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- Amazon cuts 14,000 corporate jobs as spending on artificial intelligence accelerates
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- Cloud-seeding trials conducted in parts of Delhi, more in pipeline: Sirsa
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'Entire Kharge family' anti-Assam: Himanta

My statement is given a 'political spin': Priyank Kharge

NAGAON, Oct 28: Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Tuesday alleged that the "entire Kharge family", including Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, is "anti-Assam".

His accusation came a day after he was engaged in a verbal duel with Karnataka Information Technology Minister Priyank Kharge, the son of the Congress chief, over setting up of big tech-driven industries like semiconductor unit in Assam.

Karnataka is a Congress-ruled state.

"Mallikarjun Kharge's son Priyank Kharge is spreading misinformation about Assam. His father made extremely shameful comments when Bhupen Hazarika was conferred with the Bharat Ratna award," Sarma claimed.

He said that the Congress should explain to the Karnataka IT minister about the culture of Assam and the efficiency of the youths here.

"The entire Kharge family is



anti-Assam. Father had insulted Bhupen Hazarika and the son insulted the youths of Assam. I think the Congress should raise its voice against this," Sarma told reporters on the sidelines of an official function here.

Priyank Kharge on Sunday purportedly told a news channel that investments meant for Karnataka were being diverted towards Gujarat and Assam, after being "arm-twisted" by the Centre.

"Why are semiconductor industries going to Assam and Gujarat when they actually want to come to

Bengaluru?... What is there in Gujarat? Is there talent there? What is there in Assam? Is there talent there?" he reportedly asked.

Responding to this, Sarma on Monday called Priyank as a "first-class idiot" and said the Assam government is considering registering a case against the Karnataka minister for allegedly stating that there is no talent in the Northeastern state for setting up big industries like a semiconductor unit.

"Perhaps, we might file a case against him because he has said that Assam does not have educated competent youth. That is an insult to the entire Assamese youth. So, we are considering whether a case can be filed against him in the court of law. But let me say, he is a first class idiot," he added.

Priyanka Kharge shot back by accusing the CM of trying to "whitewash his failures" by giving Kharge's statements a "political spin" and said that Sarma should reflect on (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Judicial custody of 5 accused extended by 14-days

Zubeen death case: Noted writer Rita Chowdhury appears before CID

HT Bureau GUWAHATI, Oct 28: A local court here on Tuesday extended the judicial custody of the five accused in Zubeen Garg's death case by 14 days.

The five accused are North East India Festival (NEIF) chief organiser Shyamkanu Mahanta, the singer's manager Siddhartha Sharma, his cousin and police officer Sandipan Garg, and his personal security officers Nandeswar Bora and Prabin Baishya.

Lodged in Baksa jail, they were produced before the Chief Judicial Magistrate, Kamrup Metropolitan, virtually, an official said.

"The current judicial custody of the five accused will end tomorrow. They were produced before the CJM through virtual mode, and the custody was extended by 14 days," he said.

Garg had died while swimming in the sea in Singapore on September 19, while visiting the Southeast Asian country to attend the 4th NEIF.

The five accused were taken to



the Baksa jail on October 16 at the end of police remand.

Violence had erupted in front of the prison when they were brought with locals protesting the move. Several people, including police and media personnel, were injured.

A total of seven persons have been arrested so far in the case,

with the two other accused, Garg's band members Amritprava Mahanta and Sekharjyoti Goswami, lodged in Haflong prison under judicial custody.

A 10-member Special Investigation Team (SIT) of the state police's CID is probing the case.

Special DGP Munna Prasad Gupta, who is heading the SIT,

had visited Singapore along with another officer last week as part of the investigation.

Meanwhile, noted writer Rita Chowdhury appeared before the CID office on Tuesday after being summoned by the Special Investigation Team (SIT) probing the Zubeen Garg death case.

Speaking to the media, she mentioned that the interrogation focused on details and Chowdhury's analysis of the conversation she had with Zubeen Garg during and after the recorded interview, just days before his demise. The SIT sought insights into the singer's state of mind and personal remarks shared during their discussion.

"A new write-up on my analysis from the entire podcast and beyond with Zubeen Garg will be up on October 30; you all will get to know my view," Chowdhury said.

Rita Chowdhury recently posted an open letter opposing the SOP that has been imposed by the Assam Government for Zubeen Kshetra. (With inputs from PTI)

3 die, 2 injured in road mishap

MORIGAOON, Oct 28: Three people, including a senior doctor, died and two others were injured on Tuesday when their vehicle lost control and hit a divider on National Highway-27 in Assam's Morigaon, police said.

A senior police officer said five people were travelling in an SUV from Jagiroo to Nagaon when the accident took place near Nelli around 3:30 am.

"The vehicle was travelling at a high speed and lost control. It first hit the divider, turtled and skidded to the opposite side of the road. The upper portion turned into a mangled heap of metal," he said.

The passengers were rescued from the vehicle using gas cutters, he said.

The deceased have been identified as Kantheswar Bordoloi, who was a (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

HAL to produce Russian SJ-100 civil aircraft

NEW DELHI, Oct 28: India and Russia have firmed up a joint aviation collaboration to produce a twin-engine narrow-body passenger aircraft for short-haul flights in line with growing strategic ties between the two countries.

State-run aerospace major Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd (HAL) reached an agreement with Russia's Public Joint Stock Company United Aircraft Corporation (PJSC-UAC) for production of SJ-100 aircraft. It was signed in Moscow on Monday.

It will be the first such project to produce a passenger aircraft in India.

As on date, more than 200 SJ-100 aircraft have been produced and are being operated by more than 16 commercial airline opera-

tors. "SJ-100 will be the game changer for short-haul connectivity under the UDAN scheme in India. Under this arrangement, HAL will have the rights to manufacture SJ-100 aircraft for domestic customers," the Indian aerospace major said.

The pact was signed in presence of HAL's Chairman and Managing Director DK Sunil and PJSC-UAC Director General Vadim Badekha.

UDAN is a scheme aimed at ensuring regional air connectivity in India.

The HAL said manufacturing of SJ-100 aircraft in India will mark the beginning of a "new chapter" in the history of the Indian aviation industry.

"It's a step towards fulfilling the

dream of 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' (self-reliant India) in the civil aviation sector," it said.

The HAL said the manufacturing will also strengthen the private sector and create direct and indirect jobs in the aviation industry.

"It is estimated that over the next 10 years, the Indian aviation sector will require over 200 jets in this category for regional connectivity and an additional 350 aircraft for the Indian Ocean region to serve nearby international tourist destinations," it said.

"This collaboration between HAL and UAC is the result of mutual trust between the organisations. This will also be the first instance wherein a complete passenger aircraft will be produced in India," the (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

BJP condemns misuse of Lachit Borphukan's name

HT Bureau GUWAHATI, Oct 28: The Assam unit of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has strongly condemned the misuse of the name of Assam's legendary general, Lachit Borphukan, by an organisation accused of engaging in extortion and intimidation.

In a statement issued on Tuesday, State BJP spokesperson Kalyan Gogoi said it was "extremely reprehensible" that an organisation named after Lachit Borphukan — the immortal symbol of Assam's valour and patriotism — was functioning in a mafia-like manner.

Gogoi alleged that one Bikash Asom, operating under the banner of Bir Lachit Sena, had been spreading fear among the business

community through extortion, blackmail, and threats.

"Using the sacred name of Lachit Borphukan, the eternal embodiment of Assam's courage and dignity, for such nefarious activities is a grave insult to our cultural heritage," he said.

The BJP spokesperson claimed that several businessmen across the state had already lodged police complaints against the accused, who is currently absconding. The party has urged the Assam government to take immediate action to arrest him.

Gogoi further alleged that the same individual had insulted poor and struggling mothers of Assam by comparing them to dogs in a video circulated on social media, calling it (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Meghalaya Police bust human trafficking network; three arrested

SHILLONG, Oct 28: Meghalaya Police have unearthed a major human trafficking network that lured young girls into traveling to other states under the pretext of marriage, only to be sold off.

Three individuals, including the kingpin of the gang, have been arrested in connection with the case. Superintendent of Police of Ri Bhoi district, Meghalaya, V Rathore said a case was registered in June 2025 after a girl went missing in the Bymihat area.

During investigation, it was found that the girl was in Rajasthan and had been sold and married to an unknown person in lieu of Rs. 3 lakh. The girl was rescued with the help of Rajasthan Police and brought back to Meghalaya.

Further investigation revealed that the accused, Rajesh Hinge, Md Khalil Ali, and Monika, were involved in the human trafficking network, the police officer said. They befriended their targets on social media platforms, lured them into traveling to other states, and then sold them off. The accused have sold at least five girls from Assam and one girl from Tripura in the last two years, he added.

Meanwhile, the Meghalaya police then appealed to parents and children to be aware of this modus operandi and to be cautious while interacting with people on social media.

The investigation revealed a common pattern in such cases, where the targets are befriended on social media platforms like Facebook and Instagram. After chats and calls for some time, they are lured into traveling to other places such as Delhi, Haryana, and Rajasthan on the pretext of marriage or tourism, and then sold off.

The police have also advised that children should remain alert and inform their parents if any such situation arises. They should be careful online, as the same tactics may (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Judicial commission probing Leh violence seeks information from public by November 28

LEH, Oct 28: A judicial commission probing the recent violence in Leh town of Ladakh on Tuesday issued a public notice, inviting all individuals with knowledge, information, or relevant evidence concerning the incident to record their statements by November 28.

The three-member commission headed by former Supreme Court judge B S Chauhan was notified by the Ministry of Home Affairs on October 17 to ascertain the circumstances leading to serious law and order situation in Leh on September 24, review the actions taken by the police during the situation, and assess the events resulting in the tragic loss of four lives.

"This notice is issued by and under the order of the Justice Chauhan, inviting all persons acquainted with the subject matter of the inquiry to furnish to the inquiry commission statements relating to



matters as specified in the notification," Mohan Singh Parihar, retired district and sessions judge and judicial secretary to the inquiry commission said in his public notice.

He said every statement furnished to the inquiry commission should be accompanied by an affidavit in support of the facts set out in the statement and sworn by the person furnishing the statement.

"Every person furnishing a statement shall also furnish to the inquiry commission along with the statement a list of the documents, if any, on which he/she proposes to

rely and forward to the inquiry commission, wherever practicable, the originals or the true copies of such documents as may be in his/her possession or control and shall state the name and address of the person from whom the remaining documents may be obtained," Parihar said.

He said the statements should reach the office of the inquiry commission, ADR Centre New Court Complex Melongthang, Leh within a period of four weeks on or before November 28.

On Monday, Justice Chauhan said the commission will examine the collected material from December 10 onwards and is open to meet anyone coming forward.

All citizens and parties concerned are requested to extend their cooperation to ensure a transparent and comprehensive inquiry, the commission said. (PTI)

Wi-Fi facilities in eleven Government Colleges launched

AI and Internet should be used for people's welfare: Tripura CM

HT Correspondent

AGARTALA, Oct 28: Tripura Chief Minister Manik Saha on Tuesday said that everyone needs to move forward in various fields using AI and the Internet, and technology must be utilized for the welfare of the people.

Saha said this while inaugurating Wi-Fi facilities in 11 government colleges (Phase II) and launching the Mukhyamantri Yuba Yogayog Yojana for the academic year 2024-25 at the Government Arts and Crafts College in Lichu Bagan, Agartala.

At the function organized jointly by the Information Technology Department and the Higher Education Department, Saha said that having a Wi-Fi system provides many benefits in work.

"Wi-Fi services have already been launched in 19 government colleges in the state. Today, this facility is being provided in 11 more colleges. This system will offer many advantages in the field of technology and benefit students greatly. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has given special importance to technology. The youth community (18 to 35 years) of India constitutes about 60 to 65 percent of the total population, which is a mat-



ter of pride for us, as no other country in the world has such a large youth population," he said.

Saha said that the youth will play a special role in realizing the Prime Minister's dream of building a Viksit Bharat by 2047.

The chief minister further said that Tripura is now progressing in all aspects.

"A few days ago, Tripura was declared the third fully literate state in the country. This recognition was granted in accordance with UNESCO guidelines. Tripura achieved this position (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Hundreds of devotees, accompanied by their families, gather at riverbanks

Chhath Puja celebrated with devotion across Karbi Anglong

HT Bureau DIPHU, Oct 28: The festival of Chhath Puja was celebrated with devotion and enthusiasm across Karbi Anglong, along with the rest of the country.

Devotees observed the four-day festival by offering prayers to the Sun God at both sunset and sunrise.

Major celebrations took place at the Jammuna Irrigation Canal in Bakaliaghat, on the banks of the Kopili River, as well as at Kheroni and Bokajan, where the Hindi-speaking community largely resides.

Hundreds of devotees, accompanied by their families, gathered at riverbanks with baskets of fruits and homemade delicacies to offer prayers to the Sun God.

Similar devotion was witnessed



at Birla and Manja, where a large number of worshippers assembled on the banks of the Diphu River to perform rituals and make offerings.

The four-day festival, which

began on October 25 and concluded on October 28 this year, is dedicated to the worship of the Sun and his consorts, Usha and Pratyusha.

Devotees observe rigorous fasting, including a period without water, while offering prayers while standing in water.

The rituals begin on the sixth day (Shashthi) of the Kartik Shukla Paksha and are marked by purity, discipline, and gratitude.

Chief Executive Member of the Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council (KAAC), Tuliram Ronghang, along with MP Amarsing Tisso, joined devotees at the Kopili River during the sunset rituals on Sunday evening. They offered prayers and interacted with the gathering, extending festive greetings.

At the Jammuna Irrigation Canal, devotees began assembling as early as 2 a.m., waiting eagerly for sunrise. Women carrying baskets of fruits descended into the water to (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

NEW DELHI, Oct 28: India's soils are alarmingly deficient in essential nutrients such as nitrogen and organic carbon, a study said on Tuesday, raising serious concerns for the future of sustainable agriculture.

The study by Delhi-based think tank Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) is based on the government's own Soil Health Card data.

It found that 64 per cent of soil samples were low in nitrogen and 48.5 per cent were low in organic carbon, two key indicators of soil fertility and climate resilience.

The findings suggested that India's heavy use of fertilisers has failed to improve soil health.

Data indicates that applying nitrogen-based fertilisers to the soil does not lead to any "corresponding

improvement in soil nitrogen levels", the study said, adding that there is "no improvement in soil organic carbon due to use of total (NPK) fertiliser".

The CSE study warned that this deficiency threatens long-term productivity and the ability of soils to store carbon, which is essential for climate change mitigation.

"A critical function of a healthy soil is its capacity to store organic carbon, which makes it essential for climate change mitigation. Indian soils can sequester an estimated 6-7 teragram of carbon annually," the study said.

The report, titled "Sustainable Food Systems: An agenda for climate-risked times", was released at the National Conclave on Sustainable Food Systems organised by CSE at the Anil Agarwal Environ-

ment Training Institute (AAETI) in Nimli, Rajasthan.

The Soil Health Card (SHC) scheme, launched in 2015 under the National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture, tests 12 chemical parameters and provides farmers with recommendations on fertiliser use.

Between 2023 and 2025, about 1.3 crore soil samples were tested under the scheme.

However, experts at the conclave said the monitoring remains incomplete.

"Focusing only on these parameters does not reflect the overall soil nutrient status. International bodies like the FAO's GLOSOLAN recommend including physical and biological indicators for a holistic assessment of soil health," said Amit Khurana, director, food systems (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Sensex, Nifty slip amid profit taking, weak Asian markets

MUMBAI, Oct 28: Benchmark BSE Sensex declined by 150 points in a volatile session on Tuesday due to profit-taking in IT, consumer durables and realty shares and weak trends in Asian markets.

In a see-saw trade, the 30-share BSE Sensex closed lower by 150.68 points or 0.18 per cent at 84,628.16. The index opened strong but erased gains in the late morning as investors took profits.

The barometer tanked nearly 560 points to hit a low of 84,219.39 during the day, but buy-



ing support at lower levels helped it recover some losses in the final hour of trade.

The 50-share NSE Nifty dipped 29.85 points or 0.11 per cent to 25,936.20.

Among Sensex firms, Trent, ICICI Bank, Tech Mahindra, Bajaj Finserv, Mahindra & Mahindra, Power Grid, Tata Consultancy Services and Bajaj Finance were the major laggards.

However, Tata Steel, Larsen & Toubro, State Bank of India, Kotak Mahindra Bank were among the major gainers.

"The domestic market remained volatile in negative terrain and ended flat, weighed down by profit booking on monthly expiry and weak global cues," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Investments Limited said.

Despite this, the metals sector

gained on renewed optimism following China's announcement to curb steel overcapacity and potential progress over US-China Trade relations, while PSU banks outperformed amid reports of a potential increase in FII holding limits, Nair added.

The BSE midcap gauge went up by 0.12 per cent and smallcap index edged higher by 0.06 per cent.

Realty dropped 1 per cent, utilities (0.82 per cent), BSE Focused IT (0.72 per cent), consumer durables (0.64 per cent) and IT (0.60 per cent).

Metal jumped 1.30 per cent, commodities climbed 0.55 per cent, industrials (0.21 per cent), bankex (0.06 per cent) and financial services (0.03 per cent).

"The Nifty-50 traded within a narrow 25,800-26,000 range for

most of the day, reflecting cautious sentiment ahead of key global events such as the US Federal Reserve's policy outcome," Ponnudi R, CEO of Enrich Money, an on-line trading and wealth tech firm, said.

"Market sentiment remained cautious ahead of key global central bank meetings and major US tech earnings announcements. Additionally, muted activity by foreign institutional investors in the cash segment weighed on sentiment, though steady domestic inflows and a largely positive earnings season so far helped maintain an overall constructive tone," Ajit Mishra - SVP, Research, Religare Broking Ltd, said.

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

Markets in Europe were trading on a mixed note. US markets ended in the positive territory on Monday.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 55.58 crore on Monday, according to exchange data. Domestic Institutional Investors (DIIs) however, bought stocks worth ₹ 2,492.12 crore in the previous trade. (PTI)

Rupee falls 10 paise to close at 88.29 against US dollar

MUMBAI, Oct 28: The rupee depreciated by 10 paise to close at 88.29 against the US dollar on Tuesday on weak domestic stock markets and foreign fund outflows.

Forex traders said a weak US dollar and softening of crude oil prices cushioned the downside. Investors are also keeping a watch on the Federal Reserve's policy decision on Wednesday for further cues.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the rupee opened at 88.34, and later traded in a range of 88.23 to 88.40 during the day. The local unit finally settled at 88.29 against the greenback, registering a fall of 10 paise from its previous close.

On Monday, the rupee plunged 36 paise to close at 88.19 against the US dollar.

"We expect the rupee to trade with a slight negative bias on weak domestic equities and month-end dollar demand from importers. However, optimism over the trade deal between India and the US may support the rupee at lower levels," said Anuj Choudhary, Research Analyst, Currency and Commodities, Mirae Asset ShareKhan.

Choudhary further noted that investors may remain cautious ahead of the US FOMC meeting decision.

USDINR spot price is expected to trade in a range of 87.90 to 88.60, he said.

Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, fell 0.09 per cent to 98.69.

Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, fell 1.74 per cent to USD 64.48 per barrel in futures trading.

On the domestic equity markets front, Sensex declined 150.68 points to settle at 84,628.16, while the Nifty dipped 29.85 points to 25,936.20.

Foreign Institutional Investors purchased equities worth ₹ 10,339.80 crore on Tuesday, according to exchange data.

Meanwhile, India's crude oil imports from the United States climbed to their highest level since 2022 in October, a move seen as part of New Delhi's effort to diversify supplies away from Russia and ease trade tensions with the Trump administration.

India's crude imports from the US reached 540,000 barrels per day as of October 27 - the highest since 2022, according to data from Kpler.

October is likely to close with near 575,000 bpd, and November looks to book around 400,000-450,000 bpd, per US export data - a sharp jump from the year-to-date average of around 300,000 bpd. (PTI)

Gold plunges ₹ 4,100 to ₹ 1,21,800/10g; drops below USD 4,000-mark in global markets

NEW DELHI, Oct 28: Gold prices dropped by Rs 4,100 to Rs 1,21,800 per 10 grams in the national capital and slipped below USD 4,000 an ounce in the global markets on Tuesday as easing US-China trade tensions dampened safe-haven appeal. According to the All India Sarafa Association, the precious metal had closed at ₹ 1,25,900 per 10 grams on Monday.

In the local bullion market, gold of 99.5 per cent purity also tumbled by ₹ 4,100 to ₹ 1,21,200 per 10 grams (inclusive of all taxes) from its previous close of ₹ 1,25,300 per 10 grams.

"Gold dipped further on Tuesday and extended losses due to diminishing safe haven demand. Selling accelerated and the yellow metal prices slid to a three-week low. "This decline is attributed to technical selling that occurred after an intra-day failure to maintain levels above the USD 4,000 psychological threshold," Saumil Gandhi, Senior Analyst - Commodities at HDFC Securities, said. Silver prices also registered a steep fall of ₹ 6,250 to ₹ 1,45,000 per kilogram (inclusive of all taxes) on Tuesday. The white metal had ended at ₹ 1,51,250 per kg on Monday, as per the association.

In the international markets, spot gold remained under pressure, declining by USD 94.36, or 2.37 per cent, to USD 3,887.03 per ounce. In the previous ses-

ion, it had slumped to close below the USD 4,000-mark, down by USD 132.02, or 3.21 per cent.

"Spot gold continues to trade under pressure on reduced safe haven demand due to US-China trade deal optimism," Praveen Singh, Head of Commodities and Currencies at Mirae Asset Sharekhan, said.

Meanwhile, US President Donald Trump and his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping are set to finalise the trade deal framework, with likely follow-up meetings. Trump also expressed confidence on a trade agreement with Japan also weighed on the bullion prices.

Praveen Singh said outflows from global gold-backed exchange traded funds (ETFs) fell for the third straight day on October 24, further weighed on the prices. "Investors are awaiting the US Federal Open Market Committee's policy outcome on Wednesday where the central bank is widely expected to cut interest rates by 25 basis points," he added.

Spot silver also witnessed steep losses, falling 2.85 per cent to hit an intra-day low of USD 45.56 per ounce.

Saumil Gandhi of HDFC Securities said, "We believe that the correction in gold will persist, with a potential downside of 5-10 per cent, likely as big players take profit after the price increased by more than 50 per cent this year." (PTI)

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'Entire Kharge family'

why young people are leaving Assam to find work elsewhere.

Alleging that after nearly a decade of BJP rule, Assam now ranks among the bottom five states in crucial development indicators like health, education and economic growth as per NITI Aayog's latest report, Kharge claimed that the only thing Sarma has managed to grow is his own wealth.

"Every major scam or corruption case seems to trace back to his doorstep, while the youth of Assam are left without jobs or opportunities," he added. (PTI)

3 die, 2 injured

senior doctor, and healthcare professionals Manas Mahanta and Asik Hussain. The injured are undergoing treatment in hospital. (PTI)

HAL to produce

HAL said. "The last such project was HAL's production of AVRO HS-748, which started in 1961 and ended in 1988," it added.

The AVRO HS-748 was used by the Indian Air Force. (PTI)

BJP condemns misuse

a "disgraceful and inhuman act." He also criticised the silence of other political parties and organisations, including the Congress and Bir Lachit Sena, over recent remarks made by Karnataka minister Priyank Kharge, who reportedly questioned the semiconductor project in Assam and commented on the state's talent pool. "Except the BJP, no political organisation has spoken up against this insult, which is deeply shameful," Gogoi said.

Condemning the activities of such self-styled nationalist organisations, Gogoi said forming groups in the guise of protecting the nation while harassing the public for personal gain had created a "perverted and destructive culture" in society.

The BJP has called upon the police administration, social organisations, and the people of Assam to remain alert and united against such anti-social activities.

Meghalaya Police bust

be used to commit other crimes like cyber fraud, UPI fraud, or blackmailing. People are also cautioned against installing unknown applications or clicking suspicious links, as their mobile phones and computers may be compromised. (NNN)

Wi-Fi facilities in

after Goa and Mizoram. Currently, there is dependence on technology in every field," he said.

Saha further mentioned that under the Mukhyamantri Yuba Yogayog Yojana, students studying in the final year of college are given Rs 5,000 to buy mobile phones.

"Now that Wi-Fi has been introduced in colleges, students will no longer have to spend their own money on the Internet. The state government has also introduced a start-up policy. Investors from outside the state are coming in. Airtel has been allotted space to build data centers. Medical science too is not without technology. AI (Artificial Intelligence) and the Internet must be used to advance in various fields. Great work is being done in the areas of medical services and agriculture. Today, platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp are all technology-dependent. The best services must be provided to people through technology. However, technology should always be used for good," he added.

The chief minister also emphasized the importance of setting up more mobile towers in the state.

Most Indian soils low

programme, CSE. Apoorva Oza, global lead - agriculture, food security and climate resilience at the Aga Khan Foundation, said: "India has around 14 crore farmer households. In the past two years, soil card testing has reached only 1.1 crore. When it comes to soil testing, what is being measured, why, and by who are key to understanding the gaps."

The CSE assessment also highlighted policy and implementation gaps. Biochar produced through pyrolysis of biomass has emerged as a promising soil amendment that can improve fertility, retain moisture and act as a carbon sink.

But India currently lacks standardised production protocols for biochar. Moreover, while there are schemes to promote organic farming, the area covered under these programmes remains limited.

The CSE conclave underlined the need to expand soil health monitoring to include physical and biological parameters, improve fertiliser management and promote sustainable practices such as biochar use and organic farming to restore India's declining soil quality. (PTI)

Chhath Puja celebrated

make offerings as dawn broke. "It was one of the happiest moments to participate in Chhath Puja with my family, praying for good health and prosperity," said Mukesh Chauhan, a devotee.

A committee was formed to manage the crowd and maintain order, with proper lighting and seating arrangements made for devotees. The State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) and Bakulia police personnel were deployed to ensure safety throughout the event, which passed off peacefully.

By around 6 am, devotees concluded their prayers and returned home to break their 36-hour fast by sharing prasad with family members, marking the end of this spiritually uplifting festival.

Industrial output growth remains steady at 4 pc in Sept on manufacturing boost, GST rate cuts



NEW DELHI, Oct 28: India's industrial production growth remained steady at 4 per cent in September this year due to the good performance of the manufacturing sector buoyed by GST rationalisation and festive demand, according to official data released on Tuesday.

The factory output, measured in terms of the Index of Industrial Production (IIP), had expanded by 3.2 per cent in September 2024.

The National Statistics Office (NSO) revised the industrial production growth to 4.1 per cent for August 2025 from the provisional estimate of 4 per cent released last month.

Commenting on the IIP data, Aditi Nayar Chief Economist, ICRA Ltd said, "Overall, the combination of GST rate rejig, pent-up demand and the early festive onset appears to have boosted demand in September-October 2025, which is expected to augur well for the growth in manufacturing output in October 2025 as well."

While the GST rationalisation may support demand for regular use/smaller ticket items post the festive season, the sustenance of the buoyancy in de-

MakeMyTrip launches 'Travel Ka Muhurat'

HT Bureau GUAHATI, Oct 28: MakeMyTrip, India's leading online travel company, has launched "Travel Ka Muhurat", a new initiative aimed at marking the beginning of the country's year-end travel planning season.

The campaign covers the entire travel spectrum — including flights, hotel stays, holiday packages, ground transport, tours, and travel essentials such as visas, forex, and insurance.

It brings together leading airlines, hospitality brands in India and abroad, and major banking partners to offer travellers value-driven deals.

The inaugural edition of Travel Ka Muhurat will run from October 29 to November 30, 2025. MMTBLACK members will enjoy early access to offers, alongside weekly Black Friday Deals and limited-period "Lightning Drops" available daily between 6:00 PM and 9:00 PM.

Each week will highlight curated domestic and international destinations, featuring beach, hill, cultural, and city getaways.

"Travel Ka Muhurat is a first-of-its-kind initiative in the travel category that both travellers and our partners would benefit immensely from," said Rajesh Magow, Co-Founder and Group CEO of MakeMyTrip. "As India's leading travel platform, we are uniquely positioned to bring the ecosystem together at a scale that delivers exceptional value to travellers."

According to the company, the timing of the initiative aligns with insights on when Indians typically plan their trips. Data from MakeMyTrip shows that around 30% of domestic travellers finalise their year-end bookings by November, while international travel plans often see a spike as early as October, as customers anticipate rising fares and limited availability.

The company said this evolving travel-planning mindset has created space for a dedicated travel planning season.

Travel Ka Muhurat seeks to define this period as India's annual moment for travel preparation, encouraging customers to act on their vacation plans through curated offers and destination inspiration.

Noel Tata, two others block Mehli Mistry's reappointment as trustee, deepening rift at Tata Trusts

NEW DELHI, Oct 28: Tata Trusts chairman Noel Tata and two other powerful trustees considered close to him blocked the reappointment of late Ratan Tata's close associate and businessman Mehli Mistry as trustee, deepening the rift at the philanthropic arm that controls the holding company of Tata Group, people familiar with the matter said.

Noel Tata was appointed head of Tata Trusts following the death of Tata Group patriarch Ratan Tata last year.

TVS Motor Co's chairman emeritus Venu Srinivasan and former defence secretary Vijay Singh voted against Mistry's reappointment as trustee after the end of his three-year tenure on Tuesday, they said.

The three other trustees -- former Citibank India CEO Pramit Jhaveri, Mumbai lawyer Darius Khambata, and Pune-based philanthropist Jeangir HC Jehangir -- who are considered close to Mistry, supported his reappointment, they said.

The unprecedented vertical split marks a sharp departure from the recent consensus-driven approach.

Noel Tata and Mehli Mistry are two power centres in the Tata Trusts, which control a majority stake in the holding company of the Tata Group. The former has the backing of Srinivasan and former defence secretary Vijay Singh, while the other three are with Mistry. Differences between the two groups came to the

fore in September, when Mistry and three other trustees -- Jhaveri, Khambata and Jehangir -- voted to remove Singh as Tata Trusts' representative on the board of Tata Sons -- the holding company of the salt-to-software conglomerate.

However, last week, Srinivasan was made a lifelong trustee in a unanimous decision.

While Mistry had remained tight-lipped about his next move, it is likely he will challenge it in court.

The challenge may be on the ground that a joint meeting of the Sir Ratan Tata Trust and the Sir Dorabji Tata Trust on October 17 last year -- within days of the death of Ratan Tata -- had agreed to make all trustees permanent.

When contacted, Tata Trusts declined to comment.

Last week, the CEO of Tata Trusts issued a circular to other trustees seeking Mistry's reappointment to the Sir Ratan Tata Trust (SRTT), the Sir Dorabji Tata Trust (SDTT), and the Bai Hirabai Jamsetji Tata

NAME CHANGE

I, RACHAKI DAIMARY W/O SAMIT DAIMARY R/O village - Bargara Bagicha.P.O. - Chakarabasti . PS- Dalgao, Dist - Darrang . (Assam) do hereby solemnly affirm and declare that I am a permanent resident of above mentioned address and citizen of India by birth. That my actual and correct name is RACHAKI DAIMARY which is correctly recorded in my PAN Card vide No - JDSPPD9547R and in my Aadhar card vide No - 792228453337 as well as in my postal SB passbook. That my name has been recorded in my postal life insurance bearing policy No- 000000097686 as RASANTI BARO in place of RACHAKI DAIMARY. That through this AFFIDAVIT I intend to change my name as RACHAKI DAIMARY in place of RASANTI BARO. That RACHAKI DAIMARY and RASANTI BARO is the name of same and one person.

sd/- RACHAKI DAIMARY

ASSOCIATE SIGNALLING WORK AT LUMDING DIVISION

E-Tender No. SNT-13-LMG-2025-26-RT dated: 24-10-2025 E-Tenders are invited by the undersigned for the following works: Name of work: Associate Signalling work in connection with Yard improvement at Lumding-Furkating section (i.e. CTR & TTR) and associate signalling works in connection with work "Aghori-Narengi-TTR with TWS and WCMS for laying of CWR." Tender Value: ₹59,68,224.66/- . Earnest Money: ₹ 1,19,400/-. Date & Time of Closing of Tender: At 15.00 hrs. & opening at 15.30 hrs. on 17-11-2025. The complete information of above e-tender will be available in website www.ireps.gov.in

DSTE, Lumding

ENGINEERING WORKS IN LUMDING DIVISION

Tender Notice No.: LMG/Engg/74 of 2025, Dated: 24-10-2025. E-Tender are invited by the undersigned for the following work: Brief Description of Item : Major Repairs to P.S. Tank of water intake point located at Barlangfer, 2 nos. of 10 lakh gallons capacity each under the jurisdiction of SSE/ WWS/Lumding. Tender Value: ₹69,02,681.66/- . Earnest Money: ₹ 1,38,100/-. Date & time of closing of tender at 15:00 hrs. on 18-11-2025 and opening at 15:00 hrs. on 19-11-2025. Complete information alongwith the tender document of above e-tender will be available in the website www.ireps.gov.in

DRM (W), Lumding

CONDUCTING GEOTECHNICAL SURVEY

Tender Notice No.: CON/2025/OCT/02, Dated: 14-10-2025. E-Tender are invited by the undersigned for the following work. Tender No.: CE/CON/LF/GTI/2025/01. Name of Work: Conducting Geotechnical survey and submission of reports for getting approval from competent authority from Furkating (Excluding) Km 33.1/130 to New Tinsukia (Including) Km 525/020 (Total length is 193.85 Km). Approx. Value: ₹4,83,63,851.27/- . Date & time of closing of tender at 14:30 hrs. and opening at 15:30 hrs. on 11-11-2025. For complete information and tender document of e-Tender will be available in website www.ireps.gov.in

Chief Engineer/Con/Lumding Project/Malgaoon

NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY Construction Organization

Serving Customers With A Smile

E-AUCTION FOR UP-GRADATION, OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE OF RETIRING ROOM AND DORMITORY

E-Auction for Up-gradation, operation and maintenance of Retiring Rooms and Dormitories at Lumding Station on "Upgrade, Operate and Transfer" basis. Details are as under: Auction Catalogue No.: RR-LMG-01-2025; Auction Start Date & Time (All Lots): 11:00 hrs. on 10-11-2025; Auction Close Date & Time: 11:30 hrs. on 10-11-2025; Rate Unit: Annual Licensing Fee; Trips/Days: 1826.

Seq No. Lot No./Category Description

AA/1	PriU-LMG-LMG-WRL-66-25-1 (Pay and Use - Lounges/Waiting/Retiring/Clock Rooms)	E-Auction for Up-gradation, operation and maintenance of Retiring Rooms and Dormitories at Lumding Station on "Upgrade, Operate and Transfer" basis.
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Prospective bidders are requested to visit e-Auction leasing Module of IREPS website www.ireps.gov.in.

Divisional Railway Manager (C), Lumding

NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY

"SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE"

Initiatives promote integrity, transparency and ethical practices across workplaces and communities

Vigilance Week promotes integrity and ethics across workplaces

HT Correspondent

KOKRAJHAR, Oct 28: NTPC Bongaigaon, Salakati, observing Vigilance Awareness Week 2025 from October 27 to November 2, under the theme "Vigilance: Our Shared Responsibility."

The program began with an Integrity Pledge administered by Arnab Maitra, Head of Project, in the presence of Amit Asthana, AGM (HR), Ananta Samanta, DGM (Vigilance), departmental heads, employees and union representatives.

As part of the week-long observance, an essay competition in Assamese and Boro languages was organised at Salakati High School on October 25, encouraging students to reflect on "Impact of Corruption on Indian Society."

A special awareness session for contractual workers was also conducted at the station, emphasising vigilance, transparency and ethical practices in daily operations.

Our Dibrugarh Correspondent adds: Oil India Limited (OIL) is observing Vigilance Awareness Week 2025 from October 27 to November 2 at its Duliujan headquarters and across all departments, under the theme "Vigilance: Our Shared Responsibility."

The week began with an inaugural ceremony at Duliujan Club, featuring the lighting of the ceremonial lamp, administration of the Integrity Pledge and a cycle rally flagged off by Bi-



nayananda Bharali, RCE-officiating, OIL. The rally aimed to promote community participation and ethical conduct.

As part of the observance, OIL is conducting student and employee competitions, quizzes, Gram Sabhas, street plays, and a vendor grievance redressal program in Duliujan and nearby areas, including Joypur, Tingkhong and Moran.

Posters, banners and radio jingles are also being used to raise awareness about integrity and

transparency.

This initiative forms part of OIL's broader three-month campaign (August 18 – November 17) focused on preventive vigilance, case disposal, capacity-building, asset management and digital transformation.

Through these activities, OIL reinforces its commitment to integrity, transparency and ethical governance, contributing to national development and community welfare.

Mega health camp at Kheroni Kapili College

HT Correspondent

DONGKAMUKAM, Oct 28: A "Mega Health Camp" under the Susrusa Setu initiative was organised at Kheroni Kapili College in West Karbi Anglong, drawing an overwhelming response from the local community.

The camp was conducted by the National Health Mission, Assam, in collaboration with the District Health Society, West Karbi Anglong, and was inaugurated by MLA Rupsing Teron. A total of 3,230 beneficiaries registered for the out-patient services, with a majority being minors. No cases of TB, HIV or cancer were reported during the camp. Additionally, 150 patients were referred for further treatment.

Medical support was provided by a team of 10 specialist physicians and 10 medical officers, ensuring comprehensive healthcare services for the attendees.

The camp aimed to increase healthcare access in the region and create awareness about preventive and curative medical services among the local population.

Lions Club organises free eye camp

HT Correspondent

TEZPUR, Oct 28: The Lions Club of Tezpur Greater, in association with Guwahati Lions Eye Hospital, organised a free eye screening camp at Bahumukhi Sanskritik Sansthan, Durga Mandir Campus, Saikia Chuburi on Tuesday.

Over 100 people from Saikia Chuburi and nearby areas were screened for cataract, blood pressure and blood sugar. A total of 28 patients were diagnosed with cataract.

The Club, in collaboration with the hospital, will provide free transportation, meals, accommodation and surgery for all cataract patients. The group is scheduled to travel to Guwahati on 12th November, with surgeries completed and patients returning to Tezpur by 14th November 2025.

The camp was initiated by Anuva Saikia of Saikia Chuburi and managed by Lions Sanjeev Pradhan, Bhaskar Hazarika and Abdul Rahman, with support from Bahumukhi Sanskritik Sansthan members. Lions Club president Rajiv Jain expressed gratitude to all contributors, saying the initiative reflects their commitment to restoring vision for those in needs.

Nijut Moina 2.0 cheques distributed in Demow College

HT Correspondent

DEMOW, Oct 28: Under the Mukhya Mantrir Nijut Moina Aasoni 2.0 scheme, cheques were distributed to girl students at Demow College and HCDG College, Nitaipukhuri, on Monday.

At Demow College, Pallabita Baruah Gogoi, Chairperson of the Demow Municipal Board, served as the chief guest and handed over cheques to the students in the presence of the Principal and faculty members.

At HCDG College, Nitaipukhuri, Anima Chungkran, Chairperson of Zilla Parishad, distributed cheques to the girl students with the Principal and professors of the college in attendance.

Draft electoral rolls published for two SKAC constituencies

HT Correspondent

JORHAT, Oct 28: The draft electoral rolls for the Sonowal Kachari Autonomous Council (SKAC) elections have been published for two constituencies—21-Borholla and 22-Bojalkata—in Jorhat district, with November 1, 2025, as the qualifying date.

Addressing the media at the Jorhat Deputy Commissioner's office, DC Jay Shivani informed that 21-Borholla Constituency has a total of 2,788 electors, including 1,354 males and 1,434 females. The 22-Bojalkata Constituency has 2,377 electors, comprising 1,184 males and 1,193 females. The draft electoral rolls are available for public inspection at the office of the Electoral Registration Officer, 21-Borholla/22-

Bojalkata, located in the office of the Co-Deputy Commissioner, Titabor. Electors may verify their names there or online at [http://ermsec.assam.gov.in] (http://ermsec.assam.gov.in) using their EPIC number issued by the Election Commission of India.

Claims and objections related to the draft rolls may be submitted in Form 2, 3 or 4 to the respective Electoral Registration Officer, C/o Co-Deputy Commissioner, Titabor, on or before November 10, 2025.

The publication of the draft electoral rolls follows the State Election Commission's Notification No SEC.53/2025/13 and Letter No SEC.53/2025/15, both dated October 4, 2025, in connection with the upcoming SKAC Election 2025.

Fire destroys house in Kokrajhar during Chhat Puja

HT Correspondent

KOKRAJHAR, Oct 28: A major fire broke out early Tuesday morning in Kokrajhar town, destroying a family residence and belongings worth around Rs 12 lakh during Chhat Puja celebrations.

The blaze erupted around 3:30 AM at a house on Depot Road, Tengapara, reportedly due to an electrical short circuit while the owner and tenants were at the Gaurang River ghat offering prayers. Four rooms were reduced to ashes, affecting two families — one belonging to Titep Mushahary and the other to tenant Bharati Das.

Tragically, two students living in the house, Sholkha Basumatary of Kokrajhar Girls' College and Dipal Mushahary of Bodoland University, lost all study materials, school certificates and recently issued scholarship cheques.

Residents said the fire service arrived nearly 30 minutes late, but the quick action of locals, who fetched water in buckets, helped contain the fire and prevent it from spreading to nearby homes.

Man killed in hit-and-run near Jorhat ISBT

HT Correspondent

JORHAT, Oct 28: In a tragic hit-and-run incident this morning, Nabakumar Talukdar of Dekagaon, Pijali Chook was killed when a speeding dumper struck his motorcycle near the ISBT. Talukdar died on the spot and the driver fled the scene. Police are actively searching for the vehicle and its driver.

Sri Sri Chhath Brata Mahotsav concludes

HT Correspondent

DEMOW, Oct 28: The Sri Sri Chhath Brata Mahotsav concluded with great religious fervor and devotion at the Demow Nital Road Chhath Ghat on Monday and Tuesday.

On Monday afternoon, devotees gathered at the Ghats to perform traditional rituals, offering prayers to the Sun God. Cultural icon Zubeen Garg was also paid tribute near the Chhath Ghat during the celebrations.

Later that night, devotees lit earthen lamps along the banks of the Demow River as part of the sacred rituals.

The festival concluded on Tuesday morning with the distribution of prasad, thekhuwa, among the attendees, marking the successful completion of the two-day religious celebration.

Teacher leads community road repair

HT Correspondent

NAGAON, Oct 28: In a remarkable act of community service, Monuar Hussain Faruquee, a school teacher, philanthropist and social worker from the 55th Dhing Assembly constituency, has spearheaded the repair of a crucial 2-kilometer road stretch from Bechamari Amtala to Mairadhuj-Roumari, long in a state of disrepair.

The dilapidated road had severely affected schoolchildren, local businesses and senior citizens. Rather than waiting for lengthy government procedures, Faruquee mobilised local residents to complete the repairs promptly, easing daily hardships for commuters.

"As an ordinary person, I have taken human service as my religion and dedicated myself to the development of the people of this constituency," Faruquee said.

Beyond road repair, Faruquee has consistently supported local communities, honouring teachers on Teachers' Day across multiple villages, assisting youth with employment opportunities and mentoring students in higher education.

BJP holds silent rally seeking justice for Zubeen Garg

HT Correspondent

MORIGAON, Oct 28: Under the aegis of Morigaon BJP, a silent protest rally titled "I am Zubeen's fan, we are also Zubeen's fan" was held across the town today, demanding justice for the late youth icon Zubeen Garg.

The rally was led by Information and Public Relations and Water Resources Minister Piyush Hazarika, Minister Bimal Bora, MLA Ramakanta Deuri, president Ramprasad Sarker, and GS Nirmal Konwar. It started from Basanaghat and proceeded through Morigaon town, concluding at Morigaon Tarun Field.

Over 10,000 fans and BJP workers participated, holding placards with slogans such as "Moiu Zubeen Anuragi," "Amiu Zubeen Anuragi," "Amar Zubeen," and demands for a fast-track court for justice. The silent protest highlighted the community's demand for accountability and legal action.

Air taxi service and aviation training

Air Bodoland partners with Aerosports Skyventure to launch air taxi services

HT Correspondent

GOSSAIGAON, Oct 28: Air Bodoland Training Academy, part of Connection Point Academy OPC Pvt Ltd, founded by Munmun Singha Chowdhury, has partnered with Aerosports Skyventure Pvt Ltd, led by ex-military aviator Captain Sanjay Chakraborty, to boost regional connectivity and aviation skill development in the Northeast.

The collaboration includes a 15-day Airport Training Program at Jaipur International Airport, offering hands-on experience in ground handling, baggage management, passenger services and safety procedures under Captain Chakraborty's supervision.

The partnership also plans to



launch Air Taxi services connecting remote districts of Bodoland and other northeastern states to key urban centers, aiming to improve tourism, commerce and local employment opportunities for trained

graduates. Munmun Singha Chowdhury said the initiative seeks to provide rural youth with practical aviation exposure and career opportunities, building "a connected, confident and capable Northeast."

Cachar invites applications for FRA cell contractual posts

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, Oct 28: The Cachar District Administration has invited applications for two contractual positions under the Forest Rights Act (FRA) Cell to strengthen tribal welfare initiatives. The move follows a directive from the Secretary, Tribal Affairs (Plain) Department, Dispur, dated October 4, 2025.

The posts include FRA Co-ordinator with a monthly remuneration of Rs 35,000 and MIS/Programme Associate (FRA) with Rs 25,000 per month, both on an 11-month contractual basis.

Eligibility for the Co-ordinator post requires a Master's degree in Social Science or Social Work, knowledge of IT/computer applications, and at least five years of experience in rural development or tribal welfare. For the MIS/Programme Associate, candidates should have a BSc or BA in Statistics, Mathematics, Economics, or Social Science, a diploma in IT or computer applications, and a minimum of two years of experience in large-scale data management. The maximum age limit for both posts is 35 years as of January 1, 2025.

Applications, along with self-attested copies of educational qualifications, experience certificates, age and address proofs, must be submitted in a sealed envelope to the Personnel Branch, Office of the District Commissioner, Cachar (Ground Floor) by 5:00 PM on November 15, 2025. Separate applications are required for each post.

Shortlisted candidates will be informed of the interview date and venue. No TA/DA will be provided. Further details are available on the official Cachar district website, cachar.assam.gov.in.

Scouts and Guides assist NFR passengers during Chhath Puja

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, Oct 28: On the occasion of Chhath Puja, volunteers from Bharat Scouts & Guides provided active support at several stations under North-east Frontier Railway (NFR), helping manage the festive rush and assisting passengers.

Around 30 members, including Scouts, Guides, Rovers, Rangers and Unit Leaders from the Katihar and New Jalpaiguri District Associations, offered services at key stations such as Katihar, Barsoi, Purnia, Jogbani, Forbesganj, New Jalpaiguri, and Kishanganj. Their tasks included guiding crowds during boarding and de-boarding, assisting passengers on platforms and distributing free drinking water to ensure comfort.

To meet the high demand during the festive season, NFR is operating 620 special festival train trips from September to December 2025, connecting major destinations for travelers heading home or to pilgrimage sites. Special arrangements at major stations include temporary holding areas, enhanced announcement systems, extra ticket counters, automatic ticket vending machines and round-the-clock war rooms. Additional staff and RPF personnel were deployed to maintain crowd discipline and ensure smooth operations.

The voluntary contribution of Bharat Scouts & Guides reflected the spirit of service and discipline, complementing NFR's efforts to provide safe, organised, and comfortable travel during Chhath Puja and other festivals.

127-year-old Bishuddhachar Buddha Vihar inaugurated

HT Correspondent

MARGHERITA, Oct 28: The historic 127-year-old Bishuddhachar Buddha Vihar in Namdang Gaon, under the 83rd Margherita Legislative Assembly constituency, has been magnificently reconstructed and inaugurated, marking a celebration of faith, heritage and community spirit.

The inauguration held on Monday, featured a grand flag hoisting, Pay Bo, Daratham, Sangha Dana offerings and a procession with the revered Buddha statue and the symbolic Kalpataru. The reconstructed

Vihar was formally inaugurated by Gyanopal Mahathero, president of the All Assam Buddhist Association and head monk of Namphake Buddha Vihar. Devotees and Buddhist monks from Assam and Arunachal Pradesh attended in large numbers.

A tribute was also paid to Assam's musical legend Zubeen Garg with the unveiling of his portrait, adding a cultural touch to the religious festivities.

Founded in 1898 by Sukhram Wakhet on the banks of the Buridheh River, the Vihar was later relocated to Namdang Gaon due to

erosion. The reconstruction was led by Jyotika Mahathera, head of Ledo Maulang Khamti Buddhist Monastery, in collaboration with the Shaileen Wakhet family. The All Assam Buddhist Association, Tinsukia district committee, felicitated Gyanopal Mahathero, Jyotika Mahathera and the Wakhet family for their contributions to reviving this cultural and spiritual landmark.

The two-day celebration continues with Anikaja Tang, Daratham and other Buddhist religious events, further enriching the spiritual heritage of the region.

Apollo Kolkata offers advanced neurosciences care to patients from Assam

Hospital showcases expertise in neuro intervention and microvascular neurosurgery, providing world-class treatment

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, Oct 28: Apollo Multispecialty Hospitals, Kolkata, a leading tertiary care centre in Eastern India, is highlighting its cutting-edge Neurosciences Department, delivering advanced care in Neuro Intervention, Neuro Surgery and Microvascular Neurosurgery for patients from Assam and the broader Northeast region.

With a rising number of complex neurological cases being referred from Assam, the hospital has become a trusted destination for comprehensive brain and spine care. Its state-of-the-art infrastructure—including Neuro Bi-plane Cath Labs, 3T MRI, Neuronavigation Systems and Intraoperative Neuro Monitoring enables precise diagnosis and minimally invasive treatment for delicate neurological conditions.

"Patients from Assam often come to us with complex neurovascular disorders such as aneurysms, arteriovenous malformations, skull-base tumours and Moyamoya disease. Our expertise



in microvascular neurosurgery and neuro intervention ensures world-class care," said Dr Debarshi Chatterjee, Senior Consultant Neurosurgery.

The hospital's Neuro Intervention Unit specialises in minimally invasive endovascular techniques for stroke, aneurysms and vascular malformations, while the Microvascular Neurosurgery team performs intricate brain and spine

surgeries using high-precision microscopes, improving outcomes, recovery and reducing complications. Dr Surinder Singh Bhatia, Director of Medical Services, Eastern Region, said, "Our goal is to bring advanced neurology and neurosurgery closer to the Northeast, making high-quality care more accessible."

Dr Manoj Kumar Mahata, Senior Consultant – Interventional

Neurology, added, "By extending our services to Assam, we aim to save lives and improve outcomes for complex neurological cases, bridging the gap between advanced medical technology and regional accessibility."

Every year, hundreds of patients from Assam travel to cities like Kolkata for advanced neuro care, facing financial and emotional strain and delays in critical treatment. Strengthening Assam's infrastructure, technology and specialist training could make the state a hub for Neurosciences in the Northeast. Apollo's Comprehensive Stroke Program also ensures round-the-clock emergency stroke care with dedicated neuro interventionists, making it one of the most advanced stroke-ready centres in Eastern India.

With its focus on clinical excellence, technology-driven precision and compassionate care, Apollo Multispecialty Hospitals, Kolkata, continues to provide world-class neurosurgical services to patients from Assam and beyond.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

Research is creating new knowledge.
—Neil Armstrong

Trump-Xi talks in Seoul significant

The U.S. President Donald Trump is finally meeting the Chinese President Xi Jinping in Seoul by this month end, possibly on October 30, on the sidelines of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Summit in the South Korean capital scheduled for October 31 and November 1. Both the leaders are attending APEC summit. The summit is more crucial from Trump's political perspective compared to President Xi, who has got a mandate from the fourth plenary session of the central committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC) for his ambitious 15th five-year plan covering the period 2026-2030. So, President Xi will be attending the Seoul summit with confidence and will be in a better bargaining position with the US president on the contentious trade issues which are under discussion. On the other hand, President Trump will be attending with some discomfort as his image has got a jolt with the continuing problems in implementing his Gaza peace plan and in the total failure of his efforts to stop the Russia-Ukraine war. Rather, the tensions have heightened with Russia after his latest announcement on imposing fresh sanctions on the two major Russian oil companies in international transactions. Among the western alliance members, Trump is again in collision course with Canada and the trade talks have been suspended by Trump.

Under such circumstances, Trump badly needs a deal with China to show his invincibility as a deal maker as also a messenger of peace. He also needs China in persuading Xi's ally President Putin to cooperate with Trump in implementing his peace plan for ending the Ukraine war. Trump does not want the Europeans to take any front-foot bypassing the US in helping Ukraine. The US administration does not like the Europe coalition for helping Ukraine. Trump feels that this European move will only prolong the war putting more burden on the USA. But the most important issue is to conclude a trade deal, the process of which has got set back in the last few days despite two earlier draft trade agreements, one arrived at Geneva and the second at London.

The timing of the October 30 summit is also significant. The additional 100 per cent tariff imposed a few days back by the US as a retaliation against China stopping export of rare earth minerals, is due to take effect from November 1. Once it takes effect, the US high-tech industry will be badly hit. The sense of urgency has been communicated to Trump. Trump has to take the issue as a priority one with President Xi and a solution has to be worked out at this meeting. Trump uses always hyperbole but still it is apparent that Trump will make his best efforts to conclude a trade deal with President Xi at this summit.

The secret language of the universe

Talking Points

By: Narvijay Yadav

The Universe often speaks through synchronicities, numbers, and moments that align perfectly. When we breathe consciously and live with awareness, every coincidence becomes a coded message from the divine.

There are days when life seems to turn into a quiet dialogue between you and the Universe. Patterns appear, faces reappear, numbers repeat, and the invisible thread of connection becomes impossible to ignore. These are not random events; they are celestial messages, softly reminding us that we are being guided. Recently, I attended "The Art of Becoming a Millionaire Speaker" workshop at Holiday Inn, Aerocity, New Delhi. It was a bright, charged morning; the kind that feels full of promise. As I entered the hotel driveway, a white Fortuner paused right in front of me. Its number plate read 1111.

That number had been following me for months, as well as the title of my upcoming book, "Bliss 1111". Seeing it again at the hotel entrance felt like the Universe tapping gently on my shoulder, saying, "You're exactly where you need to be." Then came the next surprise. When I stepped into the lift to reach the event floor, there stood Amandeep Thind, the London-based international speaker conducting the workshop. He was lost in his mobile phone, absorbed in silence. I smiled and greeted him softly, "Bliss On!" He looked up and smiled back. That moment, quiet, unexpected, yet perfectly timed, felt like a preface written by the Universe itself. Inside the hall, the workshop began. It was designed for corporate professionals, coaches, and public speakers, not for meditators or seekers. Yet throughout the eight-hour session, Amandeep must have instructed us to take a 'deep breath' more than eighty times. Every time he said, "Take a deep breath," I smiled inwardly. Because deep breathing is the first step of Bliss Meditation. It was astonishing to see how the same act that opens meditation, inhaling deeply, exhaling slowly, had also become the foundation of effective communication. The world of business and the world of consciousness had quietly merged for a day.

Later, during a tea break, I opened my phone to photograph the hotel's lush vertical garden. The screen displayed 11:11 AM. In the afternoon, it flashed 2:22 PM, a sign of alignment and partnership. At night, it was 11:11 PM again. Numbers were flowing like sacred codes. By the end of the day, I discovered that two members of our "5AM Bliss" community were already attending the workshop, and four new members joined Bliss right there, drawn by the same energy of mindfulness and purpose.

How the Universe Communicates: The Universe doesn't speak in sentences. It speaks in signs, symbols, and frequencies; through the rhythm of time, the pattern of numbers, and the sudden synchronicity of meetings. When you are aligned with your higher purpose, life begins to mirror that frequency. 1111 is often seen as the gateway of divine alignment. 222 symbolizes trust, harmony, and partnerships in progress. Such moments are not coincidences. They are reminders that your thoughts and energy are in tune with your path. The more aware you become, the clearer these messages get.

The Bliss Lesson: The greatest lesson of that day came from the breath itself. Every deep breath was a reminder of home, of Bliss Meditation, of awareness, of being present in the moment. The trainer was teaching us to be confident speakers. Yet, unknowingly, he was also teaching us to be conscious humans, to breathe before we speak, to center ourselves before we express, to be present before we perform.

That's the language of the Universe; subtle, seamless, and sacred. It doesn't shout or demand attention. It waits patiently for you to notice. And when you finally do, everything, even a corporate workshop, turns into meditation. Sometimes the Universe doesn't whisper. It simply smiles through numbers, coincidences, and breath, waiting for you to smile back.

Protection of human rights: A universal responsibility

The concept of human rights represents the foundation and soul of human society, deeply acknowledging the inherent dignity and value of every individual. These rights are not a gift from any government, state, or specific social system; rather, they are intrinsic and indispensable to every person by virtue of their humanity. They are not merely legally recognized rights but the ethical and spiritual basis of every human life. The essence of humanity lies within these rights, which distinguish humans from other beings and grant them the right to lead a dignified life. Without these rights, an individual's full development is impossible, their talents and potential remain unrealized, and thus, they are essential for the entire human society. Their universality stems from the fact that they apply equally to every person worldwide, irrespective of race, religion, caste, gender, language, socio-economic status, or any other identity. No geographical boundary, cultural difference, or political ideology can limit this universality; rather, its universal nature strengthens and deepens the necessity of human rights across different parts of the world. The concept of human rights establishes that when an individual's rights are violated anywhere in the world, it poses a challenge to the dignity of all humanity. This universality underscores that the protection of human rights is not the limited duty of a single nation or society but a profoundly important and indispensable responsibility of every individual, institution, and government worldwide. The scope of this responsibility is not confined to preventing violations but extends to actively ensuring a dignified life for all through a proactive, constructive, and fully committed role. Without realizing this profound value and sense of responsibility, envisioning a just, peaceful, and equitable world is challenging, as it is the key to resolving all global issues and a hallmark of the ethical standards of human society. This universal sense of responsibility forms the foundation for international relations and cooperation, which are vital for global peace and security.

A deep analysis of the importance of human rights reveals that they are not limited to political freedom or legal protection but encompass every aspect of human life, providing a holistic framework for human development. The right to life, the foundation of all rights and inalienable by anyone, the right to freedom, which ensures individual autonomy, freedom of thought, and expression, the right to security, which guarantees a life free from fear and danger, the right to equality, which considers everyone equal in the eyes of the law and eliminates discrimination, and the right to dignity, which upholds the fundamental respect for human existence—these are the core pillars of human rights. Beyond these fundamental aspects, the right to education, which opens the door to knowledge and empowers individuals to make informed life decisions; the right to health, which ensures physical and mental well-being and enhances the quality of life; the right to food, which eliminates hunger and ensures nutrition; the right to clean water and a healthy environment; and the right to work, which provides livelihood and self-respect—these social, economic, and cultural rights also fall within its scope. These rights are interconnected, indivisible, and interdependent, meaning that the violation of one right naturally affects others, lowering the overall standard of living. For example, if a person is denied the right to education, their right to work and quality of life are naturally diminished, which also im-

pacts their right to a dignified life. The protection of these rights enables every individual to develop their full potential in a society free from fear, discrimination, and with complete dignity. This fosters a just, humane, and cohesive environment in society, where marginalized, oppressed, and excluded groups also gain full opportunities to assert their identity and integrate into the mainstream. Therefore, the protection of human rights is not merely a matter of individual gain but a fundamental condition and essential element for building a healthy, stable, just, and progressive society. Respecting these rights means respecting humanity, which is the foundation for global peace, sustainable development, and human progress, and a commitment to intergenerational justice.

The primary condition for this universal responsibility is the effective and dedicated role of the state. The state is the primary institution entrusted with the responsibility of protecting the human rights of its citizens. Every country's constitution recognizes and undertakes the ultimate responsibility to safeguard these rights. This responsibility is built on three core principles: respect, protection, and fulfillment. Firstly, the state must not violate human rights in any way; it is an essential duty of the state to ensure that its policies or actions do not contravene any individual's fundamental rights. Secondly, the state must adopt strict laws and regulatory measures to prevent the violation of these rights by other individuals, private companies, or institutions. Thirdly, the state must take proactive steps to ensure these rights are fulfilled in practice, especially in the case of social and economic rights, such as providing education and healthcare for all. The state must not only refrain from being a violator of human rights but also establish a robust, transparent, and accountable legal and administrative system to prevent violations, conduct thorough, immediate, and impartial investigations when violations occur, impose appropriate penalties on offenders, and provide justice to victims, including compensation. This requires a strong, independent, and impartial judicial system, a police and administration that is sensitive to human rights, trained, and free from corruption, and an education system that fosters awareness of human rights among the public. Government policies and programs must be designed comprehensively, holistically, and with foresight to ensure that people from all sections of society, especially backward, vulnerable, minority, and disadvantaged groups, can equally enjoy their rights without discrimination and benefit from development. The state's role does not end with enacting laws but is fulfilled through their proper, effective, and humane implementation. Furthermore, international cooperation and mutual understanding among states are crucial for upholding human rights standards globally, as internal issues in one country, such as migration, refugee crises, or international crimes, can impact others.

The concept of universal responsibility transcends state boundaries, encompassing the international community and strengthening the idea of global citizenship. If serious or widespread human rights violations occur within a state, such as genocide, ethnic cleansing, war crimes, or crimes against humanity, the rest of the world remaining a silent spectator is not only morally unacceptable but also a challenge to international peace, security, and law. The principle of "Responsibility to Protect" reinforces the

idea that if a state is unable or unwilling to protect the fundamental human rights of its citizens, the international community has a moral and political duty to intervene collectively. International institutions like the United Nations and regional organizations (African Union, European Union, etc.) have a specific and critical role in monitoring human rights standards, issuing warnings in cases of violations, and taking effective measures. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and other treaties form the essential foundation for these universal standards. Commitment to these treaties is not merely a legal obligation but a profound moral responsibility toward humanity. The international community must work together proactively and in coordination through mutual dialogue, diplomatic pressure, economic incentives, developmental aid, and, where necessary, collective and effective measures to prevent human rights violations. Strengthening the authority, independence, and effectiveness of institutions like international courts, the International Criminal Court, the Human Rights

Council, and others is essential to hold states accountable. In this complex era of globalization, human rights issues can no longer remain internal matters of a state; they are a central concern for global peace, security, and stability. Therefore, developed nations must assist developing countries with technological, financial, and human resource support in protecting rights, and collaborate to address new challenges to human rights in a technology-driven world, such as data privacy, cybercrimes, and potential inequalities arising from artificial intelligence. In the current world, international cooperation plays an indispensable role in promoting and protecting human rights.

In the realm of the universal responsibility for human rights, non-governmental organizations, human rights activists, educators, the media, and conscious civil society have an undeniable and unparalleled role, creating a system of monitoring and awareness at national and international levels. These organizations (NGOs) courageously and diligently uncover human rights violations, gather evidence, raise public awareness, provide legal aid, psychological support, and rehabilitation to victims, and consistently and non-violently pressure governments for transparency and accountability. They are often referred to as the "watchdogs," "sentinels," and "conscience of humanity," reminding and compelling governments and institutions to honor their commitments. Educational institutions can play a pivotal role in educating the younger generation about the principles of human rights, their historical development, and their importance in the modern world, fostering a future generation that is more sensitive, responsible, and tolerant toward these values. Human rights education should not be confined to curricula but should become part of the culture of schools and universities. The media, through accurate, impartial, and courageous dissemination of information and public awareness, serves as a powerful medium to foster in-depth discussions on human rights in society. Every conscious citizen also has a responsibility to fully respect the rights of others in their personal and social lives and to voice ethical courage against rights violations in their communities. This responsibility is not limited to en-

joying one's own rights but includes actively participating in protecting the rights of others. The use of social media and technology has created new possibilities for raising awareness and grassroots movements, spreading the message of human rights worldwide and challenging oppressive regimes. A strong, proactive, fearless, and organized civil society is essential for protecting human rights, as it holds power in check, prevents corruption, and strengthens democratic values. The challenges to protecting human rights are highly complex and multifaceted, requiring a comprehensive and multidisciplinary strategy to address them. Poverty, unemployment, the impacts of climate change, ethnic and religious conflicts, wars, terrorism, and the rise of authoritarian regimes are some of the complex challenges that violate human rights daily and threaten global peace. Poverty deprives people of economic, social, and cultural rights, keeping them away from education, health, and a dignified life, turning them into marginalized sections of society. Conflicts and wars completely destroy fundamental human rights, such as the right to life and security, creating severe humanitarian crises. Addressing these issues requires not only legal or political measures but a global collective effort focusing on poverty eradication, education expansion, ensuring social justice, equitable resource distribution, and resolving conflicts through peaceful dialogue. In this regard, economic and social cooperation among all nations, along with a genuine moral commitment to human rights, is essential. Environmental issues caused by climate change, such as floods, droughts, and natural disasters, adversely affect the health, food, clean water, and life rights of millions, making environmental protection an indispensable part of human rights, often referred to as "climate justice." Additionally, the rapid development of technology has created new challenges, such as breaches of data privacy, government surveillance, and inequalities caused by artificial intelligence, forcing us to redefine the concept of human rights. Addressing all these challenges requires making the concept of human rights stronger, more comprehensive, and future-oriented.

The protection of human rights is a universal responsibility, deeply felt in every human heart and an intergenerational commitment. It is not merely a provision recorded in legal texts but a defining feature of human society, determining the level of our ethical, social, and spiritual development. When human rights are violated in any part of the world, it raises a question about the entire humanity and undermines the dignity of human society. The universality of human rights profoundly reminds us that we are all integral members of a larger human family, and the dignity, well-being, and safety of one depend on the dignity, well-being, and safety of all. By fulfilling this responsibility, we can move toward a future where peace, justice, equality, and dignity become a reality for all without discrimination. This journey is not only for governments but for every individual, institution, cultural group, and the global community—an ongoing effort, introspection, and struggle. To succeed in this struggle, it is imperative that we all diligently fulfill our responsibilities. By deeply awakening the universal sense of responsibility for human rights, we can build a better, more humane, just, and peaceful world, truly proclaiming the triumph of humanity. This responsibility continually reminds us that human dignity is priceless and inviolable, and protecting it is our most sacred duty.

2025 PN7: Earth's Mini-Moon Until 2083

By: Satyabrata Borah

The discovery of a second moon orbiting Earth has captured the imagination of astronomers and space enthusiasts alike. This is not a plot for a science fiction movie but a real astronomical phenomenon confirmed by NASA. Designated as 2025 PN7, this small nearEarth object has been classified as a quasatsatellite, meaning it shares a unique orbital dance with our planet around the Sun. Unlike Earth's familiar Moon, which has been a constant companion for billions of years, this new cosmic traveler is temporary, expected to remain in its current relationship with Earth until approximately 2083. The arrival of 2025 PN7 offers a fascinating glimpse into the complexities of celestial mechanics, the nature of nearEarth objects, and the ever-evolving understanding of our place in the cosmos. This article explores the discovery, characteristics, and scientific significance of this temporary second moon, shedding light on why it matters to both science and the broader human perspective.

2025 PN7 is a small asteroid, estimated to be between 18 and 36 meters in diameter, roughly the size of a modest building. To put this into perspective, Earth's Moon has a diameter of about 3474 kilometers, making 2025 PN7 a minuscule counterpart. Despite its small size, its presence is significant. First observed in August 2025 by the PanSTARRS survey at Hawaii's Haleakala Observatory, this asteroid was initially identified as a nearEarth object. Further analysis by NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory and other astronomers revealed its unique orbital behavior, leading to its classification as a quasatsatellite. Unlike a true satellite, which orbits Earth directly under its gravitational pull, a quasatsatellite follows a path around the Sun that is synchronized with Earth's orbit. This phenomenon, known as a 1:1 resonance, means that 2025 PN7 takes approximately the same time as Earth, about 365 days, to complete one orbit around the Sun. From certain vantage points, it appears to orbit Earth, creating the illusion of a second moon.

The concept of a quasatsatellite might seem confusing at first. Imagine two runners on a circular track, running at the same speed but maintaining a distance from each other. They move in sync, never colliding but always in proximity. Similarly, 2025 PN7 follows Earth around the Sun, maintaining a stable but distant relationship. This behavior distinguishes it from Earth's true Moon, which is gravitationally bound to our planet. Archival images suggest that 2025 PN7 may have been in this quasatsatellite configuration since the 1960s, unnoticed until modern telescopes and computational models revealed its presence. Its orbit is expected to remain stable for about 126 years, after which, around 2083, the gravitational influence of the Sun and other celestial bodies will likely pull it away from Earth's vicinity. This temporary nature underscores the dynamic and ever-changing environment of our solar system, where objects come and go in a cosmic ballet. The discovery of 2025 PN7 is not entirely unprecedented. Earth has had temporary minmoon companions be-

fore, such as 2024 PT5, which briefly orbited Earth for a few months in 2024. Other objects, like 2006 RH120 and 2016 HO3, have also been identified as temporary quasatsatellites or minmoonlike objects. What makes 2025 PN7 stand out is its relatively long duration as a quasatsatellite, potentially spanning over six decades. This longevity provides scientists with a unique opportunity to study its behavior over an extended period. The asteroid is believed to belong to the Arjuna group, a class of nearEarth asteroids with orbits closely resembling Earth's. These objects are of particular interest because their proximity makes them accessible for study and potential exploration, while their orbits offer insights into the gravitational interactions that shape our solar system.

The scientific significance of 2025 PN7 is multifaceted. First, it enhances our understanding of orbital dynamics. By studying its path, scientists can refine models of how nearEarth objects interact with Earth's gravity and the Sun's influence. These models are crucial for predicting the trajectories of other asteroids, some of which could pose a threat if their orbits bring them too close to Earth. While 2025 PN7 itself is too small to cause any harm, its study contributes to planetary defense strategies. Organizations like NASA's Planetary Defense Coordination Office rely on such data to monitor and assess potential asteroid impacts. Understanding the behavior of quasatsatellites like 2025 PN7 helps improve these predictive tools, ensuring humanity is better prepared for future cosmic visitors.

2025 PN7 offers a window into the history of our solar system. The origins of quasatsatellites are still a subject of research. Some scientists hypothesize that 2025 PN7 could have originated from the main asteroid belt between Mars and Jupiter, dislodged by collisions or gravitational perturbations. Others suggest it might be a fragment of the Moon, ejected during an ancient impact event. A notable example is the quasatsatellite Kamo'oalewa, which some researchers believe could be lunar debris. Determining the composition and origin of 2025 PN7 could reveal clues about the early solar system, including the processes that shaped the terrestrial planets and their moons. Future observations, possibly with advanced telescopes or even spacecraft missions, could provide spectroscopic data to analyze its surface composition, offering further insights into its history.

The potential for resource exploration is another exciting aspect of studying 2025 PN7. Asteroids, even small ones, are rich in materials like metals, silicates, and possibly water ice. In the future, mining such objects could provide resources for space exploration, reducing the need to launch materials from Earth. For instance, water extracted from asteroids could be used for drinking, fuel production, or radiation shielding in space habitats. While 2025 PN7 is too small to be a primary target for mining, its study contributes to the broader understanding of nearEarth asteroids as potential resource reservoirs. Companies and space agencies, including NASA, are already exploring asteroid mining as a viable future industry. The data gathered from 2025 PN7 could inform

the design of missions to larger asteroids, paving the way for sustainable space exploration.

The public's reaction to this discovery has been a mix of awe and curiosity. Social media platforms have buzzed with headlines about Earth's "second moon," sparking both excitement and misconceptions. Some have speculated that 2025 PN7 could cause earthquakes or tidal disruptions, but NASA has clarified that its small size and distant orbit render it harmless. Its gravitational influence on Earth is negligible, and it poses no threat to our planet's environment or ecosystems. Instead, this discovery serves as a reminder of the wonders of the cosmos, encouraging people to look up and ponder the mysteries of the universe. For students and educators, 2025 PN7 offers a tangible opportunity to engage with astronomy. By modeling its orbit or discussing its implications, classrooms can bring complex scientific concepts to life, fostering a new generation of scientists and explorers.

From a philosophical perspective, the arrival of 2025 PN7 prompts reflection on our place in the universe. Earth is not an isolated entity but part of a dynamic cosmic neighborhood where objects like asteroids and comets constantly interact with planets. This small asteroid, invisible to the naked eye, reminds us that the universe is full of hidden wonders waiting to be discovered. Its temporary presence also highlights the impermanence of celestial relationships, much like the fleeting connections in human life. Just as 2025 PN7 will eventually drift away, its brief companionship with Earth underscores the beauty of transience. This perspective resonates beyond science, touching on themes of change, connection, and the vastness of existence.

Looking ahead, astronomers will continue to monitor 2025 PN7 using advanced telescopes and computational tools. Missions like NASA's ATLAS (Asteroid Terrestrial Impact Last Alert System) and the upcoming PLATO (Planetary Transits and Oscillations of stars) telescope will enhance our ability to detect and track such objects. These efforts will not only deepen our understanding of quasatsatellites but also contribute to broader astronomical research. The data collected from 2025 PN7 could inform future missions, such as sample return missions or even crewed explorations to nearEarth asteroids. Each observation adds a piece to the puzzle of our solar system's history and future.

2025 PN7 is a remarkable addition to Earth's cosmic story. Its status as a quasatsatellite, orbiting in sync with our planet for decades, offers a unique opportunity to study the intricacies of celestial mechanics, the origins of nearEarth objects, and the potential for space exploration. While it may not rival the grandeur of Earth's true Moon, its presence enriches our understanding of the universe. As it journeys alongside us until 2083, 2025 PN7 serves as a symbol of the ever-changing, interconnected nature of the cosmos. This tiny asteroid, a fleeting companion in the vastness of space, reminds us that the universe is an endless repository of stories—waiting for us to listen, learn, and marvel.

Best protein powders for women: 12 options

By: **Havley Osborne**

Scientists have found that adding protein powder to the diet helps with weight loss, recovery/Trusted Source after exercise, and building new muscle.

This article explores the benefits and risks of using protein powders and how women can make an informed choice about using one.

Males and females often benefit from differing vitamin and mineral types, quantities, and combinations. With this in mind, some companies develop specific formulas of supplements, vitamins, shakes, and health bars. A person should discuss their options with a doctor or healthcare professional who can help them decide, and choose the product they feel works best for them and their needs.

Why use protein powder?

Protein powder is a convenient way to add protein to the diet. It is widely available in supermarkets, health food stores, and online.

People often mix protein powder with water or milk or add it to smoothies and soups. People can also add it to many home-cooked meals and baked goods.

Some people who eat a vegetarian or vegan diet might find it difficult to meet their bodies' protein needs through diet alone. Protein powder can be a cost-effective, easy way to consume more protein.

How to choose a protein powder

There are a couple of key factors to consider when choosing a protein powder.

Few ingredients

Some people may want to avoid products with artificial colorings, preservatives, and other additives.

Low sugar

Some protein powders are available in sweet flavors, such as chocolate, vanilla, and strawberry. These may significantly add to a person's daily sugar intake. Therefore, it may be worth checking the nutrition label before choosing a product or avoiding flavored powders altogether.

It is advisable to look for protein powders with less than 4 grams (g) of sugar per serving and those with natural sweeteners, such as stevia or monk fruit.

Protein type and ingredients

It is best to check the product's label before committing to a purchase. The label should include a list of all the ingredients and suggestions of how a person should use the product.

For example, some protein powders are free of gluten, soy, and dairy, making them suitable for people with allergies or intolerances. Also, a person who follows a keto diet may look for a product that is low in carbohydrates.

Furthermore, buyers may also wish to check whether the item is animal-based or plant-based. Animal-based protein powders often contain casein, whey, collagen, and eggs. Plant-based products often contain pea, rice, and hemp proteins.

Price

Price is another factor a person should check when looking for protein powders.

All products have a one-time price. However, many companies also offer a subscription service that costs less than the one-time price and may suit those who want regular orders.

How we chose

Medical News Today chooses products that meet the following criteria:

- Price: Products suit a wide range of budgets.

- Ingredients: Products list all ingredients clearly, with manufacturing processes outlined.

- Safety: Products contain ingredients deemed safe for ingestion.

- Reputation: Products are from businesses that adhere to industry best practices.

12 of the best protein powders for women

The following are some of the best protein powders for women available to purchase online.

Please note that the writer of this article has not tried these products. All information presented is purely research-based and correct at the time of publication.

Medical News Today follows a strict product selection and vetting process. Learn more here.

Best for allergies: ALOHA Organic Protein Powder

This plant-based protein powder is ideal for women with allergies because it is free of gluten, lactose, and soy. It may also suit people who prefer more sweet powders.

It uses natural coconut sugar as a sweetener and contains 4 g of added sugar per serving. This powder contains no genetically modified organisms and is low in carbohydrates. The main ingredients used in this powder are pea, brown rice, hemp seed, and pumpkin seed proteins.

Add two scoops to water or plant-based milk to make a healthy shake.

The chocolate-flavored version of this product contains the following nutrients per serving:

- 130 calories
- 3 g of fat
- 0 milligrams (mg) of cholesterol
- 320 mg of sodium
- 9 g of carbohydrates
- 18 g of protein

ALOHA Organic also offers a vanilla-flavored protein powder.

This product costs \$32.99, but a person can also enroll in a monthly subscription for \$29.69.

Best with natural sweetener: Tone It Up Organic Plant-Based Protein Powder

Tone It Up suggests this powder is ideal for active women who need a quick and convenient way to refuel.

This powder may suit people who prefer natural sweeteners, as it contains monk fruit sweetener rather than refined sugar or sweeteners.

Moreover, this protein powder has a creamy natural vanilla flavor and is suitable for people looking for a dairy- and gluten-free option.

- Each serving also contains:
- 100 calories
 - 3 g of fat
 - 210 mg of sodium
 - 3 g of carbohydrates
 - 15 g of protein

Tone It Up offers protein powders in other flavors on their website.

This product costs \$49.99. Alternatively, the company offers a subscription price of \$42.49.

SHOP NOW
Best plant-based: Vega Protein & Greens Protein Powder

In addition to pea, brown rice, and sachas inchi proteins, this powder contains organic kale, alfalfa, broccoli, and spinach. Sacha inchi protein comes from the roasted seeds of a plant native to South America.

This powder contains natural stevia sweetener, has no added sugar, and delivers 120 calories per serving.

This product may suit people who prefer a range of flavors, as it is available in vanilla, chocolate,

berry, salted caramel, and coconut almond. There are also different container sizes a person can choose from, starting from 16–18 servings.

Below are some of the nutritional values of each serving:

- 3 g of fat
- 0 mg of cholesterol
- 300 mg of sodium
- 6 g of carbohydrates
- 20 g of protein

The company suggests using the powder in the usual way to make a drink or baking with it, replacing between one-eighth and one-fourth of the flour in recipes.

Vega stocks the Protein & Greens powder starting from \$29.99.

Best with superfoods: Orgain Organic Protein & Superfoods Plant-Based Protein Powder

The protein powder combines plant-based proteins with 50 "superfoods," including vegetables, berries, herbs, sprouts, and grains. However, the long list of ingredients might make it one to avoid for people with allergies. Additionally, this powder is higher in carbohydrates than some other options.

People can choose their preferred flavors from creamy chocolate fudge or vanilla bean.

Further to that, people can also consider the nutritional value per serving 2-scoop serving:

- 170 calories
- 310 mg of sodium
- 20 g of carbohydrates
- 21 g of protein
- 5 g of dietary fiber
- 1 g of sugar
- 5 g of erythritol

The price is \$37.99. The company also offers a subscription price of \$28.49.

Best for highest protein per serving: Cellucor Whey Sport Protein Powder

This protein powder is gluten- and soy-free and helps support recovery and muscle building.

Each 2-scoop serving contains:

- 170 calories
- 30 g of protein
- 3 g of fat
- 70 mg of cholesterol
- 5 g of carbohydrates

The formulation also contains vitamin C, iron, and calcium, which may help support bone health.

Chocolate and vanilla flavors are available, and the product includes 18 servings.

The one-time price is \$22.99. People may also benefit from a subscription for \$16.09.

This protein powder is suitable for individuals looking to build lean muscle or lose fat. It is also a good option for people who do not eat soy or gluten. However, it is not suitable for vegans.

Eight flavors are available, including pure chocolate, vanilla cinnamon, chocolate peanut butter, and strawberry. A person can also opt for an unflavored whey protein.

Furthermore, the product page lists the nutritional values that come with each 1-scoop serving:

- 130 calories
- 2.5 g of fat
- 95 mg of cholesterol
- 3 g of carbohydrates
- 24 g of protein

It also contains stevia leaf extract.

The company recommends that buyers use a blender or shaker bottle when mixing the protein powder. A person can add the product to their water or milk, then shake or blend it for up to 30 seconds.

Some individuals may prefer to add protein powder to their oats, ice cream, or other recipes.

This grass-fed protein powder



comes in different sizes, and one-off pricing starts at \$34.95. There is also a subscription for \$33.20.

Best keto-friendly: Owyn 100% Plant Protein Powder

This vegan and plant-based product comes without dairy, soy, gluten, egg, peanuts, or tree nuts. It is also keto-friendly.

Each 2-scoop serving contains:

- 140 calories
- 3 g of fat
- 400 mg of sodium
- 8 g of carbohydrates
- 20 g of protein

There are two flavors available: smooth vanilla and chocolate.

The one-time purchase price is \$28.99. It is also available for a \$23.19 subscription.

Best low cost: Sunwarrior Organic Hemp Protein

Sunwarrior's Organic Hemp Protein is free from soy, GMO, gluten, and dairy. It is also suitable for vegans and has no added sugars.

This product has recyclable packaging and only contains organic hemp seed protein. Hemp sprouts are rich in Trusted Source antioxidants and the plant contains essential amino acids, vitamins, minerals, and fiber.

Each 1-scoop serving contains:

- 120 calories
- 3.5 g of fat
- 0 mg of sodium
- 8 g of carbohydrates
- 15 g of protein

Each jar has a list price of \$27.97. People can also subscribe for \$22.38 per jar.

Best for older women: Sunwarrior Collagen Building Protein Peptides

This protein powder is vegan and free from soy, gluten, dairy, and added sugar.

As a person ages, their body starts to produce less collagen. This powder has plant-based amino acids and peptides that are collagen precursors, meaning a person's body can convert them into collagen. Collagen supplements can help Trusted Source retain moisture, and vitamins to help strengthen the skin.

This supplement also contains several vitamins and minerals, such as vitamin K, niacin, and biotin, that may help support general well-being.

Each 1-scoop serving contains:

- 100 calories
- 2 g of fat
- 6 g of carbohydrates
- 0 g of sugar
- 14 g of protein

The cost is \$38.97. People can also subscribe and save 20%, with each jar costing \$31.18.

SHOP NOW
Best whey protein powder: Optimum Nutrition Gold Standard 100% Whey Protein

Whey protein is a fast-absorbing protein, with studies estimating the

body absorbs 10 g per hour Trusted Source. Whey protein aids in muscle growth and muscle recovery Trusted Source, potentially making it beneficial to those who do high intensity workouts and weightlifting.

This protein powder comes in over 20 flavors such as banana cream, coffee, strawberry, and rocky road. It is also available in sizes of 1.8–10 lb.

Each 1-scoop serving of the banana cream flavor contains:

- 120 calories
- 1 g of fat
- 35 mg of cholesterol
- 100 mg of sodium
- 4 g of carbohydrates
- 2 g of sugar
- 24 g of protein

Prices start from \$37.99.

Best bulk buy: Naked Nutrition Micellar Casein Protein Powder

This protein powder only contains one ingredient, micellar casein. This ingredient can aid Trusted Source with muscle recovery if a person consumes it after exercise.

The protein powder does not contain any additives or artificial sweeteners. However, it contains dairy and gluten.

Each 2-scoop serving contains:

- 110 calories
- 0 g of fat
- 20 mg of cholesterol
- 0 g of carbohydrates
- 0 g of sugar
- 26 g of protein

Each 5 lb jar costs \$99.99. However, people can subscribe and save, paying \$79.99 per jar.

Best for vegans: Garden of Life MD Protein Fit

This vegan protein powder is free from soy, GMO, and peanuts. The chocolate flavoring is Fair Trade, and the company claims it is carbon neutral.

This powder contains green coffee beans, oat beta-glucans, probiotics, olive leaf, and coconut. The protein comes from ancient, sprouted barley. However, it is higher in carbohydrates than the other options on this list.

Each 2-scoop serving contains:

- 200 calories
- 4 g of fat
- 140 mg of sodium
- 29 g of carbohydrates
- 2 g of sugar
- 20 g of protein

Benefits of protein powder

Taking protein powder may come with a few benefits.

Muscle building

Protein is essential for growing different sorts of body tissue, including muscle. People who want to build muscle might choose to add protein powder to their diet.

A 2017 review of 49 studies concluded that when healthy adults combined protein supplements with resistance training, they experienced increases in muscle

strength and size.

Older adults may not build the same amount of muscle as younger adults due to differences in hormone levels. That said, they will see other benefits Trusted Source, such as less muscle and bone loss, if they increase their protein intake and commit to resistance training.

Recovery after exercise

Some people use protein powders to help their muscles recover and feel less sore after exercise.

Many studies have supported the link between consuming protein and muscle recovery.

One 2017 review Trusted Source notes that resistance training and protein consumption stimulate muscle growth. The reviewers also recommend consuming protein just before or after exercise to enhance further muscle growth.

Combining carbohydrates and protein powder may benefit Trusted Source muscle recovery after a workout. Adding carbohydrates replenishes glycogen stores, which could speed up muscle recovery.

To consume both proteins and carbohydrates, a person could make a fruit smoothie and add protein powder for a post-workout drink.

Weight loss

Eating protein can make women feel full, meaning they might eat fewer calories. This is helpful for people who want to lose weight. It may explain the popularity of low carbohydrate diets.

A 2017 study concluded that whey protein supplementation seems to improve body weight, fat mass, and cardiovascular disease risk factors in people with excess weight.

Added nutrition

The recommended daily intake of protein differs depending on a person's body weight and activity levels, among other things.

According to the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2020–2025, protein may make up 10–35% Trusted Source of an adult's daily calorie intake.

People who find it difficult to eat this amount may wish to consider using protein powder to supplement their diet.

Risks of protein powders

Eating protein-rich foods as part of a balanced meal would provide more of the vitamins, minerals, and other nutrients a person needs than a protein powder shake alone.

In general, some supplements may interact with medications.

Therefore, people taking other medications or supplements may want to seek guidance from a healthcare professional before taking protein powder.

Consuming extra protein may also lead to dehydration if a person does not drink enough fluids. As a result, people with kidney disease must take extra care with the amount of protein they consume.

People should also be aware of unregulated dietary supplements Trusted Source, such as energy and so-called muscle-gain products. These may contain dangerous ingredients, such as steroids, stimulants, and hormones.

Alternatives

Using protein powders to provide a nutritional boost does not suit everyone. Here are some alternative ways to add protein to the diet.

Eating protein-rich foods

The easiest way for the body to digest and metabolize protein is through food.

A diet rich in natural protein is also likely to contain the vitamins, minerals, and nutrients the body

needs. Some foods rich in protein include:

- red meat, such as lamb, beef, and pork
- poultry, such as chicken, turkey, and duck
- tofu
- eggs
- dairy products, such as milk, Greek yogurt, and cheese
- beans

According to a 2019 review Trusted Source, animal protein is more bioavailable, so the body can digest it more easily than plant-based proteins. However, a person may prefer to consume plant-based proteins for environmental reasons.

Learn more about the differences between animal and plant-based proteins here.

Exercising

Resistance training is a tried and tested route for gaining muscle and losing fat.

However, resistance training alone will not build muscle. A person still needs to consume an adequate amount of protein and nutrients from their diet before seeing any gains in muscle growth.

Resistance training has numerous other health benefits. For example, it may protect against cardiovascular disease and diabetes.

Frequently asked questions about protein powders for women

Here we answer some common questions about protein powder:

How much protein should I take daily?

Adults should consume 0.75 g of protein per kilo of body weight a day, equivalent to 0.36 grams of protein per pound of body weight.

On average, this means females should have around 45 g and males 55 g per day.

However, there is a range of factors that may influence how much protein a person needs, such as exercise, health, and fitness goals. People should speak with a registered dietician or other healthcare professional for personalized advice.

Is whey protein safe for women?

Whey protein is safe to consume. However, whey protein comes from milk, which is unsuitable for vegans and those with a dairy or lactose allergy.

Is a protein supplement necessary for working out?

Protein supplements offer a convenient way to consume protein. However, supplements are not necessary if a person would prefer to eat protein from food sources.

Foods high in protein include: Trusted Source:

- meat
- poultry
- seafood
- eggs
- dairy products
- beans
- nuts

Learn more about food high in protein here.

Summary

Protein powders can be a useful addition to a woman's diet, whether they want to improve their general health, lose weight, or build muscle.

Eating a balanced and nutritious diet is the ideal option for meeting the body's protein needs. However, protein powders offer convenience, and people can use them in a number of ways. Many plant-based and organic options are available.

Before choosing a powder, a person may wish to make a list of their priorities regarding ingredients and flavor to help narrow down the choices. (Courtesy: MNT)

Deleted by Design: The Institutional Disenfranchisement of Women in Bihar

By: **Himanshi Yadav and Madhav Deepak**

In late June 2025, the Election Commission of India (ECI) launched a "Special Intensive Revision" (SIR) of Bihar's electoral rolls – an exercise that spanned roughly three months and covered nearly eight crore registered voters. The ECI's June 24 order noted that rapid urbanisation/frequent migration may have inflated the roll, prompting a "special revision" for the entire country – starting with Bihar.

The timing, however, was conspicuous – the state heads to polls in November 2025, and such revisions are usually carried out a year or two in advance, not mere months before an election. The previous summary revision had concluded in January 2025 after beginning in October 2024. Yet, within six months, the ECI announced an entirely new revision process.

The commission described this as a "purification" of the rolls. But with a timeline of just three months for what is traditionally a multi-step, labour-intensive exercise, scepticism was inevitable.

The official press release shows the electorate shrank from 7.89 crore in June 2025 to about 7.42 crore in September 2025 – a net drop of roughly 47 lakh voters. According to ECI's own bulletin, about 65 lakh names were struck from the draft roll, another 3.66 lakh removed in the final list, and only 21.5 lakh additions made to end up at about 7.42 crore.

Based on official population projections, Bihar should have around 8.22 crore adult voters in 2025; the new figures suggest nearly 10% of adults have been left out. In essence, the SIR has disenfranchised close to 7% of the state's adult population in one sweep.

Gendered patterns in voter deletions

In Bihar, democracy has long worn a distinctly feminine face. In the 2020 assembly elections, women's turnout was 59.7%, while men's was 54.6% – marking the third election in a row where female turnout exceeded male turnout in the state. In the same election, women outpolled men in 167 out of 243 constituencies.

This pattern extends beyond state polls. In the 2024 Lok Sabha elections in Bihar as well, women pulled ahead: their turnout being around 59.45%, compared to men at about 53%. The trend of women leading in electoral participation is not a fluke but a structural feature of Bihar's recent politics. Against this backdrop, the SIR's disproportionate removal of women from the rolls doesn't merely shrink numbers – it targets the very group that has historically turned out with strength, frequently swung margins, and shaped agendas.

Even before the revision, Bihar's women were underrepresented in its electorate. On Jan 1, 2025, the roll had 914 women per 1,000 men, already below Bihar's census ratio of 918. After SIR, that slid to just 894:1000. This translates to the fact that women constitute 59.7% of the reduction in the electorate from January 2025 to September 2025, with districts like Gopalganj, Madhubani and Kishanganj seeing the largest proportion of deleted women electors.

A large number of deletions were attributed to relocation (16.09 lakh women and 10.4 lakh men due to death, due to deletion, for failure to fill forms, and due to duplicate entries.), followed by death (11.6 lakh women and 10.6 lakh men), failure to fill enumeration forms (5.2 lakh women and 4.4 lakh men), and duplicate entries (3.7 lakh women and 3.5 lakh). The numbers are counter-intuitive, given that male migration and male mor-

ality rates in Bihar are demonstrably higher.

Why are women more vulnerable?

The roots of this disproportionate exclusion lie in the texture of women's lives and the structural vulnerabilities that surround documentation.

In Bihar

Amazon cuts 14,000 corporate jobs as spending on artificial intelligence accelerates

SEATTLE, Oct 28: Amazon will cut about 14,000 corporate jobs as the online retail giant ramps up spending on artificial intelligence while trimming spending. In June CEO Andy Jassy, who has aggressively sought to cut costs since becoming CEO in 2021, said that he anticipated generative AI would reduce Amazon's corporate workforce in the next few years.

Jassy said at the time that Amazon had more than 1,000 generative AI services and applications in progress or built, but that figure was a "small fraction" of what it plans to build.

Jassy encouraged employees to get on board with the company's AI plans. Earlier that month Amazon announced that it was planning to invest \$10 billion toward building a campus in North Carolina to expand its cloud computing and artificial intelligence infrastructure.

Since 2024 started, Amazon has committed to about \$10 billion apiece to data center projects in Mississippi, Indiana, Ohio and North Carolina as

it ramps up its infrastructure to compete with other tech giants to meet growing demand for artificial intelligence products.

Amazon is competing in the AI space with giants like OpenAI, Google and Microsoft. In a conference call with industry analysts in May, Jassy said the potential for growth in the company's AWS business is massive.

"If you believe your mission is to make customers' lives easier and better every day, and you believe that every customer experience will be reinvented with AI, you're going to invest very aggressively in AI, and that's what we're doing. You can see that in the 1,000-plus AI applications we're building across Amazon. You can see that with our next generation of Alexa, named Alexa+," he said. On Tuesday, the online giant said it was reducing bureaucracy.

"The reductions we're sharing today are a continuation of this work to get even stronger by further reducing bureaucracy, removing layers, and



shifting resources to ensure we're investing in our biggest bets and what matters most to our customers' current and future needs," Beth Galetti, Senior Vice President of People Experience and Technology at Amazon, said in message to employees Tuesday.

Teams and individuals impacted by the job cuts will be notified on Tuesday. Most workers will be given 90 days to look for a new position internally, Galetti said. For those who can't find a new role

at the company or who opt not to look for one will be provided transitional support including severance pay, outplacement services and health insurance benefits.

Amazon has about 350,000 corporate employees and a total workforce of approximately 1.56 million. The cuts announced Tuesday amount to about a 4% reduction in its corporate workforce.

Amazon's workforce doubled during the pandemic as millions stayed home and boosted online spending. In the following years, big tech and retail companies cut thousands of jobs to bring spending back in line.

The cuts announced Tuesday suggests Amazon is still trying to get the size of its workforce right and it may not be over. It was the biggest culling at Amazon since 2023, when the company cut 27,000 jobs. Those cuts came in waves, with 9,000 jobs trimmed in March of that year, and another 18,000 employees two months later. Amazon has not said if more job cuts are coming.

Neil Saunders, managing director of GlobalData, said in a statement that the layoffs "represent a deep cleaning of Amazon's corporate workforce."

"Unlike the Target layoffs, Amazon is operating from a position of strength," he said. "The company has been producing good growth, and it still has a lot of headroom for further expansion in both the US and overseas." But Saunders noted that Amazon is not immune to outside factors, as global markets tighten and underlying costs climb.

"It needs to act if it wants to continue with a good bottom line performance. This is especially so given the amount of investment the company is making in areas like logistics and AI. In some ways, this is a tipping point away from human capital to technological infrastructure," he said.

Amazon will post quarterly financial results on Thursday. During its most recent quarter, the company reported 17.5% growth for its cloud computing arm Amazon Web Services. (AP)

'As a matter of fact, Prime Minister Abe often told me about your dynamic diplomacy'

Trump praises Japan's new PM, saying US an 'ally at the strongest level'



TOKYO, Oct 28: President Donald Trump began one of his busiest days of his Asia trip on Tuesday by warmly greeting the new Japanese prime minister, and taking her with him as he spoke to US troops aboard an aircraft carrier.

Although Trump is visiting one of America's most steadfast allies in Asia, there's no shortage of uncertainty while he's there. Sanae Takaichi, who became the country's first female prime minister only days ago, must solidify her relationship with Trump while defending her country's economic interests.

Trump is trying to nail down USD 550 billion in Japanese investment as part of a trade agreement.

Trump and Takaichi swap warm words

As Trump and Takaichi met on Tuesday, they shook hands and he paid her a compliment: "That's a very strong handshake." In return, Takaichi talked about watching the third game of the US World Series before the event. She added that Japan would give Washington 250 cherry trees next year to honour America's 250th anniversary, as well as fireworks from Akita Prefecture for July 4 celebrations.

She used her early remarks to mention former Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, her arch-con-

servative mentor who forged a strong bond with Trump during his first term through their shared interest of golf.

"As a matter of fact, Prime Minister Abe often told me about your dynamic diplomacy," she said.

Trump called her role as Japan's first woman prime minister as a "big deal," putting an emphasis on the US commitment to Japan. While the president in the past has publicly scolded his foreign counterparts, he had nothing but praise for Takaichi. "Anything I can do to help Japan, we will be there," Trump said. "We are an ally at the strongest level."

Takaichi is primed for a charm offensive, including a potential purchase of Ford F-150 trucks. Reporters arriving for the event were hustled past a gold-hued Ford F-150 as well as what appeared to be white American-made Toyota vehicles parked outside the Akasaka Palace, which is Tokyo's guest house for visiting foreign leaders.

Trump has often complained that Japan doesn't buy American vehicles, which are often too wide to be practical on narrow Japanese streets.

The Japanese delegation also made the strategic choice to serve American beef and rice during a working lunch that was mixed with

Japanese ingredients, at which the two leaders also discussed efforts to end Russia's war in Ukraine.

Takaichi also gave Trump a putter used by Abe, the former prime minister, and a golf bag signed by the professional golfer Hideki Matsuyama, according to a post on X by White House aide Margo Martin. They signed black "Japan is Back" baseball caps that resembled Trump's own red "Make America Great Again" caps.

Agreements vow a golden age for alliance and cooperation on critical minerals

Both leaders signed the implementation of an agreement for the "golden age" of their nations' alliance. When the document was held up after signing, it ran to less than one page and reaffirmed the earlier framework by which the US would tax goods imported from Japan at 15 per cent and the creation of a USD 550 billion fund for Japan to invest in the US.

Trump and Takaichi then signed a second agreement, this one laying out a US-Japan framework for securing the supply of critical minerals and rare earths. That agreement suggested that some of the investment dollars would go to the development of rare earths needed for advanced technologies.

White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt told reporters that Takaichi would be nominating Trump for the Nobel Peace Prize. The two leaders also met with people whose family members were abducted by North Korea.

Trump talks to troops on US aircraft carrier

Although Trump has focused his foreign policy toward Asia around tariffs and trade, he also spoke aboard the USS George Washington, an aircraft carrier docked at an American naval base near Tokyo. The president brought Takaichi with him and she also spoke. (AP)

Community in shock after Indian-origin woman's 'racially aggravated' rape in Walsall, UK

LONDON/WALSALL, Oct 28: The residents of the quiet, leafy Park Hall neighbourhood in England's Walsall are in shock after an Indian-origin woman was allegedly raped in a "racially aggravated" attack over the weekend.

A 32-year-old man arrested on suspicion of rape remains in custody as police continue to question him over the attack on the woman in her 20s on Saturday evening.

Walsall, where the incident took place, is about 220 kilometres from London and is located in the West Midlands region. "The racially aggravated rape in Walsall is a horrific crime. My thoughts are with the victim and her family," UK Home Secretary Shabana Mahmood said in a social media post.

"I know the fear that will be felt by the local Sikh community. I've sought assurances from the police and local leaders that they are doing all they can to support everyone impacted by this crime.

"I urge anyone with more information on the attack to come for-

ward and contact West Midlands Police as soon as possible," she said. The local councillors in Walsall had a meeting scheduled with the police on Monday evening to get updates on the progress of their investigation. "I am shocked and frustrated because what happened to the young lady is intolerable," said Councillor Ram K. Mehmi, a respected community leader and founder-trustee of the local Shri Guru Ravidass Temple in Darlaston.

"I have been living here for 61 years and have never, ever heard of such an incident. The local community are getting seriously concerned because this is the second (racially aggravated) attack in the West Midlands," he said. On Sunday, the police released CCTV footage of the suspect, described as a white male in his 30s, after they were called to the Park Hall area of Walsall on Saturday evening following concerns for the welfare of a woman in distress in the street.

"I am absolutely shocked to hear about this. A customer informed

me about it and I couldn't believe such a thing could happen in this peaceful neighbourhood," said an Indian-origin shopkeeper in Park Hall, Walsall, on condition of anonymity.

"I am from India and have been living here for a few years. It's a very diverse area and there have never been any race-related troubles," he said. The West Midlands Police have condemned the "absolutely appalling attack" on the young woman, who is being supported by specially trained officers.

"We have teams of officers recovering evidence and building a profile of the attacker so that he can be brought into custody as soon as possible. While we are following multiple lines of enquiry right now, it's vital that we get to hear from anyone who saw a man acting suspiciously in the area at the time," Detective Superintendent (DS) Ronan Tyrer, who is overseeing the investigation for the West Midlands Police, had said on Sunday. (PTI)

Military-backed party in Myanmar holds rallies as campaigning begins for Dec election

BANGKOK, Oct 28: Political parties in military-run Myanmar on Tuesday kicked off their election campaigns, two months ahead of scheduled national polls that are widely seen as an effort to confer legitimacy on the military's 2021 seizure of power, even as the country's civil war precludes voting in many areas.

Campaigning began just a day after UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, in a meeting with leaders of Southeast Asian nations, warned that the planned election could cause further instability and deepen Myanmar's crisis. Critics of the military-led government charge that the polls, which are set to begin on December 28, will be neither free nor fair.

Fifty-seven parties have registered for the contest but Aung San Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy, which won the last two elections by landslides only to be ousted by the army, is not among them. It was one of dozens of parties ordered disbanded by the army-appointed Union Election Commission more than two years ago after it refused to take part in what it saw as a sham process.

On Tuesday, the military-backed Union Solidarity and Development Party held ceremonies in the capital Naypyitaw and Yangon, the country's largest city, to



unveil its campaign slogan "Stronger Myanmar."

The ceremony in Naypyitaw, attended by hundreds of green-clad supporters, was led by the party's senior figures, including former generals now serving in the Cabinet of the military government.

USDP chairman Khin Yi, a former general and chief of police, said in his speech that the campaign would follow regulations and the law, declaring that the poll's results would confer legitimacy.

Other parties have not yet staged campaign events on the ground but are instead focusing their outreach on social media platforms, especially Facebook. State television and radio will carry nightly broadcasts by registered parties through November 24. (AP)

Indian national allegedly stabs 2 teens mid-flight; charged with assault

NEW YORK, Oct 28: A 28-year-old Indian national allegedly stabbed two teens with a metal fork and slapped a co-passenger on board a Chicago to Germany flight, according to American authorities.

The incident occurred on Saturday on a Lufthansa flight that had to be diverted to Boston Logan International Airport following the disturbance, the US Attorney's Office for the District of Massachusetts said in a press release on Monday.

According to charging documents, Praneeth Kumar Usiripalli allegedly stabbed a 17-year-old male passenger in the shoulder with a metal fork before stabbing another 17-year-old male passenger in the back of the head with the same fork. The second teen suffered a laceration on his head. Usiripalli has been charged in the US District Court with one count of assault with a dangerous weapon with intent to do bodily harm while travelling on an aircraft in the special aircraft jurisdiction of the US. (PTI)

Pak, Afghan continue talks in Turkiye to resolve cross-border tensions

ISLAMABAD, Oct 28: Officials from Pakistan and Afghanistan were still trying to find common ground to settle their dispute over cross-border military and other issues despite three days of talks held in Turkiye. Talks began on Saturday and continued through Monday, but without any final agreement. Quoting officials, the Dawn newspaper reported that a final agreement still remained elusive.

Sources familiar with the closed-door discussions said that while "most of the points had been mutually agreed between the two sides", the mechanism for verifiable action against terrorist groups operating from Afghan territory continued to be the main sticking point.

"We kept hoping that we would be able to sign a mutual document with Afghanistan soon, followed by a joint statement, but it still remains out of our reach," the newspaper quoted one source as saying. The atmosphere early on Monday had been markedly positive. Participants described "encouraging progress" and "serious en-

gagement" from both delegations. As the day wore on and talks stretched into the evening, optimism began to fade. "It is a difficult phase," a source said. By nightfall, it appeared that the process had once again hit a roadblock, according to the newspaper.

The Afghan Taliban delegation continued to resist putting anything in writing, particularly on the issue of providing verifiable guarantees to end support for the outlawed Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), according to the participants. (PTI)

Sustainable Development at Columbia University, called the memo "pointless, vague, unhelpful and confusing."

"There is no reason to pit poverty reduction versus climate transformation. Both are utterly feasible, and readily so, if the Big Oil lobby is brought under control," he wrote in an email.

Stanford University climate scientist Chris Field said there is room for a healthy discussion about whether the current framing of the climate crisis is typically too pessimistic.

"But we should also invest for both the long term and the short term," he wrote in an email. "A vibrant long-term future depends on both tackling climate change and supporting human development."

Princeton University climate scientist Michael Oppenheimer said he doesn't dispute the principle of making human well-being the primary objective of policy, but what about the natural world?

"Climate change is already wreaking havoc there," he wrote in an email. "Can we truly live in a technological bubble? Do we want to?"

Gates is clear in his memo that every tenth of a degree of warming matters: "A stable climate makes it easier to improve people's lives." (AP)

South Korea's president faces high-stakes diplomacy at APEC summit

SEOUL, Oct 28: South Korea's new president will host leaders from 20 countries for the upcoming Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit, where the American and Chinese leaders are set to hold a high-stakes meeting on the sidelines. The two-day annual APEC summit, which opens in Gyeongju on Friday, is likely to test Lee Jae Myung's diplomatic abilities as he faces tough foreign policy challenges.

Lee, in office less than five months, seeks to get along with friends and rivals alike with his self-proclaimed "pragmatic diplomacy."

But prospects for greater cooperation with Washington and Tokyo are in doubt due to Trump's tariff war and the election of a new ultraconservative leader in Japan. Tensions with North Korea remain high after Pyongyang snubbed Lee's overture and bolstered ties with Russia and China instead.

In Gyeongju, Lee is expected to hold one-on-one meetings with US President Donald Trump, Chinese President Xi Jinping and new Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi, while presiding over APEC events.

Experts say the summit may offer positive optics for Lee, but it doesn't guarantee long-term diplomatic success.

A joint declaration and US-China tensions

This year's APEC summit, the first in South Korea in 20 years, is overshadowed by Thursday's Trump-Xi meeting, whose results are expected to have a major impact on the global economy. Trump will likely skip APEC's main conference, but experts say Lee could still align with other countries to promote free trade and multilateralism.

South Korean officials say they've been holding ministerial-level communications with other countries to prod all 21 to issue a joint declaration at the end of the summit in an effort not to repeat the failure to reach one in 2018 in Papua New Guinea due to US-China discord over trade.

"Of course, there are some lingering issues, but many have been resolved. We're making efforts toward the adoption of a 'Gyeongju Declaration' and acting as a mediator between the US and China," South Korea's national security director Wi Sung-lac told local broadcaster KBS on Sunday.

US and Japan

Top South Korean officials have been recently flying in and out of Washington to finalise a trade agreement with the US, but it's unclear if the two countries can strike one in time for the APEC summit.

South Korea's trade minister, Kim Jung-Kwan, told lawmakers Friday that Washington and Seoul remain "sharply divided" over how much of South Korea's promised USD 350 billion US investment package should be provided as direct cash payments under a July deal aimed at averting the Trump administration's highest tariffs.

There are also worries that South Korea's ties with Japan could turn sour because of the recent inauguration of Japan's Takaichi, who has right-wing views on her country's wartime aggressions.

Relations between the Asian neighbours and their trilateral military cooperation with the US have improved in recent years. But Seoul-Tokyo ties previously experienced on-again, off-again setbacks due to grievances stemming from Japan's past colonial rule of the Korean Peninsula. There are also questions about whether a trilateral Seoul-Tokyo-Washington partnership would continue to grow amid Trump's "America first" policy. (AP)

Bill Gates calls for climate fight to shift focus from curbing emissions to reducing human suffering

NEW YORK, Oct 28: Bill Gates thinks climate change is a serious problem but it won't be the end of civilisation. He thinks scientific innovation will curb it, and it's instead time for a "strategic pivot" in the global climate fight: from focusing on limiting rising temperatures to fighting poverty and preventing disease.

A doomsday outlook has led the climate community to focus too much on near-term goals to reduce emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases that cause warming, diverting resources from the most effective things that can be done to improve life in a warming world, Gates said.

In a memo released Tuesday, Gates said the world's primary goal should instead be to prevent suffering, particularly for those in the toughest conditions in the world's poorest countries.

If given a choice between eradicating malaria and a tenth of a degree increase in warming, Gates told reporters, "I'll let the temperature go up 0.1 degree to get rid of malaria. People don't understand the suffering that exists today."

The Microsoft co-founder spends most of his time now on the goals of the Gates Foundation, which has poured tens of billions of dollars into health care, education and devel-



opment initiatives worldwide, including combating HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. He started Breakthrough Energy in 2015 to speed up innovation in clean energy.

He wrote his 17-page memo hoping to have an impact on next month's United Nations climate change conference in Brazil. He's urging world leaders to ask whether the little money designated for climate is being spent on the right things.

Gates, whose foundation provides financial support for Associated Press coverage of health and development in Africa, is influen-

tial in the climate change conversation. He expects his "tough truths about climate" memo will be controversial.

"If you think climate is not important, you won't agree with the memo. If you think climate is the only cause and apocalyptic, you won't agree with the memo," Gates said during a roundtable discussion with reporters ahead of the release. "It's kind of this pragmatic view of somebody who's, you know, trying to maximise the money and the innovation that goes to help in these poor countries."

Climate scientists say every fraction of a degree of warming matters

Every bit of additional warming correlates to more extreme weather, risks species extinction and brings the world closer to crossing tipping points where changes become irreversible, scientists say.

University of Washington public health and climate scientist Kristie Ebi said she thoroughly agrees with Gates that the UN negotiations should focus on improving human health and well-being. But, she said, Gates assumes the world stays static and only one variable changes — faster deployment of green technologies — to curb climate change. She called that unlikely.

Jeffrey Sachs, director of the Center for

Event celebrates transparency and merit-based recruitment under APSSB framework

CM Pema Khandu felicitates CHSLE 2025 qualifiers, hands over appointment letters

HT Correspondent

ITANAGAR, Oct 28: Chief Minister Pema Khandu on Tuesday felicitated the successful candidates of the Combined Higher Secondary Level Examination (CHSLE) 2025 and handed over appointment letters during a ceremony held in Itanagar. The event marked another milestone in the State Government's ongoing efforts to promote merit, fairness and transparency in public recruitment.

In his address, the Chief Minister commended the Arunachal Pradesh Staff Selection Board (APSSB) for completing the CHSLE 2025 recruitment process from advertisement to final recommendation within three months, setting a record for efficiency and integrity.

Over 21,000 candidates appeared across 12 centers and 113 venues, underscoring the growing confidence of Arunachalee youth in the transparent system established under the APSSB. Out of them, 64 candidates were selected purely on merit, including seven APST candidates who qualified under the unreserved category.

Khandu described the establishment of the APSSB as one of his



government's most important reforms, noting that the Board was created through an Act of the Legislative Assembly to eliminate corruption and favoritism in recruitment. He reaffirmed the Board's motto, "Equal Opportunity for All," as a reflection of the government's vision for a fair and merit-driven recruitment system.

The Chief Minister also lauded the introduction of the Answer Key Challenge System, saying it represents the government's deep-rooted culture of transparency and accountability. "Transparency is not just a process, it is a culture we are building in Arunachal Pradesh," he said.

Addressing the newly appointed candidates, Khandu urged them to

uphold honesty and dedication in their duties. "This appointment letter is not merely a piece of paper—it is a public trust and a symbol of faith that the people of Arunachal Pradesh have placed in you," he said.

He also encouraged the qualified candidates, including engineering graduates and postgraduates, to aim higher and appear for future APSSB and UPSC examinations.

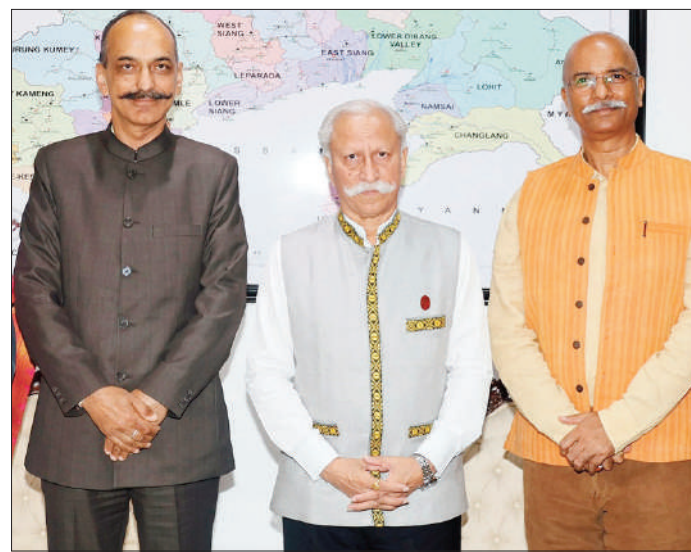
Reiterating his government's commitment to youth empowerment, Khandu said that regular and transparent recruitment through APSSB and the Arunachal Pradesh Public Service Commission (APPSC) will continue alongside investments in skill development, entrepreneurship and sports to create more employment avenues.

"Through institutions like APSSB, we are shaping a future where merit is celebrated, hard work is rewarded and honesty is honoured. In the next 10-15 years, the Arunachal Government will have an efficient, capable and meritorious workforce," Khandu said.

The programme was attended by Cabinet Ministers Balo Raja, Kento Jini, Dasanglu Pul and B R Wahge.

UP and HP Public Service Commission Chairmen call on Governor

KT Parnaik stresses transparency, merit and credibility in public recruitment



HT Correspondent

ITANAGAR, Oct 28: The Chairman of the Uttar Pradesh Public Service Commission, Sanjay Shrinet and the Chairman of the Himachal Pradesh Public Service Commission, Captain Rameshwar Singh Thakur (Retd), called on the Governor of Arunachal Pradesh, Lt General KT Parnaik, PVS, UYSM, YSM (Retd), at Raj Bha-

van, Itanagar, on Tuesday.

During the meeting, they exchanged views on the functioning, best practices and emerging challenges faced by Public Service Commissions across the country.

Emphasising the importance of maintaining integrity in recruitment, the Governor called for strengthening transparency, efficiency and credibility in the selec-

tion process to ensure that public institutions continue to attract the finest talent. He stressed that merit must remain the sole guiding principle in all recruitment activities.

The Governor highlighted that the core responsibility of every Public Service Commission is to identify and recommend the most deserving and capable candidates for public service, as the quality of governance and the State's progress depend largely on the integrity and competence of those selected. He noted that the onus lies with the Commissions to uphold the highest standards of fairness and meritocracy.

Governor Parnaik also shared insights into the recent challenges faced by the Arunachal Pradesh Public Service Commission (APPSC) and the measures undertaken to restore public confidence and institutional credibility.

He appreciated the visiting Chairmen for their efforts to promote collaboration and the exchange of experiences among State Public Service Commissions, which he said would strengthen the overall framework of public administration in the country.

New ADO Office Inaugurated at Geku



HT Correspondent

GEKU, Oct 28: The newly constructed Agriculture Development Officer (ADO) Office-cum-Store Building at Geku was inaugurated on Tuesday by TG Neekom, Director of Agriculture, in the presence of progressive farmers, departmental officers and officials from Upper Siang District and the Directorate Office, Naharlagun.

In his address, Neekom, who is retiring on October 31, recalled his early career in the district, noting that a temporary bamboo office had been built under his supervision in 1988-89 at a cost of ₹ 14,000. He highlighted the symbolic coincidence of the old bamboo structure "retiring" alongside him and encouraged continued enthusiasm for agricultural development and public participation in safeguarding government assets.

Dana Moyong, DAO Yingkiang, spoke about past challenges faced by the Geku office, including rain-induced leakages that damaged important documents and welcomed the new building as a solution for staff and stakeholders. The inauguration was attended by Lancy Tangu, ADO Geku, Sanjay Kr Singh, ADO (HQ), Balung Mengu, Director (Agriculture Marketing), Oran Tayom, Secretary (PPA), progressive farmers and departmental staff.

APSFC chairman Tarh Tarak takes charge

HT Correspondent

ITANAGAR, Oct 28: Arunachal Pradesh State Food Commission (APSFC) Chairman Tarh Tarak and members Ngasah Tangiang and Maji Chokar received a warm welcome on their first day in office at the State Food Commission headquarters in Niti Vihar, Itanagar.

Hundreds of people, including officers from various boards and commissions, public leaders, social workers, former MLAs, former ministers and other dignitaries attended the reception ceremony. BJP State president Kaling Moyung, former Minister Anok Wangsa, Tanyong Tatak and former MLA W. Thanpaw were among those present.

Speaking to the media, Chairman Tarh Tarak expressed happiness at joining the commission, noting that he looks forward to working on key issues related to food and nutrition for children, food safety for the general public, and the proper implementation of the mid-day meal programme in schools. He said the commission will ensure that all related schemes benefit the people effectively.



Tarak explained that the APSFC, formed under Section 16 of the National Food Security Act, 2013, aims to strengthen the public distribution system, improve economic conditions, reduce leakages and ensure proper implementation of the PM Garib Kalyan Yojana under the Food & Civil Supplies Department.

He added that the commission will also monitor programmes under the Education Department such as the mid-day meal and PM

Poshan schemes to improve nutrition, reduce dropout rates and boost student enrolment. Under the Women & Child Development Department, the focus will be on supplementary nutrition, health checkups, immunisation and early childhood education for children under six, as well as support for pregnant and lactating women.

Tarak said the commission will soon hold meetings with various departments to prepare and implement effective action plans.

Ex-DC Talo Potom in 14-day custody in suicide case

HT Correspondent

ITANAGAR, Oct 28: The Judicial Magistrate First Class (JMFC) Court in Yupia, Papum Pare district, has remanded senior IAS officer and former Itanagar Capital Complex Deputy Commissioner Talo Potom to 14 days of judicial custody in connection with the suicide case of late Gomchu Yekar.

The Arunachal Pradesh Police have expanded their investigation into the twin suspected suicide cases, including that of 19-year-old Gomchu Yekar. A special probe team has been formed and a nationwide lookout notice was issued against Potom, who is among the accused named in the case registered at Nirjuli Police Station.

Deputy Inspector General of Police (DIGP) Tumme Amo, IPS, has constituted a special investigation team (SIT) to ensure focused supervision of Nirjuli PS Case No 92/2025, registered under Sections 108/271/272/3(5) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita. The team will oversee all technical, legal, and procedural aspects to ensure a smooth investigation.

The SIT is led by DySP Kengo Dirchi, SDPO Itanagar, assisted by Inspector Talom Moya Nekam, SI Gopal Tok, Head Constable (SG) Dokter Lombi, SCL Sanu Raj T and Constable (Driver) Hano Pii. They have been tasked with collecting evidence and submitting daily progress reports.

The case originated after Yekar was found hanging in his rented room at Lekhi village on Thursday. Initially treated as an unnatural death, it became a criminal case following a complaint from Yekar's father, who named Potom and Rural Works Department Executive Engineer Likwang Lowang as accused. Several handwritten notes, believed to be suicide notes, were handed over to police.

In a related development, Lowang allegedly died by suicide the same night in Tirap district. His death has been brought under the same case jurisdiction. The Nirjuli police are coordinating with Tirap police as the investigation progresses, according to a Capital Police statement.

Sensitisation meeting on malaria elimination

HT Correspondent

NAHARLAGUN, Oct 28: The Arunachal Pradesh State Health Society (NCVBDC) organised a one-day sensitisation meeting on the preparation and verification of district dossiers for Sub-National Malaria Elimination at Hotel Orchid, Naharlagun. The event focused on orienting district officials on technical procedures and requirements for achieving district certification under the programme, supporting India's goal of a malaria-free nation by 2030.

The meeting was attended by Dr Marbom Basar (DHS), Marge Sora (MD, NHM), Dr Kalpana Baruah (NCVBDC, GoI), Dr Soumyadeep Chaudhuri (WHO-India), and Dr K T Mulung (DDHS-cum-SPO, NCVBDC), along with District Programme Officers and consultants from 18 districts. Discussions focused on malaria surveillance, data validation, dossier preparation and inter-departmental coordination.

Dr Baruah praised Arunachal Pradesh for being the first state to organise such a dedicated meeting and assured continued technical support. The meeting concluded with a pledge to sustain malaria-free districts, aiming for zero indigenous malaria by 2027 and a malaria-free state by 2030.

SBI Yingkiang branch manager found dead

HT Correspondent

YINGKIONG, Oct 28: The Branch Manager of the State Bank of India (SBI), Yingkiang, was found dead at his official quarter on the bank's first floor on early Monday morning.

Staff members discovered the lifeless body after he failed to report for duty, prompting the police to reach the spot and begin an investigation. The cause of death has not yet been determined and authorities are awaiting post-mortem and forensic reports. The sudden demise has left bank staff and local residents in shock, with many remembering him as a sincere and hardworking officer. The area has been sealed for investigation and police have assured that all possible angles will be explored to ascertain the exact cause of death.

Arunachal Pradesh celebrates Chhath Puja across state



HT Correspondent

ITANAGAR, Oct 28: Arunachal Pradesh joined the rest of the nation in celebrating the sacred festival of Chhath Puja, observed for peace, progress, development and well-being of all human beings.

Hundreds of devotees gathered at local water bodies across the state, offering 'arghya' to the setting and rising Sun God (Surya Bhagwan) and seeking blessings for prosperity. The festival also includes worship of Chhathi Maiya (Chhathi Mata), reflecting deep-rooted faith and tradition. Celebrations were reported from the capital complex, including Papanallah, Doimukh, Borum, Nirjuli, Banderdewa, Chandannagar, Police Colony, Chimpu and other areas such as Bhalukpong, Pasighat, Namsai, Tezu, Daporijo, Likabali and Aalo.

Third search operation to trace missing Jamok Pansa



HT Correspondent

ANINI, Oct 28: The second phase of the search and rescue operation to locate Jamok Pansa, missing since September 22, 2025, was called off on October 26 due to adverse weather conditions, including continuous rainfall, poor visibility and heavy snowfall.

The operation team, led by Deputy Commissioner Bekir Nyorak and comprising officials from the District Administration, Indian Army, Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), Arunachal Pradesh Police (APP), local porters, ALCs and two trainee APCS officers was forced to return to Anini for safety reasons.

Despite the challenges, a third phase of the search operation was launched on October 27, with an eight-member team leaving Anini for the designated search area. The District Administration in coordination with all assisting agencies continues efforts to locate Pansa amid difficult terrain and harsh weather conditions. The Administration expressed its gratitude to all participating agencies and volunteers for their commitment, cooperation, and perseverance.

Tirap bans camouflage clothing for civilians during hunting and fishing

ITANAGAR, Oct 28: The Tirap district administration in Arunachal Pradesh has imposed a ban on the use of camouflage or military-pattern clothing by civilians during hunting and fishing activities with immediate effect. An order issued by Deputy Commissioner Techu Aran stated that wearing camouflage attire in forested areas could lead to cases of mistaken identity by security forces, especially amid increased militant activities in and around the districts of Tirap, Changlang, Longding and Namsai.

"No person shall wear camouflage attire or carry arms while engaging in hunting or fishing activities, except authorised security personnel on duty," the order read. The directive also prohibits civilian entry into forest areas for hunting or fishing after sunset. Those found violating the order will face legal action and penalties as per the law. (PTI)

Tirap administration holds Women Reservation Lottery for local body polls

Event ensures one-third reservation for women to promote inclusive grassroots governance

HT Correspondent

KHONSA, Oct 28: The Tirap District Administration successfully conducted the Women Reservation Lottery for Zilla Parishad and Gram Panchayat seats at the Circuit House Community Hall, Khonsa. The initiative aims to ensure one-third reservation for women in Panchayati Raj Institutions, promoting inclusivity, equity and transparency in grassroots governance.

The event was supervised by Deputy Commissioner-cum-District Election Officer Techu Aran and attended by Khonsa West MLA Chakat Aboh, ZPM Bari-Basip Tediap Hallang, Khonsa ZPM Wanghong Panka, BJP president (Tirap Unit) Lankham Wangsu, APCC secretary Tangse Tekwa, ADC-cum-DPDO Namneet Singh, IAS, ADC Deomali B Tawisk and other officials, political representatives and members of the public. Administrative officers present included SDO Tana Bapu, Assistant Commissioner N L Naam, AC Yowa Anya, AC Indra Thomoung Riba and CO Dadam Dr Metung Taku.

Welcoming the gathering, DC-cum-DEO Techu Aran highlighted the importance of



the lottery draw to ensure women's one-third reservation as per government directives. He informed that the State Election Commission is planning to conduct the

Local Bodies Elections in December and this lottery was part of the preparatory activities. To ensure transparency and public confidence, he added that the entire process

was videographed.

In his keynote address, ADC-cum-DPDO Namneet Singh, IAS, explained the objective and procedure of the lottery. He stated that a committee was constituted under the chairmanship of the Deputy Commissioner, with administrative officers as members and the ADC-cum-DPDO as the Member Secretary, to oversee the process. He informed that Tirap District comprises 10 Zilla Parishad Members (ZPMs), 69 Gram Panchayat Segments (GPs) and 345 Gram Panchayat Members (GPMs). Out of these, 3 ZPM, 23 GPC and 115 GPM seats have been reserved for women under the one-third reservation policy.

The event concluded with a Vote of Thanks by SDO Tana Bapu, who expressed gratitude to the Deputy Commissioner, administrative officers, dignitaries and participants for ensuring the smooth and successful conduct of the program.

The occasion marked a significant step toward strengthening women's participation and empowerment in Tirap's Panchayati Raj system.

Cloud-seeding trials conducted in parts of Delhi, more in pipeline: Sirsa

NEW DELHI, Oct 28: The Delhi government, in collaboration with IIT-Kanpur, conducted cloud-seeding trials in parts of Delhi on Tuesday, with more such exercises planned over the next few days, Environment Minister Manjinder Singh Sirsa said.

Environmentalists, however, termed the Delhi government's cloud-seeding trial a short-term measure, saying it may temporarily reduce pollution but fails to address the root causes of the capital's deteriorating air quality.

According to officials, the aircraft took off from Kanpur for Delhi and covered areas like Burari, north Karol Bagh and Mayur Vihar before landing at the Meerut Airfield.

"The Cessna aircraft took off from Kanpur. It released eight fire flares each weighing 2 to 2.5 kilograms and the trial lasted for half an hour. Each flare lasted for two to two-and-a-half minutes. The clouds had a humidity of 15 to 20 per cent. The flares were released for 17 to

18 minutes," Sirsa said in a video statement.

He added that IIT-Kanpur has opined that rain could happen within 15 minutes to 4 hours after the trial.

"However, the rainfall won't be heavy since the humidity levels were only at 15 to 20 per cent," the minister said.

Meanwhile, the second trial was also conducted later in the day in outer Delhi.

Nine to 10 such trials are planned over the next few days, Sirsa said, adding that since IMD has informed that the wind direction is towards north, areas falling under that region are being targeted.

"This is a huge step taken by the government to mitigate pollution. If trials are successful, we will prepare a long-term plan till February. We hope that if this is successful, it will be a first such scientific step in India to reduce pollution," he added.

According to sources, IIT Kanpur successfully executed the operation over Delhi, in a corridor measuring roughly 25



nautical miles in length and 4 nautical miles in width with the largest distance covered between Khekra and little north of Burari.

The first round involved six flares released at an altitude of nearly 4,000 feet above ground level, with a burn duration of eighteen-and-a-half minutes. A second

flight took off at 3:55 pm, deploying eight flares at a higher altitude of around 5,000-6,000 feet.

Following the second trial, Sirsa, in a post on X, said the Cessna aircraft took off from Meerut Airport for Delhi and released cloud seeding flares in different areas.

The team from IIT-Kanpur has expressed hope for good results from these systematically conducted experiments, he said.

"Based on the success of these trials, cloud-seeding will be used extensively in Delhi for pollution control under the leadership of Chief Minister Rekha Gupta," he added.

The trial, aimed at inducing artificial rain to tackle air pollution in the capital, is part of the Delhi government's broader strategy to mitigate deteriorating air quality during the winter months.

The government had conducted a test flight over Burari last week. During the test run, small quantities of silver iodide and sodium chloride compounds used to trigger artificial rain were released from the aircraft.

However, due to low atmospheric moisture of less than 20 per cent, as against the 50 per cent typically required for cloud seeding, rainfall could not be induced.

The Delhi government signed a memorandum of understanding with IIT Kanpur on September 25 to carry out five cloud seeding trials, all of which are planned in northwest Delhi.

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation earlier granted permission to IIT Kanpur to conduct the trials any time between October 1 and November 30.

Clearances have also been secured from more than 10 central and state departments, including the Union ministries of environment, defence and home, the Uttar Pradesh government, the Airports Authority of India, and the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security, among others.

The Delhi Cabinet on May 7 approved a proposal to conduct five cloud seeding trials at a total cost of ₹ 3.21 crore.

However, the exercise faced multiple postponements due to unfavourable weather and monsoon conditions, including deadlines set for May-end, early June, August, September and, most recently, the second week of October. (PTI)

NDA govt least bothered about it: Tejashwi

'Law and order completely collapsed in Bihar'

SARAN, Oct 28: RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav on Tuesday alleged that the law and order situation has completely collapsed in Bihar, and the NDA government in the state was "least bothered" about the situation.

Addressing back-to-back poll rallies in Saran, Yadav asserted that the INDIA bloc needs to be voted to power in the assembly elections for redressal of people's grievances.

He also voiced disapproval of the prohibition policy in Bihar, and declared that the INDIA bloc will remove the ban on 'toddy' (tari) if it comes to power.

"Saran is witnessing murder, dacoity, abduction and loot every day. But, Chief Minister Nitish Kumar is least bothered about it... he never comes to console the victims. This is sheer insensitivity on the part of the government," he claimed at the rally in Marhaura.

"Vote for the INDIA bloc to ensure improved law and order, jobs and redressal of grievances," Yadav said.

The opposition coalition's chief ministerial candidate also reiterated his promise of one government job to every family in the



state if it comes to power.

At the rally in Taraiya assembly constituency of Saran, Yadav said: "People of Bihar are fed up with unemployment and

price hike. They want a government that will ensure 'padhai, dawai, kamai, sichai' (better education, health facilities, employment and irrigation facilities)."

The RJD leader, at another rally in the Parsa assembly constituency, criticised the prohibition policy in Bihar.

"The Bihar Prohibition and Excise Act has completely failed in Bihar... There is a home delivery system of liquor in the state and people are easily availing it," he claimed.

"If we are voted to power, we will remove the ban on 'toddy' (tari)," Yadav said.

The sale and consumption of 'toddy' is prohibited in the state under the Act.

Yadav also asserted that the developmental work that the NDA could not execute in 20 years, the INDIA bloc will carry out in 20 months if it comes to power.

"We just want 20 months for this," he said. In a word of caution for officials, the RJD leader said that any officer who tries to create trouble "in collusion with Union Home Minister Amit Shah" will face such severe punishment.

"We will not allow vote theft or dishonesty under any circumstance," he added.

The 243-member Bihar Assembly will go to polls in two phases on November 6 and November 11, with results set to be announced on November 14. (PTI)

Retd Justice Ranjana Prakash Desai to chair 8th Pay Comm; Cabinet clears ToR

NEW DELHI, Oct 28: The Cabinet on Tuesday approved the Terms of Reference (ToR) of the 8th Pay Commission, which will be headed by retired Supreme Court judge Ranjana Prakash Desai.

The panel's award is likely to come into effect from January 1, 2026. The recommendations of the 8th Pay Commission will benefit about 50 lakh central government employees and 69 lakh pensioners, a government statement said after the meeting of the Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The Commission will examine and recommend changes in salaries and other benefits of central government employees. It will submit an interim report, followed by a final report that will be within 18 months from the date of its constitution.

Nine months after the in-principle nod to the 8th Pay Commission, the Union Cabinet on Tuesday approved the Terms of Reference (ToR) of the panel. This also comes close on the heels of Bihar assembly elections between November 6-11.

As per the Cabinet decision, the 8th Pay Commission, under Desai, will have one part-time member - IIM (Bangalore) Professor Pulkar Ghosh, while Petroleum Secretary Pankaj Jain will be the Member Secretary. (PTI)

Modi-Nitish govt strangled aspirations of youth in Bihar: Rahul

NEW DELHI, Oct 28: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Tuesday alleged that the "Modi-Nitish" government has strangled the aspirations of the youth in Bihar, left the state abandoned and pushed it into an abyss on every development parameter.

Gandhi asserted that now is the time for change and to reaffirm the Mahagathbandhan's resolve for justice. He made the remarks in a post on X, accompanied by a video of his interaction with Bihar's youth recently.

"A few days ago, I had a very interesting conversation with the youth of Bihar on -- education, health, employment -- every issue. And, there is only one culprit responsible for the deplorable state on all these counts -- the BJP-JDU government," the Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha said in his post in Hindi.

"The youth of Bihar are well aware of how, over the past 20 years, this Modi-Nitish government has strangled their aspirations, left the state abandoned, and pushed it into the abyss on every parameter," he said.

Gandhi pointed out that on the education front, in terms of dropout rate in classes 9 to 10, Bihar is 27th out of 29 states; in



enrollment rate in classes 11 and 12, it is 28th out of 29 states; and in female literacy, the state is 28th out of 29 states.

On the job front, in terms of employment in the service sector, Bihar is ranked 21st; while in the industry/manufacturing sector, it is 23rd, he said.

The former Congress chief also said that in terms of infant mortality rate, Bihar is 27th out of 29 in health coverage through insurance schemes; and in access to toilets in households, it is in the 29th position.

He further pointed out that on the human development front, Bihar is 27th in terms of Human

Development Index (HDI) and 25th in terms of per capita income.

"These are not just numbers; they are a mirror, a rear-view mirror showing how far this 'double engine' has dragged Bihar back from progress. All the Bihar youths I met are extremely talented and intelligent. With their capabilities and hard work, they can shine anywhere, but the government has given them unemployment and despair instead of opportunities."

"Now is the time for change, to rekindle Bihar's pride. It is time to reaffirm the Mahagathbandhan's resolve for justice," Gandhi said.

In his interaction with the students from Bihar studying in Delhi, Gandhi asks if they have been literally forced to move out of the state studies and gets the answer in the affirmative. The youths cited the condition of the educational institutions in the state.

In the video, one of the students flagged discrimination, saying "Bihari" is used as an abuse in universities here. A woman student talked about the negative profiling of the state.

The 243-member Bihar Assembly will go to polls in two phases - on November 6 and November 11 -- with results set to be announced on November 14. (PTI)

Following Bengal man's suicide, Mamata accuses BJP of spreading fear over NRC

KOLKATA, Oct 28: West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee accused the BJP of spreading fear over the National Register of Citizens on Tuesday, hours after the alleged suicide of a man near Kolkata, who reportedly left behind a note blaming the NRC for his death.

Barrackpore Police Commissioner Muralidhar Sharma said after visiting the spot that 57-year-old Pradeep Kar from Panihati in North 24 Parganas district was found hanging at his residence in Panihati on Tuesday morning.

A suicide note was found in which NRC was mentioned, Sharma said, adding that preliminary investigations revealed the person was in depression after announcement of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of the electoral rolls on Monday.

Condemning what she described as the BJP's "politics of fear and division," the CM alleged that the party's campaign around the NRC has created panic among people.

"It shakes me to the very core to imagine how, for years, BJP has tormented innocent citizens with the threat of NRC, spreading lies, stocking panic and weaponising insecurity for votes," Banerjee said in the post. (PTI)

Kerala plans to create 5 lakh IT jobs by 2031, says CM Vijayan

KOCHI, Oct 28: Kerala aims to create 5 lakh jobs in the information technology sector by 2031, Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan said here on Tuesday. The state also plans to capture 10 per cent of India's IT market share and increase the number of Global Capability Centres (GCCs) to 120.

He was speaking at the inauguration of the ReCode Kerala 2025 IT Seminar, organised by the Department of Electronics and IT as part of the government's Vision 2031 initiative.

The CM also unveiled the draft Vision Document for the Information Technology, Electronics, Semiconductor, and Emerging Technology sectors at the function. Industries Minister P Rajeev received the document.

Vijayan said Kerala needs to expand its IT infrastructure to three crore square feet. Given the limited availability of land, the government is promoting private investment through a land-pooling model to support infrastructure growth, he said.

He said that the state would develop data centres, cloud infrastructure sites and satellite IT parks. Sustainable practices would be encouraged in energy use and construction.

"Our goal is to train ten lakh skilled youth, create five lakh high-quality jobs, and provide employment for two lakh people in Global Capability Centres," the Chief Minister said.

He said the government is considering the creation of new bodies such as the Kerala Future Technology Mission, the Kerala Semiconductor Mission and the Kerala AI Mission to drive innovation and employment.

Research in semiconductors will be given priority to help Kerala benefit from advances in the field, he said.

"The Maker Village in Kochi, now the country's largest hardware incubator, will soon expand under the Maker Village 2.0 project. The new phase will include regional incubation and research centres in Wayanad, Kannur, Palakkad, Alappuzha, Thrissur and Kottayam," the Chief Minister said. (PTI)

India on track to peak coal power emissions by 2030 as clean energy soars: CREA

NEW DELHI, Oct 28: India could see its coal power emissions peak before 2030 if it meets its 500 gigawatt (GW) non-fossil power capacity target, according to a new analysis published on Tuesday.

The report by the Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air (CREA) said China, India and Indonesia, the three largest coal growth markets and top drivers of global CO2 emissions since the Paris Agreement, are now on track to peak power sector emissions by 2030, provided they sustain their clean energy momentum.

Together, these countries accounted for 73 per cent of global coal consumption in 2024.

According to the study, India's clean electricity growth has accelerated sharply, with a record 29 gigawatt (GW) of non-fossil capacity added in 2024 and 25 GW more in the first half of 2025.

"Meeting India's 500 GW of non-fossil power capacity set by Prime Minister (Narendra) Modi could in fact peak coal power before 2030. The country has already crossed the 50 per cent mark well ahead of its 2030 deadline, even as electricity demand continues to rise in line with rapid economic and population growth.

"Strengthening grid flexibility, storage



and transmission will be key to sustaining this momentum and ensuring reliable, affordable electricity," said Manoj Kumar, Analyst at CREA.

India's national policy framework, driven by competitive renewable energy auctions and ambitious manufacturing targets, has transformed it into a fast-growing solar manufacturing hub, the report said.

The country's annual solar module capacity stood at 118 GW by mid-2025 and is projected to reach 200 GW by 2028, reducing import dependence and supporting its clean

energy goals.

CREA said China has already achieved a milestone by adding enough new clean electricity generation to cover all new demand growth.

"China has already added enough new clean electricity generation to cover all new demand growth and power sector coal use and emissions have been falling since 2024 as a result. While the coal power decline is unlikely to be linear and may experience occasional setbacks, maintaining China's current pace of clean energy growth means a coal power peak is imminent," said Lauri Myllyvirta, Co-founder and Lead Analyst at CREA.

In Indonesia, the report said President Prabowo Subianto's 100 GW solar programme could ensure that coal power generation peaks by 2030.

"The real opportunity lies in translating this vision into a concrete delivery roadmap that positions clean energy to dominate new capacity additions," said Katherine Hasan, Analyst at CREA.

The report cautioned, however, that all three countries continue to expand coal-fired capacity which is a major risk to their clean energy transition.

India plans to add about 100 GW of new coal capacity by 2035, while China has 230 GW under construction.

"Unchecked coal power expansion risks creating powerful vested interests that could potentially delay the energy transition in power sector emissions post coal peak would not only require maintaining pre-2030 renewable energy growth rate in all three countries but also ensuring power market and grid reforms. The total reduction in power sector CO2 emissions could be equivalent to India's total 2019 CO2 emissions, compared to business-as-usual," Myllyvirta added.

The report said that the three countries are driven by similar motivations: improving energy security, reducing import dependence and attracting manufacturing investment.

But sustaining clean energy growth beyond 2030 will require strong policy support, modernised grids and political will to phase down coal use.

If successful, CREA said, China, India and Indonesia would join other BRICS nations such as Brazil, South Africa, the UAE and Ethiopia in having peaked their power sector emissions. (PTI)

Indian, Turkish researchers study how digital tools can transform agricultural productivity



NEW DELHI, Oct 28: Researchers from the National Institute of Technology (NIT) in Rourkela and the Azerbaijan State University of Economics, Turkey have studied insights on how digital tools and renewable energy can transform agricultural productivity and sustainability in 27 developing countries, according to officials.

The research team has conducted the study covering 27 developing countries, including India, revealing how internet use, mobile connectivity, renewable energy, agricultural land and fertilizer consumption collectively shape the nature of food production in a rapidly-changing world.

The findings of the research have been published in the prestigious "Technology Analysis and Strategic Management" journal.

According to Narayan Sethi, Professor, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, NIT-Rourkela, in the current technology-driven environment, no aspect of progress is untouched by digital technologies.

"From how we communicate and work to how we produce food and meet our energy needs, everything is experiencing a revolution driven by the internet and renewable energy. The internet in agriculture has changed how we produce, market and consume food. Farmers can now check market rates before selling their produce, compare fertiliser prices online and learn sustainable-farming techniques," Sethi said. "In many rural communities, a simple mobile phone can bridge the gap between farmers and markets, improving transparency, bargaining power and overall efficiency.

Along with emerging technological trends, the growing shift toward renewable energy is also

changing agricultural practices. Solar-powered irrigation is potentially helping smallholder farmers overcome the challenge of irregular electricity supply," Sethi added.

Speaking about how the internet and renewable energy are influencing agriculture, Sethi said the agricultural sector is a major source of employment and income in developing countries like India. However, it is also prone to varying effects of climate change.

"Thus, the government can prioritise training programmes for encouraging sustainable farming through multiple cropping systems, irrigation techniques and the appropriate use of fertilisers. Additionally, digital literacy, subsidised or zero-cost credit facilities and financial inclusion should be prioritised to support small- and medium-sized farm holders for higher agricultural productivity from technological advancement and renewable-energy use.

"With the changing global scenario, higher investments supporting ICT inclusion, renewable-energy use and sustainable land-use practices are crucial for strengthening the agri-food sector to enhance food security, economic growth and environmental benefits in developing countries," he said.

The research team used advanced econometric methods to analyse agriculture-related data from 27 developing countries, spanning 2000 to 2021. The countries are India, Argentina, China, Pakistan, Ghana, Malaysia, Togo, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Nigeria, Thailand, Bolivia, Nicaragua, Tunisia, Botswana, Jordan, Turkey, Sri Lanka, Panama, Tanzania, Costa Rica, Mexico, the Philippines, Kenya, Dominican Republic, Mozambique and El Salvador. (PTI)

TET mandatory for all in-service teachers Meghalaya to file review petition against SC order

SHILLONG, Oct 28: Meghalaya Education Minister Lakhmen Rymbui on Tuesday said the state government will file a review petition against the Supreme Court's September 1 order making the Teacher Eligibility Test (TET) mandatory for all in-service teachers, a move that is likely to affect over 32,000 teachers across the state.

The minister said the government will seek an exemption for teachers appointed before the implementation of the Right to Education (RTE) Act, arguing that the apex court's judgment has a retrospective effect.

"Our contention is that this judgment of the Supreme Court has a retrospective effect. What we want is that the government should exempt all those teachers who were appointed before the RTE Act came into force," Rymbui told PTI.

He said that after the implementation of the RTE Act, the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE), the regulatory authority for elementary and primary education, had issued notifications set-

ting minimum standards and qualifications for teachers, which the state has since followed.

"After the coming of the RTE and the subsequent notification of NCTE, the standards for teacher recruitment were made clear, and the state government has complied with them. So, there is no question of non-compliance," the minister said. Rymbui said the state government's concern is primarily for those teachers who were recruited before the RTE Act and may not meet the present TET requirements.

"Around 32,000 plus teachers will be affected by this judgment, which means they will have to clear the TET within two years," he said.

He, however, expressed apprehension that not all of these teachers may be able to clear the test within the stipulated timeframe.

The Education minister clarified that teachers who have already cleared the Meghalaya Teacher Eligibility Test (MTET) or the Central Teacher Eligibility Test (CTET) are exempt from appear-



ing in any other TET examinations and that their services remain secured. Asked about the recommendations made by the state education commission to phase out underqualified teachers, Rymbui said the issue was a "matter of interpretation."

"The government has been recruiting teachers as per the norms set by the NCTE, which means they are already qualified. Once they meet the criteria prescribed by the NCTE, they are eligible to continue in service," he said.

The Education minister said the government's decision to file a review petition reflects its concern for the large number of teachers whose livelihoods could be affected by the judgment.

"The Supreme Court has directed that in-service teachers must pass the TET within two years. However, if the court reviews or modifies its order, that would change the situation," Rymbui added.

He maintained that the state government was not against the

TET requirement but was seeking a fair approach that recognises the service of teachers appointed before the implementation of the RTE Act.

"Many of these teachers have been serving for years and have contributed immensely to the education system. We only seek that their long years of service and experience be considered before applying such a condition retrospectively," the minister said.

He expressed hope that the Supreme Court would consider the state's petition sympathetically and provide relief to those affected.

The Supreme Court's September 1 judgment had directed that all in-service teachers, regardless of their length of service or date of appointment, must pass the TET within two years to continue in their posts, in line with the qualifications prescribed by the NCTE.

If the state government's review petition is admitted, it could provide relief to thousands of teachers in Meghalaya, many of whom were appointed before the RTE Act came into effect in 2009. (PTI)

30,000 dwelling units covered in Nagaland under PMAY-U: Official

HT Correspondent
DIMAPUR, Oct 28: Temjenrenla Kechu, state mission director, PMAY-U, on Tuesday said nearly 30,000 dwelling units have been covered across Nagaland under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Urban (PMAY-U), with a completion rate of about 96 percent, which is one of the highest completion rates in the North East.

Delivering the keynote address at the 2nd PM Awas Mela-Shehri under the Angikaar 2025 campaign at Chümoukedima Town Council hall, Kechu outlined the achievements under PMAY-U and new strategies under PMAY-U 2.0.

She said PMAY-U has achieved significant progress in Nagaland, marking nine years of implementation since its launch in 2016.

Kechu said the beneficiaries under the first phase of the scheme have been provided with a subsidy amount of ₹1.5 lakh, released in three instalments. She stated that the Angikaar campaign is a nationwide outreach program under PMAY-U 2.0 to accelerate the scheme's implementation.

She added that the campaign



aims to raise public awareness about PMAY-U 2.0, expedite the completion of sanctioned houses through activities like door-to-door drives, camps, and loan melas.

In his address, municipal affairs & urban development adviser Zha-leo Rio said the PMAY-U 2.0 is a continuation of the PMAY-U scheme, with the goal of providing financial assistance to urban poor and middle-class families to help them build or buy affordable houses. Stating that the scheme will be implemented over five years, he informed that under PMAY-U 2.0, the financial assistance for beneficiaries has been increased to ₹ 2.5 lakh, to be paid in three instalments. Out of this, 90 percent is funded by the Central Govt and 10 percent by the state government, he added.

5 suspected Bangladeshis held in Shillong

SHILLONG, Oct 28: Five suspected Bangladeshis were arrested here for travelling without any valid documents, police said on Tuesday. The arrest was made during a joint operation by Mawlai Police and the Special Operations Team (SOT) on Monday from the ISBT junction at Mawlai Mawiong here, they said.

Police identified the five arrested people as Md Fajid Bilul (47), Lelepa Begum (40), Musamat Jahana Khatun (35), Md Alamgir Mia (25) and Md Imammul Hassan (18). The group was reportedly travelling towards Bangladesh through Shillong after arriving from Srinagar without any valid travel documents, they said.

Acting on a tip-off, police teams intercepted a tourist taxi carrying the five individuals during a checking operation at the ISBT junction. The suspects failed to produce valid travel documents or passports to justify their presence in India, officials said.

Superintendent of Police (City) Vivek Syiem said a criminal case has been registered at Mawlai Police Station for further investigation. The five were produced before a local court on Monday, which remanded them to 14-days judicial custody, he added. (PTI)

MNF calls 10-hr shutdown in Mizoram today

Protest extension of forest Act in state
AIZAWL, Oct 28: Mizoram's main opposition party, the Mizo National Front (MNF), has called for a 10-hour total shutdown across the state barring Mamit district on Wednesday to protest the extension of the Forest (Conservation) Amendment Act (FCAA), 2023, a party leader said.

MNF media and publicity cell secretary Lallenmawia Jongte told PTI on Tuesday that the 6am to 4pm strike will be observed in all districts except Mamit due to the upcoming bypoll in Dampa on November 11.

All government and private offices, educational institutions, business establishments, among others, will be shut during the shutdown, he said, adding that vehicles will also not be allowed to ply.

However, people and vehicles under emergency services will be exempted from the strike, Jongte added.

According to Jongte, the party had strongly opposed the adoption of the FCAA by the state assembly and urged the Zoram People's Movement (ZPM) government headed by Chief Minister Lalduhoma to withdraw the resolution adopting the law.

Earlier, the MNF had urged the state gov-

ernment to call a special assembly session to review and withdraw its resolution.

MNF chief Zoramthanga alleged that the adoption of FCAA by the ZPM government had hurt the sentiment of the Mizos.

People's Conference party and the Joint Civil Society Mizoram (CJM), a coalition of several organisations, have extended support to the MNF and urged the public, NGOs and political parties to support the move.

The Mizoram assembly during its monsoon session on August 27 adopted a resolution to extend the FCAA, 2023 in the state from this year, which was a reverse from its earlier resolution adopted in August 2023 during the MNF rule.

The party alleged that under the legislation, the central government could gradually take over land belonging to indigenous people, as the new law allows exemption of forest clearance for "strategic linear projects of national importance and concerning national security" within 100 km of international borders.

On September 11, the CJM staged a peaceful demonstration in Aizawl to protest against the Act and urged the state government to withdraw its resolution. (PTI)

BSF Spl DG on 3-day visit to Tripura, calls on Gov, CM

AGARTALA, Oct 28: Border Security Force (BSF) Special Director General Mahesh Kumar Aggarwal called on Tripura Governor Indrasena Reddy Nallu and Chief Minister Manik Saha and discussed the security scenario in the state with them, an official said. Aggarwal is on a three-day visit to Tripura, the official said on Tuesday. "During the meeting with the governor and CM on Monday, the current security scenario and various issues pertaining to the state of Tripura were discussed," he said.

The Special DG, on his arrival in Agartala on Monday, was briefed by the Frontier Inspector General (IG), BSF, Aloke Kumar Chakraborty, on operational preparedness and key strategic matters, the official said. (PTI)

Three members of family, including two minors, murdered in Nagaland

KOHIMA, Oct 28: Three members of a family, including two minors, were allegedly murdered in Niuland district of Nagaland, police said on Tuesday.

According to police, Ashatul (35) and his two children - 12-year-old daughter and six-year-old son - were allegedly murdered by his brother Abdul Gofur on Monday.

The accused, after committing the crime, surrendered to the village council along with the weapons used in the crime.

The motive behind the triple murder is not known, and the accused has been taken into police custody for further investigation, they said.

Meanwhile, a 22-year-old woman was found murdered in mysterious circumstances near her residence at Old Ministers' Hill in Kohima on Sunday.

The victim, a well-known basketball player, was reportedly last seen the previous night.

Police registered a case of murder and formed a Special Investigation Team to probe the crime. The incident has sparked widespread outrage, with the Nagaland State Commission for Women (NSCW) taking suo-motu cognisance and various civil bodies condemning the brutal act.

In another incident, two men from Aoching village were killed in a suspected hit-and-run case along NH-702B near Longleng in the inter-

vening night of Saturday and Sunday.

Sources said the victims were returning home when they were hit by an unidentified vehicle.

The incident triggered protests in the area as villagers demanded swift justice and accountability.

The Phom People's Council, an apex tribal, and its frontal organisations on Monday jointly organised a mass rally of solidarity in connection with the incident.

The civil society organisations and the general public have collectively resolved to restrict the movement of all heavy vehicles and army/military convoys along the route until the case is resolved and justice delivered. (PTI)

Tripura announces schemes for women, girls, to open new women college

HT Correspondent
AGARTALA, Oct 28: The Tripura Government has announced a series of new initiatives aimed at empowering women, girls, and minorities, along with plans to establish a new women's college in the state.

Addressing a press conference on Tuesday, Tripura Cabinet Spokesperson and Transport Minister Sushanta Chowdhury said that the cabinet, in its meeting on Monday, approved the formation of the Tripura Women Entrepreneurs Policy.

"The Industry Department has been promoting entrepreneurship through a single-window system. For women empowerment, especially for those from rural areas engaged with Self Help Groups (SHGs) or other community enterprises, this policy has been designed to encourage them further. Under this initiative, women entrepreneurs can avail of loans up to Rs1 crore, with a 35% subsidy. Even beneficiaries of the Lakshmi Didi scheme will be eligible," the Minister said.

The Social Welfare and Social Education Department has also decided to introduce the Mukhyamantri Balika Samridhhi Yojana, a new scheme to support the girl child. Under this initiative, if two baby



girls are born in a family under the Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) category, a fixed deposit of ₹ 50,000 will be made for each girl. The amount can be withdrawn by the parents once the daughters turn 18. The Minister emphasized that the births must take place in government hospitals, adding that the scheme's primary objective is to prevent child marriage and provide financial security to poor families.

Further strengthening women's education, the government has approved the establishment of a new Women's College at Nalchar in the Sepahijala district. The project will be implemented under the Higher Education Department.

In addition, the cabinet has cleared a proposal to fill 104 managerial posts in the Tripura State Electrical Corporation Limited (TSECL). These include 24 posts of Manager (Electrical) Grade A, 4 of Manager (Mechanical) Grade A, 8 of Manager (Civil) Grade A—all requiring B.Tech qualifications—and 58 posts of Manager (Electrical) Grade B for diploma holders. The recruitment process will be conducted through examinations.

The cabinet also approved a new welfare programme for minorities titled Mukhyamantri Sonkhalaghu Unnayan Prakalpa 2025, aimed at improving the economic condition of religious minority communities. Under this scheme, ₹ 1.5 crore has been allocated to support small business ventures. Beneficiaries will receive a one-time grant of ₹ 10,000, disbursed in two instalments, through the Department of Welfare of Minorities. The scheme targets 1,500 beneficiaries in its first phase.

Minister Chowdhury said the government remains committed to inclusive growth and ensuring that women, girls, and minority communities receive the necessary support to achieve economic and social empowerment.

E-AUCTION FOR "ADVERTISING ASSETS" OVER LUMDING DIVISION		
E-Auction for "Advertising Assets" over Lumding Division for a period of three (03) years. Details are as under. Auction Catalogue No.: ADVT-LMG-43-25; Auction Start Date & Time (All Lots): 10:30 hrs. on 03-11-2025; Auction Close Date & Time: 10:40 hrs. on 04-11-2025; Rate Unit: Annual Licensing Fee; Trips/Days: 1096.		
Seq No.	Lot No./Category	Description
AA/1	ADVT-LMG-TGE-OH-367-25-1 (Advertising - Out of Home)	A proposal for calling e-Auction for advertisement right at Thekeraguri (TGE) station circulating area for a period of 03 years.
AA/2	ADVT-LMG-DML-OH-401-25-1 (Advertising - Out of Home)	A proposal for calling e-Auction for advertisement rights at Dharamtul (DML) station circulating area for a period of 03 years.
AA/3	ADVT-LMG-MBO-OH-376-25-1 (Advertising - Out of Home)	A proposal for calling e-Auction for advertisement rights at Mairabari (MBO) Railway Station for a period of 03 years.
AA/4	ADVT-LMG-SCE-OH-373-25-1 (Advertising - Out of Home)	A proposal for calling e-Auction for advertisement rights at Senchoa (SCE) Railway Station for a period of 03 years.
AA/5	ADVT-LMG-HBN-OH-371-25-1 (Advertising - Out of Home)	A proposal for calling e-Auction for advertisement rights at Haibargaon (HBN) Railway Station for a period of 03 years.
AA/6	ADVT-LMG-DBZ-OH-381-25-1 (Advertising - Out of Home)	A proposal for calling e-Auction for advertisement rights at Dhing Bazar (DBZ) Railway Station for a period of 03 years.
AA/7	ADVT-LMG-RUP-OH-379-25-1 (Advertising - Out of Home)	A proposal for calling e-Auction for advertisement rights at Rupahigaon (RUP) Railway Station for a period of 03 years.
AA/8	ADVT-LMG-CPK-OH-366-25-1 (Advertising - Out of Home)	A proposal for calling e-Auction for advertisement right at Chaparmukh (CPK) circulating area for a period of 03 years.
AA/9	ADVT-LMG-JKB-OH-372-25-1 (Advertising - Out of Home)	A proposal for calling e-Auction for advertisement rights at Jakhlabandha (JKB) Railway Station for a period of 03 years.
AA/10	ADVT-LMG-KKET-OH-369-25-1 (Advertising - Out of Home)	A proposal for calling e-Auction for advertisement rights at Kamrup Khetri (KKET) circulating area for a period of 03 years.
AA/11	ADVT-LMG-HJI-OH-411-25-1 (Advertising - Out of Home)	A proposal for calling e-Auction for advertisement rights at Hojai (HJI) station circulating area for a period of 03 years.
AA/12	ADVT-LMG-RAHA-OH-378-25-1 (Advertising - Out of Home)	A proposal for calling e-Auction for advertisement rights at Raha (RAHA) Railway Station for a period of 03 years.
AA/13	ADVT-LMG-BRHU-OH-370-25-1 (Advertising - Out of Home)	A proposal for calling e-Auction for advertisement rights at Barahu (BRHU) Railway station for a period of 03 years.
AA/14	ADVT-LMG-JID-OH-382-25-1 (Advertising - Out of Home)	A proposal for calling e-Auction for advertisement rights at Jairoad (JID) Railway Station for a period of 03 years.
AA/15	ADVT-LMG-BEE-OH-380-25-1 (Advertising - Out of Home)	A proposal for calling e-Auction for advertisement rights at Bebejia (BEE) Railway Station for a period of 03 years.
AA/16	ADVT-LMG-SHTT-OH-377-25-1 (Advertising - Out of Home)	A proposal for calling e-Auction for advertisement rights at Silghat Town (SHTT) Railway Station for a period of 03 years.
AA/17	ADVT-LMG-AONI-OH-375-25-1 (Advertising - Out of Home)	A proposal for calling e-Auction for advertisement rights at Amoni (AONI) Railway Station for a period of 03 years.
AA/18	ADVT-LMG-AJRE-OH-368-25-1 (Advertising - Out of Home)	A proposal for calling e-Auction for advertisement right at Aujuri (AJRE) station circulating area for a period of 3 years.
AA/19	ADVT-LMG-NGAN-OH-374-25-1 (Advertising - Out of Home)	A proposal for calling e-Auction for advertisement rights at Nagaon (NGAN) Railway Station for a period of 03 years.
AB/1	ADVT-LMG-BRHU-OSN-390-25-1 (Advertising - On Station Premise (Non-Digital))	A proposal for calling e-Auction for advertisement rights at Barahu (BRHU) Railway Station premise for a period of 03 years.
AB/2	ADVT-LMG-DIU-OSN-408-25-1 (Advertising - On Station Premise (Non-Digital))	A proposal for calling e-Auction for advertisement rights at Dhing (DIU) station premise for a period of 03 years.
AB/3	ADVT-LMG-HJI-OSN-410-25-1 (Advertising - On Station Premise (Non-Digital))	A proposal for calling e-Auction for advertisement rights at Hojai (HJI) station premise for a period of 03 years.
AB/4	ADVT-LMG-TRBE-OSN-404-25-1 (Advertising - On Station Premise (Non-Digital))	A proposal for calling e-Auction for advertisement rights at Tarabari (TRBE) station premise for a period of 03 years.
AB/5	ADVT-LMG-JID-OSN-387-25-1 (Advertising - On Station Premise (Non-Digital))	A proposal for calling e-Auction for advertisement rights at Jairoad (JID) Railway Station premise for a period of 03 years.
AB/6	ADVT-LMG-SCE-OSN-394-25-1 (Advertising - On Station Premise (Non-Digital))	A proposal for calling e-Auction for advertisement rights at Senchoa (SCE) station premise for a period of 03 years.
AB/7	ADVT-LMG-BKS-OSN-405-25-1 (Advertising - On Station Premise (Non-Digital))	A proposal for calling e-Auction for advertisement rights at Balikotia (BKS) station premise for a period of 03 years.
AB/8	ADVT-LMG-RUP-OSN-400-25-1 (Advertising - On Station Premise (Non-Digital))	A proposal for calling e-Auction for advertisement rights at Rupahigaon (RUP) Station premise for a period of 03 years.
AB/9	ADVT-LMG-KKET-OSN-388-25-1 (Advertising - On Station Premise (Non-Digital))	A proposal for calling e-Auction for advertisement rights at Kamrup Khetri (KKET) Railway Station premise for a period of 03 years.
AB/10	ADVT-LMG-DML-OSN-385-25-1 (Advertising - On Station Premise (Non-Digital))	A proposal for calling e-Auction for advertisement rights at Dharamtul (DML) Railway Station premise for a period of 03 years.
AB/11	ADVT-LMG-TGE-OSN-384-25-1 (Advertising - On Station Premise (Non-Digital))	A proposal for calling e-Auction for advertisement rights at Thekeraguri (TGE) Railway Station premise for a period of 03 years.
AB/12	ADVT-LMG-DBZ-OSN-407-25-1 (Advertising - On Station Premise (Non-Digital))	A proposal for calling e-Auction for advertisement rights at Dhing Bazar (DBZ) station premise for a period of 03 years.
AB/13	ADVT-LMG-HBN-OSN-399-25-1 (Advertising - On Station Premise (Non-Digital))	A proposal for calling e-Auction for advertisement rights at Haibargaon (HBN) station premise for a period of 03 years.
AB/14	ADVT-LMG-AONI-OSN-396-25-1 (Advertising - On Station Premise (Non-Digital))	A proposal for calling e-Auction for advertisement rights at Amoni (AONI) station premise for a period of 03 years.
AB/15	ADVT-LMG-MBO-OSN-409-25-1 (Advertising - On Station Premise (Non-Digital))	A proposal for calling e-Auction for advertisement rights at Mairabari (MBO) station premise for a period of 03 years.
AB/16	ADVT-LMG-RAHA-OSN-392-25-1 (Advertising - On Station Premise (Non-Digital))	A proposal for calling e-Auction for advertisement rights at Raha (RAHA) station premise for a period of 03 years.
AB/17	ADVT-LMG-AJRE-OSN-386-25-1 (Advertising - On Station Premise (Non-Digital))	A proposal for calling e-Auction for advertisement rights at Aujuri (AJRE) Railway Station premise for a period of 03 years.
AB/18	ADVT-LMG-BTDR-OSN-406-25-1 (Advertising - On Station Premise (Non-Digital))	A proposal for calling e-Auction for advertisement rights at Batadrowa Road (BTDR) station premise for a period of 03 years.
AB/19	ADVT-LMG-SMGR-OSN-389-25-1 (Advertising - On Station Premise (Non-Digital))	A proposal for calling e-Auction for advertisement rights at Samaguri (SMGR) Railway Station premise for a period of 03 years.
AB/20	ADVT-LMG-CPK-OSN-383-25-1 (Advertising - On Station Premise (Non-Digital))	A proposal for calling e-Auction for advertisement rights at Chaparmukh (CPK) Railway Station for a period of 03 years.
AB/21	ADVT-LMG-DGX-OSN-402-25-1 (Advertising - On Station Premise (Non-Digital))	A proposal for calling e-Auction for advertisement rights at Dagaon (DGX) station premise for a period of 03 years.
AB/22	ADVT-LMG-JRX-OSN-403-25-1 (Advertising - On Station Premise (Non-Digital))	A proposal for calling e-Auction for advertisement rights at Juriagaon (JRX) station premise for a period of 03 years.
AB/23	ADVT-LMG-NGAN-OSN-395-25-1 (Advertising - On Station Premise (Non-Digital))	A proposal for calling e-Auction for advertisement rights at Nagaon (NGAN) station premise for a period of 03 years.
AB/24	ADVT-LMG-BEE-OSN-393-25-1 (Advertising - On Station Premise (Non-Digital))	A proposal for calling e-Auction for advertisement rights at Bebejia (BEE) station premise for a period of 03 years.
AB/25	ADVT-LMG-SHTT-OSN-398-25-1 (Advertising - On Station Premise (Non-Digital))	A proposal for calling e-Auction for advertisement rights at Silghat Town (SHTT) Railway station premise for a period of 03 years.
AB/26	ADVT-LMG-JKB-OSN-397-25-1 (Advertising - On Station Premise (Non-Digital))	A proposal for calling e-Auction for advertisement rights at Jakhlabandha (JKB) Railway station premise for a period of 03 years.

Prospective bidders are requested to visit e-Auction leasing module of IREPS website www.ireps.gov.in.

Divisional Railway Manager (C), Lumding

NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY
"SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE"

LOS ANGELES, Oct 28: Hollywood star Sydney Sweeney, who shot to fame with her role as Cassie on the HBO teen drama "Euphoria", says being back on the set of the series for the third season felt like returning home to family.

Sweeney has since starred in popular films like "Anyone but You", "Echo Valley" and more recently the biopic "Christy".

"I wrap 'Euphoria' in two days," she told Variety at the AFI Fest premiere of her new drama "Christy" on Saturday.

Sweeney talked about returning to the HBO series after three years. "It's mostly the same crew, so it feels like I'm going home to family. I've grown up with them. I was 20 when I did the pilot, so being able to see a lot of the same people, it feels very comforting."

The third season, as per HBO's announcement, is the series' final outing but when asked if there would be a possibility of return, Sweeney said, "I cannot confirm any information."

Her co-star Jacob Elordi also teased the highly anticipated season while walking the red carpet at the Academy Museum Gala in Los Angeles earlier this month.

Sweeney's Cassie, Elordi's Nate and Alexa Demie's Maddy were engulfed into a toxic love triangle in the last season of "Euphoria", which premiered in 2022.

The series is headlined by Zendaya. Sweeney will next be seen in "The Housemaid" alongside Amanda Seyfried and Brandon Sklenar. (PTI)

I'VE GROWN UP WITH THEM: SYDNEY SWEENEY ON RETURNING FOR 'EUPHORIA' SEASON THREE



I'm left grasping for words of praise: Shashi Tharoor on Aryan Khan's 'The Ba***ds of Bollywood'



NEW DELHI, Oct 28: Politician Shashi Tharoor says Aryan Khan's series "The Ba***ds of Bollywood" is one of the best things he has come across on OTT and Shah Rukh Khan must be proud of his son.

Sharing the poster of the show on his X account on Sunday, the politician went on to review Aryan's debut series and said he was at a loss of words after watching it. "I've been battling a cold & cough and cancelled engagements for two days. My staff and my sister, @smitatharoor, persuaded me to turn my eyes away from the computer part of the time towards a @NetflixIndia series, and it's one of the best things I have ever treated myself to: absolute #OTT GOLD!" Tharoor's note read. "Just finished watching Aryan Khan's directorial debut, "The Ba***ds of Bollywood", and I'm left grasping for words of praise. It takes time to grow on you, but then you're irresistibly hooked! The writing is sharp, the direction is fearless, and the sheer audacity of this satire is just what Bollywood needed," he added. Calling the show a masterpiece, Tharoor went on to praise the debutante's technical expertise.

"A genius, often hilarious, sometimes moving, and always unflinching look beyond the glamour, sending up every cinematic cliché with razor-like wit — and a series of insider jokes that let the audience into the act & behind the scenes. The seven compelling episodes mark the arrival of a true storytelling powerhouse. Take a bow, Aryan Khan—you've delivered a masterpiece: "TheBa***dsOf-Bollywood" is brilliant!" he wrote.

In another post, he also gave a shout out to Shah Rukh Khan. "@iamsrk: from one father to another, let me say: you must be so proud!!" he concluded. (PTI)

'Emergency' not based on Coomi Kapoor's book, only inspired: Kangana's production house



NEW DELHI, Oct 28: Actor-politician Kangana Ranaut's production house, Manikarnika Films, on Monday clarified that its film "Emergency" was only inspired and in no manner based on senior journalist and author Coomi Kapoor's book "The Emergency: A Personal History".

The statement comes after Kapoor, whose book was published by Penguin in 2015, approached the Delhi High Court in April this year alleging blatant breach of the agreement regarding the book's intellectual property rights for adaptation into a feature film.

She also accused the makers of the film of "multiple factual inaccuracies and misleading portrayals of historical events".

Akshat Ranaut, the director of the production house, clarified the details in a public notice. "We, Manikarnika Films Pvt. Ltd., do hereby clarify that it was inadvertently mentioned in the credits of the film 'Emergency', that it is based on the book "The Emergency" by Ms. Coomi Kapoor. We hereby clarify that the film 'Emergency' is only inspired by the aforesaid book and is in no manner based on it," the notice read.

"Emergency", released in January this year, featured Ranaut in the role of the late prime minister Indira Gandhi. Ranaut not only starred in the movie but also directed and produced it. On Netflix, which is where the movie started streaming from March, the credits in the beginning included a disclaimer stating that it is "inspired by the books, 'The Emergency' by Coomi Kapoor and 'Priyadarshani' by Jayanth Vasant Shinde".

However, towards the end, the disclaimer shifts tone, stating that the film is "based on the books, 'The Emergency' by Coomi Kapoor and 'Priyadarshani' by Jayanth Vasant Shinde", which Kapoor argued directly contradicts the terms of their agreement.

The clarification from Akshat Ranaut, who is also the brother of actor and MP Kangana Ranaut, is part of a settlement between Manikarnika Films, Kapoor, and Netflix, reached through mediation under the Delhi High Court.

As part of the agreement, the production house's rights to Kapoor's book have also been terminated.

The case was disposed of on Monday by Justice Purushendra Kumar Kaurav following the mediation held on October 13, 2025. The other details of the agreement were not disclosed. (PTI)

'DDLJ'@30: Mumbai's Maratha Mandir continues its love affair with romance classic

MUMBAI, Oct 28: Mumbai's iconic single-screen theatre, Maratha Mandir, has remained the permanent home of "Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge" for 30 years and it will continue to do so as long as audiences keep coming, says the theatre's executive director Manoj Desai. Opened in 1952, the 1,107-seater cinema has screened numerous iconic films, including "Mughal-E-Azam" and "Pakeezah". Yet it is the Shah Rukh Khan-Kajol starrer "Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge" that has cemented its place in history with an unprecedented and record-breaking run since its release on October 20, 1995. During a private screening ten days before the release of the film, which marked the directorial debut of Yash Chopra's son Aditya, Desai said that he told the late filmmaker -- "Yeh lambi race ka ghoda hai."

"I had seen the film before its release and I was desperate to release it. It has everything in it, the story, great blend of casting, characters Amrish Puri, Shah Rukh, Kajol, rather every character in the film is a perfect fit. If the public wants, we will continue to run in the theatre."

"At that time, I didn't know that we would run it in theatres this long. Our managing director, Mr Arun Nahar had thought that since the ticket rates are so low, it will be in our theatres for a long time and it turned out to be true," Desai told PTI in an interview.

On a typical weekday, the theatre draws around 70 to 100 viewers for the 11:30 am matinee, while weekend attendance jumps to 200-300 enthusiastic fans. Tickets are priced at Rs 50 for the balcony and Rs 30 for the dress circle.

What makes "DDLJ" special is its ability to resonate across various demographics, said Desai.

At Maratha Mandir, which is located just a short distance from both Mumbai Central Railway Station and ST bus stand, people come from different parts of the country to watch the iconic film.

"We've different set of audiences coming to watch it, one is middle class, lower middle class, and then there's upper middle class, they all enjoy watching it. Besides, they can afford a movie at this rate," he said.

Desai witnessed the incredible attachment and love that audiences have for "Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge" a few years ago when the theatre put up a notice saying that the film would stop screening after 1,000 weeks. Instead of accepting it, many fans came to the theatre to express their disappointment.

"There were couples who would come here and say, 'Why you want to end the run of the film in the theatre'. They asked to remove the board. It's the public that makes a film hit," Desai said.

The film has been played here every day since its release, except for a brief hiatus of four months or



so during the pandemic that hit India in March 2020.

"We used to get phone calls asking us to start screening DDLJ once COVID-19 was over. We all know the kind of films release today but 'DDLJ' is truly special," Desai recalled. With its old-world charm, comfortable seating, and a spacious food-and-beverage area, the theatre offers a unique atmosphere that keeps patrons returning again and again. The corridors, lined with photographs and trophies from numerous films, serve as a reminder of the rich history and enduring legacy of the cinema hall.

"We do whatever we can to give a good experience in terms of pricing and the ambience. All kinds of people come here, most of them are couples, or those who have had night shifts come here and some even sleep inside in the AC."

"I've become friends with those who come here regularly and we share things and sometimes food with each other," a staff member at Maratha Mandir, who has been working for over a decade, told PTI.

Among the audience, one will find regular moviegoers including students, office goers and even social media influencers, many of whom share a love for "Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge".

During a show, the audience often erupts in excitement at memorable scenes, joyfully whistling along to iconic songs and shouting out fa-

mous dialogues like, "Bade Bade Desho Mein Aisi Choti Choti Baate Hoti Rehti Hai," "Palat, Palat, Palat," and "Jaa Simran, Jaa, Jee Le Apni Zindagi."

For Vijay, a 58-year-old taxi driver who comes to watch the movie during his lunch break, the film resonates on a deeply personal level. "My father was almost like Amrish Puri ji, me and my siblings would fear him a lot as he was a disciplinarian but he had a heart of gold, he did whatever he could for us. Whenever I see this film, it reminds me of my father, he left us a few years ago," the driver told PTI.

For content creator and stand-up comedian Pulkit Kochar, watching the film is a surreal experience, with its dialogues and songs etched into his memory.

"I don't have the count of how many times I've seen 'DDLJ' but I'm seeing it for the first time in Maratha Mandir. This is the first film I watched after I was born, I'm exactly 30-year-old. So, it's surreal to watch this romance which my parents saw," Kochar told PTI.

A couple in their early 20s told PTI, "This is my most and only favourite love story. We didn't know anything about DDLJ or Shah Rukh or Kajol but once we all friends came here last year after college is when we discovered this gem. We come here regularly to get immersed in the love and warmth of Raj and Simran." (PTI)

1ST T20I: FOCUS ON SURYAKUMAR'S FORM AS INDIA TAKE ON AUSTRALIA

CANBERRA, Oct 28: The leader in Suryakumar Yadav will nudge the batter in him to take centre stage and start contributing handsomely with the willow when India take on Australia in the opening T20 International here on Wednesday.

It promises to be a battle on even keel with both countries having won eight of their last 10 T20I games with a defeat each. While India had one tied game, Australia saw one game washed out.

While the captain's prolonged bad patch remains a cause of worry, the Indian T20 team has been the best of three national outfits, almost operating on autopilot with the new players taking on their roles like fish to water.

Since being appointed captain, Suryakumar's record has been phenomenal in terms of results, with 23 wins in 29 games so far, adhering to the new template of fearless cricket where every batter goes all guns blazing from ball one.

The aggression at all costs and Surya's own leadership skills have worked really well with an all-win bilateral series record and the Asia Cup

triumph, albeit, against some second rung continental teams, including Pakistan, who are a few light years behind India in terms of skill, quality and execution.

The Australia series marks the beginning of India's real preparation going into the T20 World Cup early next year with 15 games to get into the groove. But one can say that the result of this series will not have a major impact as the next 10 games against South Africa and New Zealand will be on familiar conditions, something similar to what they are likely to get in T20 World Cup.

While head coach Gautam Gambhir was unequivocal in his support for Surya and believes that he doesn't need to worry about his string of low scores, it is indeed time that the captain lets his bat do the talking.

In 2023, Surya had batted in 18 innings, scoring 733 runs at a strike rate of nearly 156 and it comprised two tons and five half-centuries. In 2024, he amassed little less than 450 runs at a strike-rate of 151 but cut to 2025, the Indian skipper has managed only 100 runs from 10 innings at an average of



11 runs per game.

What stands out as an anomaly is his strike rate of over 105, which suggests that while he has struggled for runs, he hasn't completely abandoned his attacking intent.

"I feel I have been working really hard. Not that I wasn't working hard before. I have had good few sessions back home, good 2-3 sessions here, so I am in good space," the skipper said

at the pre-series press conference at the Manuka Oval.

The skipper again stressed on the team goal.

"Runs, it will come eventually but I'm working hard towards the team goal. It's more important what team wants from you in different situations and I take one game at a time and if it starts then I think it will be a good thing."

For someone like Abhishek Sharma, who became the toast of the nation in Asia Cup, tackling the extra bounce on Australian pitches will be a new challenge and hence skipper's contribution becomes all the more important.

The problem with Surya has been his limited range of strokes and always trying to play behind the square using the pace and bounce of the deliveries.

While bounce in Manuka Oval track gives him a chance to ride on it and get maximum returns, Josh Hazlewood's presence and those Test match lengths on and in the off-stump corridor will create problems.

It will not only be a new set of question for someone like Abhishek but also old set of queries for the Indian skipper, whose critics always point out that he hasn't consistently scored against big teams in past few years.

In terms of bowling attack, Jasprit Bumrah's presence and Varun Chakravarthy's guile will be the important factors if Indian batters can put up a decent score. The 12 overs from Varun, Kuldeep Yadav and Axar Patel will be very important alongside Bumrah and Arshdeep's opening spells

against Travis Head and the dangerous Mitchell Marsh.

All eyes will also be on Mitchell Owen, Australia's new T20 star who played a game for Punjab Kings last year. Owen was terrific against India in a recent ODI in Adelaide but possibility of facing 12 overs of slow bowling will definitely test his hitting skills.

Teams:

India: Suryakumar Yadav (C), Abhishek Sharma, Shubman Gill (VC), Tilak Varma, Nitish Kumar Reddy, Shivam Dube, Axar Patel, Jitesh Sharma (WK), Varun Chakravarthy, Jasprit Bumrah, Arshdeep Singh, Kuldeep Yadav, Harshit Rana, Sanju Samson (WK), Rinku Singh, Washington Sundar.

Australia: Mitchell Marsh (c), Sean Abbott (games 1-3), Xavier Bartlett, Mahli Beardman (games 3-5), Tim David, Ben Dwarshuis (games 4-5), Nathan Ellis, Josh Hazlewood (games 1-2), Glenn Maxwell (games 3-5), Travis Head, Josh Inglis, Matthew Kuhnemann, Mitchell Owen, Josh Philippe, Tanveer Sangha, Matthew Short, Marcus Stoinis.

Match Starts: 1:45 pm (PTT)

SLC sends reconnaissance team to Pakistan

LAHORE, Oct 28: The Sri Lankan cricket board has sent a reconnaissance team to Pakistan ahead of a tour to the country next month to play a number of T20 internationals.

The team is meeting with the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) officials and getting briefed on the travel and security arrangements for their team.

They will also visit the venues in Lahore, Rawalpindi and Faisalabad where matches are scheduled and get briefed by the organisers and police officials.

While the SENA cricket nations normally send their security delegations to Pakistan ahead of tours to check all arrangements, it is unusual for Sri Lanka to carry out such a visit, especially since they were the first to tour Pakistan in 2019 after international teams refused to visit the country for 10 years following the terrorists attack on Sri Lankan team bus in 2009 in Lahore.

Sri Lanka have visited Pakistan several times since 2019 and the country also hosted the ICC Champions Trophy earlier this year.

The Sri Lankan team will first play a three-match bilateral series from November 11-15 and then take part in a T20 Tri-series, also featuring Zimbabwe, from November 19-29.

Zimbabwe have replaced Afghanistan in the Tri-series. (PTT)

India U20 women held by Kazakhstan in 2nd friendly

NEW DELHI, Oct 28: The India U20 women's team drew 1-1 against Kazakhstan U19 in the second and final friendly at the BIK Sports Complex in Shymkent, Kazakhstan, on Tuesday.

Both goals came in the second half. Adeliya Bekkozina handed the lead to the hosts in the 47th minute before Pooja, scoring her second goal in as many games, equalised in the 55th.

As part of their preparations for the AFC U20 Women's Asian Cup 2026, the Young Tigresses played two friendly matches against Kazakhstan U19 in Shymkent.

India won the first friendly 3-2 on Saturday. (PTT)

Ivanka Trump joins FIFA education charity project part-funded by World Cup ticket sales

ZURICH (SWITZERLAND), Oct 28: FIFA added another personal link to U.S. President Donald Trump by appointing his daughter Ivanka to the board of a \$100 million education project part-funded by 2026 World Cup ticket sales.

Ivanka Trump, tennis great Serena Williams, singers Shakira and The Weeknd, actor Hugh Jackman and soccer star Kaka are on the advisory board of the charity fund created by FIFA and the Global Citizen anti-poverty nonprofit.

"The board will provide strategic guidance to maximize the fund's reach and impact," FIFA said in a statement on Monday. The project is split between grants awarded to grassroots education in more than 200 countries and the soccer body's worldwide schools program.

FIFA said \$30 million is already raised toward the fund's



\$100 million target and will get \$1 from each World Cup ticket sold. More than seven million spectators are expected to attend the 104 games in 16 host cities across the United States, Canada and Mexico from June 11-July 19.

FIFA president Gianni Infantino has joined President Trump on overseas trips this year — causing him to be late arriving from the Middle East for a soccer officials' congress in Paraguay in May — and been a regular visitor to the White

Nischal, Lemtur guide Nagaland to memorable draw against TN

BENGALURU, Oct 28: Nagaland opener Dega Nischal and Imliwati Lemtur probably played the innings of their life, guiding their team to a memorable draw against Tamil Nadu in a Ranji Trophy Group A match here on Tuesday.

The Nagaland pair, however, could not stop the Sai Kishore-led Tamil Nadu from earning three vital points on the basis of first-innings lead, though the NorthEast side managed to thwart an innings defeat, which looked highly probable after upcoming left-arm pacer Gurjapneet Singh had reduced them to 3/9 with a hat-trick on day two.

Tamil Nadu, thanks to a double century (201) from young left-hand batter Pradosh Ranjan Paul and 189 from opener Vimal Khumar, had scored a mammoth 512 for 3 declared in their first innings.

But Nagaland's Nischal (175) and Lemtur (146) batted unflinchingly for nearly two days to give a befitting reply to their opponents as the NorthEast side scored 446 all out in 157.4 overs, leaving no scope for any other outcome other than a draw.

Overnight batters Nischal and



Lemtur, who were unbeaten on 161 and 115 respectively on Monday, started from where they had left off as they continued to frustrate Tamil Nadu.

However, Nischal could add just 14 runs to his overnight score before he became the sixth Nagaland batter to be dismissed, by right-arm pacer RS Ambrish.

But, Lemtur continued to frustrate the TN bowlers and was the last man out, adding 31 runs to his overnight score as Nagaland were all out in the 158th over.

With the only logical conclu-

sion being a draw, the captains shook hands.

UP-Odisha match ends in draw

In Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh earned three points by virtue of first-innings lead after the game against Odisha ended in a draw.

UP skipper Karan Sharma (121) and Aaradhya Yadav (101) scored centuries as the hosts made 409 for 6 declared in reply to Odisha's 243 all out in the first essay.

UP made an early declaration on the final day as they aimed for an outright win, but an unbeaten

71 by Odisha opener Swastik Samal put paid to the hosts hopes of victory. Odisha made 151/3 in 44 overs in their second essay.

Brief scores:

In Bengaluru: Tamil Nadu 1st innings 512/3 decl in 115 overs drew with Nagaland 446 in 157.4 overs (Dega Nischal 175, Yugandhar Singh 67, Imliwati Lemtur 146; Gurjapneet Singh 4/75, DT Chandrasekar 3/69).

In Vizianagaram: Baroda 1st innings 363 in 109 overs (Vishnu Solanki 132; Ati Sheth 86, Mahesh Pithiya 54; Kavuri Saiteja 4/71, Tripurana Vijay 3/63) vs Andhra 43 for 2 in 19 overs (Bhargav Bhatt 2/19). Match drawn.

In Nagpur: Jharkhand 1st innings 332 in 125.3 overs vs Vidarbha 492 for 5 in 161.1 overs (Aman Mokhadde 176, Dhruv Shorey 48, Ravikumhar Samarth 63, ash Rathod 101 not out).

In Kanpur: Odisha 1st innings: 243 all out & 151 for 3 in 44 overs (Swastik Samal 71 not out) drew with Uttar Pradesh 409 for 6 declared in 130 overs (Madhav Kaushik 67, Karan Sharma 121, Aaradhya Yadav 101 ret'd hurt; Sambit Baral 3/52). (PTT)

Shami's five wickets on final day sets up fine win for Bengal over Gujarat



KOLKATA, Oct 28: Mohammed Shami served another reminder to the Indian selectors with a five-wicket haul as Bengal beat Gujarat by 141 runs for their second straight win in the early part of their Ranji Trophy campaign here on Tuesday.

With 15 wickets in 68 overs across the first two games, Shami has given a good account of his form and fitness in the premier domestic competition thus far. He last played for India in the Champions Trophy but was not picked for the five Test tour of England.

With five wickets on day four of the game, Shami took his match tally to eight wickets. The player of the match award went to left-arm spinner Shabbaz Ahmed who took six wickets in the first innings to give Bengal a crucial first-innings lead over Gujarat.

Resuming their second innings

at 170 for six, Bengal declared at 214 for eight to set Gujarat an improbable 327 run target.

Shami's exploits on the final day meant Gujarat were rolled over for 185 in the second innings.

Batting at three, Urvil Patel kept Gujarat's fight going with an unbeaten 109 off 124 but barring himself, Jaymeet Patel (45) and Aarya Desai (13), none of the batters could enter double digits.

In Ramnagar, Uttarakhand were all out for 398 after gaining the all-important first-innings lead over Railways, who made 333 in the first innings. In the second innings, Railways were 85 for one when players settled for a draw.

Brief Scores:

At Kolkata: Bengal 279 and 214/8 decl in 54 overs (Sudip Kumar Gharmani 54; Siddharth Desai 5/61 vs Gujarat 167 all out in 76.3 overs and 185 all out in 45.5 overs (Urvil Patel 109 not out; Mohammed Shami 5/38). Bengal won by 141 runs.

At Ramnagar: Railways 333 and 85 for one in 23 overs vs Uttarakhand 398 all out (Yuvraj Chaudhary 92, Bhupen Lalwani 78; Kunal Yadav 5/85). Match drawn with three points to Uttarakhand due to first innings lead. (PTT)

Nikhat sets sights on collecting maximum points from next month's World Boxing Cup Finals

NEW DELHI, Oct 28: Two-time gold medalist Nikhat Zareen has put behind the disappointment of missing out on a third World Championships medal, and is now focussed on collecting maximum ranking points by winning the top prize in the upcoming World Boxing Cup Finals.

The event will be held in Greater Noida from November 14 to 21. Nikhat, who competes in flyweight and light flyweight categories, won World Championship gold medals in 2022 in Istanbul and 2023 in New Delhi. But she failed to replicate that in 2025 in Liverpool, losing in the quarterfinals to two-time Olympic silver medalist Buse Naz Çakiroglu of Turkey.

"I won't say it (World Championships) was disappointing. See you are coming back after a break of one year and still you are a part of Team India and then going there winning two bouts and losing to a very good boxer, two-time Olympic silver medalist. I would appreciate that I didn't give up," Nikhat told reporters here on Tuesday. She was speaking on the sidelines of the logo unveiling ceremony of the World Boxing Cup Finals. "I had so much energy that I defeated boxers who were in the camp for 3-4 months and got selected in the Indian team. I won't let down myself by saying that I came empty-handed from there.

"Sometimes you have to take some competitions as

a lesson. It was my first competition post Paris Olympics, so it was a great learning for me.

"Now I am looking forward to participate in the World Cup Finals which India is hosting. I am really excited, everyone is working and preparing very hard. I hope we better our Liverpool performance here," the 29-year-old pugilist said.

"It's very important for all of us to win medals in all the upcoming world competitions so that we can collect as many points as possible because it will help us in Asian Games and Commonwealth Games to get seedings and qualify." Nikhat said any boxer or athlete can't always remain at their peak and need to pick and choose competitions to keep themselves fresh.

"You can't expect to be at your peak throughout the year. We too are human beings. In Paris I was at peak, but unfortunately, I got a tough draw. It's past, and now I am focussing on LA Olympics. I am going step by step. "My focus now is on the World Cup as the gold medal winner will get 300 points, silver will get 150 and bronze 75 points. My effort would be to collect as many points as possible so that I get a good seeding," she said.

"We need to be calculative in selecting competitions. We need to select competitions which have got more points, like the Asian Championships in January which has got 800 points. We need to plan that. (PTT)

Sanju Samson to back two Kerala school athletes who set records

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, Oct 28: Indian cricketer Sanju Samson will extend support to two young athletes who put up outstanding performances at the ongoing Kerala School Sports Meet, state General Education Minister V Sivankutty said on Tuesday.

Devapriya Shaibu of CHS Calvary Mount, who set a new record in the sub-junior girls' 100m event, and Athul T M of Charamangalam Government DVHSS, who broke records in both the 100m and 200m categories, will be supported by the Sanju Samson Foundation, the minister said.

Addressing reporters here, Sivankutty read out a message from Samson, who is also the brand ambassador of the State School Sports Meet 2025—a week-long event that concludes later in the day.

"What caught my attention was their remarkable achievements despite challenging life circumstances. With the right support, these young athletes can rise to national and even Olympic levels," the wicket-keeper-batsman said in his message.

He said all necessary assistance would be extended through the Sanju Samson Foundation, including travel and accommodation for state and national events, proper guidance, and access to a professional athletics coach.

"The Foundation and I will stand by these children,



ensuring they receive every facility needed to race towards greater achievements and become the pride of Kerala," Samson added.

After reading out the message, Sivankutty announced that next year's State School Sports Meet will be held in Kannur.

A record 19,310 students participated in various events this year, he said.

The minister also announced that houses would be constructed for deserving gold medal winners of the meet, with specific criteria to be set for eligibility. "Generous individuals can also contribute to this initiative," he added. (PTT)

Arunachal CM reiterates govt's commitment towards sports, youth empowerment

ITANAGAR, Oct 28: Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu on Tuesday reiterated the state government's strong commitment towards sports and youth empowerment.

"For us, sports is not just about competition; it is about character-building, discipline, teamwork, and resilience. These values shape great citizens as much as they shape great athletes," Khandu said after inaugurating the 69th National School Games 2025 (Under-17 Boys & Girls - Boxing) at the Khelo India Indoor Stadium here.

Highlighting investments in sports infrastructure, including establishment of Khelo India centres, multipurpose indoor halls, stadiums, and specialised academies for various sports, the CM said the government is also extending financial incentives, job reservations, and technical support to promising sportspersons to nurture their growth.

The event marks the first-ever hosting of a National School Games competition by the state in the 71 year history of the School Games Federation of India



(SGFI). Expressing immense pride at this milestone, the chief minister called it a reflection of the state's growing confidence and capacity to host major national events.

"This is not just an event, but a moment of pride for Arunachal Pradesh as we join India's long and illustrious journey of school sports under the banner of

the SGFI," Khandu said. He highlighted that the SGFI, established in 1954, has been instrumental in nurturing India's young sporting talent and providing the foundation upon which many national and international athletes have built their careers.

Arunachal Pradesh, which became affiliated with SGFI in 2008-09, has since

made impressive progress in developing school-level sports.

"In the last decade, our young athletes have excelled in several disciplines such as taekwondo, karate, wushu, boxing, and weightlifting, proving that our youth are among the best in the country," the chief minister noted.

Appreciating SGFI, the department of secondary education and others for their collective efforts in making the event possible, he also lauded the local organising committee, coaches, officials, and volunteers for their tireless work in preparing for the event.

The CM encouraged young athletes participating in the event to compete with honesty, fairness, and passion.

"You are not just competing for medals, but for your dreams. Win with humility, lose with dignity, and never stop learning," he told the athletes.

Khandu emphasised that hosting the Games reinforces the state's vision of transforming it into a hub of sporting excellence in the Northeast, contributing to India's larger sporting success story. (PTT)

Australia will stick to aggressive approach ahead of T20 World Cup: Marsh



CANBERRA, Oct 28: Australia skipper Mitchell Marsh knows an ultra-aggressive batting strategy won't pay off always, but said his team will continue with its attacking approach as part of its preparations for next year's T20 World Cup, having fallen short in the last two editions.

Australia will take on India in a five-match T20I series beginning here on Wednesday as part of their preparation for the showpiece to be hosted by India and Sri Lanka in February-March next year. Australia last won the T20 World Cup in 2021 while India triumphed in the last edition in 2024.

"We had two World Cups where we didn't quite go all the way. And I guess we spoke about wanting to challenge ourselves as a team to what we think can win us to the World Cup," Marsh said during the pre-series press conference on Tuesday.

"As a batting unit, we have played a lot more aggressively. I think that's been the nature of T20 cricket for a lot of teams over the last few years.

"But yeah, if you look towards the World Cup in India, that's certainly the way we're going to play. We're not going to get it right every time. We will fail. But we're clear on how we want to go about it. That gives us the best chance for success. And hopefully that's the case as we keep building."

Australia had finished in Super 12 and Super 8 in the 2022 and 2024 T20 World Cup editions.

"Look, they (India) are a fantastic team, one which we have great respect for and I think five-match series are going to provide a lot of excitement for the fans that are coming to watch," he said.

"It's two really good teams that are going to be going at it. So, looking forward to the challenge."

Marsh said while he wouldn't comment on India's preparations for the World Cup, Australia were confident with the progress they have made as a group.

"I'm not really here to comment much on Indian side of preparation for the World Cup but I know that we've got eight games to go for us. And we're really building nice as a team in the way we want to play and go about it.

"So, yeah, we feel great at the moment. But we know that it's going to be a big series against India."

Several Australian players, including Marsh, are regulars in the IPL, but the home side captain said familiarity with the Indian players does not make the challenge any easier.

"Not necessarily (more challenging). I think around world cricket there's so much footage these days. Everyone watches everyone. The key is execution under pressure. That's all it comes down to."

'Abhishek is an incredible talent'

Abhishek Sharma has been in scintillating form as an opener, amassing 314 runs at an average of 44.85 and a strike rate of 200 during India's Asia Cup triumph.

"He obviously sets the tone for them. He's been incredible for the Sunrisers over the last little period of time. He'll provide us a good challenge...I think you want to be challenged against the best players in the world. We know he's one of those," Marsh said.

The Australian skipper himself has been in fine touch at the top, scoring two centuries and two half-centuries in his last 10 innings.

"I think it's just like any other batsman, you want to contribute to winning games for Australia. That's really all I'm focused on when I'm batting. I'm not really thinking as a captain," Marsh said.

"I'm trying to have a really good partnership with Heady or whoever it is that I'm batting with. So hopefully it will continue."

With Ashes preparations in full swing, Australia's T20I squad features several players rotating in and out.

Leg-spinner Adam Zampa will miss the start of the series following the birth of his second child, while Josh Hazlewood will withdraw after the first two matches and Sean Abbott will depart after the third game.

"We do have guys coming in and out. But I think that's been the nature of the white ball teams over the last couple of years with the schedules and how busy it is," Marsh said.

"Some guys going back and playing shield cricket. Certain guys coming back from injury. So, I think it's just about being really flexible with that. Each and every one understands their role when they do come into the team.

"It's about being really clear on that. And then guys coming in and doing their job." (PTI)

SA look to iron out batting flaws against spin in crunch semifinal against England

GUWAHATI, Oct 28: South Africa will hope to address their batting frailties against spin and produce a solid all-round show when they face four-time champions England in the first semifinal of the ICC Women's World Cup here on Wednesday.

En route to the knockout stage, South Africa suffered two heavy defeats and their batting came apart against spin on both occasions.

Left gutted after being bowled out for 69 in their opening game, the South Africans recovered well to record narrow but gritty wins over New Zealand, India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Pakistan.

However, their struggles against spin resurfaced in the final league game against Australia, who bundled them out for just 97 in 24 overs.

While the South African batters failed to pick the line and were undone by the drift against England, they were completely left gobsmacked by Alana King's leg-spin in the match against Australia.

England will look to exploit this South African weakness again and rely not only on their all-round strength but also on their spin trio of Sophie Ecclestone, Linsey Smith and Charlie Dean to stifle the South African batters.

Seamer Lauren Bell will need to apply pressure early on, while Alice Capsey has been in good bowling rhythm, having claimed five wickets.

There, however, remains a concern on Ecclestone's availability for the match after she suffered an injury during their last game. She had fallen awkwardly on her bowling shoulder while fielding during Sunday's win over New Zealand.

England are "optimistic" that Ecclestone will be fit to play.

"Results of an MRI scan on Sophie Ecclestone's left shoulder indicate a minor injury to the joint next to her collar bone. She will continue to be assessed ahead of Wednesday's ICC Women's World Cup semi-final against South Africa," England



and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) said in a statement.

For South Africa, captain Laura Wolvaardt has led from the front with 301 runs in seven matches at an average of 50.16, including three half-centuries. But except for Wolvaardt, few South African batters have shown consistent form.

Tazmin Brits, who struck 101 against India in Indore, has since managed three ducks, a 55 and a 6, underlining her shaky form. She had scored three consecutive centuries before the World Cup, and South Africa will hope she can provide a solid start on the big day.

Sune Luus (157 runs) and Marizanne Kapp (162) have also been inconsistent, contributing to the team's batting woes. Some of their shot selection against Australia were questionable, and they will need to be spot on with their execution against

England. England, on the other hand, will head into the high-pressure clash with plenty of confidence, having hammered South Africa by 10 wickets in their tournament opener at the same venue.

For England, it has been a strong comeback since their home series loss to India. Under coach Charlotte Edwards, the team has shown plenty of character. They too lost to Australia in the league phase but still finished second behind their arch-rivals with 11 points.

England have looked a formidable unit for most parts of the tournament, but their campaign has not been without stumbles. Batting collapses and nervy finishes have occasionally exposed their soft underbelly in pressure situations.

Their close shave against Bangladesh and a rain-hit clash against Pakistan underlined those frailties. While they scraped through

with a four-wicket win over Bangladesh, Pakistan pacer Fatima Sana laid bare their vulnerability to inswingers with a four-wicket haul that reduced them to 133 for nine.

Captain Heather Knight (288) and wicketkeeper-batter Amy Jones (220) have been the most dependable in the middle order, but opener Tammy Beaumont's (210) inconsistency has hurt their starts.

All-rounder Nat Sciver-Brunt remains the heartbeat of the side, though her returns have fluctuated, a century against Sri Lanka followed by single-digit scores against Pakistan and Australia.

Among the others, middle-order batters Emma Lamb and Sophia Dunkley are yet to produce innings of substance, something England will be desperate to correct in the semifinal.

South Africa, meanwhile, boast a mixed bowling attack, but if the wicket assists spin, Nonkululeko Mlaba -- with 11 wickets in the tournament -- will be crucial. They will also depend heavily on Kapp to maintain tight lines and lengths with the new ball.

The teams will also have their eyes on the sky as showers are expected in Guwahati on the day of the first semi-final. Although there is a reserve day, but if there is no result, the team that finished higher on the points table will progress into the final.

The Teams :

England: Nat Sciver-Brunt (c), Em Arlott, Tammy Beaumont, Lauren Bell, Alice Capsey, Charlie Dean, Sophia Dunkley, Sophie Ecclestone, Lauren Filer, Sarah Glenn, Amy Jones, Heather Knight, Emma Lamb, Linsey Smith, Danni Wyatt-Hodge.

South Africa: Laura Wolvaardt (c), Anneke Bosch, Tazmin Brits, Nadine de Klerk, Annerie Dercksen, Sinalo Jafta, Marizanne Kapp, Ayabonga Khaka, Masabata Klaas, Sune Luus, Karabo Meso, Nonkululeko Mlaba, Tumi Sekhukhune, Nondumiso Shange, Chloe Tryon.

Match starts at 3pm. (PTI)

India bids for 2028 Asian Indoor Athletics Championships and 2026 Asian Relays



NEW DELHI, Oct 28: India has submitted bids to host the 2028 Asian Indoor Athletics Championships as well as the 2026 Asian Relays, in line with the country's efforts to stage continental and global events in the coming years.

If India succeeds in its bids for the events, it would be the first time the country would be hosting the two continental competitions.

The Athletics Federation of India (AFI) has proposed Bhubaneswar as the host city for the 2028 Asian Indoor Athletics Championships while the venue for the 2026 Asian Relays is yet to be finalised.

"We have submitted the bid for

2028 Asian Indoor Athletics Championships with Bhubaneswar as the host city. There is no other venue in India which can host the event other than the indoor facility at the Kalinga Stadium complex in Bhubaneswar," a top AFI official told PTI on conditions of anonymity.

"For 2026 Asian Relays, we have not yet decided on the venue."

As of now, the AFI is considering a north Indian city for the Asian Relays, likely to be held in April, but it is not yet final and can be changed later, it is learnt.

The state-of-the-art indoor facility at the Kalinga Stadium complex

in Bhubaneswar was inaugurated in 2024. It has a 200m running track, a 100m practice track, designated areas for long jump, triple jump, pole vault, and shot put, warm-up areas for athletes, as well as a gym.

The oval shaped track lies below a spectator gallery which can house 2000 people. The facility also houses 60 twin-sharing rooms and a dining hall for those undergoing full-time training.

The inaugural Asian Relays was held in May 2024 in Bangkok where India won gold in the mixed 4x400m, and a silver each in men's and women's 4x400m.

The Asian Indoor Athletics Championships, a biennial event, was first held in 2004 in Tehran. Iran has hosted the event four times, all in Tehran, the most by any country.

The Iranian capital hosted the last edition also, in 2024, with India winning three gold medals and one silver. Tajinderpal Singh Toor (men's shot put), Jyothi Yarraji (women's 60m hurdles) and Harmilan Bains (women's 1500m) won a gold medal each while Ankit Dhyani (women's 3000m) got a silver. (PTI)

Maharashtra beat Chandigarh by 144 runs

CHANDIGARH, Oct 28: Seamers Mukesh Choudhary and Ramakrishna Shekhar Ghosh took four wickets each to power Maharashtra to a 144-run win over Chandigarh on the fourth day of their Ranji Trophy Group B match here.

Set an imposing target of 464 after Prithvi Shaw's scintillating 222-run knock, Chandigarh ended third day's play at 129 for one. Eventually, they were all out for 319 in 94.1 overs on the final evening.

In order to make a game of it, Chandigarh needed a couple of big knocks from their top batters but, with the exception of opener Arjun Azad, who slammed a fine 168 in 236 balls, none of their players could go on to make a big hundred.

Playing in only his second first-class match, this was the 24-year-old Azad's second successive century, after his 141 against Goa on debut.

Skipper Manan Vohra chipped in with 58 while U19 World Cup winner Raj Bawa contributed 42, as the others failed to reach double digit scores in their second innings.

Choudhary and Ghosh were the chief wicket-takers for Maharashtra in Chandigarh's second innings, returning figures of 4/34 from 19 overs and 4/71 from 20.1 overs.

The outright victory helped Maharashtra bag a full six points from the match, while there was nothing for the home team Chandigarh.

While the bowlers did their job on the final day, a lot of credit for Maharashtra's victory must go to Shaw, whose third fastest double hundred in Ranji Trophy history gave his team enough runs on the board and also time to take all 10 wickets in Chandigarh's second innings.

Brief scores:

At Chandigarh: Maharashtra: 313 all out and 359/3 declared in 52 overs (Prithvi Shaw 222) vs Chandigarh: 209 all out in 73 overs and 319 all out in 94.1 overs (Arjun Azad 168; Mukesh Choudhary 4/34, Ramakrishna Shekhar Ghosh 4/71).

At Shivamogga: Karnataka: 371 all out in 110.1 overs (Karun Nair 174 not out, Shreyas Gopal 57; Arjun Tendulkar 3/100, Vasuki Koushik 3/35) vs Goa 217 all out and 143/1 in 46 overs (Abhinav Tejrana not out 73, Manthan Khutkar not out 55). (PTI)

Kohli and Rohit generational combo of talent, fans should celebrate them: de Villiers

MUMBAI, Oct 28: Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma are a "generational combo" of talent and cricket fans should celebrate the remainder of their glorious careers, says AB de Villiers while terming the critics of the two Indian superstars as "cockroaches".

Facing intense scrutiny since last few months which saw both Kohli and Rohit retiring from Test cricket and T20Is, they made international comebacks during the recent ODI series in Australia, which India lost 1-2.

It was their last tour of Australia and both Kohli and Rohit walked off on a high, with the former scoring 74 not out in his final innings Down Under and the latter winning the Player of the Series award after scores of 73 and 121 not out in the last two matches.

"Rohit, another hundred.... Back in the runs (is) the Biscotti, going strong and I am looking forward to what's sort of ahead," de Villiers said on his Facebook page.

"I honestly just think, if you're a fan of cricket, it's just really time to celebrate players like these. It's not often players like these come across our talent. It's a generational combo of paths that we have here, and it's really necessary for us to celebrate them and to enjoy the last



few years, however long they last," he added.

De Villiers, however, was not kind towards those who criticise the two Indian players.

"I don't know what it is about people. I'm not sure if I can call them people. Cockroaches climbing out of their holes as soon as players get towards the backend of their careers. Why?," he asked.

"Why do you want to pour negative energy into players that have given their lives literally for their country and this beautiful game of cricket? This is the perfect time to celebrate them (and) not now when they have done well."

"Not now that they have done. They have taken a lot of criticism in the last few months. Everyone is just trying to push them down for

what reason, I have no idea," he added. De Villiers hoped those who criticise Kohli and Rohit are not many.

"Obviously, I am referring to the minority because I think the majority of people celebrate Rohit and Virat and their incredible careers. And it is a fantastic time to celebrate them once again," he said. (PTI)

Mandhana solidifies No 1 status with career-best rating in women's ODI batting rankings

DUBAI, Oct 28: Star India opener Smriti Mandhana on Tuesday strengthened her status as the No.1 batter in women's ODI cricket after achieving a career-best rating on the back of an outstanding home World Cup campaign.

The 29-year-old left-handed batter scored 109 against New Zealand and 34 not out against Bangladesh in her last two matches and moved to a rating of 828, almost 100 points clear of Australia's Ash Gardner in second (731), who jumped six spots after her unbeaten century against England.

It continues a dream run for Mandhana, who was named ICC Women's Player of the Month for September 2025 for her performances in the ODI series against Australia before the World Cup.

South African captain Laura Wolvaardt also moved into the top three with a jump of two spots, courtesy her knocks of 90 and 31.

England's Amy Jones, meanwhile, entered the top 10 with a four-spot climb to ninth (656), while Annabel Sutherland enjoyed the biggest jump of those in the top 40, moving 16 spots to 16th (613).

Another India batter, Pratika Rawal, who will miss the remainder of the World Cup with injury, moved into the top 30 (27th) with a rating of 564. Spin has played a big part at the tournament and the rankings jumps reflect the work of several to shine.

England's Sophie Ecclestone remains well clear atop the women's ODI bowling rankings (747), though she has a new rival chasing her in Australian leg-spinner Alana King, who took a seven-wicket haul against South Africa.

King moved five places with a career-high rating of 698, edging her teammate Gardner, who dropped one position to third (689).

Nashra Sandhu of Pakistan was tied for 10th with Proteas left-arm orthodox spinner Nonkululeko Mlaba (610), while fast bowlers Marizanne Kapp and Sutherland also made one-spot hops to fourth and seventh respectively. Another exponent of left-arm orthodox, Linsey Smith was the biggest mover, up 24 spots to 36th (444).

Gardner's exploits have cemented her No. 1 position in the all-rounder stakes (rating 503), though has a new No. 2 behind her in Kapp, who overtook West Indies' Hayley Matthews with a rating of 422.

Sutherland's performances, meanwhile, took her to fourth, with teammate King into the top 10 with a move of three spots to 26th. (PTI)