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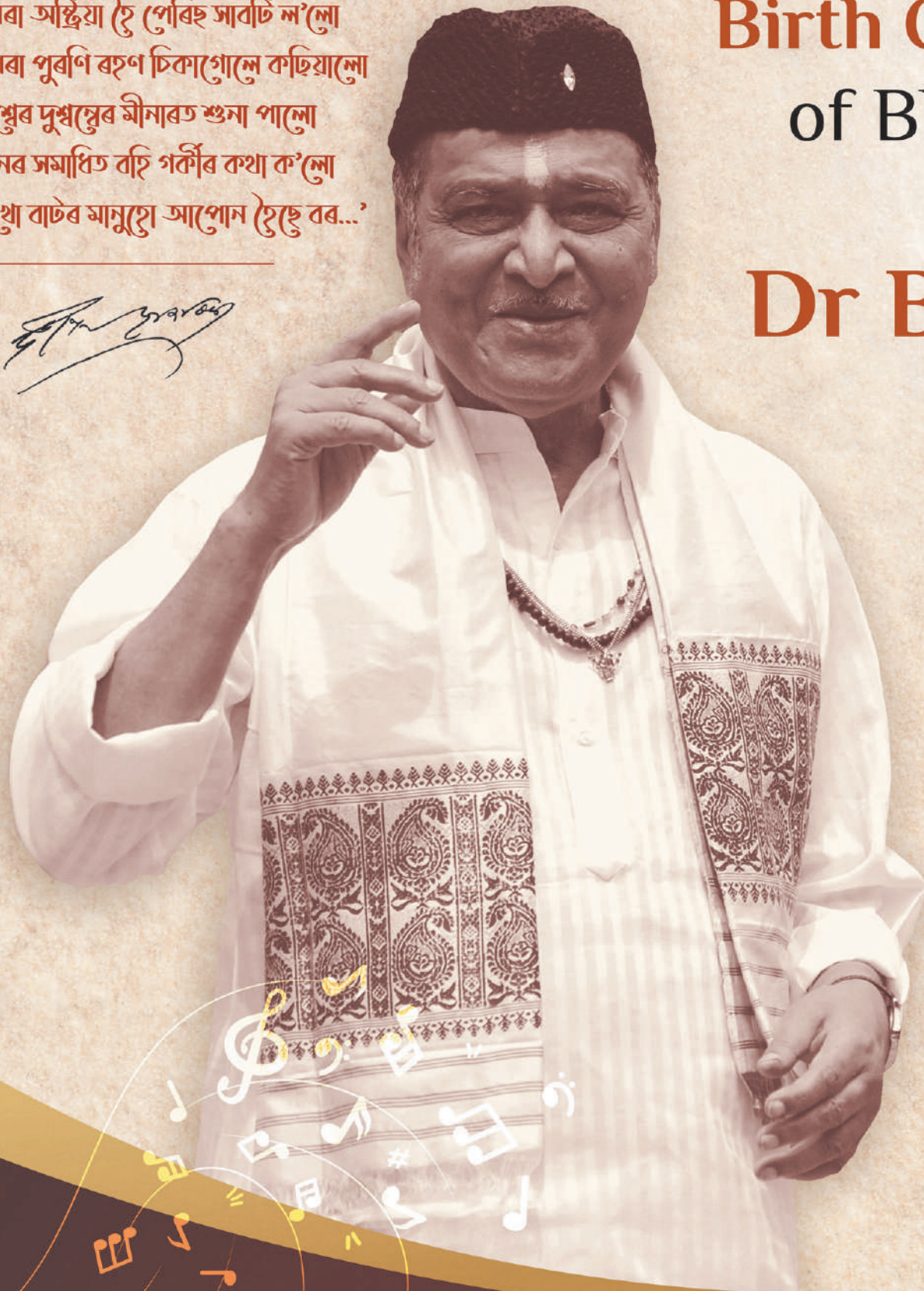
Government of India



Government of Assam



‘অহে নুহেতৰ পৰা অহিহিপি হৈ ভুলগাৰ ৰূপ ঢালো
অটোৱাৰ পৰা অস্থিয়া হৈ পোৰিছ সাবটি ল’লো
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গান্ধিৰ শ্ৰেয় দুশ্বাস্ত্ৰৰ মীমাৰত শুনা পালো
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বাৰে বাৰে দেখো বাৰে মান্নুহো আপোন হৈছে বৰ...’



Birth Centenary Celebration
of Bharat Ratna Awardee
Sudhakantha
Dr Bhupen Hazarika



Chief Guest

Shri Narendra Modi
Prime Minister

in august presence of

Shri Lakshman Prasad Acharya
Governor, Assam

Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma
Chief Minister, Assam

Shri Sarbananda Sonowal
Union Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways

Shri Pema Khandu
Chief Minister, Arunachal Pradesh

Shri Bimal Borah
Minister, Government of Assam

Smti Bijuli Kalita Medhi
Member of Parliament



Scan for songs to be played at the event

13 September 2025 5 PM

Veterinary Science College Ground, Khanapara, Guwahati



The event will be telecast live on DD News



Trump's tariffs hurting India, number of jobs already lost: Tharoor

SINGAPORE, Sept 12: Senior Congress leader Shashi Tharoor on Friday described US President Donald Trump as "mercurial", whose tariffs on goods have started to hit Indian businesses, and a number of jobs have already been lost.

The US has imposed a 50 per cent tariff, including 25 per cent as a penalty for buying Russian oil, on exports from India.

India needs to diversify export markets to mitigate the impact of tariffs, Tharoor said, adding that 1.35 lakh people have lost jobs in the gems and jewellery business, and seafood and manufacturing sectors.

"Trump is a very mercurial individual, and the American system gives the President an amazing amount of leeway," he said while replying to a query related to Indo-US relationship and imposition of tariffs at a conference organised by CREDAI, India's apex industry body for the real estate sector. Tharoor further said: "Even though there have been 44 or 45 presidents before him, no one has ever seen this kind of behaviour coming down from the White House".

The Congress leader described Trump as an "unusual President" by every yardstick, who does not



honour the conventional standards of diplomatic behaviour. "I mean, have you ever heard any world leader openly saying that he deserves a Nobel Peace Prize. It never happened before. Have you heard of any world leader saying things like, 'Oh, all the countries in the world want to come and kiss my ass,'" Tharoor said.

"Have you heard of any world leader who has basically said India and Russia are dead economies. 'I don't care if they go down the drain together,'" he said, quoting Trump, and added that this was not the kind of language ever heard from any head of government.

"So, Trump is unusual, and I would beg you not to judge our performance by his behaviour," the Congress leader told a gathering.

On the impact of tariffs, Tharoor said the truth is that the tariffs are having a "very, very" negative impact on India. "I don't want anyone to have any illusions that we can just wash it up."

"Already, people are losing jobs. 1.35 lakh people in Surat have been laid off in the Gems and jewellery business," he said, adding that there are potential job losses in the seafood and manufacturing sectors. Tharoor pointed out that exports of many products became

unviable because of the initial 25 per cent tariff, and the additional penalty of 25 per cent has made it virtually impossible to enter the US market, with India's competitors having lower tariffs.

India, he said, has no choice but to tighten its belt and move on.

"We are finding it very difficult to get into the American market. And I am pleased to say that we are actually negotiating, knowing very well that we need some access to America," he said, adding that there are possibilities of a reduction in the initial basic 25 per cent tariff imposed by the US.

"The imposition of an additional 25 per cent is not a tariff. It is actually a sanction, and it is a sanction against us for buying oil from Russia. But that's totally unfair, because China is importing more oil and gas from Russia," the Congress leader said.

Tharoor said the US should have a uniform policy for every country which buys oil from Russia.

"This entire sanction policy seems to be completely bizarre and unsustainable," he said.

Tharoor said there is a need to diversify export markets, and hoped that the recent trade agreement with the UK would boost India's exports. (PTI)

Canon India launches 'Retail Utsav'

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, Sept 12: Canon India on Friday launched Retail Utsav, a nationwide retailer engagement drive aimed at strengthening its partner network ahead of the festive season.

According to an official statement, the program will reach over 4,000 retailers across more than 45 cities, including Guwahati, Bhopal, Kolkata, Surat, Cochin, Coimbatore, Udaipur, Chandigarh, and Agartala.

The initiative, which began in four major metros — Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru, and Kolkata — and recently concluded in Guwahati, is set to expand to additional cities across the country.

The program is designed to foster community-driven advocacy, communicate key product offerings and ongoing schemes, and reward retailer loyalty through interactive, gamified activities.

Marking the 10th anniversary of Canon's flagship MegaTank Printers, the initiative seeks to celebrate the festive spirit while highlighting Canon's inkjet and laser printer categories.

Retailers participating in Retail Utsav will benefit from quizzes, retail display programs, and instant incentives, with multiple reward slabs aimed at encouraging participation.

C Sukumaran, Senior Director, Products & Communication Centre, Canon India, said, "Retail Utsav is our tribute to the unwavering contribution of our retail partners in Canon's growth journey. It's an opportunity to meet them on-ground, listen to their insights, equip them with the tools to succeed, and celebrate the invaluable role they play in bringing Canon's innovations to customers across India. As we commemorate 10 years of our MegaTank Printers, Retail Utsav blends festive cheer with meaningful business enablement, reinforcing our commitment to building a stronger, more connected retail ecosystem that is ready to capitalise on the immense potential of the season ahead."

Canon India aims to inspire and empower its retail partners by combining knowledge sharing, engagement, and rewards, creating a foundation for mutual growth as festive demand increases.

Balaji Udyog showcases premium wall textures and coatings by UTTPPL

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, Sept 12: Balaji Udyog is showcasing a premium range of textured wall finishes and decorative coatings by Ultratech Textures Paints Pvt Ltd (UTTPPL) at the ongoing exhibition at Maniraman Dewan Trade Center, Hall 1, Stall No. A2, according to an official statement.

The exhibit highlights high-quality solutions tailored to meet the evolving requirements of the building industry.

Rohit Asthana, president of UTTPPL, and Ritash Gupta, AGM of UTTPPL, along with their team, are present at the event, underscoring the importance of the North-East market in Balaji Udyog's

growth strategy. With over 13 years of experience in the region, Balaji Udyog has completed numerous residential, commercial, and institutional projects, earning a reputation for quality and trust.

UTTPPL, a trusted name in the industry, has executed more than 3,000 landmark projects across India, including the Supreme Court of Delhi, the New Parliament Building, and various IIT campuses.

Speaking at the exhibition, the Sales Head of UTTPPL said, "We are delighted to engage with architects, builders, and developers in the North-East. Our innovative coatings are created to enhance façades with unmatched durability,

elegance, and long-lasting performance."

Anuj Joshi, director of Balaji Udyog, added, "This exhibition provides an excellent platform to showcase our expertise while strengthening our presence in the flourishing market of the region. Visitors to the stall will have the opportunity to explore a wide portfolio of textures and coatings, gain insights into innovative applications, and discuss project-specific requirements with the team."

He further stated that Balaji Udyog, in collaboration with UTTPPL, remains committed to delivering quality, innovation, and excellence to the building industry across North-East India.

Markets extend gains; Sensex jumps 355 points amid global rally on US Fed rate cut hopes

MUMBAI, Sept 12: Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty surged on Friday in line with a global market rally amid rising hopes that the US Federal Reserve will cut interest rates next week.

Optimism over a successful conclusion of India-US trade talks has also fuelled a rally in markets.

Rallying for the fifth day in a row, the 30-share BSE Sensex jumped 355.97 points or 0.44 per cent to settle at 81,904.70. During the day, it surged 444.12 points or 0.54 per cent to 81,992.85.

The 50-share NSE Nifty rallied 108.50 points or 0.43 per cent to 25,114, registering its eighth straight day of uptrend.

"The domestic market closed at a three-week high, supported by renewed global optimism over a potential Fed rate cut. Sentiments improved further on reports that the EU may reject US tariff proposals on India for buying Russian oil."

"Progress in US-India trade talks is also expected to keep the positive momentum intact in the near term. The defence sector outperformed, aided by the Indian procurement authorities beginning negotiations for six next-generation conventional submarines," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Investments Limited, said.

On the weekly front, the BSE benchmark jumped 1,193.94 points or 1.47 per cent, and the Nifty climbed 373 points or 1.50 per cent. In eight trading days, the Nifty has jumped 534.4 points or 2.17 per cent. From the Sensex firms, Bharat Electronics, Bajaj Finance, Bajaj Finserv, Axis Bank, Maruti and Tata Motors were among the gainers.

However, Eterna, Hindustan Unilever, Trent and Titan were the major laggards.

The BSE smallcap gauge climbed 0.27 per cent, and the midcap went up marginally by 0.09 per cent. Among sectoral indices, capital

goods jumped 1.76 per cent, industrials (1.28 per cent), telecommunication (0.88 per cent), BSE utilities (0.53 per cent), power (0.44 per cent) and BSE Focused IT (0.36 per cent).

Consumer Discretionary, FMCG, consumer durables, oil & gas were the laggards.

"Positive trends in Asian equities, coupled with a mild decline in crude oil prices, further supported risk appetite," Gaurav Garg, Research Analyst, Lemonn Markets Desk, said.

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

US markets ended higher on Thursday. "Markets extended their winning streak on Friday, gaining nearly half a per cent, in line with favourable global and domestic cues. The up move was supported by a mix of triggers. Corporate developments, such as Infosys' ₹18,000 crore mega buyback, boosted sentiment in IT blue chips."

"Strong inflows from domestic institutional investors offset continued selling by foreign portfolio investors, while positive cues from global markets further strengthened momentum," Ajit Mishra, SVP, Research, Religare Broking Ltd, said.

Foreign institutional investors (FIIs) off-loaded equities worth ₹ 3,472.37 crore on Thursday, while domestic institutional investors (DIIs) bought stocks worth ₹ 4,045.54 crore, according to exchange data.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude climbed 0.47 per cent to USD 66.72 a barrel.

On Thursday, the Sensex climbed 123.58 points or 0.15 per cent to settle at 81,548.73, its fourth day of rally. The Nifty rose by 32.40 points or 0.13 per cent to settle at a nearly three-week high of 25,005.50, marking its seventh consecutive day of gains. (PTI)

Inflation rises marginally to 2.07 pc in Aug on costly kitchen items

NEW DELHI, Sept 12: Retail inflation inched up to 2.07 per cent in August from 1.61 per cent in the preceding month, driven by a rise in prices of kitchen items, like vegetables, meat, fish, and eggs, according to government data released on Friday.

The rise in inflation comes after a continuous fall in the consumer price index (CPI) for nine months. It was in decline since November 2024.

The inflation was 3.65 per cent in August 2024. The annual food inflation in August 2025 was (-) 0.69 per cent, according to the data released by the National Statistics Office (NSO).

"An increase in headline inflation and food inflation during the month of August 2025 is mainly attributed to an increase in inflation of vegetables, meat and fish, oil and fats, personal care and eggs," NSO said.

The Reserve Bank has been mandated by the government to ensure inflation remains at 4 per cent with a margin of 2 per cent on either side.

The inflation in rural India increased to 1.69 per cent in August from 1.18 per cent in July. In urban parts of the country, it was 2.47 per cent compared to 2.1 per cent sequentially. Among states, the highest inflation was in Kerala at 9.04 per cent and the lowest in Assam (-0.66 per cent).

The Reserve Bank mainly factors in the retail inflation while arriving at its bi-monthly monetary policy.

Commenting on the data, Iera Chief Economist Aditi Nayar said the sequential uptick in year-on-year CPI inflation in August 2025 was largely driven by the food and beverage segment, which was flat compared to the year-old levels, after witnessing a deflation in each of the last two months.

Core inflation inched up marginally to 4.3 per cent in August 2025 from 4.2 per cent in the previous month, while remaining similar to the range seen during the last seven months, she said. (PTI)

Sebi eases IPO rules for very large cos; extends timelines to meet public shareholding requirements

MUMBAI, Sept 12: Stock market regulator Sebi on Friday decided to relax initial public offering (IPO) rules for very large companies and also extend the timeline by up to 10 years for them to meet minimum public shareholding norms.

The move is expected to benefit mega IPOs including that of Reliance Jio Infocomm and the National Stock Exchange (NSE).

The new framework, if implemented, would reduce the immediate dilution burden while still ensuring gradual compliance with public shareholding norms.

Under the new framework, companies with a market capitalisation between ₹ 50,000 crore and ₹ 1 lakh crore, would be required to float 8 per cent of their equity instead of the current 10 per cent. Such firms would also get a timeline of five years instead of the present three years for achieving minimum public shareholding (MPS) requirement of 25 per cent.

For companies with a market capitalisation above ₹ 1 lakh crore, mandatory offer requirements would be reduced to 2.75 per cent from the current 5 per cent, while those above ₹ 5 lakh crore would need to dilute only 2.5 per cent. Such large companies would also be given up to 10 years to achieve the 25 per cent minimum public shareholding requirement, compared with five years at present.

This means companies can list with smaller IPOs initially, while gradually increasing their public shareholding over a longer period, reducing the immediate burden of



large-scale equity dilution. It is expected to help large issues, which often find it challenging to dilute substantial stakes through an IPO, as the market may not be able to absorb such a large supply of shares.

The regulator noted that for large size companies, the revised minimum public offer will still be large enough to provide sufficient stock to the market, including retail investors, and facilitate liquidity. "Regular dilution post listing impacts issuers until MPS requirements are complied with, may lead to price overhang due to the impending equity dilution, thereby adversely affecting the interest of existing public shareholders," Sebi chairman Tuhin Kanta Pandey told reporters here.

"Further, under the proposed MPO (minimum public offer) requirements, issuers are recommended to be permitted to list with

a lower initial public float, hence, an extended period is required to allow them to achieve MPS of 25 per cent in a gradual manner. Extended period for large issues also do not pose risk of low liquidity in large size IPO," he added.

In view of the revised MPO proposal, Sebi said that there is no further proposal to reduce allocation to retail investors in IPO size exceeding ₹ 5,000 crore from 35 per cent to 25 per cent. Correspondingly, there is no proposal to increase QIB reservation from 50 per cent to 60 per cent. To broaden the participation of long-term institutional investors in the IPOs, Sebi has decided to revamp share-allocation framework for anchor investors in companies' maiden public offerings. The regulator has decided to increase the number of anchor investors permitted for IPOs with an anchor portion exceeding ₹ 250 crore, by increasing

the existing limit from 10 to 15 per cent.

"The number of permissible anchor investor allottees for allocations above ₹ 250 crore has been increased. Thus, a minimum of 5 and a maximum of 15 investors shall be allowed for allocations up to ₹ 250 crore. For every additional ₹ 250 crore or part thereof, an additional 15 investors are to be permitted, subject to a minimum allotment of ₹ 5 crore per investor," the Sebi chief said.

Additionally, Sebi has approved a proposal to merge Category I and II for anchor allocation sizing in a bid to align the framework more effectively with the scale of the current IPO.

Also, Sebi has decided to increase total reservation in the anchor portion from one-third or 33 per cent to 40 per cent. Of this, one-third will continue to be reserved for domestic mutual funds, while remaining will be reserved for life insurance companies and pension funds. If the 7 per cent reserved for insurers and pension funds remains unsubscribed, it will be reallocated to mutual funds.

At present, reservation in the anchor book is available only to domestic mutual funds, excluding other long-term institutional investors such as life insurance companies and pension funds.

These amendments are expected to broaden anchor investor participation by easing participation for large FPIs operating multiple funds, thus enabling more diversified anchor books and aligning with global best practices. (PTI)

Copper futures climb on global cues, supply concerns

NEW DELHI, Sept 12: Copper futures rose ₹ 4.30 to ₹ 917.30 per kilogram in the domestic futures market on Friday as speculators widened their positions, tracking firm global trends.

On the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX), copper contracts for October delivery increased ₹ 4.30 or 0.47 per cent to ₹ 917.30 per kg in a business turnover of 6,021 lots.

The most traded red metal futures for September delivery extended the gains for the fifth straight session by appreciating ₹ 4.45 or 0.48 per cent to ₹ 922.55 per kg on the MCX.

"Copper extended gains for the fifth consecutive session, supported by growing expectations of interest rate cuts by the Federal Reserve, which boosted the sentiment in the base metals market," brokerage firm Axis Securities said.

In the international markets, Copper futures on the London Metal Exchange rose 0.38 per cent to USD 10,051.50 per tonne. Comex copper futures went up 0.64 per cent to USD 4.68 per pound.

Mining company Freeport on Friday said that production at Grasberg will remain suspended after a mud flow blocked parts of the underground complex.

Grasberg, which is jointly owned by Freeport and the Indonesian government, is the world's second-biggest copper mine by reserves.

The mine produced about 8,16,466 tonnes of copper in 2024, representing nearly 3.6 per cent of global mined copper output.

"Further, support came from supply disruptions in Indonesia, which reignited concerns over global availability of the industrial metal," the brokerage firm said. (PTI)

Contd. from Page 1...

Next step on SIT

at a press conference. Gogoi, in a post on X, had alleged that the CM's words and actions have led to "so many embarrassing instances, for example, I remember he said that he saw Rahul Gandhi's 'body double' during the Bharat Jodo Yatra."

"The latest flop show is even bigger than the body double," Gogoi said in a reference to the SIT report.

Sarma, at a press conference during the Yatra in January 2024, had said, the Congress should have issued a press release and clarified "whether it was a body double or a look-alike." Regarding the alleged abuse of the PM and his late mother in Bihar from the platform of a Congress meeting, Sarma said that the people of that state as well as the entire country will give a befitting reply to the party. (PTI)

Senior ULFA(I) leader

Police sources confirmed that Mrigank Asom is in the custody of the Tinsukia police and is being interrogated. His surrender is seen as a significant blow to ULFA(I), which has been facing a leadership crisis following the earlier arrest of Rupam Asom.

A senior police officer said, "After the arrest of Rupam Asom, the ULFA(I) has been facing a huge crisis in their leadership. Rupam was a top commander and had successfully carried out many operations in Tinsukia and Arunachal Pradesh. His arrest has weakened the ULFA leadership." Police sources added that Rupam Asom and Mrigank Asom had together been involved in several activities in the Assam-Arunachal region, and that security forces have gained valuable leads after the arrest of the top leader.

BJP releases manifesto

rights for all communities will be ensured to foster development throughout the BTR," he said. He urged residents to read the manifesto, which will be available both in print and digitally, to realise the BJP's commitment to building a new and developed BTR.

He also appealed to members of all parties to maintain peace and harmony during the elections, stating, "Polls will come and go, but we must ensure that harmony and peace among communities are maintained."

With elections to the 40-member council scheduled for September 22, the BJP is contesting independently for the first time.

The party aims to emerge as a strong political force in the region, building on the response to its campaign. The manifesto, released in languages spoken by the diverse communities of BTR, reflects the BJP's vision for inclusive growth and development in the coming years. (With inputs from PTI)

CP Radhakrishnan takes

Mallikarjun Kharge and some other opposition leaders attended the ceremony and shook hands with Radhakrishnan. Kharge was seated in the second row.

Dhankhar's term was till August 10, 2027. According to the Constitution, an incumbent vice president, who enters the office to fill a vacancy arising due to death or resignation, will get a full five-year term.

Radhakrishnan will hold office till September 11, 2030. After the swearing in, Radhakrishnan went to pay floral tributes to Mahatma Gandhi at his memorial at Rajghat.

He also paid homage to former prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee at Sadaiv Atal and offered tributes to former prime minister Charan Singh at Kisan Ghat.

Back in the Parliament House, he assumed charge as the chairperson of the Rajya Sabha. The vice president is the ex-officio chairman of the Upper House of Parliament.

Radhakrishnan offered floral tributes at the statues of eminent leaders, freedom fighters and social reformers at the Prerna Sthal in the Parliament House complex, where he was welcomed by Rajya Sabha Deputy Chairperson Hariyansh, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju and Ministers of State for Parliamentary Affairs Arjun Ram Meghwal and L Murugan. Rajya Sabha Secretary General P C Mody was also present.

He planted a sapling in the Parliament House complex and later, signed some official papers soon after assuming charge as the chairman. Separately, the Union home ministry issued a notification announcing that Radhakrishnan entered the vice president's office on September 12.

Radhakrishnan is the third leader from Tamil Nadu to occupy the coveted post.

Described as a "Pachai Tamizhan" (true-blue Tamil) by well-wishers, Radhakrishnan was serving as the governor of Maharashtra when he was named as the vice-presidential nominee of the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA). Radhakrishnan on Tuesday described his election to the second-highest constitutional post in the country as a victory of the nationalistic ideology and vowed to work towards making India a developed nation by 2047. (PTI)

Sign language workshop

domestic and international visitors. It will be a boost for homestays and rural tourism as trained families can build genuine bonds with guests, offering immersive cultural experiences.

Participants from across the state, including Bodoland, Kaziranga, Majuli, Tinsukia, Tezpur, Karbi Anglong and Guwahati, attended the workshop. (PTI)

Next step on SIT report after BTC polls: Himanta

'Report on Gaurav's link with Pak 'explosive', points to cartel working against country'

GUWAHATI, Sept 12: Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Friday claimed that the SIT report, probing the alleged Pakistani links of state Congress president Gaurav Gogoi and his family, is 'explosive' and points to a cartel working to defame and demean the development process of the country.

"Let me assure all of you that this is a very explosive report. It is a kind of a cartel which was working to defame and demean the development process of our country," the chief minister said on the sidelines of the BJP manifesto for the BTC polls here.

"In that cartel, a Pakistani citizen and the British wife of the Congress MP. This has become completely clear in the report," he said.

The CM claimed that the SIT team has "recovered many important documents posing a threat to the sovereignty of our country."

He said that once the cabinet dis-



cusses it, "We will release the report for the consumption of the general public and also decide on the next steps to be taken."

"It is the prerogative of the cabinet to first discuss the report and to take a call on the next course of action," Sarma said.

He said that the priority of the government was to ensure that the

Prime Minister's two-day visit to the state passes off successfully and the BTC polls on September 22 are held successfully.

"Once the BTC elections are over, the cabinet will discuss the SIT report and decide on the next step," he added.

"The SIT report is 96 pages long, and 'there must be something

in those pages. It does not contain some fairy tale," Sarma said.

"We don't want to create a drama around the report, as the government does not work for TRP. We are dealing with it in a serious manner and will follow the necessary procedure", the CM said.

The SIT, led by Special DGP (CID) Munna Prasad Gupta, had formally submitted the report to the chief minister on Wednesday evening.

Reacting to Congress president Gaurav Gogoi's statement that he has made a mockery of his chair with his actions while his words have lost all credibility, the chief minister said that it is the "media who has made him a hero".

On Rahul Gandhi's alleged use of a body double during the Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra, Sarma said that he had given all the details during the Yatra. (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Senior ULFA(I) leader Mrigank Asom surrenders



HT Correspondent
DIBRUGARH, Sept 12: A senior leader of the banned United Liberation Front of Assam (Independent) [ULFA(I)], Mrigank Asom alias Buddheshwar Gohai, surrendered before security forces along the Assam-Arunachal Pradesh border on Thursday.

Acting on a tip-off, personnel of Assam Rifles and the Tinsukia police took him into custody.

Mrigank Asom, a close aide of top leader Rupam Asom, had been serving as the operational commander of the group's 779 camp since joining ULFA(I) in April 2010.

At the time of surrender, Mrigank Asom was carrying sophisticated weaponry, including an MQ series rifle, three magazines loaded with 90 live rounds, and a hand grenade. (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

BJP releases manifesto for BTC polls

Implementation of Bodo accord, peace and progress promised

HT Bureau
GUWAHATI, Sept 12: Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Friday released the BJP's election manifesto for the upcoming Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR) Council polls, reiterating the party's commitment to peace, progress, and prosperity, while promising full implementation of the Bodo Peace Accord.

At the unveiling ceremony held at Vajpayee Bhawan in Guwahati, Sarma said that the BJP is contesting the polls for the first time with the objective of forming the Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC), and has received immense support from people across the region.

"The BTR is a symbol of the aspirations of 26 communities living in its five districts, as well as the political aspirations of the Bodos," he said. "We must foster harmony among these communities while respecting their art, culture, and traditions."

The chief minister assured that

the BJP will prioritise peace, infrastructure, and women's empowerment in the region.

"We have promised 100 per cent implementation of the Bodo Peace Accord. In the next five years, we will resolve administrative issues to ensure all communities feel ownership of the council," he said.

Among the key promises, the manifesto commits to establishing new higher educational institutions, including a new campus of Bodoland University in Udalguri, making Tamulpur Medical College functional at the earliest, and setting up colleges in all subdivisions.

The BJP will also focus on connectivity by building bridges over rivers and tributaries and safeguarding the constitutional and land rights of all communities.

Sarma emphasised that all state government schemes, particularly those benefiting women and girl students in backward areas, will be implemented across the region. "Equal" (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Over ₹ 8 cr recovered in 'tax evasion' raid



NORTH LAKHIMPUR, Sept 12: A multi-crore tax evasion case involving a company engaged in construction of a concrete gravity dam as part of an NHPC project at Gerukamukh on the Assam-Arunachal Pradesh border has been unearthed by the Assam GST department, an official said on Friday.

He said over ₹ 8 crore has been recovered during a raid in connection with the tax evasion of the company constructing the dam - a part of NHPC's 2,000-MW Subansiri Lower Hydro Electric Project. The amount is likely to increase "significantly" as the operation was still underway, he said.

Superintendent of state tax, Monuj Kumar Dowari, said, "A significant tax evasion case involving M/s BGS SGS SOMA Joint Venture, the company engaged in the construction of the Concrete Gravity Dam at Gerukamukh under NHPC, has been uncovered."

A 10-member team led by Dowari launched the operation on Tuesday to trace irregularities.

"The swift action resulted in an on-the-spot recovery of ₹ 8.2 crore, marking one of the department's most successful enforcement drives in recent months, and underscoring its strengthened focus on data-driven tax compliance," Dowari said. (PTI)

CP Radhakrishnan takes oath as 15th Vice President of India

NEW DELHI, Sept 12: Chandrapuram Ponnusamy Radhakrishnan was on Friday sworn in as the 15th vice president of India. He later assumed charge as the chairman of the Rajya Sabha in his office in Parliament.

President Droupadi Murmu administered oath to Radhakrishnan (67) at a brief ceremony at the Rashtrapati Bhawan, which was attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and several Union ministers.

Dressed in a red kurta, Radhakrishnan took oath in English in the name of god.

Murmu congratulated him after he took oath.

Radhakrishnan succeeds Jagdeep Dhankhar, who suddenly resigned from the post on July 21 citing health reasons, necessitating an election.

Radhakrishnan won the vice-presidential election on Tuesday, defeating joint opposition candidate B Sudeshan Reddy by a margin of 152 votes.

Dhankhar was present at the ceremony, his first public appearance since his resignation as the vice president. He was seated in the front row, next to his predecessor M Venkaiah Naidu, and was seen conversing with him. Another former vice president, Hamid Ansari, was seated next to Naidu. Dhankhar's wife, Sudesh Dhankhar, was also present on the occasion.



Besides Modi, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, Home Minister Amit Shah, Transport Minister Nitin Gadkari and Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) president J P Nadda were in the front row across the aisle.

Former president Ram Nath Kovind, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis, Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav and Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu were also present at the oath-taking ceremony.

Chief Justice of India B R Gavai was present and was seated next to Birla.

Veteran BJP leader and former Union minister Murlu Manohar Joshi also attended the oath-taking function at the Rashtrapati Bhawan.

Leader of Opposition in the Rajya Sabha (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

First steps to inclusive travel environment

Sign language workshop for tourism industry stakeholders in Assam

GUWAHATI, Sept 12: In a step towards creating an inclusive tourism atmosphere in Assam, multiple stakeholders such as hoteliers, guides and tour operators have been trained in Indian sign language to better assist and welcome persons with disabilities.

The stakeholders were trained during a five-day workshop which concluded here on Friday, a statement said.

"With the launch of the 'Sign & Serve', the Indian sign language workshop, Assam has taken its first step towards a truly inclusive travel



environment — a small beginning with the promise of a larger transformation," the organisers said.

abled, in collaboration with the Tour Operators Association of Assam and supported by North East Development Finance Corporation Ltd.

By learning the sign language, hoteliers, homestay owners, guides, tour operators and hospitality professionals can welcome the specially abled with empathy and confidence, making travel in Assam more inclusive and accessible, the organisers maintained.

They said the move will help the tourism sector expand its market reach as inclusivity will draw more (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

IN 2024-25, Khadi and Village Industries achieved record sales of ₹1.70 lakh crore - a 450% increase compared to 2013-14

IN 2024-25, Khadi and Village Industries recorded a production value of ₹1.16 lakh crore - a 350% increase compared to 2013-14

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QUOTE OF THE DAY

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

GST reforms in right direction

The GST reforms introduced by the GST council at its September 4 meeting is a mega budget for the entire country. It will be the determining factor for the budgets of the Central government as well as those of the states. The goods and services tax, shorter form GST, had consolidated all the indirect taxes in an umbrella tax and now comprises a major segment of the total revenues of both centre and states. The rationale for the wide-ranging ranges in the rates and attempt at reducing the slabs of the GST structure. Does it fulfil a promise of consolidation of slabs of tax rates? On average, GST revenues are 44% of the total revenues of states and the centre. Taking a more focussed view, GST would account for even larger segment of the revenues of states. The recasting of rates could be expected to hit the state finances more than the Centre's. The announcement of GST slab rationalisation—commonly referred to as GST 2.0—sounded very similar to former budgets. The budget announcements of tax adjustments used to be reflected in the prices of ordinary consumer goods going up or down. Cigarette prices would be up and bidis down; ACs up and diesel down and so on. What is the logic of introducing these changes now? As such, the exercises were for slab reduction and other reforms all along. But the urgency of implementing these changes has a contemporary logic. Hopefully, the slab restructuring and the lowering of tax rates of a wide number of articles is expected to boost consumption. This is particularly relevant as Indian exports to one of its major destinations are feared to hit serious roadblocks.

The tax cuts should primarily help in raising domestic demand for goods and thus compensate the loss of markets overseas. It is the same logic followed by many countries earlier, like the US itself in the time of Reagan presidency. American tax cuts had worked wonders for its economy then. So, the finance minister, Nirmala Sitharaman, hopes that the tax cuts on a variety of products from motor cars to milk products should boost domestic demand. Prime Minister has also been harping on the same logic that the government was leaving more money with the people with its lower tax rates to spend on consumption items. With higher consumption at home, it should have its own virtuous cycle. More consumption should bring forth larger investments by producers to meet higher demand and that should result in higher employment and again an upward cycle of growth and development.

The present round of reforms in public finance structure should be viewed from this larger perspective than only tax reforms. These have also to be placed in the background of current geo-economics and their implications for the country. From this point of view the changes introduced are well-timed and could be seminal forces for growth. Let us wait with our fingers crossed.

Modi's Tianjin gamble and the shifting chessboard of global power

The blistering onset of New Delhi's summer usually ushers in a season of bureaucratic escapes, as India's top officials migrate to cooler climes under the pretext of international conferences. The United Nations' interminable climate change deliberations, often more performance than policy, have long provided such refuge. But this year, the escape route veered not toward the temperate havens of Europe but to Tianjin, the sweltering coastal city of eastern China. The shift was not driven by comfort but by compulsion, born of geopolitical tremors set off by America's mercurial commander-in-chief, Donald J. Trump, whose tariffs and combative trade adviser, Peter Navarro, had plunged the global system into disarray.

India, once celebrated in Washington as a democratic bulwark against authoritarian expansion, found itself branded a culprit. New Delhi's imports of discounted Russian oil, long justified as an economic necessity, were reinterpreted by Trump's White House as a moral failing—indeed, even as the “root cause” of Moscow's war on Ukraine. In one stroke, India was not just the “bad boy” of global trade but, according to some in Washington's inner circle, the enabler of a bloody European conflict.

Then came the photograph. On September 1, Prime Minister Narendra Modi appeared in a warm embrace with Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese President Xi Jinping. The image, taken on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation's (SCO) 25th summit in Tianjin, shattered the cloud of gloom hanging over Delhi's media and political circles. It was a gleeful tableau, almost irreverent in its defiance, and a tonic for India's battered self-image. Only months earlier, Beijing had been suspected of providing Islamabad with intelligence during India's retaliatory Operation Sindoor. That Modi chose this moment to cross the Himalayas for his first visit to China in seven years—and to stand shoulder-



shoulder with Xi and Putin—was nothing short of audacious.

Although no joint statement emerged from Modi's meetings with Xi, the usually reserved Chinese leader extended a rare olive branch, speaking of “good neighbourly and amicable ties” with India. Even more dramatic was Modi's leisurely limousine ride with Putin, a one-on-one that fueled speculation but left no transcript. Whether substantive or symbolic, the gestures sent unmistakable signals. India, bruised by Trump's tariffs and vilified for its energy trade with Moscow, was demonstrating that it had options beyond the West.

The West, predictably, reacted with horror.

Analysis from European and American outlets oscillated between handwringing regret and smug vindication. India, they insisted, had once been “eating out of our hands.” Now it was cosying up to “the world's biggest thieves.” The undertone was clear: India was slipping away as a “valuable democratic ally,” one that offered not just a giant consumer market and an insatiable appetite for weapons, but also—if push ever came to shove with China—the promise of cannon fodder in the Indo-Pacific. For the Atlantic press corps, Modi's camaraderie with Xi and Putin was a betrayal authored by Trump himself, whose transactional instincts and tariff tantrums had pushed Delhi into Beijing's and Moscow's arms.

Yet the picture is more complex than Western handwringing suggests. The SCO, after all, is no minor forum. It is the largest regional grouping across Eurasia and the Indo-Pacific, encompassing nearly half of humanity. India had hosted its foreign ministers in Goa in 2023, where Pakistan's Bilawal Bhutto had appeared despite simmering tensions. Yet Pakistan has shown no inclination to abandon its well-trodden path of cross-border terrorism, the most recent example being the Pahalgal massacre. China's silence on the origins of the attack, followed by its tacit shielding of Pakistan when India struck back with Operation Sindoor, has only deepened Indian mistrust.

Indeed, Indian public opinion views China with suspicion nearly equal to that reserved for Pakistan. To clasp Xi Jinping's hand in Tianjin, therefore, was not an act of naive optimism but of calibrated signalling. Veteran diplomat Navtej Sarna, former ambassador to Washington, put it bluntly: “Attending the summit was signalling by India that there are other options, other relationships, and that India has been unjustly treated by the US.” Sarna cautioned, however, that India has not abandoned its “basic challenges with China.” Participation in the SCO was not capitulation but recalibration.

C. Raja Mohan, one of India's foremost strategic thinkers on China, offered a similarly nuanced view. Since the Galwan clash of 2020, he noted, India had deliber-

ately slowed Chinese investment and hardened its border posture. Now, incremental shifts—India lifting some restrictions, Beijing discussing de-escalation—signalled a tentative thaw. “Nothing dramatic,” Mohan argued, “but both are giving something.”

Russia, by contrast, remains a relationship of reassurance rather than reinvention. Defence cooperation continues, even as India diversifies its sources. Russian spare parts are indispensable, and New Delhi's interest in more S-400 surface-to-air missile systems, proven effective during Operation Sindoor, is unabated. Moscow offers familiarity, continuity, and a hedge against overdependence on the West.

Yet the thorniest issue remains terrorism. At the SCO summit, India pressed for stronger condemnations of cross-border terrorism emanating from Pakistan. The final declaration did include an unprecedented reference to the Pahalgal attack and called for sponsors of terrorism to be brought to justice. But, predictably, there was no mention of Pakistan by name. The omission underscores the SCO's balancing act: denouncing “terrorism in all its forms and manifestations” while protecting Chinese and Russian sensitivities toward Islamabad. For India, the text was meagre consolation, but “at least something,” as one diplomat noted, given the SCO's stature as the voice of the Global South.

This delicate diplomacy raises an unavoidable question: what of India's relations with the United States? The optics of Modi's warm interactions with Putin and Xi are bound to unsettle Washington. Trump's tariffs—an unprecedented 50 per cent levy on Indian goods—have already soured trade ties. With the US Supreme Court reluctant to fast-track challenges to the legality of tariffs, Trump's bargaining tool remains intact, even as its constitutionality is questioned. For Indian exporters in textiles, leather, auto components, gems, jewellery, and shrimp, the tariff is nothing less than an embargo.

India's defence of its Russian oil

imports, once a pragmatic economic choice, has now become a prestige issue in Washington. Modi's Tianjin manoeuvre, therefore, was as much about oil as it was about optics. New Delhi cannot afford to abandon discounted Russian barrels entirely—not until trade issues are resolved. Yet it also cannot allow the oil question to overshadow the breadth of Indo-US ties, from strategic partnerships and defence cooperation to services trade, where the US enjoys a significant surplus.

Therein lies the paradox. India must flatter Trump, much as Ukraine's Volodymyr Zelenskyy once did, but without crossing its own red lines in trade negotiations. Modi must resist concessions on agriculture and dairy, sectors vital to India's economy and politics, even as he offers gestures of goodwill to coax Trump back to the negotiating table. Video calls between the two leaders are reportedly imminent, with an autumn deadline for a trade deal. But as Sarna observed, the trust painstakingly built over years of bipartisan engagement in Washington has been eroded. Rebuilding it will not be swift. And perhaps, he suggested, it may require “another personality” in the White House.

For now, India's play is one of strategic ambiguity. By attending Tianjin, Modi reminded Washington that New Delhi has options—China, Russia, and the wider Global South. By engaging Xi, he sought tentative relief at the border. By reaffirming ties with Putin, he ensured continuity in defence and energy. And by keeping dialogue with Trump alive, he preserved the possibility of salvaging the US relationship.

The global chessboard is shifting. India, long accustomed to being courted as a counterweight to China, is now demonstrating its agency as a power in its own right. Whether Washington interprets Modi's Tianjin gamble as betrayal or as a warning shot remains to be seen. But one truth is inescapable: the time for India to set things right with the US is now, and the opportunity may not remain open forever. (The writer can be reached at dipakkurmigpltd@gmail.com)

DEGREE OF THOUGHT

By: Dipak Kurmi

The impact of climate change and the future of Assam

The impacts of climate change in Assam are a local manifestation of a global issue, highlighting the need for coordinated action at both local and global levels. Public awareness and cooperation in Assam can mitigate the negative consequences of these changes. The dynamic trajectory of climate change will shape Assam's future, where adaptation and sustainability are essential. A thorough analysis of climate change's impacts in Assam shows that this issue is not only environmental but also profoundly affects social, economic, and cultural dimensions. Assam's future must align with these changes to ensure a sustainable environment for future generations. These changes will steer Assam's societal life in new directions, where balancing environmental protection with social stability is crucial.

By: Himangshu Ranjan Bhuyan

Climate change is a global phenomenon that profoundly affects the environment, economy, society, and lifestyle worldwide. In a geographically sensitive region like Assam, the impacts of this change are more intense and visible. Assam, a state in Northeast India, is situated in the Brahmaputra River valley, and its terrain makes it highly susceptible to even minor climatic shifts. These changes leave a deep imprint on every aspect of Assam's natural resources, agriculture, water resources, forests, biodiversity, health, and economy. The lifestyle of Assam's people is intricately tied to nature, making the effects of climate change particularly disruptive to their daily lives. The primary causes of these changes are significantly tied to human activities, such as the use of fossil fuels, deforestation, industrialization, and urbanization, which contribute to greenhouse gas emissions.

In Assam, local sources of these emissions include changing agricultural practices, forest degradation, and urban expansion. These activities have warmed the local climate, leading to instability in rainfall patterns and cycles. This instability has disrupted Assam's traditional monsoon cycle, which forms the backbone of agriculture. The process of climate change will have serious implications for Assam's future, raising questions about the sustainability of local communities. Assam's geographical structure amplifies the effects of climate change. While floods in the Brahmaputra River are not new to Assam, climate change has increased their intensity and frequency. These changes have heightened the occurrence of natural disasters, complicating the lives of the people. Understanding the depth of climate change's impact



requires attention to Assam's ecological balance, which is increasingly disrupted by human activities. Assam's future depends on adapting to these changes, necessitating a synergy between local knowledge and scientific approaches.

The consequences of climate change demand transformation across Assam's environment, economy, and society. If the people of Assam acknowledge these changes and move toward adaptation, sustainable solutions are possible. Analysis of these changes reveals that Assam's future is intricately linked to this phenomenon. The impact of climate change necessitates a restructuring of Assam's traditional lifestyle, emphasizing the conservation of local resources and social stability. Due to Assam's geographical location, these impacts are more complex, underscoring the need for local-level solutions. The depth of this analysis opens doors to new possibilities and challenges for Assam's future.

The impacts of climate change in Assam are a local manifestation of a global issue, highlighting the need for coordinated action at both local and global levels. Public awareness and cooperation in Assam can mitigate the negative consequences of these changes. The dynamic trajectory of climate change will shape Assam's future, where adaptation and sustainability are essential. A thorough analysis of climate change's impacts in Assam shows that this issue is not only environmental but also profoundly affects social, economic, and cultural dimensions. Assam's future must align with these changes to ensure a sustainable environment for future generations. These changes will steer Assam's societal life in new directions, where balancing environmental protection with social stability is crucial.

Among the primary causes of climate change, the role of human activities is highly significant, and their impact is clearly evident in Assam's local environment. Industrialization, urbanization, and changing agricultural practices have increased greenhouse gas emissions. These gases, such as carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrous oxide, trap heat in the atmosphere, disrupting the natural climate balance. In Assam, deforestation is a critical local source of these emissions, as forests are a

primary natural medium for carbon absorption. The loss of forest cover has reduced this absorption capacity, contributing to rising temperatures. In Assam's agricultural sector, the use of chemical fertilizers and shifts in organic practices have increased methane levels. Urban areas, with rising vehicle numbers and industrial activities, have intensified this issue. These factors have altered Assam's local weather patterns, with noticeable instability in rainfall timing and volume. This instability has also changed river flows, contributing to increased flood intensity.

Assam's geographical structure makes these changes more sensitive, as the mix of lowlands and hilly regions amplifies even subtle climatic shifts. While some natural factors have a lesser impact on Assam's climate change, human activities have accelerated these natural changes. Given that Assam's economy is heavily reliant on agriculture, changing agricultural practices have increased greenhouse gas emissions, which are detrimental to the local environment. These factors have accelerated the pace of climate change in Assam, creating more complex challenges for the future. Deforestation has reduced carbon storage capacity, contributing to both rising temperatures and economic losses. Urban congestion and industrial emissions have deepened this problem. The impact of these factors is evident in the lifestyle of Assam's people, necessitating changes in daily activities.

Analysis of these causes shows that local-level actions are urgently needed to address this issue in Assam's future. Natural resources like water and soil are being damaged by these changes, posing long-term problems. Controlling human activities can slow the pace of these changes, which is essential for Assam's environmental sustainability. Public awareness and cooperation are crucial for addressing these causes in Assam's future. This analysis highlights new pathways for restoring Assam's ecological balance. The causes of climate change in Assam indicate the need for coordinated actions at local and global levels. If the people of Assam acknowledge these causes and take proactive steps, environmental protection is achievable. These causes threaten Assam's ecological balance,

necessitating a restructuring of local lifestyles. Controlling these factors can ensure environmental stability in Assam's future.

The impact of climate change on Assam's agricultural sector is profound and extensive, as agriculture forms the backbone of the state's economy. Rainfall instability has created challenges in crop sowing and harvesting, directly affecting farmers' incomes. Rising temperatures have reduced soil fertility, leading to decreased crop productivity. As Assam's agricultural practices rely heavily on water, recurring floods and droughts have caused significant crop losses. These changes threaten Assam's food security, posing challenges to meeting the population's nutritional needs. The livelihoods of farmers are shrinking due to these changes, contributing to increased poverty levels in rural areas. Climate change has also increased pest infestations, a major cause of crop damage. Assam's agricultural communities need to adopt new methods, such as organic or sustainable farming, to cope with these changes. Analysis of this impact questions the sustainability of Assam's economy, as declining agricultural productivity affects local markets and exports. Rural lifestyles in Assam require restructuring due to these changes, impacting the quality of life for farmers. These changes will shape the future of Assam's agriculture, where adaptation is urgently needed. Farmers must adopt new techniques to maintain productivity. These changes have created instability in Assam's food cycle, affecting social stability. The impact of climate change on agriculture is a central concern for Assam's future economy. These changes necessitate transformations in public lifestyles, crucial for local societal stability. The impact of climate change challenges the sustainability of Assam's agriculture, potentially hindering economic development. Farmers in Assam need to integrate local knowledge with scientific methods to adapt to these changes. This analysis shows that the future of Assam's agriculture is tied to these changes. The impact of climate change on agriculture necessitates a restructuring of the local economy's foundation, critical for future generations. These changes will shape Assam's rural society in new ways, underscoring the urgent need for sustainable solutions.

The impact of climate change on Assam's water resources is profound and extensive, as the state's water system is heavily dependent on the Brahmaputra River. Rainfall instability has increased the intensity and frequency of floods, polluting water resources and causing destruction in local areas. Rising temperatures have increased evaporation rates, leading to water shortages. Changes in the flow of rivers and lakes have affected the availability of drinking water. These changes have created a water crisis in Assam's societal life, directly impacting health and agriculture. Recurring floods have caused economic losses in water resources, increasing recovery costs. These changes have also altered Assam's geography, with noticeable shifts in river courses. The water-dependent lifestyle of Assam's people is clearly affected, disrupting daily activities. These changes challenge Assam's future water security, critical for local societal stability. The river system's instability due to these changes endangers public life. The impact of climate change necessitates a restructuring of Assam's water cycle, essential for ecological balance. This analysis questions the sustainability of

Assam's water resources, vital for future generations. These changes will shape Assam's water system and lifestyle in new ways, necessitating the adoption of new water conservation methods. The impact of climate change complicates Assam's future water security, crucial for local societal stability. Analysis of these changes highlights the need for new water management strategies at the local level. The people of Assam must adopt sustainable water conservation practices to adapt to these changes.

Assam's forests are a cornerstone of ecological balance. Rising temperatures have affected forest vegetation growth, contributing to biodiversity loss. Recurring floods and landslides have increased forest destruction, reducing carbon absorption capacity. These changes are evident in Assam's protected areas, where wildlife habitats are being destroyed. Climate change has increased wildlife migration, disrupting local ecological balance. These changes challenge Assam's environmental sustainability, necessitating forest restoration efforts in the future. The degradation of Assam's forests complicates biodiversity conservation efforts. The impact of climate change has increased the rate of natural resource depletion, posing risks for future generations. These changes in Assam's forest ecosystems necessitate a restructuring of ecological balance. Analysis of this impact highlights new pathways for biodiversity conservation in Assam. Forest conservation can reduce the impact of climate change, essential for environmental stability.

In the health sector, the impact of climate change deeply affects the quality of life for Assam's people. Rising temperatures have increased the spread of diseases, placing additional strain on the healthcare system. Post-flood waterborne disease outbreaks have risen, endangering public health. In rural Assam, where healthcare facilities are limited, these impacts intensify public suffering. Climate change has increased heat-related illnesses, creating challenges for the local healthcare system. These changes have reduced the quality of life for Assam's people, affecting social stability. Analysis of this impact highlights the need to rethink Assam's health policies. In the future, new strategies are needed to address the health impacts of climate change in Assam. These changes will complicate the health future of Assam's population, critical for local societal stability.

The recurrence of floods and landslides has disrupted economic activities, reducing the productivity of the local economy. These changes have affected Assam's industry and commerce, leading to reduced investment levels. The economic losses from climate change are substantial, increasing recovery costs. These changes challenge the sustainability of Assam's economy, potentially hindering future development. Analysis of this impact highlights the need for sustainable economic strategies. Addressing the impact of climate change is crucial for the future stability of Assam's economy.

In the coming days, addressing the impacts of climate change in Assam will depend on adaptation. Through sustainable development, Assam can tackle these challenges. Public awareness and cooperation will secure Assam's future. The future of Assam can be bright if timely actions are taken. Addressing the impacts of climate change requires coordinated actions at local and global levels.

India battles brain drain as students flock overseas for education

Rising remittances cannot mask the cost of brain drain, as more Indian students spend abroad than they send back. With visa curbs, high living costs, and underpaid jobs overseas, India faces both challenges and opportunities to retain its talent

By: Dinesh N Joshi

Limited seats in prestigious universities in their home country has for decades been pushing Indian students to pursue higher education abroad, resulting in what is called an intellectual brain drain. Rather than staying back and contributing to their home country, a plethora of privileged students are choosing to go abroad for college. There has been, in recent years, a large section of academics who argue that this is in fact a good thing. "Remittances are rising rapidly", they say.

They're partly right but they're missing the bigger picture. While India is the largest remittance-receiving country in the world and it is in fact true that remittances have more than doubled from 55 billion dollars in 2010-11 to 118.7 billion dollars in 2023-24, the statistics only convey the story partly. Firstly, remittances as a percentage of GDP has remained constant at around 3 per cent since 2000. Secondly, what Indian students are now spending abroad for education has risen rapidly. According to some estimates, the total spending by Indian outbound students could reach 70 billion dollars by 2025 — a number which is rising more rapidly than the remittances being sent back.

Thirdly, and most importantly, this argument fails to consider an important hypothetical: what if these students had chosen to stay back? The argument I make is two-pronged. One, that if the students were to stay back, the Indian economy would benefit far more — in other words, remittances do not compensate for the economic and intellectual capital drain caused, and two, at times it would also be far better for the students to stay back in India, taking into account the cost of living abroad and recent anti-immigrant trends across the world.

Let me address the second claim first. According to the latest data from the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), over 1.8 million Indian students are currently studying abroad in 2025 — a staggering rise from 1.3 million just two years ago. This data, however, hides one important detail.

All the top three destination countries — Canada, US and UK — for Indian students (which account for a third of all Indian students heading abroad for education) have witnessed a sharp decline in the backdrop of tightening immigration measures, including introduction of caps on student intake and restrictions on dependent visas.

Consider this: from 2023 to 2024, Canada witnessed a 32 per cent drop, with permits falling from 2.78 lakh to 1.89 lakh, the United States saw a 34 per cent decrease, with F1 visas dropping from 1.31 lakh to 86,110, and the UK recorded a 26 per cent reduction, with sponsored student visas issued to Indians decreasing from 1.20 lakh to 88,732 during the same period.

While some argue that this is a bad sign, it provides a window of opportunity for the Indian government to reverse decades of brain drain.

But will the anti-immigrant rhetoric and curbs on visas actually prevent students from going abroad, or will they just change their destination of travel? I think that it most definitely can.

Many Indians who go abroad are actually not receiving good returns on the thousands of dollars they spent on their college education. First, many are unemployed or underemployed after their education is completed.

Second, those who get jobs are getting paid less than what Americans and Europeans with the same skills are earning. As an example, the H-1B Visa Reform Act of 2004 restructured the salary slabs and



inserted two wage levels, at the 34th and 50th percentiles of the total salaries surveyed for an occupation in an area, below the highest (the 67th percentile). This implies an underpayment for Indian (and other international) workers embedded in the law itself.

Third, their attractive salary packages include e-SOPs and other variables which are not actually part of what they receive in hand, and the cost of living abroad is considerably higher than the cost of living in India. Rent, groceries and travel all make up a considerable chunk of their expenditure, and what they're left with is sent back to their families.

While Indian students who get into Ivy League institutions would perhaps not want to stay back in India, to make many others stay back will be a low-hanging fruit. With minimal effort, India will be able to retain talent which will not only show up in GDP figures for years to come but will also advance R&D in their home process.

A particularly promising area of collaboration is the growing partnership between India and the UAE in the fields of education and employment. The UAE has become a top destination for Indian professionals, with the country expanding opportunities for skilled workers in various sectors, including healthcare, engineering and IT.

Education-wise, both nations have been actively exploring collaborative programmes, exchange initiatives, and scholarships to enhance bilateral ties. Indian universities and institutions are establishing campuses in the UAE, further cementing the relationship. For Indian students, this provides an attractive, nearby option for world-class education, while also offering enhanced job prospects in the UAE's rapidly growing economy.

There can be two ways of retaining talent in India. First, to build more good-quality higher education institutes and second, to ensure that Indians return to their home country after graduating

abroad. In terms of the second objective, India is already in the process of reversing the brain drain. Under the leadership of PM Modi, the most cutting-edge, deep tech and frontier tech start-ups, led by Indian students with PhDs from major global universities, are now taking root in India. Our start-ups have grown from just 400 a decade ago, to 1.3 lakhs today, and nearly 50 per cent of these are coming up in Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities.

It is here that the role of political leadership deserves special recognition. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision, combined with the efforts of senior leaders like Devendra Fadnis and Dharmendra Pradhan, has ensured that education and employment remain at the core of India's growth story. Maharashtra CM Fadnis has been instrumental in advancing educational reforms at the state level, pushing for skill development and industry-academia linkages, while Pradhan, as Education Minister, has driven initiatives that strengthen higher education and empower students with future-ready skills. A recent example is steps taken to make Mumbai a global education hub by handing over Letters of Intent to five globally acclaimed universities to set up campuses in Maharashtra. Together with the Prime Minister's emphasis on innovation and entrepreneurship, their combined leadership has laid the groundwork for India to transform its brain drain into a brain gain.

India stands at the cusp of a technological revolution, presenting immense opportunities in areas such as artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning (ML), big data, energy transition, electric vehicles (EVs), quantum computing, genomics, 3D printing, robotics, drones and space exploration. All these sectors have been kickstarted by the Government through initiatives like the National Quantum Mission, India AI Mission, and

the Semiconductor Mission.

Some problems remain, however. The biggest one being domestic funding, which needs to grow rapidly. Consider this — Indian start-ups raised over \$12 billion in 2024, but about 75 per cent of this came from international sources. Another one is payment of royalties. While India produces approximately 24,000 PhD graduates annually, the country paid \$14.3 billion in IPR royalties in 2024, while earning only \$1.5 billion, highlighting a significant gap which can be filled by greater innovation.

The first challenge seems to be more daunting — building quality higher education institutions. While premier education institutions like the IITs, IIMs and IITs are producing skilled professionals and are second only to Ivy League colleges, there is a dearth of such universities in India. Another challenge is a change in curricula, which is already underway to link research and industry needs. This would involve addressing skill shortages in data science, biotech, clean energy, AI and ML among others. For this, industries must step up and support the government.

It is a known fact that in India research is more de-linked from industry needs in comparison to other countries. In short, it is not solely the amount of R&D that matters, but the quality. To date, two-thirds of the R&D in India is contributed by the Government. The private sector needs to step up to fill the gap.

India is well positioned to become the world's leading start-up ecosystem.

With graduate upskilling programmes, the Government's initiatives to foster innovation, and the support of universities and corporates, the aspiration of Aatma Nirbhar Bharat, where talent nurtured at home stays and contributes locally, will come to fruition in the coming decades. (Courtesy: The Pioneer)

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

Last Date: 21/09/2025.

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

1. Health Educator
No of posts: 78 posts
Category-wise vacancy:
UR: 40
SC: 5
STP: 8
STH: 4
OBC/MOBC: 20
OBC/MOBC (Tea Tribes & Adivasi): 1
Pay Scale: Pay Scale of ₹14,000/- to ₹70,000/-, Grade Pay of ₹7,600/- per month.

2. Junior Assistant/ Account Assistant cum LDA
No of posts: 72 posts
Category-wise vacancy:
UR: 36
SC: 6
STP: 7
STH: 4
OBC/MOBC: 18
OBC/MOBC (Tea Tribes & Adivasi): 1
Pay Scale: Pay Scale of ₹14,000/- to ₹70,000/-, Grade Pay of ₹6,200/- per month

3. Basic Health Worker (BHW)
No of posts: 41 posts
Category-wise vacancy:
UR: 21
SC: 3
STP: 4
STH: 2
OBC/MOBC: 11
OBC/MOBC (Tea Tribes & Adivasi) : 0
Pay Scale: Pay Scale of ₹14,000/- to ₹70,000/-, Grade Pay of ₹5,600/- per month

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

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

OBC/MOBC: 3 years
ST/SC: 5 years
PwBD: 10 years
Educational Qualification: Graduate in any discipline from Government recognized University and applicant must possess minimum 6 (six) months diploma in Computer application.

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

Application Fee: No application fee is to be paid the applicants.
Interested and eligible candidates may apply online for these vacancy by visiting official DHS Assam Recruitment Portal. Candidates may follow below mentioned steps to apply online.

Scroll down, go to Important Web-Links section .
Click on the "Online Application Form" and complete the registration process by clicking "New Registration".
In the next stage, click on "Online Application Form" Link and Login.
Fill your all personal and educational details and upload necessary documents.
At the end, submit the form.
Don't forget to take a print out of the application form .
• Starting Date of online application submission: 12th September 2025
• Last Date of online application submission: 21st September 2025

AIC NIPER Guwahati Recruitment – Assistant Manager Post

Last Date: 26/09/2025.

The Atal Incubation Center (AIC) - NIPER Guwahati Foundation has released an employment notification for the recruitment of 1 Assistant Manager (Finance/admin) post on a contractual basis. Interested and eligible candidates may apply online here .

Name of post: Assistant Manager (Finance/admin)
No of posts: 1
Salary: Rs. 35,000/- per month (based on the qualification, experience and performance in the interview).

Age Limit: 30 - 35 Years. Age limit is further relaxable for reserved categories as per Govt norms. Age relaxation may be given to exceptionally deserving candidates.

Essential Qualification:
Educational: Bachelor's degree in Commerce, Finance, Accounting, or Business Administration/ M. Com or MBA (Finance).

Experience: A minimum of 2 years of experience in a relevant field.

Desirable Qualifications & Skills:

Technical Skills:
a) Proficiency in financial / Accounting software (Tally, Teller, Diamond etc.)
b) Advanced Excel and financial modelling
c) Familiarity with the PFMS portal
d) Awareness of tax laws, and financial regulations
Soft Skills:

a) Strong analytical thinking and problem-solving
b) Good communication and ability to explain financial concepts to non-finance teams
Interested and eligible candidates may apply online by emailing the Latest CV in PDF format to aic@niperguwahati.in by 26th September 2025.

Applications will be scrutinized, and short-listing will be carried out based on the relevant work experience and knowledge of the relevant domains. Shortlisted candidates shall then be invited for an interview by a Selection Committee appointed by AIC NIPER Guwahati Foundation.

Note: This is NOT an appointment in NIPER Guwahati or under any government organization.

Intelligence Bureau Recruitment 2025 – 394 Junior Intelligence Officer Posts

Last Date: 14/09/2025.

Intelligence Bureau (IB) has released an employment notification for the recruitment of 394 Junior Intelligence Officer Grade-II/Tech i.e., JIO-II/Tech posts in the Intelligence Bureau, (Ministry of Home Affairs), Government of India. Interested and eligible candidates may apply online here .

Name of post: Junior Intelligence Officer Grade-II/Tech
No of posts: 394 posts
Category-wise vacancy:
UR: 157
EWS: 32
OBC: 117
SC: 60
ST: 28

Name of organisation: Intelligence Bureau, (Ministry of Home Affairs), Government of India

Classification of service: General Central Service, Group 'C' (Non-Gazetted, Non-Ministerial)

Pay scale: Level 4 (Rs.25,500-81,100) in the pay matrix plus admissible Central Govt. allowances.

Helpline Phone No: 022-61087513
Nationality: Candidate must be an Indian national.

Essential Qualification: Candidates must possess any one of the following educational Qualifications.

I. Diploma in Engineering in the fields of: Electronics or Electronics & Telecommunication or Electronics & Communication or Electrical & Electronics or Information Technology or Computer Science or Computer Engineering or Computer Applications from a Government recognized University/Institute. Or

II. Bachelor's Degree in Science with Electronics or Computer Science or Physics or Mathematics from a Government recognized University/Institute. Or

III. Bachelor's Degree in Computer Applications from a Government recognized University/Institute.

Age Limit: The candidate's age should be between 18 years to 27 years as on 14.09.2025.

Age Relaxation: Permissible relaxations in upper age limit for different categories are as under:

> Upper age limit is relaxable by 5 years for SC/ST and by 3 years for OBC candidates.

> Upper age limit is relaxable for departmental candidates' up to 40 years of age who have rendered 3 years of regular & continuous service. This relaxation is applicable only to Central Govt. Civilian employees holding civil posts & not applicable to personnel working in PSUs, Autonomous/Statutory bodies, etc.

> The age limit is relaxable upto age of 35 years for UR candidates, 38 years for OBC and up to 40 years for SC/ST in case of widows, divorced women and women judicially separated from their husbands and not remarried.

> The age limit is relaxable for ex-servicemen as per the Government instructions in this regard issued by the Central Government from time to time.

> The age limit is relaxable up to maximum 5 years to the meritorious sports persons specified in Para 1 (a) of DoP&AR O.M. No. 14015/1/76-Estt.(D) dtd 4.8.1980.

Examination Fee:

Category	Fee
UR/OBC/EWS (Male)	Rs.650/-
Others	Rs.550/-

Payment Mode: Payment can be made online via SBI EPAY LITE through Debit Cards (RuPay/Visa/MasterCard/Maestro), Credit Cards, Internet Banking, UPI, SBI challan etc.

Interested and eligible candidates may apply online for this vacancy. They may follow below mentioned steps to apply online.

Scroll down, go to Important Web-Links section .
Click on the "Online Application Form" and complete the registration process

In the next stage, click on "Online Application Form" Link and Login.
Fill your all personal and educational details and upload necessary documents.

Make payment of application fee as per your category and submit the form.
At the end, take a print out of the application form.

Starting date of submission of online application: 23rd August 2025
Last date of submission of online application: 14th September 2025 (11:59 PM)

Assam Rifles Recruitment 2025 – 69 Rifleman/ Riflewomen (General Duty) Posts

Last Date: 15/09/2025.

Office of the Director General Assam Rifles, Shillong has released an employment notification for the recruitment of 69 Rifleman/ Riflewomen (General Duty) Posts under the Meritorious Sports-persons Quota Recruitment Rally 2025. Interested and eligible candidates may apply online here .

Name of post: Rifleman/Riflewomen (General Duty)
No of posts: 69 posts
Sports discipline-wise vacancy:
Boxing: Male:3, Female:3
Football: Male:5, Female:4
Shooting (Sports): Male:2, Female:2
Taekwondo (Kyorugi): Male:4, Female:4
Karate: Male:4, Female:6
Sepaktakraw: Male:2, Female:2
Fencing: Male:1, Female:4
Badminton: Male:2, Female:2
Pencak Silat: Male:3, Female:7
Athletics: Male:4, Female:7

Name of organisation: Assam Rifles
Age Limit: Age of the candidates should be between 18 to 23 years .
Age Relaxation: The Upper age relaxation is up to 5 years for OBC/ General category candidates, 10 years for SC/ST candidates.

Educational Qualification: Candidates must have passed Matriculation from a recognized Board.

Sports Qualification: Players who have participated in any International Competition/ National Competitions/ Inter-University Tournaments/ National Sports/Games for Schools/ Khelo India University Games/ Khelo India Youth Games/ Khelo India Winter Games.

Application Fee:
UR/ OBC: Rs. 100/-
Female/ SC/ST: Nil
Payment Mode: Online.

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

Scroll down, go to Important Web-Links section .
Click on the "Online Application Form" and complete the registration process by clicking "New Registration".

In the next stage, click on "Online Application Form" Link and Login.
Fill your all personal and educational details and upload necessary documents.

At the end, pay the application fee as per your category and submit the form.
Don't forget to take a print out of the application form.

Starting date of submission of application: 16th August 2025
Last date of submission of application: 15th September 2025

AIC NIPER Guwahati Recruitment – Assistant Manager Post

Last Date: 26/09/2025.

The Atal Incubation Center (AIC) - NIPER Guwahati Foundation has released an employment notification for the recruitment of 1 Assistant Manager (Finance/admin) post on a contractual basis. Interested and eligible candidates may apply online here .

Name of post: Assistant Manager (Finance/admin)
No of posts: 1
Salary: Rs. 35,000/- per month (based on the qualification, experience and performance in the interview).

Age Limit: 30 - 35 Years. Age limit is further relaxable for reserved categories as per Govt norms. Age relaxation may be given to exceptionally deserving candidates.

Essential Qualification:
Educational: Bachelor's degree in Commerce, Finance, Accounting, or Business Administration/ M. Com or MBA (Finance).

Experience: A minimum of 2 years of experience in a relevant field.
Desirable Qualifications & Skills:

Technical Skills:
a) Proficiency in financial / Accounting software (Tally, Teller, Diamond etc.)
b) Advanced Excel and financial modelling
c) Familiarity with the PFMS portal
d) Awareness of tax laws, and financial regulations
Soft Skills:

a) Strong analytical thinking and problem-solving
b) Good communication and ability to explain financial concepts to non-finance teams

Interested and eligible candidates may apply online by emailing the Latest CV in PDF format to aic@niperguwahati.in by 26th September 2025.

Applications will be scrutinized, and short-listing will be carried out based on the relevant work experience and knowledge of the relevant domains. Shortlisted candidates shall then be invited for an interview by a Selection Committee appointed by AIC NIPER Guwahati Foundation.

Note: This is NOT an appointment in NIPER Guwahati or under any government organization.

51 people, including Indian, died in recent anti-government protest in Nepal

The US has also been targeting Police said 17 bodies were recovered from different parts of the country

KATHMANDU, Sept 12: At least 51 people, including an Indian national, have died in the recent 'Gen Z' protest that erupted across Nepal against corruption and a ban on social media sites, police said on Friday.

Senior Superintendent of Police Ramesh Thapa, who is co-spokesperson for Nepal police, said the casualties include one Indian national, three policemen and other Nepali citizens. The Kathmandu Post newspaper reported.

At least 36 bodies are at Tribhuvan University Teaching Hospital, Maharajgunj, where post-mortems began on Friday, it said.

Police said 17 bodies were re-



covered from different parts of the country on Thursday and Friday.

At least 19, mostly students, were killed when police opened fire at the Parliament building in Kathmandu when the protesters under the banner of Gen Z launched their agitation on Monday.

Prime Minister K P Sharma Oli quit on Tuesday shortly after hundreds of agitators entered his office demanding his resignation over the deaths during Monday's protest. The ban on social media was lifted Monday night.

The violence continued even after Oli's resignation, with protesters setting fire to the Parli-

ament, the President's Office, the PM's residence, government buildings, political parties' offices and homes of senior leaders.

Meanwhile, many of the bodies were cremated at Aryaghat of Pashupatinath Temple near the bank of Bagmati river on Friday afternoon.

Nearly 1,700 people sustained injuries during the protests. Of them, around 1,000 have returned home after recovery, police said.

Nepal's police force is gradually resuming operations in the Kathmandu Valley, with police stations and posts that were vandalised or set ablaze slowly coming back into operation, officials said. (PTI)

South Korean workers released after days of detention in Georgia return home

INCHEON (SOUTH KOREA), Sept 12: A plane carrying more than 300 South Korean workers released after days of detention in Georgia landed in South Korea on Friday.

TV footage showed the charter plane, a Boeing 747-8i from Korean Air, landing in Incheon International Airport, just west of Seoul, on Friday. The footage later showed workers, some wearing masks, passing an arrival hall, with senior officials clapping hands.

The South Korean Foreign Ministry asked media to blur the workers' faces in video and photos at the airport, citing requests by the workers who worried about their privacy.

They were among about 475 people detained during the Sept. 4 immigration raid at a battery factory under construction on the campus of Hyundai's sprawling auto plant west of Savannah.

The US release of video showing some Korean workers shackled with chains around their hands, ankles and waists has caused public outrage and a sense of betrayal in South Korea, a key US ally.

South Korea later said it has reached an agreement with the United States for the Korean workers' releases. They workers had been held at an immigration detention centre in Folkston, 460 km southeast of Atlanta. After their releases from the detention centre, they were bused to Atlanta to board the charter plane.

The South Korean government earlier pushed to bring them back home on Thursday, but said the plan was shelved due to a reason involving the US side. South Korea's Foreign Ministry later said President Donald Trump had halted the departure process to hear from South Korea on whether the Koreans should be allowed to stay to continue their work and help train US workers or should be sent back to South Korea.

"President Trump had directed that the detainees should be allowed to return home freely and



those who didn't want to go didn't have to," South Korean President Lee Jae Myung told a news conference Thursday. "We were told that, because of that instruction, the process was paused and the administrative procedures were changed accordingly."

Lee said that one South Korean national who has relatives in the US eventually chose to stay in the US. The battery plant, a joint venture between Hyundai and LG Energy Solution, is one of more than 20 major industrial sites that South Korean companies are currently building in the United States.

They include other battery factories in Georgia and several other states, a semiconductor plant in Texas, and a shipbuilding project in Philadelphia, a sector Trump has frequently highlighted in relation to South Korea.

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

But South Korean officials and experts have accused the US of failing to act on its long-running request to improve a visa system to accommodate skilled Korean workers as the US wants South Korea to expand US industrial investments. In reality, South Korean companies have been mostly relying on short-term visitor visas or Electronic System for Travel Authorisation to send workers who are needed to launch manufacturing sites and handle other setup tasks, a practice that had been largely tolerated for years. (AP)

France sends jets to Poland, UK ramps up sanctions in signal to Russia not to escalate

WARSAW, Sept 12: France said Friday it's deploying fighter jets to Poland and the UK announced fresh sanctions targeting Russia's oil revenues and war machine as Europe's first, measured steps to Russia's drone incursion into Poland aimed to send a signal to Moscow that any further aggression won't go unchecked.

French President Emmanuel Macron said he would deploy three advanced Rafale fighter jets to help protect Poland's airspace and NATO's eastern flank to fulfill a commitment he made to Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk.

He said the deployment was discussed with both NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte and British Prime Minister Keir Starmer.

"The security of the European continent is our top priority. We will not yield to Russia's growing intimidation," Macron posted on X. Britain's new sanctions include bans on 70 vessels that the UK says is part of Russia's "shadow fleet" that transports Russian oil in defiance of sanctions already in place. Some 30 individuals and companies — including Chinese and Turkey-based firms — have

also been sanctioned for their part in supplying Russia with electronics, chemicals, explosives and other weapons components. The new sanctions came as British Foreign Secretary Yvette Cooper made her first trip to Kyiv Friday after her appointment a week ago following Starmer's Cabinet shake-up. Cooper said her visit is a demonstration of solidarity with Ukraine which faces a tenfold missile and drone Russian assault from a year ago. "The UK will stand idly by as Putin continues his barbaric invasion of Ukraine," Cooper said, noting what she said was the Russian president's "complete disregard for sovereignty" by sending drones in to NATO airspace. "International action to increase economic pressure on Russia and to cut off critical cash flows which he desperately needs to pay for this illegal war is vital." Poland's Foreign Minister Radek Sikorski was also visiting Kyiv on Friday. His Ukrainian counterpart Andrii Sybiha posted on X that the two officials would discuss "shared security, Ukraine's EU and NATO accession, and pressure on Moscow." (AP)

Indian-Origin motel manager beheaded in US; co-worker arrested

HOUSTON, Sept 12: A 50-year-old Indian-origin motel manager in the US was beheaded in front of his wife and son in Texas following a dispute over a washing machine, police said.

The suspect, a co-worker with a criminal record, has been arrested and charged with capital murder.

The incident took place on Wednesday morning at the Downtown Suites motel in Dallas.

Chandra Mouli "Bob" Nagamallaiah, originally from Karnataka, was killed after a dispute over a broken washing machine with his 37-year-old Cuban co-worker Yordanis Cobos-Martinez, according to the Dallas Police Department.

Cobos-Martinez reportedly became enraged when Nagamallaiah asked another person to translate his instructions instead of addressing him directly.

Surveillance footage showed Cobos-Martinez attacking Nagamallaiah with a machete.

The victim fled toward the motel office, where his wife and 18-year-old son were present.

Nagamallaiah's wife and son tried to intervene several times, but Cobos-Martinez pushed them away and continued the attack. He then took the victim's cell phone

and key card from his pockets before again resuming the attack until Nagamallaiah's head "was removed from his body", police said in court affidavit.

"The suspect then kicked the [Nagamallaiah's] head twice into the parking lot and proceeded to pick it up and carry it to the dumpster and put it inside," police said.

The crime is "unthinkable", they said.

Cobos-Martinez is being held without bond. If convicted, he could face life imprisonment without parole or the death penalty.

According to official records, he has been arrested twice for auto theft in Florida and has indecency with a child and assault charges in Houston. The records also show an immigration hold.

ICE officials said Cobos-Martinez was released under supervision earlier this year due to the lack of deportation flights to Cuba.

The Consulate General of India in Houston condoned the death of Nagamallaiah and said it is following up on the matter closely.

"We are in touch with the family and offering all possible assistance. The accused is in the custody of Dallas Police," it said in a post on X.

Consul General D C Manjunath told PTI that the mission is providing full consular support to the victim's family.

Known as Bob to friends and family, Nagamallaiah was remembered as a loving husband, devoted father, and kind soul who touched the lives of everyone he knew.

This unimaginable tragedy was not only sudden but "deeply traumatic", friends said. "Bob's life was taken in a brutal attack that occurred in front of his wife and son, who bravely tried to protect him. The shocking nature of this event has shaken our community."

Friends, family, and community groups, including SEWA International, have come together to support Nagamallaiah's family.

A fundraiser set up by his friend Tanmay Patel has raised over USD 50,000 and is still ongoing.

SEWA's Dallas chapter president Gitesh Desai told PTI: "We are deeply saddened by this heinous crime. The entire community has been shocked, especially after seeing the gruesome CCTV footage circulating online. We are committed to supporting the family in every possible way." Funeral services for Nagamallaiah are scheduled for Saturday. (PTI)

Israeli soldiers, and their mothers, increasingly reject calls to return to Gaza

TEL AVIV, Sept 12: As Israel calls up tens of thousands of reservists for its invasion of Gaza City, a growing number of soldiers and their mothers are saying no.

There are no official figures, but newly formed groups are broadcasting their refusal to serve despite the risk of imprisonment. It's a new phenomenon in the nearly two-year war sparked by Hamas' Oct 7, 2023, attack, though so far it has had no apparent effect on military operations.

The defiance is emerging as Israelis have joined mass protests accusing Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of prolonging the war for political purposes instead of reaching a deal with Hamas to bring back the remaining 48 hostages, 20 of whom are believed to be alive.

Many opponents, including former senior security officials, fear that the latest offensive will achieve little and put the hostages at risk. Israel also faces heavy international criticism over the humanitarian catastrophe unleashed by the war and its blockade.

One group calling on soldiers to refuse to serve is comprised of mothers who fear their sons will die in vain.

"I couldn't stop thinking of how to break his leg, break his arm, wound him in some way that he won't be able to go back," Noorit Felsenthal-Berger said as she wiped tears from her cheeks, terrified her youngest son will be forced to return.

Avshalom Zohar Sal, a 28-year-old soldier and medic who served

multiple tours in Gaza, said soldiers are exhausted, demoralised and no longer know what they are fighting for.

His doubts first surfaced last year, when he was serving in an area near where six hostages were later killed by their captors as Israeli troops closed in. "I felt this was my fault," he said.

His scepticism deepened during his most recent tour, in June, when he saw troops returning to the same areas where they had fought earlier in the war. He said some soldiers seemed less focused, leaving them vulnerable to attacks from a vastly diminished but still lethal Hamas.

"Don't put me in the position that I need to decide if I'm going to risk again my life," he said, addressing the military.

A group known as Soldiers for Hostages says it represents more than 360 soldiers who refuse to serve. While the number remains small, it is a contrast from the early days of the war, when reservists rushed for duty in the wake of the Oct 7 attack. Such refusal is punishable by imprisonment, but that has only happened in a handful of cases.

"Netanyahu's ongoing war of aggression needlessly puts our own hostages in danger and has wreaked havoc on the fabric of Israeli society, while at the same time killing, maiming and starving an entire population" of civilians in Gaza, Max Kresch, a member of the group, said at a Sept 2 news conference.

Another group known as Save

Our Souls, or SOS, says it represents nearly 1,000 mothers of soldiers. A similar movement was credited with helping to end Israel's 18-year occupation of southern Lebanon in 2000.

"We have to be their voice," said Felsenthal-Berger, whose two sons have fought in Gaza. The group has held protests around the country, met with government officials and published letters. She says her sons, including one on active duty, are no longer in Gaza. She says they support her efforts but have not officially refused to serve.

Yifat Gadot says her 22-year-old son, who fought in Gaza for nine months at the start of the war, told her that soldiers there felt like sitting ducks. More than 450 Israeli soldiers have been killed since the start of the 2023 ground invasion, according to the army.

"I told him, We the mothers will do everything we can to get you out of Gaza and save you from this political war," she said. Some of the women have encouraged their sons to refuse to report back for action in Gaza, while others say they respect their son's decisions. All say their message is aimed primarily at the country's leaders.

Netanyahu's office declined to comment.

Israel's call-up of 60,000 reservists is the largest in months, in a country of fewer than 10 million people where military service is mandatory for most Jewish men. Many have already served multiple tours away from their families and businesses. (AP)

Asian shares track Wall Street rallies as a US interest rate

MANILA, Sept 12: Asian shares rose on Friday, tracking Wall Street's record-setting run the previous after a mixed set of US data bolstered expectations that the Federal Reserve will cut interest rates to boost the economy.

Japan's Nikkei 225 set another intra-day high, rising for the third day and adding 0.9% to 44,781.09. Shares in semiconductor company Tokyo Electron, Sony Group and Fast Retailing were among the movers.

In Chinese markets, Hong Kong's Hang Seng index rose 1.5% to 26,484.65, lifted by a report that Beijing may order state banks to help cover unpaid bills of local governments. The Shanghai Composite index inched 0.2% to 3,877.38.

In Seoul, the Kospi climbed 1.3% to 3,387.02 while Australia's S&P/ASX 200 added 0.7% to 8,867.90. India's BSE Sensex rose 0.3% while Taiwan's Taiex was up 0.6%.

"What's moving markets now isn't just another rally — it's the unmistakable shift of a dovish Fed tide, the kind that doesn't rise in isolation but swells across oceans, lifting virtually every boat in every harbour," Stephen Inness of SPI Asset Management said in a market commentary. Wall Street's record-setting run kept rolling on Thursday, and stocks climbed after a mixed set of US data kept the path clear for the Federal Reserve to cut interest rates to boost the economy. (AP)

British Parliament panel opens inquiry into impact of India-UK FTA

LONDON, Sept 12: The House of Lords International Agreements Committee has opened an inquiry this week into the impacts and implications of the UK-India Free Trade Agreement (FTA), concluded during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Britain in July.

The cross-party panel, which includes British Indian Conservative peer Baroness Sandy Verma, is seeking evidence from experts and stakeholders as part of the parliamentary process before the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) can come into effect.

With a target to double bilateral trade to USD 120 billion by 2030, the CETA has been pitched by the Prime Minister Keir Starmer-led government as a "landmark agreement" that will increase trade by 25.5 billion pounds and UK GDP by 4.8 billion pounds annually in the long run.

"As we undertake a new programme of evidence gathering, covering the terms of the FTA, its potential benefits and disadvantages, and provisions for key UK sectors, among other issues, we encourage anyone with experience or expertise in this area to come forward and share their views with the full knowledge that they will have value and are welcome," said Lord Peter Goldsmith, chair of the International Agreements Committee.

It comes as Starmer prepares for his first visit to India as UK PM next month, when he is set to join Modi at the Global Fintech Fest (GFF) scheduled for October 7-9.

The House of Lords committee is seeking evidence on a set of specific aspects including: the potential benefits and risks of the FTA for the UK; how the agreement will affect sectors across the whole of the UK; the impact on consumers in the UK; the broader economic, social, and environmental impacts of the agreement; interaction with the UK's trade and industrial strategies; the implications for the UK-India relationship; and the wider geopolitical context of the agreement.

The deadline for the public call for submissions in writing is October 14, with the committee highlighting that it is keen to hear from a diverse range of individuals and organisations.

In the following stage, a select group of individuals and trade representatives will be invited to give oral evidence on a tailored set of topics before the committee.

The House of Lords International Agreements Committee is tasked with scrutinising all of the country's treaties that are laid before Parliament under the terms of the UK's Constitutional Reform and Governance Act. Its inquiries result in the publication of a report to be tabled in Parliament as part of the ratification process. (PTI)

China's newest aircraft carrier sails

BEIJING, Sept 12: China's newest aircraft carrier has sailed through the Taiwan Strait, the navy said Friday. The body of water separates China from Taiwan, the self-governing island that Beijing says must come under its control.

The sailing could serve as a warning to the US and others against support for Taiwan, though China played down any such motive.

The Fujian, which is doing sea trials ahead of its commissioning, was heading to the South China Sea to conduct training and scientific experiments, the navy said in a short post on social media.

The navy said the carrier's activities were not targeting anyone else. A social media account affiliated with state media quoted an expert saying the Taiwan Strait was the normal and most reasonable and efficient route for the carrier to reach the South China Sea.

It was the first time the Fujian had passed through the strait, the post by the Yuyuquantian account said.

The US Navy sends warships through the strait periodically, as do some of its allies, in a warning to Beijing against any attempt to use force to establish its claim to the island.

Taiwan and China split in the civil war that brought the communists to power in 1949.

The defeated Nationalist government fled to Taiwan and set up its own government on the island.

The US does not officially recognise the government in Taiwan, but it provides weaponry for its defence and says that any resolution of the differences between China and Taiwan should be peaceful and not by military force.

China's military said last week that it was on high alert after the Canadian frigate Quebec and the Australian destroyer Brisbane sailed through the strait.

It accused the two warships of provocative actions that it said heightened security risks.

Japan's military said it had spotted the China's latest carrier for the first time on Thursday afternoon.

The Fujian, together with two guided-missile destroyers, was sailing southwest about 200 km from the disputed Senkaku islands, or the Diaoyu islands in Chinese. Both countries claim the remote and uninhabited territory. The carrier's heading at the time was on a course for the Taiwan Strait. (AP)

Pakistan to host next SCO summit in 2027

ISLAMABAD, Sept 12: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday said that Pakistan will host the next Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit in 2027, as he urged the authorities to start preparations for it in the national capital.

Sharif made the announcement while addressing a road development project in Rawat area of Rawalpindi. "We have to start preparing now," the prime minister said. "We need to build accommodation and beautify Islamabad," he added. He did not give a date for the summit, which is held by the member states. The announcement to host the next summit comes less than a fortnight after the SCO Summit in Tianjin, China, where Pakistan raised the issue of the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT). (PTI)

State-run Electricite du Liban, or EDL, is viewed as one of Lebanon's most wasteful institutions and plagued by political interference

Lebanon licenses Elon Musk's Starlink for satellite internet services

BEIRUT, Sept 12: Lebanon has granted a license to Elon Musk's Starlink to provide satellite internet services in the crisis-hit country known for its crumbling infrastructure.

The announcement was made late Thursday by Information Minister Paul Morcos who said Starlink will provide internet services throughout Lebanon via satellites operated by Musk's SpaceX.

The announcement came nearly three months after Musk spoke with Lebanon's President Joseph Aoun by telephone and told him about his interest in working in the country's telecommunications and internet sectors.

During the same Cabinet meeting, the government named regulatory authorities for the country's electricity and telecommunications



sectors.

Naming a regulatory authority for Lebanon's corruption-plagued electricity sector has been a key demand by international organisations.

The naming of a regulatory authority for the electricity sector was supposed to be done more than 20 years ago but there have been repeated delays by the country's authorities. The move is seen as a key reform for a sector that wastes over \$1 billion a year in the small Mediterranean nation.

State-run Electricite du Liban, or EDL, is viewed as one of Lebanon's most wasteful institutions and plagued by political interference. It has cost state coffers about \$40 billion since the 1975-90 civil war ended.

Since taking office earlier this

year, Aoun and Prime Minister Nawaf Salam have vowed to work on implementing reforms and fighting corruption and decades-old mismanagement to get Lebanon out of an economic crisis that the World Bank has described as among the world's worst since the 1850s.

Lebanon has for decades faced long hours of electricity cuts but the situation became worse following an economic meltdown that began in late 2019. The 14-month Israel-Hezbollah war that ended in late November also badly damaged electricity and other infrastructure in parts of Lebanon.

In April, the World Bank said it will grant Lebanon a \$250 million loan that will be used to help ease electricity cuts. (AP)

Arunachal govt approves mining lease of Namchik-Namphuk coal mines

ITANAGAR, Sept 12: The Arunachal Pradesh government has approved the mining lease of Namchik-Namphuk coal mines in Kharsang in Changlang district.

In 2023, Guwahati-based M/s Coal Pulz Pvt Ltd won the bid for a period of 30 years in an auction.

On Thursday, the lease agreement was signed between the state government and Coal Pulz at Itanagar. The agreement was signed by Coal Pulz Pvt Ltd director Naveen Singhal and Geology & Mining secretary AK Singh on behalf of the Arunachal Pradesh government.

Arunachal Pradesh Geology and Mining minister Wangki Lowang, who witnessed the signing ceremony, said Namchik-Namphuk coal mines were placed for auction along with 28 other coal mines, which was the biggest tranche of auction of commercial coal mines in November 2022.

He said mining operations will start soon and is likely to produce 2 lakh tonnes per annum as per the Approved Mine Plan, generating royalty to the state exchequer.

The start of mining operations will



create job opportunities for unemployed youth, promote economic sustainability of locals and would also contribute to meet the growing energy demand, Lowang said.

The minister said the start of mining operations will drastically reduce illegal coal mining in the block.

As the mining lease area falls within

the Namchik Reserve Forest, Lowang said forest clearances have been granted by the Union Ministry of Environment and Forests & Climate Change and the Department of Environment, Forests and Climate Change under Van Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan Adhiniyam, 1980 (Forest Conservation Act).

He also said that the state environment impact assessment authority has transferred the environment clearance of Namchik-Namphuk open cast coal mine with a rated capacity of 0.20 million tonnes per annum.

Located in the far eastern corner of Arunachal Pradesh, the Namchik-Namphuk coalfields, with nearly 15 million

tonnes of coal reserves, lie in a forested zone with ecological and tribal significance.

The Namchik-Namphuk coalfield was allocated to the Arunachal Pradesh Mineral Development & Trading Corporation Ltd (APMDTCL) on October 28, 2003, by the Union Coal ministry. The total area of the coal block is 133.65 hectares, and the mining lease is being held by the corporation for a period of 20 years.

Out of the total area allocated, the operation of open-cast mining was undertaken only on 39.02 hectares between April 2007 and February 2012.

The total extraction of coal during the period was at 10,00,000 metric tonnes.

In 2012, the mining operations in the coalfield were suspended by the Centre for violation of the project's terms of reference, which are guidelines under which a project must operate, and for suspected intervention of underground armed elements.

In 2014, shortly after the Narendra Modi government came to power, the Centre said that mining in the coalfield will be resumed.

However, the project remained inactive for years, with attempts at reviving the coal block inviting scrutiny from civil society and environmental groups.

On July 1, 2019, the Pema Khandu-led government decided to resume mining activities in the coalfield.

In 2023, the coal mine was allocated to Coal Pulz, but necessary permissions for coal extraction were not granted.

On November 5 last year, the Arunachal Democratic Party had alleged illegal coal mining at Namchik-Namphuk coal mine and had sought an investigation into it.

On February 4 this year, an escrow agreement for the coal mine was signed in Delhi between the Coal Controller's Organisation under the Ministry of Coal and Coal Pulz Pvt Ltd, marking the first step towards opening of the largest coal mines to the private sector in the North East region.

On June 12 this year, the Arunachal Pradesh government sought approval for the transfer of a forest clearance to the state-run Arunachal Pradesh Mineral Development & Trading Corporation Ltd to Coal Pulz. (PTI)

Arunachal health services paralysed amidst strike by doctors, nurses associations



ITANAGAR, Sept 12: Panic and distress gripped patients across Arunachal Pradesh on Friday as hospitals shut down for 48 hours in protest against the assault on two doctors, leaving only emergency services operational, officials said.

Families carrying sick children and elderly patients lined up outside emergency wards from early morning, while some were forced to travel long distances in search of functioning facilities.

Routine consultations, diagnostic tests, and non-emergency treatments were suspended, leaving thousands of residents struggling for timely medical care.

The shutdown was called by doctors' and nurses' associations in protest against the assault on two doctors at Tomo Riba Institute of Health and Medical Sciences (TRIHMS) in Naharlagun on

Thursday.

The attack occurred in the ENT ward when a 28-year-old man, reportedly dissatisfied with the treatment provided to a patient known to him, struck Dr Arvind Pusha, a senior paediatric resident, from behind with an iron rod and repeatedly punched and kicked him.

When Dr Tam Tariang, another senior resident, intervened, the assailant attacked him too, inflicting grievous injuries.

Both doctors are undergoing treatment at TRIHMS, while the attacker has been arrested and an investigation is underway.

In response to the incident, the TRIHMS Faculty Association, Indian Medical Association (IMA) Arunachal branch, Arunachal Pradesh Doctors' Association (APDA), and Trained Nurses' Association of India (TNAI) Arunachal Pradesh branch issued a

joint statement on Thursday evening, announcing the 48-hour closure of all government and private hospital services, except emergency care.

They also submitted a memorandum to the state government demanding immediate measures to ensure a safe working environment for healthcare staff, warning that the next steps in their agitation would depend on the government's response.

"We do not want to call strikes and agitate, but the circumstances have forced us to do so. We are sad, we are scared," Dr Rinchin Dorjee Megeji, senior cardiologist and president of the TRIHMS Faculty Association, told reporters on Friday.

The associations have called for permanent security arrangements in hospitals and the augmentation of nursing staff in state-run facilities to protect healthcare workers from potential threats.

Meanwhile, the All Arunachal Pradesh Students' Union (AAPSU) appealed to doctors and nurses to end the strike, highlighting the risk to innocent patients.

In a statement, AAPSU warned that any loss of life due to the lack of medical care during the shutdown would be the sole responsibility of the striking staff.

The union urged both the government and the medical fraternity to hold urgent discussions to resolve the crisis and prevent a full-scale healthcare emergency. (PTI)

HT Correspondent

PASIGHAT, Sept 12: East Siang Deputy Commissioner Sonalika Jiواني, along with District Medical Officer Dr Yagling Perme, District Development Officer (ICDS) Mailong Taku, and other members of the District Monitoring Committee, inspected the Drug De-addiction and Rehabilitation Centres (Sudhaar Ghars) in Pasighat to assess the facilities, services, and rehabilitation measures available for recovering inmates, according to an official statement.

The inspection covered counselling support, recreational facilities, nutrition, cleanliness, hygiene, safety, security, human resources, and other parameters in line with the latest standard operating procedures.

During the visit to the government-run Sudhaar Ghar, the DC was briefed by the In-Charge Medical Officer, Dr Oson Borang, that the centre currently operates with a capacity of 10 beds and a staff strength of 24, including a counselor, psychologist, and yoga therapist.

The recovering inmates at the visited centres were inspired by the DC's interactions, where she encouraged them to become changemakers and champions in the fight against drug abuse.



She urged them to build a better future by acquiring skills and pursuing higher education and vocational courses.

She assured that the District Administration, through the skill development department and other government agencies, would extend sup-

port to help them achieve these goals.

The DC's visit was supported by DMO Dr Yagling Perme, DDICDS Mailong Taku, Inspector D Yomcha representing the Superintendent of Police, and representatives from the Education Department, among others.

Guv, CM congratulate Radhakrishnan on taking oath as VP

ITANAGAR, Sept 12: Arunachal Pradesh Governor K T Parnaik and Chief Minister Pema Khandu on Friday congratulated C P Radhakrishnan on taking oath as the 15th vice president of India.

President Droupadi Murmu administered oath to Radhakrishnan (67) at a brief ceremony at the Rashtrapati Bhawan, which was attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and several Union ministers. Parnaik, who attended the cere-

mony, extended warm wishes to Radhakrishnan for a successful tenure. He said that with his vast experience, statesmanship and dedication to public service, Radhakrishnan would further strengthen India's democratic fabric and uphold the dignity of the high office. In a post on X, Khandu said: "Heartfelt congratulations to Thiru CP Radhakrishnan Ji on taking oath as the Vice President of India."

"A leader of integrity and im-

mense experience, his service inspires us all. As he assumes this high office, we are confident his leadership will further strengthen our democratic institutions and nation's future," the chief minister said. Radhakrishnan won the vice presidential election on Tuesday, defeating joint opposition candidate B Sudershan Reddy by a margin of 152 votes.

Radhakrishnan will hold office till September 11, 2030. (PTI)

APCC terms PM's Manipur visit 'belated, political'

ITANAGAR, Sept 12: The Arunachal Pradesh Congress unit on Friday described Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Manipur on September 13 as a "belated and politically motivated" move after two years of turmoil in the violence-hit state.

Arunachal Pradesh Congress Committee (APCC) president Bosiram Siram, in a statement, said the prime minister's visit was "too little, too late", coming more than two years after ethnic clashes broke out in May 2023.

"When Manipur was burning, when mothers and children were forced into relief camps, when people cried out for justice and peace, the prime minister chose silence. Today, he comes only

after two years and under President's Rule. This is politics, not compassion," Siram alleged.

"It is ironic that the PM remained absent when his own party's government was in charge, but now makes a show of visiting when it suits the political narrative. This clearly exposes his priorities," he added.

Reiterating the Congress's demands, Siram said restoring democracy in Manipur through an elected government was the first step towards healing.

"Manipur cannot heal under President's rule. The people deserve a government of their choice, one that enjoys the confidence of every community," he said. (PTI)

BRO sets up play and learning room for workers' children in Tawang

ITANAGAR, Sept 12: The 763 Border Roads Task Force (BRTF) of the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) has set up a dedicated play and learning room for the children of casual paid labourers engaged in road construction in Tawang district of Arunachal Pradesh, a defence official said on Friday.

The move aims to provide a safe and nurturing environment for children while easing the burden on women labourers, who often juggle demanding road-building work with childcare responsibilities. Guwahati-based Defence Spokesperson Lt Col Mahendra Rawat said in a statement. Many of these women, carry their young children to construction sites due to the absence of alternative facilities, the statement said.

The play and learning room has been set up within the BRTF premises and is equipped with play materials, educational charts, a supervised indoor play area, and a designated feeding space for mothers.

Clean drinking water has also been arranged to ensure hygiene and health, the spokesperson said. (PTI)



IMD forecasts widespread rain across Arunachal from today



ITANAGAR, Sept 12: The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has forecast a fresh spell of widespread rainfall across Arunachal Pradesh from Saturday.

According to a bulletin by the meteorological centre here on Friday, the northeastern state will witness heavy rain in parts of West Kameng, Pakke Kessang, Kurung Kumey, Papum Pare and Changlang districts on September 13, while moderate to light rain is expected in other areas.

According to weather officials, rainfall activity is expected to intensify on Sunday, with warnings of very heavy rain in Dibang Valley, Lower Dibang Valley, Lohit, Anjaw and Changlang.

Districts such as East Kameng, Pakke Kessang, Papum Pare, Kra Daadi and Tirap are also likely to experience heavy downpours accompanied by thunderstorms and lightning, they added.

The wet spell will continue on Monday, with alerts issued for heavy to very heavy rain in Tawang, West Kameng, East Kameng, Kurung Kumey, Papum Pare, Pakke Kessang, West Siang, Lower Siang and Namsai districts.

Thunderstorms with lightning are expected to affect several other districts, keeping weather conditions unsettled.

Even on Tuesday, fairly widespread to widespread rain will persist across the state, Met officials added. (PTI)

Arunachal's remotest border villages set for uplift under VVP: Khandu

Papum Pare most likely to be heavily affected



ITANAGAR, Sept 12: Chief Minister Pema Khandu on Friday said that the remotest villages of the state are being brought into the mainstream of development under the Centre's flagship Vibrant Villages Programme (VVP).

In a post on X, Khandu said, "Under the transformative vibrant villages programme, Arunachal Pradesh's remotest villages are now connected to the development mainstream."

Giving a detailed account of works under Phase I of the programme, the chief minister said that 455 priority villages across 11 border districts have been identified for transformation.

"A total of 125 villages will receive 105 new roads, covering 1,022 km. In addition, 156 villages will benefit from 187 development projects worth Rs 104.99 crore," he said.

The chief minister added that the state govern-

ment is also installing over 6,000 streetlights and setting up 50 mini and micro hydel projects to provide sustainable power in the remotest areas.

Khandu said Phase II, which began in April this year, would cover 122 more villages, including 67 along the India-Myanmar border and 55 on the India-Bhutan border.

"These habitations will get all-weather roads, 4G telecom and TV connectivity, and on-grid electrification," he stated.

The Union Cabinet in April this year approved the "Vibrant villages programme-II for financial years 2024-25 to 2028-29."

The chief minister underlined that the Home Affairs ministry has sanctioned Rs 2,205 crore for the programme in Arunachal Pradesh.

Calling it a "historic investment," he remarked, "This is not just about infrastruc-

ture, but about empowering our border citizens and ensuring they continue to live with dignity as the first guardians of our nation's borders."

"The vibrant villages programme is about making our border villages vibrant, self-reliant and sustainable. It is about ensuring that people living in the remotest corners of Arunachal Pradesh feel equally part of the national growth story," the chief minister added.

Launched by the Centre in 2023, the vibrant villages programme seeks to improve the quality of life and strengthen security in border settlements by providing connectivity, modern amenities and livelihood opportunities.

Officials say the initiative is designed to check migration from remote border areas while encouraging socio-economic activities that can anchor communities in place. (PTI)

Pramod Boro leads street campaign in support of UPPL candidates

HT Correspondent KOKRAJHAR, Sept 12: As political parties intensify their election campaigns ahead of the BTC elections scheduled for September 22, the United People's Party Liberal (UPPL) is actively reaching out to voters across the Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR). Elections will be held for all 40 constituencies of the Bodoland Territorial Council Legislative Assembly (BTCL).

The ruling UPPL is contesting all 40 seats, as are the BPF and Congress. The BJP is fielding candidates in 30 constituencies, while several other parties are also in the fray.

On Friday, Chief Executive Member (CEM) of BTR and UPPL candidate from Dotma constituency, Pramod Boro, conducted a street campaign at Serfanganur market in Kokrajhar district. Accompanied by a large number of UPPL leaders, workers, and sup-



porters, Boro interacted with local vendors and shopkeepers, urging them to support the UPPL in the upcoming elections.

During his interaction with the media, Boro expressed confidence in his re-election from Dotma, which he described as one of the

most prestigious constituencies in BTR. He highlighted the peace and development achieved under the UPPL-led BTR government over the past five years and reiterated the party's commitment to all-round development and welfare of people across all communities.

Adivasi Suraksha Samiti declares war on BJP ahead of BTC Polls

HT Correspondent GOSSAIGAON, Sept 12: As the campaign heat intensifies for the upcoming BTC elections, the Adivasi Suraksha Samiti, Assam, has come down heavily on Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, accusing him of betraying the Adivasi community and failing to deliver on key promises.

Addressing the press, Samiti President Lalit Hembrom said that the BJP's lollipop politics will not succeed in Bodoland this time. "Despite ministers, MLAs, and leaders from different autonomous regions being brought in to campaign, the people of BTC will not fall for the false assurances and deceptive tactics of the BJP, he asserted.

Hembrom alleged that the Chief Minister has consistently ignored the concerns of the Adivasi people, including land rights of 22 lakh Adivasi, Scheduled Tribe status for six communities, protection of Adivasi villages, refugee rehabilitation, and employment issues. "Not a single promise was implemented. Instead, the Chief Minister has worked to undermine our organization through anti-Adivasi designs," he charged.

He further accused Sarma of misleading the people in the name of forming the Kachari Autonomous Council and the Adivasi Welfare and Development Council. "For five years, this government thrived on deception, neglect, and betrayal. Now, with another election approaching, the same leadership is trying to

misguide the Adivasi community once again. But the people will reject these empty promises," Hembrom said.

Declaring a strong anti-BJP stance, the Samiti president announced that the organisation would deploy its full strength to resist the saffron party in the BTC. At the same time, he declared open support for Congress candidate Abu Bakkar Ali in the 2 No. Guma constituency urges all members and supporters to work for his victory.

Launching a direct attack on BJP's candidate Sajal Kumar Singh, Hembrom labeled him a "proxy candidate" and claimed that "the people will never accept an imposed representative".

The event was graced by the presence of Devananda Hazarika, former MLA of Bihpuria LAC, along with Haren Saikia, Rajib Gogoi, Jintu Bhattacharya, and others.

It is noteworthy that Pankaj Jyoti Bhuyan began his journey as a scriptwriter and dramatist during his school days. Istantik Club, a socio-cultural organisation in the Sootea area, played a key role in shaping his creative career.

Several organisations, including Istantik Club, Sootea Press Club, Gyan Vikash Academy, Sootea Natya Samaj, and Naduar MLA Padma Hazarika, congratulated Bhuyan and lauded his remarkable achievement.

'Indigenous Adivasi family in Tinsukia struggles for ancestral land stolen 35 Years Ago'

HT Correspondent MARGHERITA, Sept 12: For over 100 years, Sukhlal Goh, an indigenous Adivasi community member, had been residing on 12 bighas of land in Namdang Bashbari, Ward No. 3, under Borgolai Gaon Panchayat in the 83rd Margherita Legislative Assembly Constituency, Tinsukia district.

Lakhikanta Goh, son of the late Sukhlal Goh, had entrusted the original land documents to a neighbour named Keshav Biswas for safekeeping. However, when Lakhikanta requested the return of the documents, Keshav Biswas allegedly refused, responding with threats such as, "There are no documents," and "What will you do if I don't give them?" This situation has persisted for over 35 years.

As a result, the family of Lakhikanta Goh has been deprived of their ancestral land. They are now homeless and forced to live in a rented house under extremely difficult conditions.

On Friday, a team from the All Adivasi Student Association of Assam (AASAA), comprising members from the Tinsukia District and Margherita Regional Committees, visited the land and met the af-

fectured family to understand the ground realities.

It has become evident that due to Lakhikanta Goh's economic vulnerability and his status as a poor indigenous Adivasi, Keshav Biswas has fraudulently attempted to seize the 12 bighas of land.

Jarnel Minj, General Secretary of the AASAA Tinsukia District Committee, expressed deep concern over the incident. He said it is extremely unfortunate that indigenous Adivasi people are not safe under the BJP-led government at both the Union and State levels. The government's slogans of safeguarding Jati, Mati, and Bheti (identity, land, and foundation) have proven to be hollow, which is why non-indigenous individuals like Keshav Biswas feel emboldened to illegally and forcibly grab land.

Minj further stated to the media that if Keshav Biswas does not return the rightful ownership of the land to Lakhikanta Goh's family, AASAA will pursue legal action and launch a strong agitation in the coming days. He also warned that should any untoward incident occur during this agitation, the Margherita Co-District Administration will be held fully responsible.

WKV Dibrugarh celebrates Universal Brotherhood Day

HT Correspondent DIBRUGARH, Sept 12: Vivekananda Kendra Vidyalaya (WKV), Dibrugarh, in collaboration with Vivekananda Kendra, Kanyakumari - Dibrugarh Branch, celebrated Universal Brotherhood Day on Thursday (September 11) at the Vivekananda Kendra Anandalya Bhawan, Mahalaya Road. The event commemorated Swami Vivekananda's historic address at the World Parliament of Religions in Chicago in 1893.

The programme began with a devotional invocation, "Mangalacharan," followed by a chorus titled "Bhuvan Mandale" performed by the teachers.

Principal Achintya Goswami delivered the inaugural address, which was followed by a recitation of Swami Vivekananda's Chicago speech by Kasturva Deka, a student of Class XII Commerce.

Dhubri Medical College & Hospital hosts CME on Acute Respiratory Infections

HT Correspondent DHUBRI, Sept 12: Dhubri Medical College & Hospital (DMC&H) hosted a significant Continuing Medical Education (CME) program on September 11, focusing on the theme "Acute Respiratory Infection: From Cough to Crisis." The event was organised by the Department of Pediatrics at DMC&H and sponsored by the National Academy of Medical Sciences (India).

The day-long program was inaugurated by the Patron of the CME and Principal-cum-Chief Superintendent of DMC&H, Prof (Dr) Anku Moni Saikia. The event

brought together a distinguished panel of guest speakers from across Assam.

Among the notable experts were Prof (Dr) J N Sharma, a renowned pediatrician and former Head of Pediatrics at Gauhati Medical College and Hospital; Prof (Dr) Faruque Uddin Ahmed, former Principal of Assam Medical College and a convener of the National Academy of Medical Sciences; and Halim Sarker.

The CME witnessed an impressive turnout, with around 200 doctors, nurses, and medical students in attendance. Sessions covered various aspects of respiratory dis-

eases and featured presentations by faculty members from multiple departments, including Pediatrics, Microbiology, Pharmacology, Social and Preventive Medicine, and Forensic Medicine.

An interactive panel discussion was also held, encouraging dialogue and the exchange of insights among participants. The program served as a valuable platform for healthcare professionals and students to enhance their understanding and skills in diagnosing and managing acute respiratory infections, which remain a pressing public health concern, said Prof (Dr) Anku Moni Saikia.

Dhing College celebrates 60th Freshers' Day

HT Correspondent NAGAON, Sept 12: The 60th Freshers' Day celebration of Dhing College, Nagaon was held with a two-day programme on Wednesday and Thursday.

The open session of the freshers' programme was presided over by Dr Indra Narayan Mahanta, President of the college's governing body. The session was graced by several distinguished guests, including Dr Ashok Kumar Bora, Vice-Chancellor of Srimanta Sankardev University; senior police official and noted Assamese poet Dr Nanda Singh Borkola; and Dr Dharmendra Nath, President of the Asom College Adhyaksh Parishad.

In his address, Dr Ashok Kumar Bora encouraged students to pursue knowledge not only for personal growth but also for the development of the nation and society. Dr Nanda Singh Borkola, who attended as the keynote speaker, stressed the responsibility and noble duty of the student community.

As part of the celebrations, students of the college showcased and sold various self-made products in an exhibition.

The event also witnessed the ceremonial release of several books, including "Prakrutir Pad Chihna" by the college principal Dr Biman Hazarika, a book by Samiran Kalita, and three other publications. Awards for the Best Graduates of 2025 were presented to Dichani Sarkar (Arts), Tuhin Tapsom (Science), and Raihan Masood (Commerce).

The session was attended by college principal Dr Biman Hazarika, Vice-principal Snigdha Mahanta, and Alumni Association President Jatin Nath. Professors Pankaj Saikia and Ajit Sarma also addressed the gathering, and the event was moderated by Professor Muslehul Islam.

On the second day, the programme was inaugurated by renowned singer Manisha Hazarika, followed by a classical dance performance by Guwahati-based dancer Shibangi Ratna Baruah. Senior journalist Pranoy Bordoal also attended the cultural segment of the event as an invited guest.

HT Bureau

DIPHU, Sept 12: Dr Dilip Kathar, a well-known physician based in Diphu, passed away on Wednesday, September 10, following a cardiac arrest. He was laid to rest at the Diphu Parish burial ground on Friday.

Dr Kathar, who ran a clinic at Rongkhehan market, was widely respected in the community. As a mark of respect, traders and shopkeepers at Rongkhehan market shut down their establishments from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. on the day of the funeral.

He was serving as the president of Karbi Katholik Sarmar Asong (KKSAs). While returning from Uswai in West Karbi Anglong, he experienced chest pain and breathing difficulties. He was rushed to Guwahati for treatment, but doctors could not save him. His mortal remains were brought back to Diphu to his residence in Valley View.

3-Day DPL training underway at Nagaon

HT Correspondent

NAGAON, Sept 12: Three-day District Process Lab (DPL) Training for block master trainers began on Thursday at the conference hall of Nagaon Zila Parishad. The training is part of the 'Aadi Karmayogi Abhiyan' initiative, which aims to support the development of 36 tribal villages across the district.

The programme was inaugurated by Manorama Morang, Additional District Commissioner and Nodal Officer for the Aadi Karmayogi Abhiyan. The training is designed to equip block master trainers—including Block Development Officers and NGO representatives—with the necessary skills to implement development projects effectively in tribal-dominated areas.

A key focus of the training is to enable better access to various government schemes for villagers through improved coordination and capacity building. District Assistant Commissioner Shilpi Rekha Pandit was also present during the session.

Seven district-level master trainers are conducting the sessions for the block-level trainers. These include Sidhartha Shinkai, Block Development Officer of Barhampur; Manita Das Ronghang, Block Development Officer of Batadroba; and several others from various departments. The initiative aims to drive grassroots development in tribal communities by strengthening local leadership and enhancing awareness of government welfare schemes.

HT Correspondent

BISWANATH CHARIALI, Sept 12: PM Shri Dekorai Higher Secondary School, one of the leading educational institutions in the greater Nagaon area under Biswanath district, observed its annual freshmen social on Thursday with much enthusiasm and participation.

The event began with a soulful Borgeet, followed by the inaugural speech delivered by Pradip Das, speaker of the Students' Union. The ceremony was presided over by the school's principal, Sid-dhartha Paul.

Dwijen Mahanta, retired principal of Chariali Girls' Higher Secondary School and former subject teacher at PM Shri Dekorai HSS, graced the occasion as an invited guest. In his address, he encouraged students to adapt to the changing times while maintaining discipline and focus—qualities he described as essential for a successful life. He also praised the school for continuing its legacy of excellence and commended the present faculty for their dedicated efforts.

The event was also attended by Dilip Rajbanshi, president of the

The funeral service was held at 2 p.m. at the Cathedral of the Risen Lord, Diphu. The service was led by Most Rev. Paul Mattekatt, Bishop of Diphu Diocese, and attended by Vicar General Fr John Timung, Parish Priest Fr Thomas Paripurath, other priests, nuns, and members of the community.

In his tribute, Bishop Mattekatt described Dr Kathar as not only a dedicated doctor but also a deeply God-fearing man.

Dr Kathar's younger brother, Prakash Kathar, read out a brief account of his life and contributions. Condolence messages were shared by KKSAs, Diphu Diocese Karbi Katholik Nimarli Asong (DDKNA), Indian Catholic Youth Movement (ICYM), Diphu Parish Rongtharve Unit, and the Prayer Cell.

Following the final prayers by Bishop Mattekatt, Dr Kathar was laid to rest at the Diphu Parish burial ground.

Freshmen Social held at PM Shri Dekorai HSS



HT Correspondent

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The event was also attended by Dilip Rajbanshi, president of the

School Management and Development Committee, and Gajjal Tossa, president of the Academic Sub-Committee. Both delivered motivating speeches aimed at inspiring the students.

As part of the program, students performed a chorus rendition of Dr Bhupen Hazarika's "Manuhe Manuhor Babe" and recited poems. New students shared their early experiences at the school, adding a personal touch to the ceremony. A friendly interaction between Class XII students and the freshmen followed, fostering a warm and inclusive atmosphere.

Class XI student Beauty Saikia was honored with the title of Best Fresher in recognition of her active participation and vibrant presence.

The formal session concluded with a cultural program featuring performances by students, coordinated by subject teachers and cultural in-charges Hirakjyoti Medhi and Parinita Kaushik. The day ended on a musical note with performances by teachers Rupam Bora and Durga Sonar, along with former student Sandipa Sen, marking a memorable conclusion to the event.

AFFIDAVIT

I Nazir Hussain Laskar S/O-Late Faizur Rahman Laskar, Vill- Pachim Nilbagan, P.O.-Nilbagan, P.S.-Hojai, Dist. Hojai, (Assam) That, my Fathers actual and correct name is Faizur Rahman Laskar, but in my Passport Documents Vide File No-GUWA02417411, wherein my Fathers name has been recorded as Faizur Rahman Laskar, That aforesaid Faizur Rahman Laskar, and Faizur Rahman, are the name of one and same person.

Nazir Hussain Laskar
Sadiquz Zaman
Vill:- Ruhini Pather
P.O & P.S. :- Murazam
Dist. Nagaon (Assam)
Contact- 9678015016

AFFIDAVIT

I, SHAHAJAMAL ALI S/O Late Munsar Ali, village - Sialmari Nepali gaon, P.O. kopati, PS Dalgaon, Dist-Darrang, (Assam) I declare that I am a permanent resident of above mentioned address and citizen of India by birth. That my actual and correct name is SHAHAJAMAL ALI. That my name has been wrongly inserted in my RPLI policy vide policy No-R-AS-EA-391643, as Shajamal in place of SHAHAJAMAL ALI. That SHAHAJAMAL and SHAHAJAMAL ALI is the same and one person who is myself.

Sd/-
SHAHAJAMAL ALI

HCDG College Nitaipukhuri to hold closing ceremony of Diamond Jubilee Year

HT Correspondent DEMOW, Sept 12: HCDG College Nitaipukhuri, established on July 1, 1965, is celebrating the conclusion of its diamond jubilee year in 2025.

The closing ceremony will be held over three days—September 20, 21, and 22, 2025—with a series of events and programmes planned to mark the occasion.

The organisers extend a warm invitation to all to attend and be a part of the celebrations.

Ginger Processing Unit inaugurated in West Karbi Anglong to boost rural economy

Unit, supported by the World Bank under the Assam Agribusiness and Rural Transformation Project

HT Correspondent

KHERONI, Sept 12: A ginger processing unit was inaugurated at Bi-henru in Jengkhra, West Karbi Anglong district, with the aim of boosting the rural economy. The initiative was led by Anup Chetia, former rebel leader and Chairman of the Indigenous Agricultural Farmer Producer Company Ltd.

The unit, supported by the World Bank under the Assam Agribusiness and Rural Transformation Project (APART), has been established to process and commercialise locally produced ginger and garlic. The facility is expected to make farmers in the region more self-reliant by ensuring fair prices for their produce and promoting sustainable agricultural practices.

This project is a step towards



strengthening the agricultural value chain in the hill district and is likely to bring long-term benefits to the farming community.

The inauguration ceremony was attended by Girin Hazarika, former Director of Research at Assam

Agricultural University, Jorhat; Tapan Dutta, District Agriculture Officer of West Karbi Anglong; Prabin Bharali, Project Officer of ARIAS Society (APART), Guwahati; and a large gathering of local farmers.

PM to inaugurate projects worth ₹ 8,500 crore, meet displaced people Stage set for PM's maiden visit to Manipur since 2023 ethnic clashes

IMPHAL, Sept 12: Prime Minister Narendra Modi is scheduled to set foot in Manipur on Saturday, over two years after a deadly ethnic violence swept the northeastern state, and unveil projects to the tune of ₹ 8,500 crore, officials said.

Modi will lay foundation stones for various development projects worth ₹ 7,300 crore from Peace Ground in Churachandpur, where Kukis are in the majority. The PM will also inaugurate infrastructure projects totalling ₹ 1,200 crore from Meitei-majority Imphal, they said.

The prime minister's visit comes amid repeated criticism by opposition parties for not coming to the state following the ethnic strife between the Kuki and Meitei communities, which has left over 260 people dead and thousands homeless since May 2023.

The Manipur government had on Thursday evening put up a large billboard, announcing the PM's programmes at Churachandpur's Peace Ground and Kangla Fort in Imphal on Saturday.

The hoarding came up at Keisampat Junction, a key location in Imphal, which is also close to the BJP's state headquarters.

More such billboards were put up in the state's capital Imphal, ahead of Modi's visit.

Manipur has been under the President's Rule since February,



following the resignation of chief minister N Biren Singh.

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

Another notification that did not mention the Prime Minister's name asked people to avoid bringing children below 12 years and sick persons to the venue.

The Manipur government had earlier banned air guns in Churachandpur district in view of Modi's visit.

Meanwhile, security measures have been tightened in Imphal and

Churachandpur district headquarters town, the officials said.

Both state and central forces' personnel were deployed in large numbers in and around the nearly 237-acre Kangla Fort in Imphal and the Peace Ground in Churachandpur, where a grand stage is being readied for the event.

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

Police and paramilitary forces have also been deployed and bamboo barricades constructed along the route leading to the Peace Ground.

Manipur's lone Rajya Sabha MP Leishemba Sanajaoba described the PM's visit as a "very fortunate" one for the people and the state.

"It's a great fortune that Modi will be listening to the hardships faced by the people... Manipur has had a history of violent clashes in the past. However, no prime minister has visited the state during such times and listened to people," the BJP MP said.

Leading Kuki-Zo groups have also welcomed the Prime Minister's visit to Manipur, terming it as a "historic and rare occasion".

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

"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 Modi's visit.

Several other organisations representing the Kuki-Zo community also hailed the PM's visit, but opposed a planned dance programme as part of a ceremony to welcome him.

A women's organisation 'Imagi Meira' stated that Modi should direct officials to allow Meiteis to move along the National Highway and ensure their safety. (PTI)

Central Tribal University sanctioned for Tripura: Minister

AGARTALA, Sept 12: Tripura is set to witness the fulfillment of a long-cherished aspiration as the Central Government has sanctioned the establishment of a Central Tribal University in the state.

This was announced by Tribal Welfare Minister Bikas Debbarma, who termed the decision a historic milestone for the people of Tripura.

"The university will not only serve as a premier center of learning but will also play a pivotal role in regional development, skill enhancement, employment generation, and preservation of tribal heritage," Debbarma said.

He added that the institution would empower future generations of Tripura to become more educated, skilled, and self-reliant.

"While fostering modern education, the university will also ensure the preservation of our rich cultural and traditional identity, further strengthening Tripura's role in the nation's development," he noted. Expressing gratitude on behalf of the people of Tripura, the minister thanked Union Tribal Affairs Minister Jual Oram for what he described as a "historic and visionary decision."

Limison D Sangma elected unopposed as Meghalaya deputy speaker

SHILLONG, Sept 12: Three-time National People's Party (NPP) legislator Limison D Sangma was on Friday elected unopposed as the new deputy speaker of the Meghalaya Legislative Assembly.

Announcing the result, Speaker Thomas A Sangma said, "Since one nomination paper was received and found valid, I hereby declare Limison D Sangma elected as deputy speaker of the Meghalaya Legislative Assembly."

Raksamre MLA Limison was ceremonially escorted to his chair by Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma and Leader of Opposition Mukul Sangma.

The Speaker welcomed him to the high office, stating, "Together, we will strive to maintain the dignity, efficiency, and inclusivity of the Assembly, ensuring it continues to stand as a true temple of democracy for the people of Meghalaya."

In his acceptance speech, Limison expressed humility and grati-



tude, saying, "I have learned that true leadership is not about holding power, but about serving the people with humility and integrity."

He pledged to give equal opportunity to both the ruling and opposition benches, and to ensure that the diverse voices of the Khasi, Jaintia, and Garo communities are represented fairly.

The chief minister congratulated the newly elected deputy speaker,

praising his humility, gentleness, and fairness.

"I am confident under your leadership you will be able to support the Speaker and help run the affairs of the Assembly, shaping programmes and policies for the growth of our state and our people," he said.

Leader of Opposition Mukul Sangma also lauded Limison, describing his unopposed election as a significant achievement.

"He is known for honesty, humility and generosity. When he was a minister, on my request he vacated his cabinet seat to induct someone else, something rare in politics," Mukul recalled.

Outgoing Deputy Speaker Timothy D Shira congratulated his successor and urged him to maintain neutrality while presiding over the House.

He also offered an apology to members for any unintended offence caused during his tenure. (PTI)

PM to inaugurate Bairabi-Sairang railway line, flag off first Rajdhani from Aizawl today

AIZAWL, Sept 12: Prime Minister Narendra Modi will visit Mizoram on Saturday to inaugurate the Bairabi-Sairang broad gauge railway line and flag off the first Rajdhani Express between Aizawl and Delhi and other new trains, an official said.

This will be Modi's second visit to the northeastern state since he became the prime minister in 2014, he said.

Modi visited Mizoram in December 2017 during which he commissioned the 60-megawatt Turial hydroelectric project near Saipum village in north Mizoram's Kolasib district near the Assam border.

The prime minister is expected to arrive at the Lengpui airport at 9 am on Saturday, and then he will take a helicopter to fly to Aizawl's Thumpuai helipad, the official said.

Modi will address a public meeting at Aizawl's Lamul at 10 am, during which he will inaugurate the Bairabi-Sairang railway line and flag off Rajdhani train service between Aizawl and Delhi and two other new trains between Aizawl-Kolkata and Aizawl-Guwahati, he said.

The PM will also open two education institutions and lay foundation stones for six projects of the Centre during his visit, he said.

From Mizoram, the PM will fly to Manipur, his first visit since ethnic violence broke out in May 2023, after inaugurating the Bairabi-Sairang railway line in Aizawl on the same day, the official said.

Security has been beefed up across Mizoram ahead of the PM's

visit. Mizoram Inspector General of Police (Law and Order) H Ramthlangliana said that all police units across the state have been placed on high alert, and elaborate security arrangements were made in the state capital Aizawl.

Apart from state police, two companies each of Border Security Force (BSF) and Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) were deployed to maintain law and order during the PM's visit to Aizawl, he said.

The government also placed elaborate traffic management in Aizawl, enforcing 'no parking' and 'no plying' in certain zones and stretches where the PM's entourage will move.

The Aizawl Municipal Corporation (AMC) has also asked residents to close all roadside shops, private offices, and street vending along the road the PM's convoy will pass.

The state government has instructed students and all government employees posted in Aizawl to attend the public meeting at Lamul. The government has also appealed to the general public to attend the public meeting in large numbers.

The 51.38-km-long Bairabi-Sairang broad gauge railway line project is part of the Centre's Act East policy, which aims at boosting connectivity and economic integration across the Northeast region.

The new railway line will link Aizawl with Assam's Silchar town and then the rest of the country and will bring Mizoram within the fold of India's railway network for the first time.

The project sanctioned in 2008-2009 was executed by the NF Railway at the cost of Rs. 8,213.72 crore.

Modi laid the foundation stone for the project in 2014, and its construction was completed within 10 years, starting from 2015.

Previously, Bairabi in Kolasib district on the Mizoram-Assam border was the only railway line in Mizoram.

The Bairabi - Sairang line railway project is an engineering marvel of the Indian Railways.

The railway line passes through 48 tunnels, 55 major bridges, and 87 minor bridges. The total length of tunnels is over 12.8 km, which is 25 per cent of the railway track, according to NF Railway officials.

Bridge no-144 near Sairang railway station, which rises to 114 metres, is the tallest pier railway bridge in the country and is 42 metres taller than the Qutub Minar, they said.

Once operational, the new line will cut travel time between Aizawl and Guwahati from 16 hours by road to just 12 hours by train and between Aizawl and Silchar from nearly 7 hours by road to just 3 hours, they said.

Apart from improving connectivity, the new railway line will also enhance passenger and freight movement, boost socio-economic and tourism growth, generate new employment, and fulfil a long-standing aspiration of the people of Mizoram, according to NF Railway officials.

The Bairabi-Sairang railway line was commissioned by the NF Railway in early June after it passed a safety inspection. (PTI)

Tripura achieves record potato production at 62.5 MT per hectare: Agriculture Minister Signed agreement with International Potato Centre of Peru to boost production

HT Correspondent

AGARTALA, Sept 12: To make Tripura self-reliant in potato and potato seeds by 2030, the Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare Department has taken a series of steps, including signing an agreement with the International Potato Centre of Peru.

This was informed by Tripura Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare Minister Ratan Lal Nath after he chaired a meeting with International Potato Centre Director General Simon Heck and Country Manager Niroj Sharma.

The minister informed that in Tripura there are 23,746 potato farmers, and potato is cultivated in 47,637 kani of land, which is around 7,622 hectares.

He said that earlier, per hectare potato cultivation was 19.16 MT.

"In our state, potato seeds used to come from cultivated potatoes that were stored, or from West Bengal, Punjab, or Gol Bazar of Agartala. There was no guarantee of quality, no source, and production was also very low. Later, in our state, True Potato Seeds (TPS) were introduced. This potato is expensive and required skilled workers, and without the research centre in Nagcherra, production was impossible and not significant," he said.

The minister said that potato production was 1.46

lakh MT, while the requirement was 1.55 lakh MT to become self-reliant.

"Due to less production, we had to import potatoes. After our government came in 2022-23, we started a new process called Epical Rooted Cutting (ERC). From the Rashtriya Krishi Bima Yojana (RKBY) of the Centre, we took ₹ 5 crore. We made an agreement with the International Potato Centre in Peru to help us with technology support, capacity building, research, assistance in certification so that we can export outside the state, and to establish a potato chips processing centre. From 2023 we have started. In the first year, we gave potato seeds and saplings to 104 farmers, in 2024 to 402 farmers, and now 4,000 farmers will receive this under Epical Rooted Cutting. According to Simon Heck, he has never seen such potato production anywhere.

Tripura recorded the highest potato production earlier at 19.16 MT per hectare, and now per hectare production has reached 62.50 MT, which is a record," said the agriculture minister.

The minister informed that the state will become self-reliant in potato seeds by FY 2028-29 and self-reliant in potatoes by 2029-30.

"Then we can also export potatoes, which is our plan," the minister said.

Tripura Cong slams Govt's Fixed School Uniform Policy, terms it anti-poor

HT Correspondent

AGARTALA, Sept 12: Tripura Pradesh Congress on Friday had strongly condemned the state government's decision to implement a fixed school uniform policy across all government schools, alleging that the move will further burden poor families and collapse the state's education system.

According to the new guideline, the purpose of the policy is to maintain consistency and a unified identity among schools of the same category. However, the Pradesh Congress has argued that the measure will push education further out of reach for economically weaker sections.

"Since the BJP government came to power, the cost of education has steadily increased, making it nearly impossible for children from poor families to continue their studies," the party said in a statement.

The Congress further alleged that under the Vidyaajyoti Scheme, students are charged ₹ 1,200 annually with "false promises" of better education, which violates the Right to Education Act. The party claimed that this has already contributed to a rising number of school dropouts.

The fresh directive will require students from Classes 9 to 12 to purchase new uni-

forms again, a move the Congress described as "unjust and insensitive."

Additionally, the party warned that the policy would harm local cloth traders who traditionally supplied school uniforms, as the Education Department is now expected to route procurement through a specific contractor. "This opens the door to corruption and money laundering," the Pradesh Congress alleged.

Demanding immediate withdrawal of the decision, the Congress called upon the government to prioritise affordable education instead of imposing additional financial burdens on families.

PM's Manipur visit 'merely symbolic', not aimed at bringing peace

IMPHAL, Sept 12: Manipur Congress president Keisham Meghachandra on Friday alleged that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to the ethnic violence-hit state is "merely symbolic", and "not aimed at bringing peace and ensuring justice".

Modi is scheduled to set foot in Manipur on Saturday, over two years after a deadly ethnic violence swept the northeastern state, and unveil projects to the tune of ₹ 8,500 crore. Meghachandra, in a video message, claimed, "I take the visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi as merely symbolic and a show-off. The people, who have been suffering for months, including internally displaced persons staying in relief camps, had expected a concrete roadmap for peace, rehabilitation, and justice." (PTI)

Cadre of banned KYKL held in Manipur, arms recovered

IMPHAL, Sept 12: Security forces arrested a cadre of the banned Kanglei Yawol Kanna Lup (KYKL) from Manipur's Imphal West district and recovered arms and ammunition from his possession, police said on Friday.

The 43-year-old member of the proscribed outfit was apprehended from his residence at Lamsang Makha Leikai on Thursday, a senior officer said.

He was allegedly involved in extortion from the public and was accused of threatening people in a bid to recover loans, he said.

One 9 mm pistol, along with a magazine, one gun, four empty magazines of different types and ammunition were recovered from his possession, the officer said.

Security forces also recovered a cache of arms and ammunition from the foothill areas of Sonapur and Jairotpokpi village in Jiribam district on Thursday, another officer said. (PTI)

Call for improving air quality standards of Kohima



HT Correspondent

DIMPUR, Sept 12: Kohima DC B Henok Buchem on Friday said Kohima is among the 131 non-attainment cities in India where air quality has not met national standards, emphasising the importance of environmental stewardship.

He said urbanisation must be managed carefully to preserve the forests and biodiversity that act as natural allies against pollution.

Buchem said this while delivering the keynote

speech at a day workshop on the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP), organised by the Kohima district administration in collaboration with the Kohima Press Club (KPC) as part of the latter's yearlong silver jubilee celebrations, at the Kohima DC's conference hall.

He pointed to everyday examples of pollution caused by careless practices such as littering, roadside dumping of construction materials, and releasing septic waste into rivers. He called for simple

but effective measures like walking or cycling short distances, carpooling, and responsible waste disposal.

Stating that Kohima's air is a shared inheritance, Buchem said protecting it is not a single policy or a seasonal campaign.

KPC president Alice Yhosu said efforts for clean air should not be a one-time affair, but a joint and collaborative effort. She expressed appreciation to the district administration for actively involving the press club, calling it a first-of-its-kind initiative.

Yanathung Kithan, scientist 'B', Nagaland Pollution Control Board, said the major contributors to poor air quality are road dust caused by poor road conditions and traffic movement, the open burning of waste, vehicular emissions from increasing traffic, and construction and demolition activities.

He also cautioned that indoor air pollution from the use of firewood for cooking continues to affect households across the district.

He underlined the need for constant monitoring and data collection, the adoption of cleaner fuels and technologies, and better waste management systems. He also drew attention to the national target under NCAP of reducing pollution levels by 40 per cent by 2026, stating that if the programme can succeed in Kohima, it can succeed anywhere.

Four of family killed, one injured in landslide in Sikkim

GANGTOK, Sept 12: Four members of a family were killed and another was critically injured after a landslide, triggered by incessant rain, struck their residence in Sikkim's Gyalshing district, police said on Friday.

They were asleep when the landslide smashed their house in the Upper Rimbi area around midnight, a senior officer said. Gyalshing Superintendent of Police Tshering Sherpa said Sikkim Police and Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) personnel and locals rushed to the spot and tried to rescue the family members.

Three of the six family members were killed on the spot, while the two injured women were taken to the Gyalshing district hospital, where one succumbed to her injuries, the SP said.

A seven-year-old boy was found alive during the operation and taken to the hospital, he said.

Despite incessant rain, the police and SSB personnel acted swiftly with support from the local community.

"It has been a risky operation, but we have done our best to save lives. The operation is underway," said Sherpa.

He also expressed his gratitude to all who supported the operation. (PTI)

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CBC 48143/12/0008/2526

Female friendships should be celebrated more: Tamannah, Penty on new Prime Video show



MUMBAI, Sept 12: Actors Tamannah Bhatia and Diana Penty say they instantly embraced the idea of "Do You Wanna Partner" as the show celebrates the beauty of female friendships in a professional setting.

The Prime Video show follows the journey of two best friends, Shikha and Anahita (played by Bhatia and Penty), as they embark on an ambitious venture to start their own alcohol brand.

"I think female friendships are a rarity. But when they are good, they are beautiful. I'm really lucky to have the coolest bunch of girlfriends and I'm very happy that I'm doing a show where we are celebrating female friendships," Bhatia told PTI in an interview.

Citing the example of her favourite movies like "The Devil Wears Prada," "Legally Blonde," and "Mean Girls", Bhatia said the show also explores the bond of its leads in the work space. She said such stories are not often explored on the screen, not just in India but also internationally. "Now, 'Devil Vs Prada 2' is coming, but there are few such stories and reasons best known to people who are making these movies," Bhatia, 35, said.

Penty said the genre has a great "potential" in India but there are not enough makers who have taken that chance.

"I personally feel there is so much potential in this genre. I don't want to call it a genre, but there is enough of an audience out there for girls that would enjoy watching female friendship on screen, as much as guys and girls would enjoy watching guy friendship. "Why should it be that the audience has to be only females to enjoy such friendship? This ('Do You Wanna Partner') is not treated like a typical chick flick. I think the guys can enjoy it as there's a great potential in it. I think people haven't given it a shot, maybe only after this period, they will," the 39-year-old actor said.

Penty added what sets "Do You Wanna Partner" from other female friendship narratives is that it talks about them in a workplace.

"I'm trying to think of the things that I've watched recently like female friends getting together to do business or anything that has to do with female friends, I've not seen anything. It is rare and it was a new space, something different for us as well and something new," the "Cocktail" actor said. (PTI)

WANT MY FILMS TO FEEL LIKE EXPERIENCES THAT COMPLETELY ABSORB AUDIENCE: RAAM REDDY ON 'JUGNUMA'

NEW DELHI, Sept 12: For Raam Reddy, cinema is more than storytelling -- it's about creating an immersive, almost theme park-like experience that transports audiences to a new world, a vision he hopes to bring to life with his new Manoj Bajpayee-starrer "Jugnuma: The Fable".

The film, which released in theatres on Friday, blends elements of magic realism and suspense to tell the story of a man and his family and the mysterious case of forest fires. Reddy said his aim has always been to go beyond narrative and create films that absorb viewers so completely it feels like "a trip". "I was very keen to create an immersive world. Like how you go to a theme park for a ride, I want my films to feel like experiences that absorb you so completely it's almost like a trip. You get lost in that world and honestly, that feeling is what made me want to become a filmmaker, even more than the act of telling stories.

"We often turn to cinema for escapism, but escapism doesn't have to be shallow. It can be nuanced, layered, and enriching, while still transporting you away," the filmmaker told PTI in an interview.

Reddy made his directorial debut with "Thithi", the 2016 Kannada-language film that had two bagged awards at the Locarno Film Festival. It also won the National Film Award for Best Feature Film in Kannada. "Jugnuma" was selected in the encounters section at the Berlin International Film Festival last year.

While "Thithi" was a comedic tale of how three generations of men respond to the death of their 101-year-old patriarch, Reddy said he wanted his second movie to explore suspense, mystery, and elements of magic.

"The challenge of blending suspense, magic and in a way realism

to heighten the magic even further, that really excited me. I went about trying to see where's the best setting in which I can do that. And the Himalayas immediately kind of drew me for the aura and the magic of the place. I let the place and life kind of influence where the story should go."

During his maiden Himalayan excursion, the director fought a forest fire with the locals and that gave him the narrative hinge to build a story that's set in Indian Himalayas in 1989 and follows Dev (Bajpayee), who discovers mysteriously burnt trees scattered throughout his sprawling fruit orchard estate. As fires continue to break out despite his efforts to prevent them, Dev begins to see himself and his family in a new light.

The filmmaker said he was conscious not to go overboard with the magical elements of the film. "What I love about the genre is that it's so malleable that each individual artist can interpret it how they feel. There's like this beautiful slider. It can start at

realism and head all the way to fantasy, and you can place yourself anywhere along that slider with your vision. I have a particular way of finding that balance... With this film, magic is used, I wouldn't say sparingly, but it's used realistically."

Reddy also revealed that he shot the movie on 16mm format to capture the aura of the period and to lend the film a tactile, immersive quality that mirrors the texture and unpredictability of the story.

"I was keen to use the medium that was available in 1989, which was 16mm. So that immediately sells the period in a way that's authentic. Secondly, I believe art is a form of transference.

"With film, imperfections emerge: dust, scratches, the texture of the reel, especially toward the end. Those details carry a kind of artistry, capturing emotion more directly, as if consciousness itself is being transferred into each frame. It's preserved forever, frame by frame. Digital, by contrast, just feels different."

He also loved the rigor of shooting on film.

"If you look back at the Hitchcock era, or even the history of cinema in general, film always came with a certain discipline. Because it's expensive and every reel counts, there's no room for waste. That pressure creates focus, and it feeds into every department on set - everyone is more present and invested. As a director, that's very exciting, even if it's also stressful."

Growing up, cinema was never part of Reddy's world and he only stumbled upon it in his twenties after journeys through poetry, photography,

music and prose.

"I barely had any link to cinema. I would just watch films half asleep. In fact, I would watch films so passively that I often didn't

remember the story. I'd be asking the person next to me. So it wasn't a part of my universe at all. I was much more of a poet."

Reddy, an economics graduate from St Stephen's College, recalled writing a novel about magic realism in college. "But I didn't go down the whole publishing route because I was too anxious-too itching to make films. But that book is actually my real debut. It's called 'It's Raining in Maya'. So this was my progression."

"Then I had this epiphanous moment when I was trying to figure out what to do... It hit me-that all these interests I had harboured individually over my growing years could come together in one single medium, which is film."

For him, storytelling came later-what drew him first, and what still drives his passion, is the medium itself.

"You can access all those layers in one place via the vehicle of a story. And I thought: Oh my God, what better way to spend a creative life? It's as challenging and as multidimensional as it can be. So I got into it individually and that's why I'm so passionate about the medium," he said.

If there's one thing that Reddy wants "Jugnuma" to provide to the audience, it would be "a sense of hope".

"The world feels heavy right now, things don't always flow freely. If I can, I want to undo some knots, touch an inner chord. The whole film was built so that by the end, there's a feeling of lightness and freedom that you can gain something by losing something. You don't always have to be in control; sometimes letting go can be just as powerful. I hope the audience feels that." (PTI)

Park Seo-jun, Won Ji-an to headline Prime Video series 'Surely Tomorrow'

NEW DELHI, Sept 12: Prime Video has announced its new series, titled "Surely Tomorrow", featuring popular actors Park Seo-jun and Won Ji-an in the lead roles.

Written by Yu Young-ah, the upcoming series, which "blends heartfelt storytelling with a touch of nostalgia, capturing the bittersweet journey of love, loss, and second chances", is directed by Lim Hyun-ook, according to a press release. "Surely Tomorrow" follows the "inter-twined lives of Lee Kyeong-do (Park Seo-jun) and Seo Ji-woo (Won Ji-an). The pair first fell in love in their early twenties, only to part ways. They reunited in their late twenties and gave romance another chance, but once again went their separate paths.

"Years later, fate brings them together unexpectedly—Kyeong-do, now a journalist covering a sensational scandal, and Ji-woo, the wife of the man at the center of it. Against the backdrop of public scrutiny and personal history, their story unfolds into a surprising third chapter." The release date of the series is to be announced. Park Seo-jun is best known for roles in projects such as "Itaewon Class" (2020) and "What's Wrong with Secretary Kim" (2018). Won Ji-an's notable work includes Netflix's "Squid Game" season 2 (2024), romantic drama series "Heartbeat" (2024), and "D.P." (2021), among others. (PTI)



Prabhudeva makes OTT debut with Sony LIV's Tamil original 'Sethurajan IPS'

CHENNAI, Sept 12: Actor-choreographer-director Prabhudeva is set to make his debut in the streaming space with Sony LIV's Tamil original series "Sethurajan IPS". The show is a political crime thriller from Rafiq Ismail, the director of films such as "Rathasaatchi" and "Westminster Abbey of the East". Prabhudeva, best known for his dance prowess and light-hearted roles in movies "Kaadhalan", "Love Birds", "Minsara Kanavu" and "Kaathala Kaathala", will be seen in a gritty new avatar as a police officer investigating a politically sensitive murder case in rural Tamil Nadu.

The story spirals into a complex battle of power, identity and justice. "Sethurajan IPS: isn't just a cop; he's a man caught in a storm of duty, identity, and politics. This role challenged me like never before. I believe this story is not just timely, but necessary.

"Sony LIV has always pushed the envelope with bold, rooted storytelling and this series is no exception," the 52-year-old actor said in a statement. The series, which marks a sharp departure from the conventions of a cop drama, promises to blend suspense with a social commentary on power and politics. "Sethurajan IPS" will be available soon on Sony LIV. (PTI)



FASHION, FLAIR & STARDOM: BP Packaged Drinking Water partners with Filmfare Glamour & Style Awards



HT Bureau
GUWAHATI, Sept 12 Blenders Pride (Packaged Drinking Water) announced its headlining partnership with Filmfare Glamour & Style Awards 2025. This coming together of two iconic forces sets a remarkable stage that shines the spotlight on the very best in fashion, style and entertainment.

For decades, Blenders Pride Packaged Drinking Water has been an indelible force in fashion & lifestyle with Blenders Pride Fashion Tour. Filmfare remains India's longstanding voice in

style & entertainment, that has defined the epitome of stardom through generations. Together, they created a stage where the winners were individuals who exude fearless confidence, outshine the rest with their style statement, and embody the true spirit of being The One & Only. Reaffirming its strong presence in the world of style and glamour, the brand also recognised emerging icons with bespoken honors. - Face of Fashion, Limitless Talent awarded to Ishaan Khatter, Most Desirable (Female) to Tamannaah

Bhatia, and Best Youth Icon (Female) to Ananya Panday - all powered by Blenders Pride Packaged Drinking Water. Ishwinder Singh, General Manager, Marketing at Pernod Ricard Indiaexpressed, "Blenders Pride (Packaged Drinking Water) has always been at the leading edge of fashion, style & glamour. Our partnership with Filmfare Glamour & Style Awards reflects honors those who set new trends in culture, define what's en-vogue & embody the stature of being the One & Only."



Only talk about India as a team, we should not talk about individuals: Kapil Dev

NEW DELHI, Sept 12: The legendary Kapil Dev on Friday backed India to win the Asia Cup but stressed on collective efforts taking precedence over individual brilliance ahead of the high-voltage clash against Pakistan in Dubai. The traditional rivals will face off on Sunday in what will be the first match between the two sides since the escalation of the border conflict in May.

"I am backing the Indian team. India will play as a team and return home (with the trophy). This is my wish and I know that the kind of cricket they are playing they will return home victorious," said Kapil, when asked on the sidelines of a golf event on who he felt would provide the 'X-factor' for India in the blockbuster outing.

He said it was immaterial discussing the players when the entire focus should be on team effort. "Only talk about India as a team, we should not talk about individuals, it's a collective, because when a team goes (on an



assignment), we should speak about it and not individuals.

"Yes, if someone plays well, then that performance, that individual will be in front of everyone. I do not have to say anything (else)," Kapil, who is the president of the Professional Golf Tour of India (PGTI), said that people should not be preoccupied with who is, or should be, the captain of the side when questioned whether Test skipper Shubman Gill could be given the responsibility to lead India in all three formats of the game in the near future. "Can I say something very simple. Are they playing for India? (Because) that's much bigger. It's not a matter of captaincy. You are representing the country (and) that is more important.

"People see who is the captain and who is not, I see that all of them are representing the country. That's the bottom line," said Kapil. He also said that stalwarts Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli have had glorious careers but a new generation of players is now

keen to take over.

"They (Virat and Rohit) had their time and they gave a very good account of themselves, they played really well for India. A new generation has taken over, they have to prove (now)," said Kapil. On Thursday, Kapil had urged the Indian players to remain focussed on performance and not get distracted by external factors. "The Indian players should stay focused solely on the game. They have a good team and must win," Kapil had said.

"Players should concentrate only on their performance and not get distracted by anything else. Just go and win. The government will do its job, and the players should do theirs," the 66-year-old had said. In the wake of the Pahalgam attack, the Indian government has formulated a policy under which the country would not have any bilateral sporting ties with Pakistan but won't stop the Indian teams from competing against their neighbours in multi-lateral events. (PTI)

Minakshi assures India of medal, men return empty-handed after 12 years

LIVERPOOL, Sept 12: Minakshi Hooda assured India of its fourth medal in the ongoing World Boxing Championships as she entered the semifinals even as the men's campaign ended without a podium finish for the first time in 12 years following Jadumani Singh Mandengbam's quarterfinal loss here on Friday.

The lanky Minakshi, competing in the non-Olympic 48kg category, outclassed U-19 world champion Alice Pumphrey of England by unanimous decision in the quarterfinal.

Preferring to box on the backfoot, she made optimum use of her long reach to dominate from the outset, landing straight shots at will while counter-attacking effectively.

She will face 2023 silver medalist Lutsaikhany Altantsetseg of Mongolia in the semifinals.

With her win, Minakshi joined Jaismine Lamboria (57kg), Pooja Rani (80kg) and Nupur Sheoran (+80kg) in assuring medals for India.

The tenacious Jadumani Singh tested reigning world champion Sanzhar Tashkenbay of Kazakhstan to the hilt before bowing out with a 0-4 split verdict in a fast-paced men's 50kg quarterfinal.

With his exit, India's 10-member men's squad finished without a medal for the first time since the 2013 edition.

The disappointing campaign comes on the back of 2023's high in Tashkent, where India returned with three bronze medals through Deepak Bhorla (51kg), Mohammad Hussamuddin (57kg) and Nishant Dev (71kg).

In the quarterfinal bout, the Manipuri put up an aggressive display, rushing forward to cornering the Kazakh boxer but the two-time Asian medalist landed some accurate punches to edge out Mandengbam 4-1 in the opening round.

Undeterred, Jadumani kept applying pressure though Tashkenbay's slick defence but experience helped the latter dominate the second round on all cards, while the Indian was docked a point for excessive holding.

"In the final round, Jadumani came all guns blazing, connecting some sharp right hooks, but by then Tashkenbay had done enough to secure his place in the semifinals. (PTI)

Ludvig Aberg shares the lead at Wentworth, Rory McIlroy 5 shots back in opening round

VIRGINIA WATER (ENGLAND), Sept 12: Ludvig Aberg held a share of the lead and Rory McIlroy found the water on the final hole to finish five shots back on the opening day of the weather-affected BMW PGA Championship at Wentworth on Thursday.

Aberg, a Swede who is a captain's pick for the European Ryder Cup team that heads to Bethpage Black later this month, shot 8-under 64 to join Tom Vaillant atop the leaderboard.

McIlroy, who won the Irish Open in a playoff victory over Joakim Lagergren on Sunday, made birdies on the first and fourth holes before a bogey on the par-3 fifth.

The Northern Irishman added birdies on the 10th, 12th and 16th. But he hit his approach at the par-five 18th into the water, settling for a bogey and a first-round 69.

Play was suspended because of darkness at 7:30 p.m., so Thursday's late starters will have to complete their opening rounds Friday morning. A 90-minute weather delay had disrupted play in the afternoon.

Casey Jarvis was alone in third place, one shot off the lead.

All but one player from Europe's Ryder Cup team is at Wentworth. European captain Luke Donald said last week in Ireland that Sepp Straka is home with his wife, who recently gave birth prematurely. (AP)

India draw blank in recurve again after teenager Gatha falls to Olympic champion Lim



GWANGJU (SOUTH KOREA), Sept 12: India's long wait for a world medal in recurve archery stretched further as 15-year-old Gatha Khadake, the country's last hope, went down fighting to world No. 1 Lim Si-hyeon in the pre-quarterfinals, ending the campaign in the Olympic discipline at the World Championships, here on Friday.

Before Gatha could even settle into the contest, it was all over in a blink as the Korean, a triple gold medalist from the Paris Olympics, sealed the match 6-0 without breaking a sweat playing in front of the home crowd.

Yet, despite the one-sided scoreline, the teenager's fearless run to the pre-quarters on debut at the Worlds offers hope for the future in a discipline where India have consistently flattered to deceive. India last won a recurve medal at the Worlds in 2019, when the men's team of Tarundeep Rai, Atanu Das and Pravin Jadhav settled for a silver at Den Bosch. Gatha, appearing in only her second senior international meet, looked overawed by the occasion against the reigning Olympic champion.

Lim opened with three perfect 10s to seize control and the young Indian could only reply with two 9s and an 8, conceding the opening set 26-30.

Showing superb control, Lim chose to slow the tempo in the second set but still outscored Gatha, who slipped to two 8s and a 9.

For a third successive edition, Indian recurve archers returned empty-handed.

The story was underlined by another abject show from Deepika Kumari, who bowed out in the very first round.

The six-time Worlds participant and four-time Olympian, still searching for her maiden medal at both events, lost a scrappy five-setter to little-known Indonesian Diananda Choirunisa.

Equally disappointing was Olympian Dhiraj Bommadevara, the country's top-ranked recurve archer.

After a poor qualification round that saw him slip to 39th with 670/720, Dhiraj crashed out in his opener against Tokyo Olympic champion Mete Gazoz.

India's medals, once again, came only in compound section with the highlight being a historic first-ever men's team gold won by Rishabh Yadav, Prathamesh Fuge and Aman Saini.

Yadav added a second medal, partnering Jyothi Surekha Vennam to clinch the mixed team silver. (PTI)

FIDE Grand Swiss: Nihal stuns Maghsoodloo to join leaders; Vaishali stays ahead

SAMARKAND (UZBEKISTAN), Sept 12: Grandmaster Nihal Sarin halted Parham Maghsoodloo's unbeaten run with a brilliant victory to join the leaders after the seventh round of the FIDE Grand Swiss here, while R Vaishali also regained sole lead in the women's section.

However, world champion D Gukesh's struggles continued as he slumped to a third straight defeat here on Thursday, this time against Turkey's Ediz Gurel, slipping out of contention and down to 10th in the live world rankings with four rounds still to play.

Vaishali, a winner in the previous edition held in Isle of Man in United Kingdom, outclassed her Chinese counterpart in the seventh round and now sits half a point behind Russian Kateryna Lagno.

The day however belonged to Sarin who came up with some exemplary display on both flanks.

The Queen pawn opening as white worked well for Nihal as he was able to push for an advantage with little at stake and Maghsoodloo erred in calculation when it really mattered.

Important and Indian results round 7 open (Indians unless specified): Nihal Sarin (5.5) beat Parham Maghsoodloo (Iri, 5); Arjun Erigaisi (4.5) lost to Matthias Bluebaum (Ger, 5.5); Anish Giri (Ned, 5) drew with Abhimanyu Mishra (Usa, 5);

Nihal set up a brilliant finish with the help of his queen and knight and handed Maghsoodloo his first loss in the tournament.

With the victory Nihal shot into joint lead along with Germany's Bluebaum who defeated higher ranked Indian Arjun Erigaisi.

Vaishali also displayed her superior skills to get the better of Guo Qi. The Petroff defense was met suitably and Vaishali, white, got a chance to go for a king side attack.

The Indian is known for her attacking skills and did not disappoint in finding out the precise move order.

In the open section, defending champion Vidit Gujrathi came back in reckoning with a victory over French GM Marccandria Maurizzi while R Praggnanandhaa also made a fine recovery to beat Maxim Rodshtein of Israel.

Adireza Firouzja (Fra, 5) beat Nodirbek Yakubboev (Uzb, 4); Nikolas Theodorou (Gre, 4.5) drew with Vincent Keymer (Ger, 4.5); Nodirbek Abdusattorov (Uzb, 5) beat Amin Tabatabaei (Iri, 4); Hans Moke Niemann (Usa, 5) beat Yagiz Kaan Erpdmus (Tur, 4); Vidit Gujrathi (5) beat Marccandria Maurizzi (Fra, 4); V Pranav (4.5) drew with Jordan Van Foreest (Ned, 4.5); R Praggnanandhaa (4.5) beat Maxim Rodshtein (Isr, 3.5);

Alyssa Thompson's move to Chelsea raises more questions about NWSL salary cap

NEW YORK, Sept 12: Angel City forward Alyssa Thompson's recent move to Chelsea spurred questions about whether the National Women's Soccer League is doing enough to keep its stars.

There are advantages to playing in the NWSL for many American players: the chance to stay close to home in a league regarded as one of the best in the world. But over the years, some of the league's big names have bolted for Europe. Australian Sam Kerr left for Chelsea in 2020, U.S. team captain Lindsey Heaps went to Lyon in 2022. More recently, Crystal Dunn, Emily Fox and Jenna Nighswonger have all moved overseas. Earlier this year, Chelsea paid a \$1 million transfer fee to the San Diego Wave for U.S. national team

defender Naomi Girma. Players who have left cite the adventure of living in a new culture and the challenges of a different playing style.

Thompson's move hit a bit differently because she is still an emerging talent and was playing for her hometown team alongside her younger sister Gisele. Alyssa had signed a deal at the start of the year keeping her with Angel City through 2028. She signed a five-year contract with Chelsea. The terms are not known.

But her departure has put a spotlight on the NWSL's salary cap, and whether it holds players back from their earning potential.

The NWSL's salary cap is \$3.3 million per team. The league has also introduced revenue sharing,

bringing the total to \$3.5 million. The cap will increase to \$5.1 million by 2030.

The English Women's Super League, in contrast, has a soft cap, which allows clubs to spend up to 40% of revenues on player and coach salaries — but that number is based on the parent clubs, which means teams like Chelsea and Arsenal can count revenues from their men's teams. Angel City forward Christen Press and former national team player Tobin Heath called on the NWSL to ditch the salary cap during an episode of their podcast "The Re-CAP Show."

"There has to be a change. This has to be one of the hottest topics that are happening at the board level of the NWSL, the salary cap," said Heath, who played in the

NWSL and overseas. "Because I know that clubs in the NWSL, that are ambitious clubs, that want to be able to compete with the likes of Chelsea, with the likes of Barcelona — these teams are capped out. They can't compete. They're going to lose their best players." Heath said that even if teams wanted to sign a player to a big contract, that would mean less money for the rest of the roster, creating an imbalance that likely wouldn't be attractive for an athlete looking to improve by playing against similar talent.

Ahead of the Champions League semifinal between Lyon and Arsenal in April, Heaps said she wanted a new challenge in moving to France, and theorized that's why others moved, too. (AP)

Wasteful India need to utilise chances against Japan to seal final berth in Asia Cup women's hockey

HANGZHOU (CHINA), Sept 12: A wasteful India will need to convert their chances when they take on Japan in a crucial Super 4 match of the women's Asia Cup here on Saturday.

The Indians had earlier drawn 2-2 against Japan in the pool stages but come Saturday, they just need a draw to progress for Sunday's final against world No.4 China, who have already sealed their spot after the win against India.

The Indians were unbeaten in the tournament before Thursday's Super 4 match against China, which they lost 1-4.

India were guilty of wasting a handful of chances, including three penalty corners, which cost them dearly.

The worrying factor for India's

chief coach Harendra Singh is poor finishing and he would hope his strikers utilise the opportunities that comes their way.

The scoreline against China was not an indication of how India played on Thursday as they gave the rivals a tough fight and even dominated possession for most part of the match.

Mumtaz Khan has been in red-hot form for India upfront, scoring some beautiful field goals but she lacked support.

In fact, Mumtaz is the second-highest scorer in the tournament so far with six goals behind Meirong Zou of China, who has 10 strikes to her name.

But Mumtaz would be looking for more support from the likes of Navneet Kaur, who is the fourth-highest scorer so far with five

goals. Besides, Rutuja Dadaso Pisal also needs to lift her game upfront and increase her goal tally, which is currently four.

Lalremisiami, Udita, Sharmila Devi and Beauty Dung Dung also need to lift their game after a promising start to the tournament.

Neha Goyal and Vaishnavi Vithal Phalke are the fulcrum of India's midfield and they need to raise their game a few notches to provide the supply to the forward-line.

Skipper Salima Tete also needs to lift her game and inspire the side, which is lacking till now.

India, currently ninth in the world, are the second-highest ranked team in the tournament after China, and the Asia Cup title here would secure their direct

qualification to the World Cup to be hosted jointly by Belgium and Netherlands from August 15 to 30 next year.

In veteran Savita Punia's absence, who is out with an injury, the onus of guarding India's post lies on Bichu Devi Kharibam and Bansari Solanki and the duo needs to raise their game to make their presence felt.

Going by the rankings and stature, hosts China are overwhelming favourites to win the tournament but modern-day hockey is unpredictable as any team can upset the other on a given day.

The Indians will look for two perfect games -- first against Japan and the final provided they qualify -- to seal their direct qualification for the World Cup. (PTI)





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30 TMTPA LPG Bottling Plant by IOCL at Mualkhang, Mizoram
Bridge over Chhimtuipui River on Lawngtlai to Siaha Road via Tuipui Ferry
Roads from Thenzawl-Sialsuk (via Sathlur and Lau River) and from Khankawn to Rongura Hmun in Serchhip District
Khelo India Multipurpose Indoor Hall at Tuikual

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by

Narendra Modi

Prime Minister

Saturday, 13th September, 2025 10:00 A.M. Aizawl, Mizoram

In the august presence of

General (Dr.)(Retd.) Vijay Kumar Singh
Governor, Mizoram

Lalduhoma
Chief Minister, Mizoram

Ashwini Vaishnaw
Union Minister of Railways, Information and Broadcasting & Electronics and Information Technology

Dr. Vanlalthiana
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