Kuki-Zo Council hoped that the prime minister would "give due recognition to the voice, pain, and aspirations of Kuki-Zo people".



"We place our trust in your leadership to heal our wounds, restore our dignity, and safeguard the future of the Kuki-Zo people," the council said, referring to PM's likely visit.

Several other organisations representing the Kuki-Zo community in Manipur also hailed Modi's likely visit to the state this week, but opposed a planned dance programme as part of a ceremony to welcome him.

The Imphal Hmar Displaced Committee claimed that the PM should interact with those affected in the ethnic violence instead of participating in the welcome ceremony.

Gangte Students Organisation in Churachandpur district also said it would wel-

come the PM's likely visit, but "we can't dance with tears in our eyes!"

"Our mourning is not yet over, our tears are not yet dried, our wounds are not yet healed, we cannot dance with joy," the Imphal Hmar Displaced Committee said in a statement.

Instead of taking part in a grand welcome ceremony, the PM should interact with the displaced people who are lodged at relief camps, it said.

The Churachandpur-based students' organisation, however, claimed that the PM's presence would help the ethnic violence-hit people heal their wounds and express grievances.

Kuki Inpi Manipur, the apex body of the

Kuki community, stressed that the prime minister should be welcomed in the state, but the visit must also "serve justice and recognition of the Kuki-Zo people's collective aspirations".

The organisation claimed that the demand for a political solution remains "clear and firm" and that "temporary relief measures cannot bring a lasting solution".

The PM's likely visit is seen as an opportunity for a section of people in the Meitei-majority Imphal valley to express their hardships.

"The prime minister's presence in the state will offer us a platform to share long-standing grievances and how innocent villagers have been affected by the ethnic strife," said Soibam Reagan, a villager in the Imphal East district.

A women's organisation Imagi Meira said the PM, during his proposed visit to Manipur, should direct officials to allow Meiteis to move along the national highway and to ensure their safety.

More than 260 people have been killed and thousands rendered homeless in ethnic violence between Meiteis and Kuki-Zo groups since May 2023.

The Centre had imposed the President's rule in Manipur after Chief Minister N Biren Singh resigned.

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

Tipra Motha chief claims ownership of Agartala, Teliamura, and Kanchanpur; sparks row



AGARTALA, Sept 10: Tipra Motha supremo and royal scion Pradyot Kishore Debbarma stoked a controversy by declaring himself the 'original landowner' of Agartala, Teliamura and Kanchanpur.

He made the remark while addressing a gathering of his party supporters, MLAs and members of the Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council (TTAADC) at Jantar Mantar in Delhi on Tuesday.

While Agartala is Tripura's capital, Teliamura and Kanchanpur are the two subdivisions of Tripura.

The Tipra Motha rules the TTAADC, which constitutes two-thirds of the state's territory.

He also promised to secure justice for Tripura's tribal communities, accusing the mainstream parties, including Congress, CPI-M and BJP, of failing to deliver goods for the indigenous people.

"This is my commitment to my people, and I will now take this a step further. Silence is not surrender," he told the gathering.

The protest meeting in Delhi was organised around two months after Tipra Motha leader David Murasing's symbolic march to the capital to press for the demand of a separate Tipraland, by constituting the

TTAADC areas. Meanwhile, solidarity demonstrations erupted back in the state, with torch processions here and in several villages amplifying indigenous rights and demands.

Expressing disappointment over the Centre's inaction, he reminded that the state Congress had opposed the creation of TTAADC, but then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi intervened to ensure its establishment.

"Today, the Union government faces the same dilemma. The Home Minister must take a firm stand like Indira Gandhi once did," he said. He insisted implementation of the Tiprasa Accord, adding, "My silence does not mean fear. If you want, unleash the ED, or CBI. I am happy to go to jail". (PTI)

Meghalaya Anganwadi workers face low pay, lack of benefits, MP seeks reforms

SHILLONG, Sept 10: An MP from Meghalaya has urged the Centre to fix a uniform wage of ₹ 24,000 for Anganwadi workers (AWWs) and ₹ 18,000 for helpers, along with their regularisation under labour laws.

In a representation to Union Women and Child Development Minister Annapurna Devi and Minister of State Savitri Thakur, Tura MP Saleng A Sangma pointed out that these employees serve across rural and difficult terrains.

Meghalaya alone has 5,895 Anganwadi workers and 4,120 helpers, he said.

Currently, AWWs are paid between ₹ 8,000 and ₹ 15,000 across states, while helpers get ₹ 4,500 to ₹ 8,500, the MP said.

In Meghalaya, the fixed honorarium is ₹ 11,500 with a state top-up of ₹ 1,500, the member of Parliament said.

He also called for timely digital disbursement of wages and a clear



career pathway with opportunities for training and supervisory roles for these health workers.

The MP also cited the Gujarat High Court order on minimum wages of ₹ 24,800 for AWWs and ₹ 20,300 for helpers, a "ruling yet to be implemented in most states".

Sangma said Anganwadi workers, who form the backbone of India's early childhood care, nutri-

tion and community health programmes, continue to work under difficult conditions with low pay, no job security and inadequate institutional support.

As they are designated "honorary workers", they remain outside the ambit of the Minimum Wages Act and are excluded from pensions, maternity benefits and health insurance, he said.

The representation also flagged delayed honorarium payments, rising out-of-pocket costs on travel and communication, and impractical digital mandates such as biometric attendance in hilly areas.

It also referred to recent protests in Assam as evidence of widespread discontent among workers.

For those serving in hilly and tribal regions, the MP sought special provisions, including hardship allowances, reimbursement of travel and meal costs, supply of health and safety kits, regular health check-ups, and grievance redressal mechanisms at the block and district levels.

"Anganwadi workers are unwavering in their service to mothers, children and communities. Their dedication must be recognised through reforms that secure their welfare and strengthen their vital role," the representation said. (PTI)

NPP's Limison D Sangma to be elected Meghalaya deputy speaker unopposed

SHILLONG, Sept 10: National People's Party (NPP) legislator Limison D Sangma from Raksamgre assembly constituency in West Garo Hills district is set to be elected as the new deputy speaker of Meghalaya Assembly, with the election scheduled for September 12. Sangma emerged as the lone candidate after filing his nomination paper on Wednesday.

His candidature was proposed by cabinet ministers Marcuse N Marak and AT Mondal.

Assembly Speaker Thomas A Sangma confirmed that only one proposal had been received.

"According to the schedule, tomorrow (Thursday) is the last day for withdrawal. If no withdrawal is made, we will proceed with the announcement and the election of the deputy speaker," he told reporters.

The vacancy arose after senior-most NPP legislator from Resubelpara, Timothy D Shira, resigned from the post following directions from the party's high command. (PTI)

Former Meghalaya home minister flags power woes in Amlarem; minister assures upgrade

SHILLONG, Sept 10: Candle-light dinners may be a luxury for city dwellers, but in Meghalaya's Amlarem located close to Bangladesh border, they have become a daily compulsion, UDP legislator Lakhmen Rymbui told the Assembly on Wednesday, highlighting the acute power shortage in his constituency.

Rymbui said despite housing two power projects — Lakroh and Leshka — residents of Amlarem, a subdivision in West Jaintia Hills district, continue to face frequent outages.

He urged the government to take urgent steps to reduce the crisis.

In his reply, Power Minister Abu Taher Mondal acknowledged the problem and assured that measures are underway to improve supply.

He explained that much of Amlarem subdivision and the Bakur-Dawki-Darrang belt face outages because of heavy rainfall, thunder-

storms and strong winds, which frequently snap conductors and topple trees onto lines that run through plantations of betel nut, banana, bamboo and other vegetation.

Mondal said planned shutdowns are also carried out to facilitate system upgrades under the Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme (RDSS) and LR projects.

He added that 16 linemen and jugalis are presently deployed in Amlarem sub-division to attend to breakdowns and restore supply at the earliest.

The minister informed that the department is working on sanctioning the Syndai sub-station soon to improve supply in Amlarem.

He also assured that power issues in Rajabala, a constituency in West Garo Hills district, would be resolved within the year with the operationalisation of a new sub-station. (PTI)

BJP's NE in-charge Sambit Patra arrives in Manipur

IMPHAL, Sept 10: Ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's likely visit to Manipur on September 13, BJP's NE in-charge Sambit Patra arrived here on Wednesday, a party leader said.

BJP's Manipur in-charge Ajeet Gopchade accompanied him.

The BJP leader said Patra is scheduled to hold a meeting with BJP functionaries and MLAs at the party's state headquarters here.

Patra was accorded a welcome at Imphal airport by BJP's state unit president A Sharda Devi and others, he said.

Asked about the purpose of Patra's visit, Sharda Devi declined to respond to the queries.

A BJP leader told PTI that the visit is part of the preparation and coordination for the PM's expected visit to the state. (PTI)

GOC 17th Mountain Division invites Sikkim gov for Nathula Victory Day celebration today

GANGTOK, Sept 10: General Officer Commanding of the 17th Mountain Division, Major General M S Rathore, paid a courtesy visit to Sikkim Governor Om Prakash Mathur at the Raj Bhavan here on Wednesday.

A statement by the Raj Bhavan said the visit took place on the occasion of 'Nathula Victory Day' on September 11, which is celebrated every year in memory of the soldiers of the Indian Army who laid down their lives for the country.

The GOC also met Chief Minister P S Tamang at his official residence.

In a Facebook post, the CM said the GOC briefed him on the recent achievements and operational preparedness of the Indian armed forces in the region.

"We discussed key issues including national security, infrastructure development, civil-military cooperation, and the strong coordination between the Army and the state government," he said. (PTI)

NSF urges Nagaland govt to facilitate return of Naga students from Nepal

HT Correspondent
DIMAPUR, Sept 10: The Naga Students' Federation (NSF) on Wednesday appealed to the Nagaland government for its urgent intervention in facilitating the return of the Naga students and youth, who are currently stranded in Nepal owing to the ongoing political crisis in the country, to the state.

Expressing deep concern over the plight of the students and youth, NSF president Mteising and general secretary Kenilo Kent, through a letter to the chief secretary, urged the state government to coordinate with the Union ministry of external affairs and other relevant agencies to arrange necessary travel support, documentation and transit assistance to ensure their safe return to the state in view of the difficulties faced by them.

It said many of them had gone there for academic and professional pursuits, but the prevailing situation has placed them in a position of grave uncertainty and distress.

The federation also requested that suitable arrangements, including logistical support and immediate assistance where required, be made upon their arrival in Nagaland.

"Such timely intervention by the state government will bring immense relief to the stranded individuals as well as their anxious families back home," it stated.

The NSF, while expressing its steadfast commitment to upholding the welfare of the Naga students across the globe, earnestly sought the government's consideration and prompt action on the matter.

Nagaland to witness rainfall till Sept 14

HT Correspondent
DIMAPUR, Sept 10: Nagaland will experience thunderstorms and lightning with light to moderate rainfall at a few places until September 14, according to the Nagaland State Disaster Management Authority's (NSDMA) weather update on Wednesday. It said the districts of Chumukedima, Kiphire, Kohima, Mokochung, Phek, Shamator, Tuensang, Wokha and Zunheboto will, however, experience heavy rain accompanied by thunderstorms and lightning.

Due to the risk of high precipitation in the hill sector, the state's lowland and foothill districts, including Dimapur, Niu-lund, Chumukedima, Bhandari, Baghty, Tizit, and Tuli, are vulnerable to waterlogging and flash floods.

M'laya govt reviews Japanese Encephalitis spread

SHILLONG, Sept 10: The Meghalaya government on Wednesday informed the Assembly that it is stepping up efforts to combat Japanese Encephalitis (JE) and, at the same time, has made substantial progress in the implementation of projects under the Smart City Mission.

Health and Family Welfare Minister Ampareen Lyngdoh said the state reported 236 cases of JE over the past two years — 89 cases in 2023-24 and 147 in 2024-25.

"JE vaccine is part of the universal immunisation programme for children aged 9 to 11 months and 16 to 23 months. Vaccination is key to prevention, and the government is working hard to break down misconceptions," she said.

Replying to a query from TMC legislator Miani D Shira, Lyngdoh said higher vaccination coverage in Garo Hills, between 80 and 95 per cent, has led to fewer cases compared to Khasi and Jaintia Hills. (PTI)

3 state-run schools in Mizoram's Lunglei get cosmic classrooms

AIZAWL, Sept 10: Three state-run schools in Mizoram's Lunglei district got cosmic classrooms that seek to ignite curiosity in science and space among students. School Education Minister Vanlalhlana inaugurated the classrooms at state-run Leitlangpui High School, Lungsen Higher Secondary School and Tlabung Middle School.

The minister also launched a number of other educational initiatives, among which were an English language foundation programme, a financial literacy campaign, and an awareness campaign to break taboos surrounding menstruation.

Vanlalhlana lauded the district administration and the School Education Department for their efforts in strengthening educational opportunities in Lunglei.

He said that these initiatives are in line with the National Education Policy 2020, and the state government's vision of providing quality, inclusive and equitable



education for all.

The minister expressed hope that the programmes would bring meaningful transformation in the lives of students.

Deputy Commissioner Navneet Mann said the initiatives form part of a holistic approach to education, encompassing academics, science, health, financial literacy and life skills.

She emphasised the need for continued community participation to ensure the success and sustainability of these programmes. The cosmic classrooms have been designed to nurture curiosity and a scientific spirit among students through interactive lessons on stars, planets, galaxies, and space exploration, a statement said. (PTI)

No. E-628253/119

NOTICE

In pursuance of Clause No. 5(x) and 5(ix) of this Office's earlier Notice issued vide No. E-392562/55 dated 16/10/2024 & No. E-392562/57 dated 16/10/2024 and No. E-392562/54 dated 16/10/2024 & No. E-392562/56 dated 16/10/2024 respectively, it is hereby informed that candidates of TET cum Recruitment Examination (TCR), 2024, whose document verification process is completed in regard to recruitment for Graduate Teacher and Post Graduate Teacher posts, are required to furnish valid/updated Employment Exchange Registration Card mandatorily before appointment.

Candidates are hereby advised to keep their valid/updated Employment Exchange Registration Cards ready for mandatory submission as and when asked for.

Sd/-
Director of Secondary Education, Assam
Kahilipara, Gauhati - 781

DIPR /D/HLT/158/11-Sep-25

BAJAJ FINANCE LIMITED

Registered Office: Bajaj Finance Limited, C/o Bajaj Auto Limited Complex Mumbai Pune Road Akurdi Pune 411035
Branch Office: Bajaj Finance Limited, 2nd Floor Bajaj Finance Limited Baitaha Charali

Demanded Notice Under Section 13(2) of Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002

Undersigned being the Authorized Officer of M/s Bajaj Finance Limited, hereby gives the following notice to the Borrower(s) Co-Borrower(s) who have failed to discharge their liability i.e., defaulted in the repayment of principal as well as the interest and other charges accrued there on for Home loan(s)/Loan(s) Against Property advanced to them by Bajaj Finance Limited and as consequence the loan(s) have become Non Performing Assets (N.P.A's). Accordingly, notices were issued to them under section 13(2) of Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and rules there on their last known addresses, however the same have been returned un-served/undelivered, as such the Borrower(s)/Co-Borrower(s) are hereby intimated/informed by way of this publication notice to clear their outstanding dues under the loan facilities availed by them from time to time.

| Loan Account No./ Name of the Borrower(s) Mortgagor(s)/Guarantor(s) | Description of Secured Immovable Property | Demand Notice Date and Amt. |
|---|--|---|
| 1. B B Enterprise thr. Its Prop. Bipul Boro R/o. Ward No. 3 Holding No. 03/664 Hospital Road Rangia Murara Chowk Rangia Kamrup Assam 781354 Contact: 9864145712 E-mail id: bipulboro228@gmail.com Also at: R/o. Dag No. 242 / 243 / 245 Patta No. 75 Village Nakul Mouza Pub-Barigong Circle Rangia District Kamrup Assam 781354 | Schedule of property: All the piece and parcel of Dag No. 242 / 243 / 245 Patta No. 75 Village Nakul Mouza Pub-Barigong Circle Rangia District Kamrup Assam 781354 along with proportionate share in common areas (Area adm. 5760 Sq.Ft.) | 18-08-2025 & Rs. 44,07,730/- (Rupees Forty Four Lakhs Seven Thousand Seven Hundred Thirty Only) as on 18.08.2025 |
| 2. Sabitri Boro W/o Romoni Boro R/o. H. No. 157 Santala Santala Kamrup Guwahati Assam 781125 Contact: 9864145712 E-mail id: bipulboro228@gmail.com | Boundaries:- East: Pradij Das and Owner Land; West: Road and Seller Land; North: Ananta Das; South: Owner Land and Loban Das | |
| 3. Bipul Boro S/o Karuna Boro R/o. W No 3 Hospital Road Mt Road Basni Office Rangia Kamrup Assam 781354 Contact: 9864145712 E-mail id: bipulboro228@gmail.com | | |

This step is being taken for substituted service of notice. The above Borrowers/Co-Borrowers, Guarantors are advised to make the payments of outstanding along with future interest within **60 days** from the date of publication of this notice, failing which (without prejudice to any other right remedy available with Bajaj Finance Limited) further steps for taking possession of the Secured Assets / Mortgage Property will be initiated as per provisions of Sec.13(4) of the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002. The parties named above are also advised not to alienate, create third party interest in the above-mentioned properties. On which Bajaj Finance Limited has the charge.

Date : 11-09-2025, Place: Assam
Sd/- Authorized Officer
Bajaj Finance Limited

YRF Music drops extended album of 'Saiyaara' after record-breaking success



MUMBAI, Sept 10: Yash Raj Films (YRF) on Wednesday announced the release of an extended music album for "Saiyaara" featuring two new songs and a set of original soundtrack instrumentals.

Directed by Mohit Suri and produced by YRF CEO Akshay Widhani, "Saiyaara" has turned out to be one of the highest grossing love stories in Indian cinema, earning over Rs 560 crore at the box office.

The movie, which released in theatres in July, introduced newcomers Ahaan Panday and Aneet Padda as its lead pair.

The soundtrack, which has garnered over 500 million streams across platforms, has emerged as a defining musical success of 2025. According to YRF, it has topped charts on Gaana, JioSaavn, Amazon Music

and Apple Music, with five tracks featuring in Spotify's Top 50 list.

On YouTube, songs from the film continue to trend globally, while Instagram Reels and YouTube Shorts have amplified its reach among younger audiences.

The title track "Saiyaara", crooned by singer Faheem Abdullah, alone has crossed 175 million streams on Spotify, hit the No 1 spot on Spotify's Viral 50 Global charts, and ranked in the top 10 on the Billboard Global 200, according to a press release.

The newly released extended album includes two additional tracks — "Barbaad (Rock Version)" and "Saath Tu Chal Hum-safar" — along with 16 OST instrumentals and the original seven songs that have already become popular.

"YRF has been a pioneer of original music and stories that continue to define eras. 'Saiyaara' is one such shining result of this original creation, which proves that original Indian music can stand shoulder to shoulder with the world's biggest albums.

Its global success shows us that audiences everywhere crave authenticity, and YRF Music is proud to deliver that consistently.

"With one of the most enviable music catalogues in Indian cinema, YRF Music has built a legacy that resonates across time and technology," Anand Gurmani, Vice President – Digital & New Media, YRF, said in a statement.

The "Saiyaara Extended Album" is now available on all major music streaming platforms. (PTI)

I'm enjoying every bit of this global attention: Vishal Jethwa on TIFF screening of 'Homebound'

NEW DELHI, Sept 10: After its premiere at Cannes Film Festival, Neeraj Ghaywan's "Homebound" is now gearing up for a screening at the Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF).

The film features Vishal Jethwa, Ishaan Khatter and Janhvi Kapoor in lead roles. It is executive produced by Hollywood legend Martin Scorsese and revolves around two childhood friends played by Khatter and Jethwa.

Jethwa, best known for his performances in Rani Mukerji-starrer "Mardaani 2" and "Salaam Venky", said he is looking forward to the TIFF premiere of the movie. "It feels amazing to be in the spotlight for 'Homebound'. Cannes gave us an overwhelming response, and I feel truly grateful for the love and appreciation we received there. To now be heading to Toronto is a dream. I'm enjoying every bit of this global attention," the 31-year-old said in a statement.

"I really hope the audience at TIFF embraces the film with the same warmth. This journey has been both humbling and inspiring, and I can't wait for more people to experience the world of Homebound," he added.

The film, inspired by journalist Basharat Peer's article during the pandemic, is produced by Karan Johar, Adar Poonawalla, Apoorva Mehta and Somen Mishra. Last month, the film screened at the Indian Film Festival of Melbourne where it won Ghaywan the Best Director Award.

The film's official synopsis reads: "Two childhood friends from a small North Indian village chase a police job that promises them the dignity they've long been denied. But as they inch closer to their dream, mounting desperation threatens the bond that holds them together." TIFF runs from September 4 to September 14. (PTI)

Adivi Sesh-Mrunal Thakur celebrate 'Dacoit' co-star Anurag Kashyap's birthday

NEW DELHI, Sept 10: Actors Adivi Sesh and Mrunal Thakur, who star in the upcoming film "Dacoit" alongside Anurag Kashyap, wished the filmmaker on his birthday.

The film follows an angry convict seeking vengeance against his former girlfriend who betrayed him, according to its official logline.

The two actors posted a video of their shoots with Kashyap, who turned 53 on Wednesday.

"Happy birthday Inspector Swamy," Sesh wrote in the caption, addressing Kashyap by his screen name. Thakur's caption read, "Team #Dacoit wishes 'Inspector Swamy' aka the multifaceted @anuragkashyap10 sir a very happy birthday." "He brings flair, aura and stature to the character like only he can," she added.

Sesh also posted the video with the caption, "Many happy returns of the day sir @anuragkashyap10."

"Your wisdom, brilliance and most importantly, your compassion... have made this @DACOIT experience beautiful," he wrote. Kashyap, a prominent writer-director in Hindi movies, has also acted in movies such as "Akira", "Leo", "Maharaja", "Ak Vs Ak" and "Kutney". Directed by Shaneil Deo, the film will release in theatres on December 25, 2025. It also stars Prakash Raj, Atul Kulkarni and Sunil in pivotal roles. (PTI)



I own all my films, completely and totally: Kajol on hits and flops

NEW DELHI, Sept 10: Her cinematic journey is not just defined by blockbusters. Kajol says she owns each of her films "completely and totally", be it mega hits like "Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge" and "Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham" or a "Gundaraj" and "Hulchul" that fell by the wayside and are long forgotten.

"I would not change one iota of it," the actor, who made her debut with "Bekhudi" in 1992, told PTI in an interview.

She is also proud of the ones that did not work commercially. "I think all the films I've done so far have played a huge part in my career. For me personally, I would say I own them. I own them completely and totally, I take full responsibility for each and every one of them. Credit or discredit, belongs to me," Kajol told PTI in an interview.

With the highs come the lows. In 1995, for instance, she delivered two of the year's biggest hits "Karan Arjun" and "Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge", and also appeared in

"Taaqat", "Hulchul" and "Gundaraj".

"If they've not done well, they may not have done well on a ticket basis. But yes, I did learn something from it. I have done my best in every way. I don't think I have been dishonest in front of the camera. I can say that with actual pride," she added. As someone who spent her life in front of the camera, she has nothing but gratitude for her career of three decades, said the actor, who will next be seen in the second season of the JioHotstar series "The Trial".

"I'm grateful that I can call myself relevant in this day and age. I've been lucky. Yes, I am talented, but there are a lot of talented people who have not been probably as lucky as me. "One thing that comes back to me every time is that I have literally lived my life in front of the cameras. I've fallen down, I've gotten up, I've gotten pregnant, I've had babies, I've got married, I've been a teenager, I've been a 25-year-old... I've done everything in

'JOLLY LLB 3' MEERUT TRAILER LAUNCH: AKSHAY KUMAR, ARSHAD WARSI FIELD QUIRKY QUESTIONS



MEERUT, Sept 10: "What's the story of the film?", "Which city is better, Kanpur or Meerut?" and "Why did you release a teaser for this one?" were among the range of questions that "Jolly LLB 3" stars Akshay Kumar and Arshad Warsi fielded at a packed trailer launch event here.

The upcoming film is the third chapter of the courtroom comedy franchise that started with 2013's "Jolly LLB", featuring Warsi as a down-on-luck lawyer from Meerut Jolly Tyagi. It was followed by 2017's "Jolly LLB 2" that saw Kumar starring as Jolly Mishra, another struggling lawyer from Kanpur.

The trailer launch was organised in the hometowns of the film's two characters, with the team starting their day in Kanpur before heading to Meerut, where they were greeted by huge crowd at the Shopprix Mall.

The actors were accompanied by the film's director Subhash Kapoor, producer Ajit Andhare and co-star Saurabh Shukla, who reprises his role of Judge Sunder Lal Tripathi. The trailer was then unveiled, showcasing the two lawyers locked in a battle of wit and ethics over a gripping farmer-versus-politician issue.

The first question the duo faced was about the film's story.

To this, Kumar replied, "This movie is about an event that took place in 2011. It is about farmers. Now you watch the film, it has entertainment and a lesson. The lesson is conveyed in an entertaining way."

He also praised the director for making the movie with a "lot of love".

The next question was -- Why were they in Kanpur and Meerut and which one of the cities is better?

"India is the best," said Kumar, adding that both "Mishra and Tyagi are the same, just like Kanpur and Meerut are the same".

Another journalist asked Kumar: "The earlier two movies didn't require any teasers. Why did this one need a teaser?"

A confused Kumar turned to Kapoor and asked, "Kya, teaser nahi banaya tha pehle?" leaving the audience in splits.

He was then asked, "You and Arshad are fighting against each other in the film, who will have the upper hand?"

Kumar said, "You want to find out without paying money?"

"You make a lot of patriotic films, and Meerut has been crucial to the Indian struggle. How do you feel about being here?" asked a journalist.

While he was asking the question, another interrupted, "Ek aadh sawaal judge sahab (Shukla) se bhi poochle?"

Kumar said, "Ek minute, baat karlein beta.... "We've picked up everything from here, including nankhatai from Ghanta Ghar, and on our journey back to Mumbai, we'll be snacking on it all."

The excitement around the stars was such that most of the journalists had gathered around the stage, making it difficult for actors to discern the identity of the person asking the questions.

Someone in the crowd said, "Mera sawaal Arshad Abbas ji se hai -- aapne Meerut ki bhasha ke live kis se training li hai?"

A witty Warsi replied, "Mera to naam hi badal diya." Towards the end, a question was finally posed to Shukla and amid the commotion, Shukla raised his hand and quipped, "Koi ek question aaya hai, poochne do."

The journalist then asked him -- "You are portraying the role of a judge in these films. I got to know from my sources that you made the role memorable without any script. Where did you get the motivation?" (PTI)



front of the camera. And yet I feel that people look at me with so much love and they forgive me, all my little idiosyncrasies."

Kajol cemented her place as one of the most loved stars of the 1990s with a filmography that included "Baazigar", "Udhhaar Ki Zindagi", "Gupt" and "Kuch Kuch Hota Hai".

The following decade came "Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham", "Fanaa" and "My Name Is Khan".

More recently, she has ventured into the OTT space with "The Trial" being her debut series. Asked if there was a particular decade she found most creatively fulfilling, Kajol said she doesn't view her career in terms of eras but through individual performances.

"Fortunately for me, I've had performances that I've loved... Initially maybe I had 'Udhhaar Ki Zindagi' and 'Dushman'. After that, I had 'Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham'

and after five years, I had another film... I've been blessed that I've had really good work throughout. I wouldn't say that there has been a particular decade."

"The Trial" is an adaptation of popular American show "The Good Wife" and features her as a housewife who, after 10 years, starts working at a law firm to support her family when her husband is arrested in a sex and corruption scandal. In her career, Kajol has never revisited a character again but reprising the role of Noyonika for the show's second chapter was a refreshing experience.

"It's actually quite interesting to play the same character again because when you do a film, the character has one arc and that's it's over when the movie ends. You never revisit that character again. You never go back to that character. But when you're doing a series which has a second season, you are growing that character. So it's a very interesting experience." (PTI)

Brevis, Markram smash SA20 auction records

JOHANNESBURG, Sept 10: Brevis was bought by Sourav Ganguly-coached Pretoria Capitals for R16.5 million (approx ₹8.3 crore), surpassing the previous record of R9.2 million (approx ₹4.6 crore) paid for Tristan Stubbs in 2022.

The Centurion-based franchise, with new head coach Ganguly at the helm, beat stiff competition from Joburg Super Kings to secure the 22-year-old.

"I hope he does well. I think he is a tremendous talent. His game has really progressed over the last one-and-a-half years, as we saw against Australia," Ganguly stated in a release after the auction on Tuesday.

"On that tour, he showed he is a game-changer, and that's exactly what you need in T20 cricket. We have Russell, Rutherford, who can really step it up, and I hope Brevis does the same.

"I never associate performance with money. Leaving aside the R16.5 million, I believe he is a fantastic talent. He plays spin very well, which is extremely important, and taking everything into account, that's why he went for that price.

"Markram, South Africa's T20I captain, went to Durban's Super Giants for R14 million (approx ₹7 crore) after Sunrisers Eastern Cape tried to retain him with a Right to Match card at R12.4 million.

"I'm always reluctant to talk about the numbers, but it is exciting to see the investment back into South African cricket," SA20 League Commissioner Graeme Smith said after the auction.

"The franchises have come and they've invested properly. You see they're getting behind the South African players.

"I think there's some proper talent. The platform that SA20 has provided has not only benefited them here (in South Africa), but benefited them in other leagues and internationally as well," he added.

Overall, the six franchises spent R129.3 million (approx ₹65 crore) on 84 players, including R116.9 million (approx ₹59 crore) on South Africans. A total of R22.8 million (approx ₹11.4 crore) was invested in 12 Under-23 players.

Among the youngsters, teenage pacer Kwen Maphaka was picked by Durban's Super Giants for R2.3 million, while Janco Smit (Joburg Super Kings), Bayanda Majola (Pretoria Capitals) and JJ Bason (Paarl Royals) also secured contracts for their debut SA20 seasons.

Joburg Super Kings signed all-rounder Wiaan Mulder for R9 million (approx. ₹4.5 crore) and left-arm seamer Nandre Burger for R6.3 million (approx ₹3.1 crore). Season 4 of the SA20 gets underway from December 26 to January 25, 2026. (PTI)

India beat Brunei Darussalam 6-0, but suffer heartbreak in AFC U23 Asian Cup Qualifiers



DOHA, Sept 10: The India Under 23 men's football team was eliminated from the AFC U23 Asian Cup Qualifiers despite defeating Brunei Darussalam 6-0 at the Suheim Bin Hamad Stadium in their final group match here.

The Blue Colts finished with six points from their three matches, and had to wait for the outcome of the other Group H match between Qatar and Bahrain at the Abdullah bin

Khalifa Stadium in Doha, which the hosts won 2-1, coming back from a goal down to score twice in injury time. Qatar finished top of the group with a perfect record (nine points from three matches), while India ended up second with six points.

While the four best second-placed teams (from 11 groups) also qualified, India finished the campaign at number five amongst the group runners-up. Midfielder Vibin Mohanan

(5', 7', 62') scored a hat-trick, and Mohammed Aimen (87', 90+7') netted two, while Ayush Chhetri (41') got one to his name in Tuesday's match. India started with a bang when Muhammed Suhail weaved into the box and cut it back for Vibin, who rode a tackle, before finishing it from close range to give his side the lead in the fifth minute.

The mid-fielder scored again a couple of minutes later, when his at-

tempted aerial through ball bounced over the Brunei goalkeeper's head and looped into the net.

The Blue Colts kept plugging in at the Brunei defence, but were either thwarted or missed their chances. Moosa decided to introduce centre forward Parthib Gogoi in the 32nd minute itself, in order to give his side more of an attacking edge.

Nine minutes later, Ayush added

the third goal, finishing off a fine move that saw him open up the Brunei defence after playing a one-two inside the box with Sreekuttan MS.

India pressed on in the second half, laying a siege on the Brunei penalty area, but it took them a little over 15 minutes after the restart to score the fourth, Vibin completing his hat-trick with a finely-curved free-kick through the Brunei wall.

Substitutes Sahil Harijan, Aimen, and Soham Varshneya were brought on to make an impact.

While the desired impact was there to see in terms of opening up the opposition defence, India lacked the finishing touch.

Harijan had a couple of close chances when he made smart runs between the lines.

On the first occasion, he had just the goalkeeper to beat, but was tackled by Brunei defender Irfan Abdullah, while on the second, his first-time shot off a Vibin cross went inches wide of an open goal.

Aimen was knocking at the Brunei goalmouth as well, and sent his powerful shot in the 83rd minute crashing into the upright. Harijan thought he had scored a minute later, when he tapped in an Aimen cross, but was flagged offside.

Aimen added two more superb goals to make it six, both long rangers in the dying embers of the game, to make it 6-0 for the Blue Colts. (PTI)

Kanaklata Baruah Women's Inter District Cricket Tournament begins



HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, Sept 10: The Kanaklata Baruah Women's Inter District Cricket Tournament 2025, organised by the Assam Cricket Association in collaboration with the Karbi Anglong Sports Association (KASA), began on Wednesday at the KASA Cricket Ground, Diphu. The tournament is scheduled to be held from September 10 to 17.

The opening ceremony was graced by Dr. Bishnu Ram Nunisa, Member, Senior Tournament Committee and Joint Secretary, KASA; Kensing Engti, Treasurer, KASA; Saibal Sengupta, General Secretary, Hailakandi District Sports Association; Pradip Ronghang, Assistant Secretary, KASA; Sanjay Timung, cricket Secretary, KASA, along with other distinguished dignitaries.

In Wednesday's opening match between Hailakandi DSA and Silchar DSA, Hailakandi won the toss, and Silchar DSA elected to field first.

The tournament, named after the valiant freedom fighter Kanaklata Baruah, is a historic initiative to promote women's cricket across the districts of Assam, and Diphu is proud to host such a significant sporting event.

England beat Serbia 5-0 for a statement win under Tuchel; France and Portugal dodge upsets

LONDON, Sept 10: Kylian Mbappé got France out of trouble, Cristiano Ronaldo helped Portugal do the same with a record-equaling goal, and England finally got its Thomas Tuchel era into gear.

Three of Europe's soccer powerhouses took big steps closer to the 2026 World Cup on Tuesday, all while Erling Haaland scored five goals in an 11-1 win with fresh stitches in his face.

Noni Madueke, Ezri Konsa and Marc Guehi all scored their first goals for England, which beat Serbia 5-0 for a win which could be a turning point in Tuchel's tenure.

Despite Tuchel's recent talk of being prepared to win ugly with long passing, this win was more about managing the game and shutting down Serbia, which had made England fight hard for a 1-0 win at Euro 2024. Harry Kane was crucial, finding space to score the opening goal with a header from Declan Rice's corner.

The captain cemented England's advantage late on with smart movement to get in behind the defense on a move that ended



with a red card for Nikola Milenkovic, who denied a clear scoring chance by Kane. Guehi scored England's fourth from the resulting free kick.

"The energy has been higher and the level has been higher," Kane told BBC radio. "Serbia are a good team, and we made them look average tonight."

England is seven points clear at the top of Group K from Albania, which beat Latvia 1-0. A win and two draws in its last three group games would be enough for

Tuchel's team to qualify for the World Cup.

Goalkeeper Jordan Pickford didn't have to make a save as Serbia didn't manage a shot on target. England had 12.

"We were very strong," Tuchel said. "I think it was teamwork in its purest form. We helped each other out, we had the right intensity in the right moments."

France held on with 10 men to beat Iceland 2-1 after coming from behind thanks to a goal and assist from Mbappé.

Iceland took a surprise lead when Michael Olise gave away the ball in his own penalty area and Andri Gudjohnsen pounced on it to score. Mbappé finally got France into the game when he converted a penalty just before halftime after being shoved by Mikael Anderson.

Mbappé led a break for the second goal and set up Bradley Barcola to score in the 62nd but France's task got harder when Aurélien Tchouaméni was sent off soon after for a reckless lunging tackle.

France leads Group D after winning its first two games, with Iceland second. Oleksandr Zinchenko conceded a penalty for handball as third-place Ukraine's chances of qualifying plunged in a 1-1 draw with Azerbaijan, which had fired ex-Portugal coach Fernando Santos following its 5-0 loss to Iceland last week.

Joao Cancelo scored the winning goal in the 86th to give Portugal a 3-2 victory over Hungary, its second win to start the qualifying campaign, after two goals from Barnabas Varga had given Hungary hope of an upset. (AP)

Bolivia beat Brazil 1-0 to advance to World Cup playoff from South American qualifying

EL ALTO (BOLIVIA), Sept 10: Miguel Terceros scored from a penalty in the first half and Bolivia downed Brazil 1-0 on Tuesday in South American qualifying which combined with Colombia's win over Venezuela helped the Bolivians advance to the playoff tournament for the 2026 World Cup.

Terceros converted in the 45th minute for the Bolivians who defeated Brazil at home for the first time since 2019.

The playoff tournament will involve six nations and will be played in March's international window to decide the last two spots for the World Cup to be played next year in the United States, Canada and Mexico.

Bolivia is aiming to qualify for its fourth World Cup and first since 1994.

Uruguay, Colombia and Uruguay were the most recent South American teams to qualify for next year's World Cup last week and the final round of the qualifiers was meant to decide the team to advance to the

international playoff. The Colombians, who finished in third place in the qualifiers, helped Bolivia's cause by rolling past Venezuela 6-3 with a big night from striker Luis Diaz, who scored four goals.

Diaz, a Sporting Club player, scored in the 42nd, 50th, 59th and 67th minutes. Yerry Mina in the 10th and Jhon Cordoba in the 75 also scored.

Also on Tuesday, Enner Valencia scored on a penalty kick late in the first half and Ecuador defeated reigning champions Argentina 1-0.

The 35-year-old Valencia converted in the 45th minute for the Ecuadorians, who finished second in the South American standings with 29 points behind the Argentinians' 38.

Lionel Messi, who played his last official match at home last Thursday, did not suit up.

Meanwhile, Uruguay finished the qualifying tournament with a scoreless draw against Chile, and Paraguay defeated Peru 1-0. (AP)

Recurve archers flop again: women miss bronze, mixed and individual hopes crash

GWANGJU (SOUTH KOREA), Sept 10: Indian recurve archers once again flattered to deceive at the World Championships as the women's team lost to South Korea in the bronze medal playoff, while the mixed pair and men's individual hopes also crashed out on Wednesday.

Desperate to end a decade long medal drought at the Worlds, the women's trio of Deepika Kumari, Gatha Khadake and Ankita Bhakat failed to seize the big moments against its familiar nemesis, going down 3-5 against South Korea. It's not that the 'invincible' Koreans on home turf dominated outright. In fact, they looked vulnerable with erratic shots and never once managed a perfect set.

But the Indians failed to land the knockout punch, squandering a golden chance to turn a 3-3 deadlock into a bronze.

The pattern was all too familiar with flashes of brilliance with four 10s in a set, only to be undone by loose shots and nerves when the medal was within reach.

After conceding the opening set 51-54, the Indians produced four 10s to tie the second 57-57, enough to create a panic among the Korean women's team which has won the Olympic gold 10 times in a row.

Riding on their late surge, the Indians edged the third 57-54 to draw level at 3-3, raising hopes of a breakthrough.

But the Koreans, led by triple Olympic gold medalist An San (Tokyo) and reigning Paris cham-

pion Lim Si-hyeon, regained control in the fourth, sealing a 56-54 win and extending their domination. There was more heartbreak in the mixed event where Deepika and Neeraj Chauhan went down 4-5 (18-19) in a shoot-off to Japan's Nanami Asakuno and Yuki Kawata in the second round of 16.

After losing the first set 36-37, they rallied with two tied sets (36-36, 37-37) and even edged ahead 38-37 in the fourth with three 10s, only to collapse in the decider by failing to produce a single 10 when it mattered the most.

With the men already out of the individual rounds and the compound squad having wrapped up their campaign earlier, Indian recurve contingent will now be hoping to salvaging some pride in the women's individual section.

The 31-year-old Deepika, making her World Championships return post-motherhood, is still searching for that elusive medal at the Worlds.

All eyes would also be on rising 15-year-old debutant Gatha.

The medal drought in the recurve section has stretched since 2019, when Atanu Das, Pravin Jadhav and Tarundeep Rai snatched a silver in Den Bosch.

Since then, it has been left to the compound archers to salvage India's pride at the World Championships. India have so far bagged two medals, all coming in the compound section -- a first-ever men's team gold and mixed team silver by Rishabh Yadav and Jyothi Surekha Vennam.

Debutant Rahul was the most impressive among the trio, making the third round (last-32) before going down 5-6 (8-10) to Aleksandre Machavariani of Georgia in the shoot-off.

The 21-year-old held a commanding 5-3 lead but faltered in the last two sets, once again exposing India's mental frailties under pressure in the Olympic recurve category.

After drawing the opening set 28-28, Rahul shot a perfect 30/30 in the second and edged the third 28-27 to go 5-1 up.

Needing only a draw in the fourth, he faltered with an 8 as Machavariani fired three 10s to stay alive.

The Georgian then took the fifth set 28-27 to force a shoot-off, where Rahul managed an 8 against his rival's perfect 10.

Olympian Dhiraj Bommadevara, the most experienced of the trio, had the toughest draw as he ran into former Olympic champion Mete Gazoz in the opening round. The top-ranked Indian lost 2-6 after drawing the first set 29-29. The second set was closely fought, but Gazoz's two 10s gave him a 29-28 edge.

The Turkish archer extended his lead to 5-2 with another 29-28 in the third. Dhiraj drew the fourth 29-29, but it was not enough to stop Gazoz from sealing the win.

Neeraj Chauhan, meanwhile, was outclassed 0-6 by Uzbekistan's Bobrajabov Bekzod, losing in straight sets 27-29, 27-28, 26-29. (PTI)

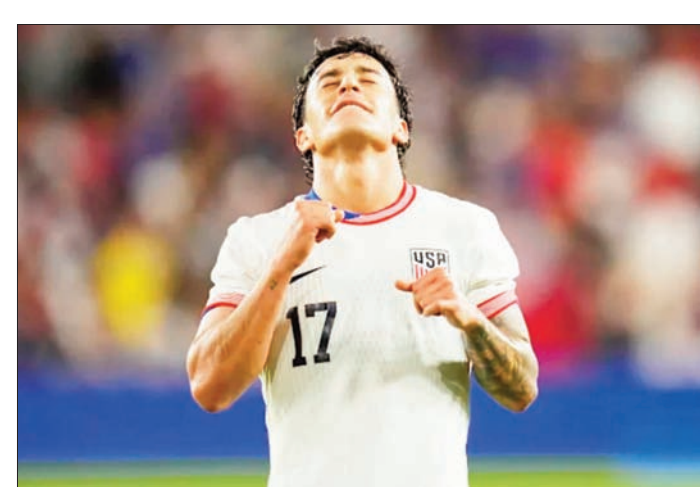
After win over Japan, Pochettino says his wife told him not to be sensitive to criticism in US

COLUMBUS (USA), Sept 10: Mauricio Pochettino and the U.S. felt like they needed a win, even in a friendly nine months ahead of the World Cup against an opponent sending out its second string.

Criticism had become a constant, with Alexi Lalas calling for Pochettino's firing.

"Super important for us," star Christian Pulisic said after assisting on the second goal as the 15th-ranked Americans beat No. 17 Japan 2-0 on Tuesday night. "It's been a tough go recently and we wanted to walk away with some confidence, with a good feeling going into the next camps, obviously leading into a World Cup year." Alejandro Zendejas scored in the 30th minute and Folarin Balogun added a goal in the 64th against a Japan team missing all 11 starters from its clinching win in World Cup qualifying.

After three straight matches in St. Louis, Houston and Harrison, New Jersey, at which fans overwhelmingly supported the visitors, the U.S. drew a pro-American sell-out crowd of 20,192 to Lower.com Field. The United States is 11-7 under Pochettino, who replaced Gregg Berhalter following first-round elimination in last year's Copa America. The Americans lost in a CONCACAF Nations League semifinal and in the CONCACAF Gold Cup final and extended their winless streak against top 25 teams to seven games with a 2-0 loss last weekend to South



Korea.

Pochettino, hired as U.S. coach last Sept. 10, had become defensive of late, saying people should take a long-term view and accept that because his team has an automatic berth as co-host, wins don't matter until the Americans' World Cup opener next June 12.

"I prefer that the people criticize me, but don't touch the players," he said. A day earlier, he addressed those who faulted his decision making, responding to a question about Chris Richards' use last weekend by saying "people sometimes create debate and think — talk with no sense." He added a profanity twice to describe the fault-finding.

Under intense media examination when he coached Tottenham, Paris Saint-Germain and Chelsea,

Pochettino said his wife told him not to get so perturbed by American media, which pays far less attention to soccer than in Europe.

"Yesterday my wife said, 'Oh, why you were like this in the press conference? These guys are so nice. When you were in France or in England, they were very — but they are the nice guys,'" he related. "I said: 'Yeah, but it wasn't for them. I said it was some people.'" "But not professional, like you," he told reporters. "But, OK, keep moving because I'm so happy to be here. I'm so happy to be the coach in this country."

Still, he defended his opinion of the criticism.

"Maybe yesterday I say one word that I don't want to repeat, but it was the truth," he said.

Zendejas scored when he took a

long cross from left back Max Arsten and volleyed with his left foot from near the penalty spot for his second goal in 13 international appearances. He had not been with the national team since November. "Just waiting for my moment," he said. "I didn't expect to get called up."

Balogun scored his sixth international goal after Pulisic's through pass, beating goalkeeper Keisuke Osako with an angled shot inside the far post.

"We're building something big here. He's obviously a top coach and it takes time, and he tried to emphasize that to us to be patient," Balogun said. "Confidence, I think it's really important. The results are at the end of the day the sort of industry we're in."

Balogun was a late addition to the roster, joining for the first time since Pochettino took over as coach. He was injured for much of last season, causing Pochettino and his staff to doubt whether he should be called in.

"Now with this type of performance he's in the race for the roster of the World Cup," Pochettino said, going on to also praise Pulisic, Arsten, Alex Freeman and Cristian Roldan, who made his first start in 26 minutes. "They understand or understood that they need to perform in the way that we expect," Pochettino said. "It's not about to win or to lose the games but, if not, to perform in the way we expect." (AP)

Asia Cup: Bangladesh eye strong start against struggling Hong Kong

ABU DHABI, Sept 10: Bangladesh will begin their Asia Cup campaign against Hong Kong at the Sheikh Zayed Stadium here on Thursday, a seemingly straightforward opener against a side that is still reeling from a heavy defeat to Afghanistan.

Hong Kong were thrashed by 94 runs in the Asia Cup opener on Tuesday, reduced to 94 for nine in reply to Afghanistan's 188 for six.

With only two batters reaching double figures, their fragile lineup will be under pressure once again, while their bowlers must quickly regroup after being taken apart at the death.

Chasing the elusive title, Bangladesh, on the other hand, will see this as an opportunity to start on a strong note and settle into the tournament before the tougher assignments against Sri Lanka (September 13) and Afghanistan (September 16) in the group stage. For the Tigers, the Asia Cup has historically been a story of promise without silverware.

Bangladesh have made three appearances in the final (2012, 2016 and 2018), but each time fell short against established heavyweights India and Sri Lanka.

Liton Das will lead the side, his fifth outing in the competition but first as full-time captain in a major continental event.

His presence as both wicketkeeper and batter provides stability, while the squad itself is a blend of experience and youthful energy.

Nurul Hasan returns to the fold after



nearly three years, lending depth to both batting and keeping options.

Towhid Hridoy brings middle-order aggression, Mustafizur Rahman remains the spearhead with his famed variations at the death, and Tanzim Hasan Sakib's rise as a miserly new-ball bowler adds further balance to the attack.

Bangladesh come into the tournament

with momentum, having won three consecutive series -- against Sri Lanka, Pakistan, and the Netherlands.

But the weight of history looms large, as Bangladesh have repeatedly fallen short in ICC and ACC tournaments despite reaching three Asia Cup finals.

"We haven't yet had a taste of the championship, but that's history. History is there

to be broken. There will be many challenges here, it won't be easy. But we'll focus on how we can improve as a team," Litton said at the trophy unveiling ceremony in Dubai on Tuesday.

The wicketkeeper-batter further stressed that the squad is in a good shape following a long camp.

Under his leadership, the top order has shown greater intent with improved strike rates, while the bowling has found fresh depth.

"There's no sense of urgency. We've played very good cricket in the recent past and had quite a long camp. I think we're well prepared for the Asia Cup. All the teams are strong and it will be challenging, but we're eager to take that challenge and give our hundred percent," he added.

Teams :

Bangladesh: Litton Das (C, WK), Tanzim Hasan, Parvez Hossain Emon, Saif Hassan, Towhid Hridoy, Jaker Ali, Shamim Hossain, Nurul Hasan, Mahedi Hasan, Rishad Hossain, Nasum Ahmed, Mustafizur Rahman, Tanzim Hasan, Taskin Ahmed, Shoriful Islam, Mohammad Saifuddin.

Hong Kong: Yasim Murtaza (c), Babar Hayat, Zeeshan Ali, Niazakat Khan Mohammad, Nasrulla Rana, Martin Coetzee, Anshuman Rath, Kalhan Marc Challu, Ayush Shukla, Mohammad Aizaz Khan, Ateeq ul Rehman Iqbal, Kinchit Shah, Ali Hassan, Shahid Wasif, Ghazanfar Mohammad, Mohammad Waheed, Ehsan Khan.

Match starts: 8pm IST. (PTI)

Gavaskar, Shastri, Sehwag in commentary panel for Asia Cup



BENGALURU, Sept 10: A clutch of young prospects such as Ravichandran Smaran and Danish Malewar will be eager to enter the selectors' thinking arc during the Duleep Trophy final between South Zone and Central Zone, starting here from Thursday.

The absence of some familiar stars, except Central skipper Rajat Patidar, owing to their India A duty against Australia A might have given the match a barren look.

But it is equally exciting to watch some next-Gen talents trying to push their cases to gain higher acclaim after making a blazing start to their respective domestic careers during the 2024-25 season.

None has been more impressive in that group than Smaran, whose seven first-class appearances for Karnataka have yielded 516 runs at an average of 64.50 with two hundreds.

His records in List A and T20s are impressive too — 433 runs from 10 matches at an average of 72.16 in 50-over matches and holding a strike-rate of 170 in six T20s.

Those numbers underline his all-format prowess, and the 22-year-old left-hander would certainly want to build on it in front of national selectors at the BCCI Centre of Excellence grounds.

On the other hand, Central's Malewar has already made an impression in the Duleep Trophy, scripting 203 and 76 in the quarterfinals and semifinals respectively.

In fact, the 21-year-old Vidarbha batter has so far made 1077 runs from a mere 11 first-class matches averaging 59 with three hundreds. Giving them company is 19-year-old Andre Siddarth from Tamil Nadu, who began his first-class career with a 612-run season (2024-25) where he averaged 68.

All these first-season wonders will be keen to build on their early success in the upcoming domestic season and this match offers them a fine launching pad.

With a few important India A assignments lined-up in the near future, they will be keen to make a strong impression on selectors.

While batting departments of both the Zones are filled with hopefuls, their bowling units largely have domestic work-horses.

At 33, India pacer Deepak

Chahar, who is representing Central Zone here, might not have too much time in his hand, and he will need to make this outing count with some wickets against his name.

In this Duleep Trophy, he has bowled 29 overs across two matches for as many wickets, and he would be eyeing an improvement there.

But in bowling, Central will miss spinner Harsh Dubey, pacers Khaleel Ahmed and Yash Thakur, as the troika has joined India A camp in Lucknow.

So does that give South, who themselves are without batters Devdutt Padikkal and Narayan Jagadeesan, a distinct advantage?

South captain Mohammed Azharuddeen was pinning his hope on the ability of his batters to bat big in the final.

"We are playing with seven batters actually, so it's always an advantage because Bangalore wickets are always favouring the batters. So, we are keeping things very simple. If you are batting either first or second, we just want to put up a huge score."

"Jaggi and Padikkal will not be there for the next match. Really happy for them because they have been doing really well for the last two-three years. But we are getting a very good replacement as well," said Azharuddeen.

In fact, if the CoE pitch retains its rather sluggish nature then, as Azharuddeen hinted, the title clash could be a run-drenched affair.

Teams (from)

Central Zone: Rajat Patidar (c), Ayush Pandey, Danish Malewar, Shubham Sharma, Sanchit Desai, Yash Rathod, Nachiket Bhute, Kumar Kartikeya Singh, Aditya Thakare, Upendra Yadav (wk), Ajay Singh Kukna, Akshay Wadkar (wk), Deepak Chahar, Kuldeep Sen, Saransh Jain.

South Zone: Mohammed Azharuddeen (c and wk), Ricky Bhui (v-c), Ravichandran Smaran, Kale M, Sheikh Rasheed, Tanmay Agarwal, Salman Nizar, Andre Siddarth, Tanay Thyagarajan, Gurjapneet Singh, MD Nidheesh, Vasuki Koushik, Ankith Sharma, T Vijay, Basil NP.

Stand-bys: Mohit Redkar, Snehal Kautankar, Eden Apple Tom, Ajay Rohera, G Anikeeth Reddy.

Match starts at 930 am. (PTI)

ICC Women's World Cup trophy visits Guwahati

GUWAHATI, Sept 10: The top prize for the upcoming ICC Women's World Cup was taken to some of the most famous and historic landmarks during its six-day Trophy Tour here, as the city prepared to host the showpiece event for the first time in history. During its six-day tour that began on August 31, the prestigious trophy visited the War Memorial, Northbrook Gate, a ferry ride from Fancy Bazar Ghat capturing the sunset over the Brahmaputra River and the culturally rich Mahabub Brahmaputra River Heritage Centre.

The tour gave fans an opportunity to connect with the tournament and celebrate women's cricket.

A key highlight was a visit to six schools: NPS International School, SBOA Public School, South Point School, Assam Jatiya Bidyalay, SAI RNS Academy and Holy Child School. Students gave the trophy a hero's welcome, took part in cricket-themed games and enjoyed engaging activities. The 13th edition of the tournament sets a new benchmark in accessibility, with record-low ticket prices starting at just Rs 100 (approximately USD 1.14) — the lowest ever for any ICC global event.

Following an exclusive four-day pre-sale window for Google Pay customers, the second phase of ticket sales also started on Tuesday.

The tour has now moved to Visakhapatnam, continuing its journey through cities in India and Sri Lanka ahead of the tournament, which will take place from September 30 to November 2 across DY Patil Stadium (Navi Mumbai), ACA Stadium (Guwahati), Holkar Stadium (Indore), ACA-VDCA Stadium (Visakhapatnam) and R Premadasa Stadium (Colombo, Sri Lanka). (PTI)

Bishnoi, Arshdeep move up in ICC rankings for bowlers in T20Is

DUBAI, Sept 10: Indian spinner Ravi Bishnoi and left-arm seamer Arshdeep Singh moved up to the sixth and 10th spot respectively in the latest ICC T20 rankings released on Wednesday.

While Varun Chakravarthy remains the highest-ranked Indian bowler at No 4 spot, the trio of Bishnoi, Arshdeep and Axar Patel moved up one spot each to reach sixth, 10th and 13th.

Among batters, Abhishek Sharma continues to sit atop the table with 829 rating points, followed by Tilak Varma on second and skipper Suryakumar Yadav at the sixth spot.

But Yashasvi Jaiswal, who was not selected for the Asia Cup in India's 15-member squad and is among the five reserve players, slipped one position to be ranked 11th.

Ruturaj Gaikwad and Sanju Samson both gained one position each to be ranked 26th and 34th.

Among all-rounders, Hardik Pandya remains No 1 with 252 rating points.

The T20I rankings were updated following the conclusion of the tri-series involving UAE, Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Sindhu loses to unseeded opponent; Prannoy, Sen advance in Hong Kong Open

HONG KONG, Sept 10: India's two-time Olympic medalist shuttler PV Sindhu bowed out, while HS Prannoy and Lakshya Sen earned hard-fought wins to advance in the Hong Kong Open Super 500 tournament here on Wednesday.

Sindhu, who had reached the BWF World Championships quarterfinals last month, lost the women's singles round-of-32 contest 21-15, 16-21, 19-21 to unseeded Danish shuttler Line Christophersen.

However, Prannoy, ranked 34th in the world, humbled 14th ranked Lu Guang Zu of China 21-17, 21-14 in 44 minutes, while Sen got his campaign going with a gruelling 22-20, 16-21, 21-15 win to secure a place in the men's singles pre-quarterfinals.

Kiran George also secured a place in the men's singles last-16 getting the better of Singapore's higher-ranked Jia Heng Jason Teh 21-16, 21-11 in 34



Pakistan won the competition with a 75-run victory against Afghanistan in the final.

There were no changes in ODI rankings for batters with India's Shubman Gill ranked world No 1, captain Rohit Sharma at No 2, Virat Kohli at No 4 and Shreyas Iyer at No 8.

However, in the latest ODI rankings for bowlers, India's Kuldeep Yadav slipped one position to be ranked fourth and Ravindra Jadeja dropped two places to 10th. Both Mohammed Shami and Mohammed Siraj also slipped two places each to be ranked 14th and 15th. (PTI)

Chamari Athapaththu to lead Sri Lanka in Women's ODI WC

COLOMBO, Sept 10: Chamari Athapaththu will lead Sri Lanka in the Women's ODI World Cup later this month with the hope that the co-hosts would break the jinx of never having made the final of the prestigious event in the previous 12 editions. Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) on Wednesday announced the 15-member squad for the eight-team tournament, being jointly hosted by India and Sri Lanka, with the experienced trio of Harshitha Samarawickrama, Nilakshika Silva and Anushka Sanjeevani adding depth to the side. (PTI)

Nupur assures India of first medal at World Boxing Championships

LIVERPOOL, Sept 10: Heavyweight boxer Nupur Sheoran assured India of its first medal at the World Boxing Championships as she defeated Oltinoy Sotimboeva of Uzbekistan to reach the semifinals of the women's +80kg category here on Wednesday.

Granddaughter of legendary boxer Hawa Singh, the 26-year-old Nupur, who entered the competition directly in the quarterfinals, overcame a scrappy contest to beat Uzbek 4-1 and secure at least a bronze medal. The +80kg, which is a non-Olympic weight category, features just 10 boxers in the ongoing competition.



Nupur started brightly, landing a sharp combination early on. The Uzbek responded with a straight jab, but frequent clinching disrupted the flow. Cleaner punching helped the Indian take the opening round on four of the five cards.

Sotimboeva, 20, refused to back down in the second round, keeping the exchanges messy yet managing to sway two judges despite Nupur finishing the round with a flurry of shots.

Sotimboeva was docked a point for excessive holding in the final round while Nupur had a point deducted for using her head soon after, cancelling the advantage.

Though the closing stages saw more swinging than scoring, Nupur's ability to land cleaner punches proved decisive as she booked her spot in the semifinals.

On Tuesday night, Jadumani Singh (48kg) and Abhinash Jamwal (65kg) had progressed to the men's quarterfinals with comprehensive wins, while Jugnoo Ahlawat's (85kg) campaign ended in the opening round against Scotland's Robert McNulty.

Later on Wednesday, two-time champion Nikhat Zareen, Commonwealth Games bronze medalist Jaismine Lamboria, Pooja Rani and Jamwal will be in quarterfinal action. (PTI)

Sports Ministry launches flexible coaching course for sports recruits in govt. departments

NEW DELHI, Sept 10: Sports quota recruits working in various government departments are set to be offered a flexible two-year Special Capacity Building Course at Patiala's Netaji Subhas National Institute of Sports to equip them with "professional coaching competencies".

The course is set to commence from October 27 with September 25 being the last date to submit applications. The initiative is driven by Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya's stated objective of ensuring that India's athletes remain actively involved in the country's sporting ecosystem even after their competitive careers wind up.

"Completion of all four levels leads to a Diploma-equivalent Certification in Sports Coaching," stated a note from the sports ministry, which described it as "tailored for working professionals to complete within two years."

Disciplines that would be covered in the course are Athletics, Boxing, Judo, Hockey and Wrestling.

NIS already offers a prestigious diploma in coaching across 26 disciplines but this course differs from that module as it seeks to "reintegrate" athletes who are em-



ployed with government departments and have lost touch with sports.

"The major difference lies in flexibility. That course demands a one-year undisturbed run-time but this one can be completed in four levels across two years and even four years. The participants will also have the exit option after each level's completion," Sports Authority of India's (SAI) Deputy Director Sibananda Mishra told PTI.

"Working professionals are unlikely to get a one-year break from their jobs to pursue a coaching course. But this course will allow them a longer window to complete the course as the mandatory offline training duration at NIS will be six weeks at a stretch," he explained.

"The age bracket has also been kept at a rather 40-42 range so that we get a good response," he added.

Most international medal winners are recruited by government

departments like the Railways and Police Services, Public Sector Undertakings like ONGC, and Steel Authority of India to honour their service to the nation and also to represent them in inter-departmental meets.

Apart from Sports Quota recruits, former athletes "seeking reengagement" with professional sports, government employees managing departmental sports activities, and individuals transitioning into coaching, talent development, or sports administration will also be eligible for the course.

"The program is strategically crafted to equip participants with professional coaching competencies, enabling them to contribute meaningfully to the sports ecosystem," the sports ministry stated.

"It emphasises building a strong foundation in coaching science, pedagogy, and sports administration, providing a holistic understanding of the coaching domain."

The course would involve 45 hours of practical field training at Khelo India Centres, SAI Training Centres, or other approved academies and the fee has been capped at ₹ 14,800 per level excluding boarding and lodging. (PTI)

Devine to lead NZ in Women's ODI World Cup, four earn maiden call-up

AUCKLAND, Sept 10: Veteran all-rounder Sophie Devine, featuring in her fifth campaign, will lead New Zealand in the Women's ODI World Cup later this month, with four cricketers set for their maiden senior ICC tournament.

The 15-member squad announced on Wednesday has six players making their World Cup debuts.

The squad also has stalwarts Suzie Bates and pacer Lea Tahuhu, who will be appearing in their fifth and fourth ODI World Cups respectively.

Maddy Green and Melie Kerr add solidity to the squad, having featured in three editions of the event.

New Zealand coach Ben Sawyer said the squad had the right mix to go deep in the eight-team tournament, being jointly organised by India and Sri Lanka from September 30.

"I'm really pleased with the balance of the squad. I think we've got the right mix to tackle what we'll come up against in terms of conditions and opposition," Sawyer was quoted as saying by ICC.

"I'd like to especially acknowledge the four players set for their first World Cup - they've all earned this opportunity and I'm excited to see what impact they can have on the tournament." (PTI)