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Veteran artist Syed Sadulla passes away at 77

HT Correspondent
DIBRUGARH, Oct 30: Veteran artist Syed Sadulla, a revered figure in Assamese music and culture, passed away on Thursday morning at the Gauhati Medical College and Hospital (GMCH). He was 77.

The noted singer, lyricist, composer, and former radio announcer had been undergoing treatment for a severe blood-related disorder and was admitted to GMCH on Tuesday.

He remained in critical condition until his demise at 10:30 a.m.

Born on February 1, 1948, in Dibrugarh district, Sadulla was widely known for his distinctive baritone voice.

He began his professional journey as the first English newsreader for All India Radio, Dibrugarh, and went on to lend

his voice to numerous radio and television programmes.

He was also a key member of the popular musical band The Quivers.

Over the decades, Sadulla's soulful renditions, heartfelt lyrics, and memorable compositions earned him lasting admiration across generations.

In recognition of his contributions to Assamese music, he was recently conferred the Achiever Music Award by the Sadin-Pratidin Group.

Medical authorities at GMCH confirmed that Sadulla had been diagnosed with Chronic Lymphocytic Leukaemia (CLL), accompanied by severe respiratory complications.

He was placed on ventilator support as his condition deteriorated. (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)



Five Bir Lachit Sena leaders arrested in Nagaon

HT Correspondent
NAGAON, Oct 30: In a major crackdown on the Bir Lachit Sena, Nagaon police arrested five leaders and members of the outfit in two separate operations carried out on Wednesday night.

According to police sources, the Nagaon Sadar police apprehended Kamar Nazman, Vice-President of the Nagaon District Committee, and Trailokya Saikia, Secretary of the same committee.

Nazman is a resident of Fajdaripatty in Nagaon town, while Saikia hails from Morikolong Borghat.

In a separate operation, Samaguri police arrested three others — Dipjyoti Phukan, President of the Kaliabor Anchalik Committee, along with members Pranjal Das and Rupit Borah.

A case has been registered under various sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, and further investigation is underway.

The arrests were made following complaints of extortion and other alleged activities by members of the Bir Lachit Sena.

Police sources said the accused had reportedly demanded money from a cattle trader in Rangagarha area of Samaguri a few days ago. The (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Zubeen's last film 'Roi Roi Binale' to hit screens today

91 screens across NE and almost 90 in the rest of the country will screen the film on a blind musician

GUWAHATI, Oct 30: Zubeen Garg's last film 'Roi Roi Binale' is geared up for its release on Friday across all screens of Assam.

With tickets of all shows for the next one week sold out, Garg's musical is expected to break all past records and create new milestones for Assamese cinema in the future.

With massive emotional outpouring for the release, exhibitors have increased the number of shows. Some hall owners have decided to project seven shows of the film in a day, starting from as early as 4.45 am and the last show at around midnight, which will end at around 2.30 am.

In 'Roi Roi Binale', Garg is playing the lead character, who is a blind musician. The Zubeen Garg musical film has 11 songs, composed by himself.

The film revolves around the life of a musician and his struggle. The trailer showed that the musician was lying senseless on the sea beach and one person was trying to wake him up, a startling coinci-



dence with his death.

The celebrated singer died under mysterious circumstances in Singapore on September 19 while swimming in the sea.

After the release of the trailer, there was an outpouring of emotional posts and netizens questioned whether Garg could foresee his end.

"The sea is really vast. Will I be

able to swim?" -- the dialogue in the trailer also hit the viewers emotionally.

Garg, who never shied away from declaring innumerable times that he was a 'social-leftist', is seen uttering a line in the 1:54-minute clip, "I am an artist. And an artist should have only one politics -- to stand with the masses, not with the monarch!"

The singer had publicly proclaimed that he is a follower of Che Guevara, Charlie Chaplin and Bishnu Prasad Rava -- all belonging to the communist school of ideology.

"Roi Roi Binale" was one of Garg's hit songs from the 90s and he had termed it as the "darkest" number written by him.

Garg is also the producer of the Rajesh Bhuyan-directed 146-minute long film 'Roi Roi Binale' along with his wife Garima and Shyamantak Gautam.

In the last three weeks, the film's trailer, title track and a few other songs were released. These have been cumulatively viewed by more than one crore people on YouTube.

"The stage is all set to release the last film of Zubeen Garg in a grand manner. So far, 91 screens across the Northeast and almost 90 in the rest of the country will screen the film from tomorrow," film content provider UFO Moviez India General Manager (Sales and Distribution) (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

China grants licences to Indian companies to import rare earth magnets



NEW DELHI, Oct 30: China has granted licences to certain Indian companies to import rare earth magnets, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said on Thursday.

China's decision to ease restrictions on supply of rare earth minerals to India came amid efforts by the two sides to normalise the bilateral ties that came under severe strain following the over four-year military face-off along the LAC in eastern Ladakh.

"Some Indian companies have received licenses for importing rare earth magnets from China," External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said at his weekly media briefing.

He, however, did not elaborate on it.

Rare earth minerals are considered vital for high-end technology products including electric vehicles (EVs), drones, and battery storage. China has been a dominant player in the critical minerals supply chain globally.

India has been looking at a steady supply of rare earth minerals to fuel its economic growth.

China accounts for around 70 per cent of global rare earth mining that makes it a very dominant player in the global supply chain of the critical minerals.

China used to export huge quantities of fertiliser to India till 2023.

However, Beijing stopped the supplies to (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Mukhya Mantri Mahila Udyamita Abhiyan reaches Sadiya In new Assam women will live with dignity: CM

HT Bureau
GUWAHATI, Oct 30: In a strong step towards strengthening women-led entrepreneurship in Assam, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Thursday distributed cheques containing seed capital of ₹ 10,000 each to 27,573 women beneficiaries from Self Help Groups (SHGs) under the Mukhya Mantri Mahila Udyamita Abhiyan (MMUA) for Sadiya Legislative Assembly at a programme held at Sadiya.

The initiative reflects the Government of Assam's commitment to empowering women with financial independence and enabling them to play a transformative role in the



state's rural economy.

Under the Abhiyan, in Sadiya constituency, 26,342 beneficiaries belong to rural areas and 1,231 to urban areas.

Addressing the beneficiaries at a programme held at Sadiya Government Higher Secondary School playground, chief minister Sarma

said that through Mukhya Mantri Mahila Udyamita Abhiyan, the State government aims to build a new Assam where women can live with dignity as the pillars of their households.

Sarma stated that the state has about four lakh self-help groups involving over 40 lakh women.

Since the formation of these groups, women have stepped beyond their homes, established linkages with banks, learned about various government schemes, and begun taking active roles in community work.

He said that women's self-help groups in Assam have borrowed nearly (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Cong against Assam's development, wants youths to join militancy, alleges Himanta

GUWAHATI, Oct 30: Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma alleged that the "Congress ecosystem" is against the state's development, and the opposition party wants the youth to return to militancy.

Sarma made the comments while responding to Karnataka Information Technology Minister Priyank Kharge's purported statement that investments meant for the southern state were being diverted towards Gujarat and Assam, after being "arm-twisted" by the Centre.

The CM said on Wednesday, "I think Priyank Kharge, (state Congress president) Gaurav Gogoi and the entire Congress ecosystem do not want Assam's development.

There is no provision in the Constitution that industries will go only to Karnataka. Do they demand that it's their birthright to have all industries there?"

"If so, then tomorrow, Assamese people will say that they won't be with India. When our youths go to Karnataka, they demand that their local youths should get the jobs. Then where will our boys go?" asked the CM.

He stressed that Kharge and Gogoi's comments in support of the Karnataka minister are "extreme disrespect" to the northeastern state.

"Priyank Kharge has demoralised the youths of Assam. As a result, the youths of Assam will join ULFA (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

India rejects UN expert's allegation that Pahalagam attack impacted displaced persons from Myanmar

UNITED NATIONS, Oct 30: India has strongly rejected "baseless observations" made by a UN expert on Myanmar that refugees from the Southeast Asian nation were "under severe pressure" following the Pahalagam terror attack, with Delhi denouncing this "prejudiced and blinkered" analysis.

"I express serious objection to the baseless and biased observations in the report regarding my country. I strongly denounce the biased approach adopted by the Special Rapporteur of the innocent civilian victims of the April 2025 terrorist attack in Pahalagam through a biased communal lens," Member of Parliament Dilip Saikia said on Tuesday.

Saikia delivered India's state-

ment on the situation of human rights in Myanmar at the interactive dialogue in the Third Committee of the UN General Assembly.

India strongly rejected the observations made by the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Human Rights in Myanmar, Thomas Andrews, in his report on the situation of human rights in Myanmar.

Referring to the April 22 Pahalagam terror attack, the report by Andrews said that "following the April 2025 terrorist attack on Hindu tourists in Jammu and Kashmir, refugees from Myanmar have been under severe pressure in India even though no individuals from Myanmar were involved in the attack."

"Refugees in India told the Special Rapporteur that they have been summoned, detained, interrogated, and threatened with deportation by Indian authorities in recent months," the report by the Special Rapporteur said.

Slamming this assertion, Saikia said the allegation that the Pahalagam terrorist attack "impacted displaced persons from Myanmar has absolutely no factual bearing."

"My country rejects such prejudiced and blinkered 'analysis' by the Special Rapporteur," he said.

Saikia stressed that India is "seeing an alarming level of radicalisation among the displaced persons, leading to consequential pressure and impact on the law-and-order situation." (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

NEW DELHI, Oct 30: Justice Surya Kant was on Thursday appointed as the 53rd Chief Justice of India and he will assume charge on November 24.

The Department of Justice in the Union Law Ministry issued a notification announcing his appointment.

Justice Surya Kant succeeds Justice Bhushan R Gavai, who demits office on November 23.

He will be the CJI for nearly 15 months and will demit office on February 9, 2027 on attaining the age of 65 years.

"In exercise of the powers conferred by the Constitution of India, the President is pleased to appoint Shri Justice Surya Kant, Judge of the Supreme Court of India as the



Chief Justice of India with effect from 24th November, 2025," Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal said in a post on X.

"I convey my heartfelt congratulations and best wishes to him," he added.

Justice Kant, born in a middle-class family on February 10, 1962 in Hissar district of Haryana, be-

came a top court judge on May 24, 2019.

He brings to the country's top judicial office a wealth of experience spanning two decades on the Bench, marked by landmark verdicts on abrogation of Article 370, free speech, democracy, corruption, environment and gender equality.

Justice Kant was part of the historic bench that kept the colonial-era seditious law in abeyance, directing that no new FIRs be registered under it until a government review.

He also nudged the Election Commission to disclose details of 65 lakh excluded voters in Bihar, showing his commitment to electoral transparency. He made history by (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

CM pays homage to 2008 serial bomb blast victims

GUWAHATI, Oct 30: Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Thursday paid tribute to the victims of the 2008 serial bomb blasts across the state.

A total of nine blasts were triggered by the National Democratic Front of Boroland (NDFB), claiming the lives of 88 people and injuring over 500.

"30th Oct 2008 will always be a dark day in the history of Assam as it witnessed the most dastardly attack on its soil," Sarma said in a post on X.

"As we mark this solemn occasion, I pay my tributes to all those who lost their lives in the serial blasts and vow to never let Assam go back to those dark days," he said. (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Participating artistes felicitated with medals and certificates of participation

Karbi cultural troupe returns after showcasing traditional dances in Thailand

HT Bureau
DIPHU, Oct 30: A 20-member cultural troupe and officials from the Karbi Traditional Music and Cultural Research Institute (KTM-CRI), under the Art & Culture Department of the Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council (KAAC), returned home on Thursday morning after successfully representing Karbi Anglong at the 15th Cultural Olympiad of Performing Arts held from October 25 to 29 at Burapha University, Pattaya, Thailand.

The five-day international cultural festival was organised by Akhil Bhartiya Shankruti Shan (ABSS) Global Council of Art & Culture, the official partner of UNESCO, to bring together artists and performers from across the world.

The event served as a platform for various ethnic communities of India to present their traditional art



forms and promote cultural diversity.

The KTMCRI troupe performed a medley of traditional Karbi dances on October 27 before a large audience.

The presentation featured Ritong Chingdi (cultivating dance), Han Up Ahi Kebi (community bamboo shoot collection dance), Lengpum Sokchon (paddy pounding dance), and Hacha Kekan

(post-harvesting dance), vividly depicting the agrarian lifestyle and everyday life of the Karbi people.

During the closing and prize distribution ceremony held on October 28, Tribal Culture Research Officer (TCRO) of KAAC, Dilip Kathar, who led the troupe, was conferred the Pioneer Mentor Golden Award by ABSS Global Council of Art & Culture.

The award, comprising a memento and certificate of appreciation, recognised his outstanding contribution towards the preservation and promotion of Karbi culture and tradition at the global stage.

The participating artistes were also felicitated with medals and certificates of participation.

Upon his return, Kathar described the experience as a proud moment (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Guwahati civic body launches programme for coexistence of humans, animals

GUWAHATI, Oct 30: To promote the harmonious coexistence between humans and animals, the Guwahati Municipal Corporation on Thursday said it has rolled out a new initiative for population mapping and behavioural analysis of different species.

GMC Commissioner M S Lakshmi Priya said the initiative 'Project Sahajeevan' is built upon the 'One Health' approach, recognising the interdependence of human, animal and environmental health.

"The objective of this campaign is to promote sustainable and humane management of street and companion animals within Guwahati. Our aim is to minimise human-animal conflicts through data-driven and community-based interventions," she said.

Under the project, the GMC will try to create awareness among citizens about responsible pet ownership and compassion towards

animals.

Priya said that to better understand urban biodiversity and human-animal interactions, a Citizen Science Programme has been launched as part of the project across all the municipal wards in Guwahati.

"Under this initiative, citizens can use their mobile phones to capture geo-tagged photographs of local flora and fauna, including street dogs, rhesus macaques and other species," she said.

The data collected will help in population mapping and behaviour analysis, which will guide GMC's animal management strategies, she said.

"GMC will conduct a month-long intensive campaign across all wards in cooperation with the respective ward commissioner, NGO, citizens and officials," Priya said.

The project encompasses activi-

ties like vaccination and sterilisation programmes, public awareness campaigns and capacity building of local volunteers, she said.

The commissioner said a dedicated helpline has been made operational to address issues related to stray dogs and dog-bite incidents.

"Citizens can report emergencies, complaints or requests for assistance through this number, enabling GMC to provide prompt and coordinated response," she said.

The GMC has also urged all pet owners to register their dogs through the Seva Setu portal in order to maintain a comprehensive and scientific database of pet animals.

"This registration is mandatory and will assist in ensuring effective vaccination coverage, better monitoring and (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Sensex tanks 593 points hit by foreign fund outflows, uncertainty over Fed's future rate cut path

MUMBAI, Oct 30: Equity markets fell sharply on Thursday, with the Sensex tumbling 592.67 points and the Nifty declining to 25,877.85 level, as fresh foreign fund outflows and uncertainty on the future course of rate action by the US Federal Reserve dampened investors' sentiment.

The 30-share BSE Sensex tanked 592.67 points or 0.70 per cent to settle at 84,404.46. During the day, it dropped 684.48 points or 0.80 per cent to 84,312.65.

A total of 2,291 stocks declined while 1,876 advanced and 155 remained unchanged on the BSE.

The 50-share NSE Nifty tumbled 176.05 points or 0.68 per cent to 25,877.85.

From the Sensex firms, Bharti Airtel, Power Grid, Tech Mahindra, Infosys, Bajaj Finance and Reliance Industries were among the major laggards.

However, Larsen & Toubro, Bharat Electronics, UltraTech Cement and Maruti were among the gainers.

"Equity benchmarks slipped on Thursday as cautious commentary from the US Federal Reserve and renewed foreign fund outflows



weighed on sentiment. The Fed's 25 bps rate cut was in line with expectations, but Chair Jerome Powell's indication of a pause in further easing dampened risk appetite, especially amid the ongoing US government shutdown," Gau-rav Garg, Research Analyst, Lemonn Markets Desk, said.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth ₹ 2,540.16 crore on Wednesday, according to exchange data. Domestic Institutional Investors (DIIs) bought equities worth ₹ 5,692.81 crore in the previous trade.

"As expected, the US Fed cut interest rates by 25 bps. However, the market consolidated after Chair Jerome Powell indicated that this might be the last rate cut of 2025, tempering hopes of further monetary easing. The resulting strength in the US dollar contributed to a risk-off sentiment across emerging markets, including India," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Investments Limited, said.

The BSE smallcap gauge dipped 0.06 per cent and midcap index ended unchanged.

BSE telecommunication tanked 2.52 per cent, teck (1.02 per cent), bankex (0.72 per cent), financial services (0.59 per cent) and BSE Focused IT (0.55 per cent). Energy, industrials, capital goods, oil & gas and realty ended higher.

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

Markets in Europe were trading lower. US markets ended on a mixed note on Wednesday.

"Profit-taking has taken centre stage on the back of weak European and Asian cues, while investors also exercised caution after the US Fed chairman indicated that further rate cuts over next two months look unlikely," Prashant Tapse, Senior VP (Research), Mehta Equities Ltd, said.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude dipped 0.59 per cent to USD 64.54 a barrel.

On Wednesday, the Sensex climbed 368.97 points or 0.44 per cent to settle at 84,997.13. The Nifty went up by 117.70 points or 0.45 per cent to 26,053.90. (PTI)

Coal exchange rules to be finalised by November-end: Coal Secretary

KOLKATA, Oct 30: The draft rules for the country's proposed coal exchange will be finalised by the end of November after examining feedback received from the public, Coal Secretary Vikram Dev Dutt said on Thursday.

"The draft coal exchange rules are in the public domain. Comments have come, and we are examining those. The rules will be finalised by the end of November," Dutt told reporters on the sidelines of the Asia Mining Congress here.

The proposed coal exchange aims to bring transparency, efficiency and a market-driven mechanism to domestic coal trading.

According to the draft rules, the coal controller organisation (CCO) will be appointed to register and regulate the coal exchanges to be established in the country. The Ministry of Coal had invited comments from stakeholders by mid-October.

On the disinvestment front, Dutt said the process for Bharat Coking Coal Ltd (BCCL) and Central Mine Planning and Design Institute Ltd (CMPDIL) has made significant progress.

"We have moved ahead in this regard for both BCCL and CMPDIL. The DRHPs were cleared by SEBI in September. Roadshows for BCCL are at an advanced stage, and we are reaching out to investors. There is healthy interest, and the roadshow will conclude by this month," he said at the 11th edition of the MGMI International Mining Exhibition.

The secretary said India's coal production continues to be strong, with the country crossing the one billion-tonne mark in both production and supply for the first time last fiscal.

"The first-half demand this year has been muted because domestic power generation is down by more than four per cent. As a result, we have record stock both at the pithead and power plants. We expect production to be close to the target for both Coal India and commercial miners," Dutt said.

Coal India Ltd (CIL) produced 781 million tonnes in FY25. The country's total coal output, including captive and commercial mines, surpassed one billion tonnes in FY25 and is projected to reach 1.15 billion tonnes in FY26. (PTI)

AGB organises blood donation camp

HT Bureau
GUWAHATI, Oct 30: Assam Gramin Bank (AGB), a premier financial institution of the state, organised a Voluntary Blood Donation Camp at its Head Office in Guwahati on October 29, 2025, as part of the observance of Vigilance Awareness Week 2025.

The event was conducted in collaboration with Saharia Blood Bank, Guwahati.

The Department of Vigilance, Assam Gramin Bank, Head Office, hosted the event on behalf of the Bank. Saharia Blood Bank was represented by seven healthcare

executives and technicians.

The logistics for the event were arranged by Saharia Blood Bank.

The event started at 11:00 a.m. at the Head Office premises, and a total of 27 officers and staff members of the Bank voluntarily donated blood during the camp.

The medical team from Saharia Blood Bank efficiently conducted the collection process, ensuring that all safety and health protocols were strictly followed.

The initiative reaffirms Assam Gramin Bank's commitment towards uplifting the spirit of honesty, service, and vigilance among

employees while supporting a noble cause that saves lives.

Assam Gramin Bank offered its sincere gratitude to Saharia Blood Bank for their cooperation and contribution in making the programme successful.

Saharia Blood Bank acknowledged the noble initiative of Assam Gramin Bank and thanked all the donors for their contribution towards the noble cause.

The event concluded with both Assam Gramin Bank and Saharia Blood Bank expressing their commitment to such future endeavours.

Gold demand in India falls 16 pc in Q3 2025 on high prices; investment buying surges



NEW DELHI, Oct 30: India's gold demand fell 16 per cent by volume in the July-September quarter of 2025 as record-high prices dampened consumer appetite, though investment buying surged on safe-haven appeal, the World Gold Council said on Thursday.

Total gold demand declined to 209.4 tonnes in the third quarter from 248.3 tonnes a year earlier, according to the industry body.

However, the volume of demand jumped 23 per cent to ₹ 2,03,240 crore from ₹ 1,65,380 crore, reflecting sharply higher gold prices.

Gold jewellery demand, which accounts for the bulk of consumption in the world's second-largest bullion market, dropped 31 per cent to 117.7 tonnes from 171.6 tonnes. But the volume of jewellery purchases remained flat at around ₹ 1,14,270 crore as buyers adjusted to elevated price levels.

Investment demand showed "re-

markable strength", rising 20 per cent by volume to 91.6 tonnes and surging 74 per cent in value terms to ₹ 88,970 crore from ₹ 51,080 crore, the WGC said.

"This highlights a deepening strategic commitment among Indian consumers to gold as a long-term store of value," Sachin Jain, World Gold Council Regional CEO for India, said.

The average gold price in India rose to ₹ 97,074.9 per 10 grams during the quarter, up 46 per cent from ₹ 66,614.1 a year earlier, excluding import duty and GST. International prices averaged USD 3,456.5 per ounce, compared with USD 2,474.3 in the year-ago period.

Despite the volume decline, Jain remained optimistic about demand during the crucial festive and wedding season, citing early signs from retailers and strong sales in October during Diwali.

"There is a 16 per cent drop in vol-

ume but there is a 23 per cent historic rise in value. We cannot ignore that," Jain told PTI. "Indian consumers are catching up with the rise in per capita income and disposable income."

He noted that many consumers preponed their wedding purchases as prices climbed in recent months, providing confidence for a strong fourth quarter.

Gold imports tumbled 37 per cent to 194.6 tonnes from 308.2 tonnes, while recycling fell 7 per cent to 21.8 tonnes.

Jain said the import figures reflected last year's surge following a historic duty reduction announced in the July 2024 budget, which made the year-ago quarter an exceptionally strong base for comparison.

The council expects full-year demand of 600-700 tonnes, toward the higher end of that range, after demand of 462.4 tonnes in the first nine months.

India's decline contrasted with global trends, where gold demand rose to 1,313 tonnes in the third quarter, the highest on record. The global surge was driven primarily by central bank purchases and investment demand, with the National Bank of Poland remaining the largest buyer among central banks.

Jain said India's consumption patterns differ from global trends as jewellery demand is predominantly an Indian phenomenon, while global demand is driven by central banks and investment flows.

He attributed the continued strength in gold prices to geopolitical uncertainties, potential trade wars, and countries diversifying their dollar reserves into gold, factors that are expected to support prices and demand momentum going forward. (PTI)

Contd. from Page 1...

Zubeen's last film

Sourav Dutta told PTI in an interview. No Assamese cinema has ever reached this scale of release and the response is also extremely overwhelming, he added.

"Almost all shows for the next one week at BookMyShow are sold out or filling fast. The emotional quotient is very high in this film with Zubeen Garg's untimely demise. We are working day-and-night to fulfill the demand," Dutta said. He said that 14 new screens will be added to meet the growing demand, and the number of halls, as well as shows, is increasing with every passing minute.

"Our teams are on the field for the last 15 days. We are installing new projectors almost every day. I have never seen such demand for any film in this region in my entire career," Dutta said.

The film, which will be projected by all the content providers like UFO, Cube and KSS, will also be released in some cities of India where no Assamese cinema saw the light of the day earlier, he added.

He said places like Lucknow, Indore, Patna, Cuttack, Bhubaneswar, Dehradun, Darjeeling, Gangtok, Kochi, Jaipur, Surat, Ranchi, Dhanbad, Coimbatore and Goa, where no Assamese film was screened before, will showcase 'Roi Roi Binale' from Friday.

When asked about demands from such new cities, Dutta said, "Two factors are working here. First, there is natural curiosity among the public, who are non-Assamese, to know about Zubeen Garg. Secondly, many multiplex chains have decided to release the film on their screens across the country."

The distributor also received a screening request from Nepal, but it is not yet finalised, he added.

Speaking on show frequency, Dutta said, "On an average, there will be five shows every day. However, some halls have increased the number to seven shows. We have advised not to do it in this way as the machine also needs some rest. Otherwise, we may see a breakdown."

Goenka Enterprises' Siddharth Goenka, the distributor of 'Roi Roi Binale', told PTI that the film is likely to continue uninterrupted for at least two months in the Northeast, especially Assam.

"From tomorrow, there is no other film in any hall in Assam. The hall owners have pre-booked the film for the next few weeks. There will be 600 shows every day and it is unthinkable for Assamese cinema," he added.

Goenka said that he is continuously receiving requests from newer places, but not able to meet the demand.

Assam Police IGP (Law and Order) Akhilesh Kumar Singh said security personnel will be stationed outside the theatres to maintain order.

"Our personnel will be deployed... We will limit ourselves only to crowd management. This is an emotional film and we are all looking forward to it," he added.

The Assam cabinet on Wednesday decided that the government will hand over the state's share of GST from 'Roi Roi Binale' to Kalaguru Artists Foundation, set up by the singer for welfare of the downtrodden. (PTI)

Five Bir Lachit

action follows chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma's recent directive for strict measures against the Bir Lachit Sena, which has come under increased scrutiny for its alleged involvement in unlawful activities. Police said more arrests are likely as investigation continues.

Veteran artist Syed

His demise marks the end of an era in Assam's musical landscape, leaving the state's cultural fraternity and admirers in deep mourning.

Syed Sadulla's rich legacy will continue to inspire and resonate through his vast body of work.

In new Assam women

₹ 21,000 crore from banks and have been repaying their loans. With about 99 per cent of women repaying their loans promptly, Assam's self-help groups have earned nationwide admiration.

Several groups have received invitations from other states to share their experiences. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has also invited Assam's "Lakshmi Baidues" to Delhi to participate in Republic Day and Independence Day celebrations. The SHGs from Assam have participated in major exhibitions across the country, where they displayed and sold their products, earning wide appreciation.

The chief minister said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi had shared his vision of creating three crore "Lakshmi Baidues" in India during a meeting in Jorhat and had advised Assam to work toward empowering its women accordingly. Inspired by the Prime Minister's call, the State government, after due discussion with successful women entrepreneurs, launched MMUA to help women in Assam become financially independent.

Sarma highlighted how women, through their involvement in self-help groups, have strengthened both their families and the state's economy.

"History has shown that Assamese women succeed in every task they undertake and have always played a vital role in guiding society," he said. He added that to enable 40 lakh women to contribute to strengthening the market economy, the government decided to provide them with an opportunity.

Acknowledging that MMUA is a major step for a state with limited financial resources like Assam, he said that implementing the scheme required nearly ₹ 4,000 crore. Over the past two years, the government gradually accumulated funds and has now made the implementation of this initiative possible.

The chief minister noted that the present State government aims to bring positive changes to women's lives in Assam. He said that the government is moving toward introducing a law in the Assam Legislative Assembly to prohibit polygamy, which will be presented in the upcoming November session.

He said that 30,000 families in the Sadiya Legislative Assembly constituency have already benefited from the Orunodoi scheme, as he announced that another 3,000 eligible families who have not yet been included will now receive approval. Families with ration cards will also begin to get sugar, lentils, and salt at subsidized prices from December. Speaking about development in Sadiya, the chief minister highlighted various government initiatives such as electrification of remote villages like Amarapur, road and flood control projects, and granting land rights to those previously deprived. The administration is preparing to distribute land titles to 5,000 families in Amarapur.

He remarked that Sadiya has now developed into a growing and prosperous district compared to its condition in 2001. Tea Tribe Welfare Minister Rupesh Gowala, MP Pradan Baruah, MLAs Bolin Chetia, Sanjay Kishan, Suren Phukan, Mission Director ASRLM Kuntal Moni Sarma Bordoloi, and a host of others were present on the occasion.

Justice Surya Kant appointed

directing that one-third of seats in Bar associations, including the Supreme Court Bar Association, be reserved for women. Justice Kant was part of the bench that appointed a five-member committee headed by former Supreme Court judge Justice Indu Malhotra to probe the security breach during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 2022 Punjab visit, saying such matters required "a judicially trained mind". He also upheld the One Rank-One Pension (OROP) scheme for defence forces, calling it constitutionally valid, and continues to hear petitions of women officers in the armed forces seeking parity in permanent commission. He was on the seven-judge bench that overruled the 1967 Aligarh Muslim University judgment, opening the way for reconsideration of the institution's minority status. He was part of the bench which heard the Pegasus spyware case and which appointed a panel of cyber experts to probe allegations of unlawful surveillance, famously stating that the state cannot get a "free pass under the guise of national security". (PTI)

CM pays homage

The NDFB's Ranjan Daimary faction had carried out the serial blasts in Guwahati, Kokrajhar, Barpeta and Bongaigaon. In September 2022, the Gauhati High Court upheld a special court's sentence of life imprisonment to Daimari along with six of his accomplices, and acquitted four others in connection with the serial bomb blasts. (PTI)

India rejects UN expert's

"I would also urge the SR (Special Rapporteur) not to depend upon unverified and skewed media reports whose sole purpose appears to be maligning my country where people of all faiths live, including more than 200 million Muslims, which is about 10 per cent of the world's Muslim population," Saikia said.

Saikia stressed that as a close neighbour, India continues to support all initiatives aimed at fostering trust and advancing a Myanmar-owned and Myanmar-led path toward peace, stability, and democracy.

"We reiterate our consistent position calling for an immediate cessation of violence, release of political prisoners, unhindered delivery of humanitarian assistance, and inclusive political dialogue.

"We firmly believe that sustainable peace can only be secured through inclusive political dialogue and the early restoration of democratic processes through credible and participatory elections," he said.

Cong against Assam's

and go to jungles. They do not want peace in Assam. Today, we are bringing back youths of Assam from militancy, but the Congress wants to push the youths towards insurgency," Sarma alleged.

The chief minister alleged that the Congress, all along, has been against the interest of Assam.

"They do not want any industry to come up in Assam. This is a blatant attempt by Priyank Kharge against the national interest of our country," Sarma claimed.

The Karnataka IT industry is being run by youth from other states, he claimed. (PTI)

China grants licences

a large number of countries last year. It lifted the restrictions in June but did not relax the norms for resuming exports to India. Over two weeks ago, China announced new restrictions on the export of technologies and equipment related to the mining and processing of rare earths, lithium batteries, and rare earth-based superhard materials. China's decision to grant licenses to the Indian companies is being seen as part of overall efforts to rebuild the ties between the two sides.. (PTI)

Guwahati civic body

responsible pet ownership," Priya said. Recognising the emotional bond between citizens and their pets, the GMC is also setting up an electric crematorium to facilitate dignified last rites for companion animals.

"This initiative will provide citizens with a respectful and environmentally friendly means to bid farewell to their pets," she added. (PTI)

Karbi cultural troupe

for Karbi Anglong, noting that the vibrant and energetic Karbi dances captivated both the audience and judges. He expressed gratitude to Chief Executive Member (CEM) Tuliram Ronghang, Executive Member (EM) of Art & Culture Department Surjya Rongphar, Joint Secretary Nirupama Timunpi, Deputy Director Kati Katharpi, and Principal of KTMCRI Bonsam Kathar for their guidance and support.

He also extended appreciation to the artists whose dedication and performance made it possible to showcase the rich cultural heritage of the Karbi community on the international stage.

NAME CORRECTION

I, MANJUARA BEGUM W/O Jainal Abdin Ahmed D/O ABDUS SATTAR, R/O - wrad No - 7, kharupetia Town. PO - kharupetia, PS- Kharupetia, Dist - Darrang. (Assam) declare that I am a permanent resident of above mentioned address and citizen of India by birth. That my actual and correct name is Manjuara Begum. That my name has been Wrongly recorded in my educational documents as Monjuara Begum. And My father's actual and correct name is ABDUS SATTAR. That My father's name has been Wrongly recorded in my International passport bearing passport No - N4032319, date of Issue 12/10/2015 as Mohammad Abdus Sattar in place of Abdus Sattar. That Abdus Sattar and Mohammad Abdus Sattar is the same and one person who is my father and Manjuara Begum and Monjuara Begum is the same and one person who is myself.

Sd/-
MANJUARA BEGUM

AFFIDAVIT

I Jabeldul Hussain, S/O- Abdul Jabbar, Resident of Islam Nagar, P.O- Nilbagan P.S. Hojai Dist.- Hojai, (Assam) That, my actual and correct name is Jabeldul Hussain and my father's actual and correct name is Abdul Jabbar. That in my Indian Passport Vide No- J1795531 date of issue 02/09/2011 File No- GUWA01520611 wherein my name has been wrongly recorded as Mohammad Jabeldul Husan instead of actual and correct name Jabeldul Hussain and my father's name has been wrongly recorded as Mihammad Abdul Jabbar instead of actual and correct name Abdul Jabbar.

Jabeldul Hussain
S/O Abdul Jabbar

IAF to showcase grand flying display over Guwahati

Spectacular aerial display to feature Tejas, Rafale jets and Suryakiran team along the Brahmaputra



HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, Oct 30: The Indian Air Force (IAF) will thrill the people of the Northeast with a spectacular flying display over the Brahmaputra at Lachit Ghat, Guwahati, on November 9, 2025, as part of its 93rd Anniversary celebrations.

Preparations are underway, with participating aircraft and display teams arriving in Guwahati for rehearsals and coordination. The aerial showcase will be held from 11:00 AM to 2:00 PM on November 5, 6, 8 and 9, offering a chance to witness the Light Combat Air-

craft Tejas, Rafale jets, the Suryakiran Aerobatic Team and other frontline IAF platforms.

This year's Air Force Day theme, "Infallible, Impervious and Precise - अचूक, अभेद्य व सटीक," reflects the IAF's commitment to operational excellence, resilience and precision. The event will also honour the IAF's legacy and inspire youth to consider careers in the Air Force.

Viewing arrangements, traffic advisories, and access details will be shared closer to the event through official IAF social media channels and local media.

KA conducts school disaster drill

HT Bureau

DIPHU, Oct 30: The District Disaster Management Authority (DDMA), Karbi Anglong, under the chairmanship of District Commissioner Nirola Phangchopi, ACS, successfully conducted the Great Assam School Shakeout Programme (GASSP) 2025 on October 29, on the eve of National Disaster Risk Reduction Day, with support from the Assam State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA).

The programme was held simultaneously in 64 schools across the district, featuring earthquake and fire mock drills. It aimed to raise awareness and enhance preparedness and response capabilities among students, teachers and school staff in the event of disasters. Through initiatives like this, DDMA Karbi Anglong seeks to promote a culture of safety and preparedness in educational institutions, contributing to more resilient school communities.

Tributes paid to Zubeen Garg and Syed Sadulla

HT Correspondent

MANGALDAI, Oct 30: At the 2025-26 freshers' welcome programme held on Thursday at Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya Adarsha Mahavidyalaya in Dalgaoan, Darrang, tributes were paid to renowned artist Zubeen Garg and veteran musician Syed Sadulla, both of whom passed away earlier in the day.

The event, graced by chief guest Shashank Sameer, director, lyricist and RJ of the film Bhaimon Da, began with a welcome address by college principal Dr Lakshmi Prasad Hazarika. Dignitaries included Zubeen Garg's instrumentalist Rishabh Bhuyan and Bhaimon Da co-director Tapan Dutta.

Hemanta Kumar Barua Youth Award to Manjit Rajkonwar



HT Correspondent

TEZPUR, Oct 30: Young researcher, writer and preserver of Assamese musical heritage, Manjit Rajkonwar, was honoured with the "Hemanta Kumar Barua Memorial Youth Award" during a commemorative programme marking the fourth death anniversary of the renowned educationist and professor Hemanta Kumar Barua. The event was organised by the Hemanta Kumar Barua Memorial Preservation Committee in association with the Barua family and the Alumni Association of Darrang College at the college auditorium on Wednesday.

The programme began with the lighting of the ceremonial lamp and floral tributes by Barua's wife Himadri Barua and daughter Ankita Barua, followed by a rendition of Borgeet by Hira Moni Lahkar.

Dr Jayanta Madhab Tamuli, professor at Srimanta Sankardeva University, delivered the memorial lecture on "Children's Literature and Translation—Relevance and Challenges." He highlighted the importance of understanding the psychology of children in writing literature for young audiences and stressed the need for creative boundaries to maintain emotional balance.

The award was presented to Manjit Rajkonwar by retired professors Dr Satish Chandra Bhattacharyya, Dr Ramesh Chandra Goswami, Dr Bhubaneswar Saharia, along with members of Barua's family. Rajkonwar received a gamosa, shawl, books, citation, memento and cash honourarium.

Speaking on the occasion, Rajkonwar shared his admiration for Barua and highlighted Tezpur's historical contributions to Assamese modern music, referencing prominent figures like Lambodar Bora, Laxmidhar Sarma, Padmanath Gohain Baruah, Lakshmiram Baruah, Nabin Chandra Bardoloi and Ananda Chandra Agarwala.

Prominent actress Dr Jahanara Begum recalled Barua's distinctive qualities, while senior lyricist Bankim Sarma, president of Baan Theatre, remembered him as a "treasure-house of spontaneous humour and warmth." Several other dignitaries also paid homage, reflecting on Barua's human values, artistic brilliance and lasting legacy.

Among those present were Dr Bhupen Saikia (Adviser, Memorial Committee), Dhruvajyoti Das (president, Alumni Association of Darrang College), Dr Palashmoni Saikia (principal, Darrang College), and Narayan Nath (president, Sonitpur Artists' Guild). The programme was presided over by Committee president Birendra Kumar Bora, with a welcome address by joint secretary Bhupen Barua. The event concluded with a vote of thanks and closing remarks from Bora.

Bodoland University signs MoU with University of Naples

HT Correspondent

KOKRAJHAR, Oct 30: Bodoland University, Kokrajhar, has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the University of Naples Federico II, Italy, one of Europe's oldest and most reputed universities, ranked among the top 400 globally in the Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2025.

The partnership aims to foster cooperation in teaching, research and training, focusing on planetary health, One Health, pollution remediation, oxidative stress and antioxidants in reproduction, waste-zero approaches and sustainability.

The initiative was coordinated by Dr Hemen Sarma, Associate Professor and Head of the Department of Botany, Bodoland University, who has been instrumental in promoting international collaborations. The MoU was signed online by Prof (Dr) B L Ahuja, Vice-Chancellor of Bodoland University, and Prof Dr Giunata De Vico, Director of the Department of Biology, University of Naples Federico II. Dr Subung Basumatary, Registrar of Bodoland University and Prof Giulia Guerriero from Naples signed as witnesses, while Dr Manjil Basumatary, Academic Registrar, assisted in finalising the agreement.

As part of the collaboration, two faculty members from affiliated colleges of Bodoland University will attend the Mediterranean Life Sciences Union (MedLIFE 2025) international conference in Naples from December 9 to 11, 2025. The event will bring together researchers from around the world to advance interdisciplinary studies in life sciences and environmental health.

Meanwhile, Dr Jahnovi Brahma, Assistant Professor, Science College, Kokrajhar, received acceptance for her paper on the "Cultural Value Index and Phytochemical Characterisation of Wild Edible Plants Used by the Bodo Tribe of Kokrajhar District, Assam." Sukanya Sarma, Assistant Professor and Head, Department of Botany, Salbari College, was also recognised for her paper on "Integrative Analysis of Cadmium Toxicity in Chlorococcum sp. GUECO1018."

Faculty members of the Department of Botany, including Dr Sanjib Baruah, Dr Yutika Narzary, Dr Rebecca Daimari, and Prof Sanjay Basumatary (IQAC Director), expressed pride in this international collaboration, describing it as a milestone in enhancing Bodoland University's global presence and promoting scientific growth in the Bodoland region.

Mega health camp in Dhekiajuli records 2,340 registrations

HT Correspondent

TEZPUR, Oct 30: A LAC-wide Mega Health Camp for the Dhekiajuli Legislative Assembly Constituency was held on Thursday at Lokanayak Omeo Kumar Das College, Dhekiajuli, Sonitpur, under the "Susrusha Setu 2025" initiative of the Government of Assam. The camp, part of the "Seva Hi Samarpan: Seva Saptah" programme, marked the fifth health camp in the district under Susrusha Setu 2025.

The camp was inaugurated by Health Minister and Dhekiajuli MLA Ashok Singhal. Other dignitaries present included Pranati Gogoi Joint Secretary of Health & Family Welfare Department, Co-District Commissioner Dyotiva Borah, Dr Manoj Choudhury Executive Director of NHM Assam, ADC (Health) Twahir Alam, Tulika Saikia, Vice Chairperson of Dhekiajuli Municipal Board and Dr Biman Sarma, Joint Director of Health Services, along



with senior health officials and staff.

The camp witnessed an overwhelming response, recording 2,340 registrations and an estimated footfall of nearly 5,000 people. Services included 15 registration desks, two Mobile Medical Units, a general laboratory, 10 specialist OPDs including cardiology and neurology, 16 doctors in the general OPD, an AYUSH OPD and yoga centre, a dental OPD, a disability centre issuing UDID cards and a cancer screening facility. More than 150 health personnel, including doctors, lab and ECG technicians, ANMs and offi-

cialists from the Social Welfare Department, offered their services to the beneficiaries.

Organised by the Department of Health & Family Welfare, the Susrusha Setu 2025 health camps aim to provide comprehensive screening for children aged 0-18 years, covering over 50 health conditions, including congenital heart diseases, neurological disorders, cleft lip and palate, congenital malformations, endocrine and haematological disorders. General health check-ups and wellness activities were also part of the initiative.

Kalaguru Theatre inaugurated at Jyoti Chitran

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, Oct 30: A new modern mini theatre named "Kalaguru Theatre" was inaugurated on Thursday at the Jyoti Chitran Film Studio in Kahilipara, Guwahati. The 106-seat state-of-the-art auditorium was inaugurated by Jyoti Chitran Chairman Vidyasagar in the presence of Vice Chairman Sunil Rajkonwar, secretary Nayana Bora and several distinguished guests.

In his inaugural address, Chairman Vidyasagar said the new theatre was constructed by renovating an old, abandoned building under the advice of the Chief Minister. He noted that this initiative fulfills a long-standing demand of the state's film and cultural community. Vidyasagar further informed that work is in progress for constructing a larger 1,000-seat modern theatre inside the Jyoti Chitran complex, in line with the Chief Minister's vision.

He added that several people-centric projects are currently underway at Jyoti Chitran, including the regularisation of long-serving contractual employees and the development of an open-air stage for artists.

To mark the occasion, a special documentary film based on the life and creative journey of veteran filmmaker and artist Pulak Gogoi was screened at the newly opened theatre.

Vidyasagar also announced that special screenings of Zubeen Garg's upcoming Assamese film "Roi Roi Binalee" will be organised at Jyoti Chitran to support and encourage local artists and technicians.

Meanwhile, the Jyoti Chitran family, led by Chairman Vidyasagar, expressed deep sorrow over the demise of noted singer, lyricist and music composer Syed Sadullah, who passed away while undergoing treatment.

KA to observe Bhupen Hazarika death anniversary

HT Bureau

DIPHU, Oct 30: The District Administration of Karbi Anglong, under the chairmanship of District Commissioner Nirola Phangchopi, ACS, will observe the death anniversary of Bharat Ratna Dr Bhupen Hazarika on November 5, in alignment with state-wide commemorations.

A preparatory meeting was held on October 29 at the Conference Hall of the District Commissioner's Office to discuss arrangements. The meeting was attended by the Senior Superintendent of Police, Additional Deputy Commissioners and representatives of various line departments.

The programme, organised as per the Standard Operating Procedure issued by the Directorate of Cultural Affairs, Assam, will include floral tributes to Dr Hazarika, cultural performances and a grand chorus of his iconic compositions, including "Manuhe Manuh Babe."

Dr Bhupen Hazarika, fondly known as the "Kudhakantha" of Assam, devoted his life to promoting unity, peace and brotherhood through music.

The District Administration aims to honour his legacy and inspire the younger generation to uphold his ideals.

₹ 5 lakh looted from scooter at Gaurisagar

HT Correspondent

SIVASAGAR, Oct 30: A sensational incident occurred at Gaurisagar near Sivasagar on Thursday when two unidentified miscreants looted ₹ 5 lakh from a scooter toolbox near PNB Gaurisagar Branch around 12:30 PM.

Rajdeep Konwar, a retired Assam Police Battalion soldier and resident of Khanamukh Bhitrorwaj village, had withdrawn the money from SBI Gaurisagar branch for household purposes. While heading towards PNB Gaurisagar on his scooter (AS04AH-8113) with his daughter Pranamika Konwar, he parked the vehicle near the branch and left the cash in the scooter diki. Within minutes, two men on a motorbike unlocked the scooter diki, stole the cash, and fled the scene.

An FIR has been filed at Gaurisagar Police Station and police are reviewing CCTV footage from nearby businesses. Sivasagar Additional Superintendent of Police and Deputy Superintendent of Police rushed to the spot for investigation. Senior Superintendent of Police Subhasis Baruah also visited the site to take stock of the situation.

District demonstrates strong preparedness and community resilience through statewide safety initiative

All Assam School Shakeout Mock Drill concludes in Dima Hasao



HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, Oct 30: The All Assam School Shakeout Mock Drill 2025 concluded successfully with a series of block-level orientation programmes conducted across Dima Hasao district, marking a major step toward strengthening disaster preparedness and awareness among school communities.

The mock drill, organised on different dates across multiple blocks, saw the participation of 37 selected schools. Teachers and students took part in hands-on training sessions guided by Block Mission Coordinators, Ricky Phukan (DPO, DDMA Dima Hasao), field officers, DDRF members, CQRT teams, Fire and Emergency Services personnel and Red Cross volunteers.

The initiative, part of the statewide Great Assam School Shakeout Mock Drill, aimed to enhance the capacity of teachers and students to respond effectively to disasters such as earthquakes and fire emergencies. The sessions included evacuation drills, simula-

tion exercises, and live demonstrations to help participants gain real-time experience in emergency response.

The programme also emphasised the formation of School Disaster Management Committees and the adoption of safety protocols to ensure schools remain alert and prepared for any emergency.

With the final drill concluding on October 29, Dima Hasao has reaffirmed its strong commitment to disaster risk reduction and community resilience. The district's active participation showcased a culture of preparedness, coordination and discipline in line with Assam's mission to build safe and disaster-ready communities.

The District Disaster Management Authority (DDMA), Dima Hasao, expressed its commitment to continue disaster mitigation programmes in collaboration with stakeholders such as the Indian Red Cross Society, emphasising the importance of continuous training and awareness to prevent risks, save lives and foster a culture of safety across the district.

West KA lifts restrictions in Tapat area

HT Bureau

DIPHU, Oct 30: The District Administration of West Karbi Anglong has formally withdrawn the restrictions imposed under Section 163 of the BNSS in the Tapat area under Hamren Police Station, following a comprehensive review confirming that the situation in the region has returned to complete normalcy.

The decision to lift the restrictions aims to restore free public movement and regular activities, ensuring smooth civic functioning while upholding peace and stability. District Magistrate Saranga Pani Sharma stated that the administration has received no reports of disturbances or anti-social activities in recent days. The area remained peaceful with no threat to public order.

Considering the improved circumstances and continuous cooperation from residents, the restrictions originally imposed through Order No ECF 14677/MJ-387/18/2023-MGA-WKA/13 dated October 9, 2025, were withdrawn with effect from October 24, 2025.

The District Administration extended sincere appreciation to citizens for their support and adherence to the measures during the enforcement period and urged everyone to continue maintaining peace and harmony. The administration will continue monitoring the situation to ensure sustained law and order and public tranquility.

AKRASU announces Assam-wide stir for ST status



HT Correspondent

GOSSAIGAON, Oct 30: The All Koch Rajbongshi Students' Union (AKRASU) has announced a state-wide stir demanding Scheduled Tribe (ST) status for the Koch Rajbongshi community and the re-establishment of Kamatapur state. The announcement was made at a press conference held at the Gossaigaon Press Club.

AKRASU president Dipen Roy accused both the Central and State Governments of failing to fulfil promises to the community. The organisation plans phase-wise protests across six districts—Dhubri, Nagaon, Kokrajhar, Dhemaji, Udalguri and Barpeta—on 13th, 16th, 20th, 21st, 23rd, and 24th November. He warned that if ST status is not granted before the 2026 Assam Assembly elections, the community would bar politicians from Koch Rajbongshi areas and withdraw cooperation.

Joint General Secretary Sunadhar Roy added that the agitation may escalate to railway blockades, highway closures and demonstrations in Dispur and New Delhi if demands are ignored. The press conference was attended by senior AKRASU leaders and former KLO Coordination Committee members, signalling a renewed push for identity, recognition and justice for the community.

Two die in septic tank accident

HT Correspondent

NAGAON, Oct 30: In a tragic incident at Barhampur in Nagaon district on Wednesday, two persons lost their lives after falling into a septic tank under construction. The mishap has left the local community in deep shock.

According to local sources, the incident occurred in the morning when a construction worker, identified as Sayed Razak Mohamud alias Bhatti (35) of Chalachali, fell into the septic tank while trying to remove wooden planks. He died of asphyxiation before he could be rescued.

In a desperate attempt to save him, the homeowner, Mantu Bordoloi (40), a sub-inspector with Assam Police, also fell into the tank and died.

Police and SDRF personnel later recovered the bodies and sent them for post-mortem examination. The tragic event has plunged both families and the entire area into mourning. Bordoloi leaves behind his wife, a young child and relatives. An investigation has been initiated to ascertain the exact cause of the accident.

Cachar to celebrate the 150th birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel

District administration to organise 'Padyatra' symbolising national integration and collective harmony



HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, Oct 30: In a befitting tribute to the Iron Man of India, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, the District Administration, Cachar is all set to organise a grand "Padyatra" (Unity March) on the occasion of his 150th Birth Anniversary on 31st October, 2025, at Silchar. The event aims to celebrate the spirit of national unity, integration and the values of patriotism that Sardar Patel so firmly stood for.

The Unity March will commence from DSA, Silchar Sports Complex at 8:00 AM and culminate at Gandhi Bagh, traversing through key points of the town Khudiram Statue, DC Office Cachar, Soni Mandir

Point, Janiganj, Nahatta Point, Premtola Point, Shillongpatty, Madhyasahar Point, DC Bungalow Point, before reaching its destination at Gandhi Bagh.

Over 1000 participants representing various walks of life including school and college students, government officials, members of the District Administration, social workers, NGOs, sports personalities, NSS and NCC volunteers, as well as prominent citizens, MPs and MLAs are expected to join this significant event. The enthusiastic participation from all communities reflects the district's unwavering commitment to unity and collective progress.

Following the conclusion of the Padyatra, a cultural programme will be held at Gandhi Bagh, jointly organised by the District Administration, Cachar in association with district cultural affairs.

The programme will feature patriotic performances, songs and speeches dedicated to the life and contributions of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, reminding citizens of his vision of a united and strong India.

The District Administration Cachar has extended a warm invitation to all citizens to join the Padyatra and pay homage to one of India's greatest nation-builders, thereby reinforcing the message of "Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat."

QUOTE OF THE DAY

With the new day comes new strength and new thoughts. -Eleanor Roosevelt

Nov 2 launch of CMS-03 satellite

As India's most powerful rocket stands ready at the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota, the nation prepares to make another significant leap in its space and defence capabilities. The Launch Vehicle Mark-3, carrying the CMS-03 satellite, is scheduled to lift off on November 2, 2025, in what promises to be one of the most strategically important missions undertaken by the Indian Space Research Organisation in recent years. The timing and purpose of this mission deserve careful attention. At a cost of ₹ 1,589 crores, funded entirely by the Ministry of Defence, the CMS-03 satellite represents far more than just another addition to India's growing constellation of communication satellites. This is a dedicated naval asset, purpose-built to extend India's eyes and ears across the vast Indian Ocean Region, a maritime expanse that has become increasingly crucial to global trade, energy security, and geopolitical competition. The satellite will replace GSAT-7, affectionately known as Rukmini, which has faithfully served the Indian Navy since 2013.

Where GSAT-7 provided essential communication links, CMS-03 promises to deliver significantly enhanced bandwidth, faster connectivity, and more sophisticated signal processing across multiple frequency bands. This technological evolution mirrors the broader transformation of naval warfare itself, where information dominance has become as crucial as firepower. Understanding what makes this satellite special requires looking at its technical specifications and operational implications. Weighing approximately 4,400 kilograms, CMS-03 will be the heaviest communication satellite ever launched from Indian soil. This mass translates directly into capability. The satellite carries advanced transponders operating across C, extended C, UHF, S, and Ku frequency bands. Think of these frequency bands as different types of highways in space, each optimized for specific types of communication.

For the Indian Navy, these capabilities translate into real operational advantages. Ships, submarines, and aircraft operating up to 2,000 kilometres from India's coast will maintain constant, secure communication links. This connectivity enables real-time sharing of surveillance data, weather information, navigation updates, and tactical intelligence. In an era where naval operations increasingly depend on network-centric warfare concepts, where every platform acts as both a sensor and a shooter within an integrated battle network, such communication capabilities become force multipliers of enormous value. For a nation with vast maritime interests and responsibilities, this satellite represents not merely technological achievement but strategic necessity in an increasingly complex security environment.

Teachers are quitting their jobs – a harsh reality

By: Dr Priyanka Saurabh

The country's education system is going through a phase where the most basic pillar – the teacher – itself is beginning to falter. Once this profession was a symbol of respect, stability and inspiration in the society, but today the same teacher is lost amidst paper formalities, technical pressure and administrative orders. He's exhausted, frustrated, and many teachers are now leaving the profession. This isn't an individual decision, but a national warning—because when a teacher burns out, education dies.

Today, the Indian education system is going through a phase where teachers have reached a state of extreme helplessness and devaluation. Once a symbol of respect, ideals, and self-satisfaction, this profession was a symbol of respect, ideals, and self-satisfaction. A teacher was someone who shaped society's direction, instilling values and wisdom in children. But now, the teaching profession has gradually become an administrative burden. Teachers' time is now spent more on papers, reports, and online portals than on children. Every day demands a new plan, a new directive, a new app, and a new form. Teaching has become a job, and a job so complex that it leaves no time for teaching. When a system demands proof of every task, both trust and creativity are eroded. This is why, despite being teachers, a large section of the population is disconnected from teaching—and the new generation is no longer interested in pursuing this profession. They are finding that this profession has become a symbol of fatigue and stress, not inspiration.

The direction in which education is being pushed in the name of technology and administrative oversight has turned teachers into data collectors and event managers. Every month, some day is celebrated—Yoga Day, Mother Language Day, Literacy Day—and every event is accompanied by photos, videos, reports, links... all of this has morphed into a culture of ostentation. Schools are no longer centers of knowledge, but platforms for display. Teachers seem to address the camera more than the children. This burden is even heavier in rural areas. Two or three teachers are responsible for hundreds of children. Mid-day meals, scholarships, uniforms, bicycle distribution, surveys, censuses—everything falls on them. Education has gradually become a management system, and the teacher a government employee, obedient to everyone. This situation has not only affected the quality of education but has also eroded the creativity and self-respect within teachers.

These circumstances have had the greatest impact on teachers' mental states. Constant monitoring, the demand for data, and digital proof of every action—all of this has stripped education of its humanity. Teachers who once had an emotional connection with their students are now forced to play a mechanical role. They have neither the time nor the opportunity to understand a child's problem, motivate them, or communicate with them. As a result, teachers are becoming emotionally exhausted, and students are becoming increasingly distant. Students no longer view teachers as guides, but as service providers. This attitude is destroying the very soul of education. The relationship of respect and trust, once the foundation of education, is now burdened with suspicion and formality. This situation is a concern not just for teachers, but for the future of society. If teachers and students are no longer the center of education, schools will become mere buildings. Schemes, portals, and policies are only meaningful if they enhance human connection, not eliminate it. We must seriously consider this question—do we trust our teachers? Are we giving them the freedom and respect that education most desperately needs? When a teacher is reduced to a mere order-bearer, they cease to be inspiring. And when inspiration disappears, the meaning of education also vanishes. We must acknowledge that the teacher is the center around which the entire education system revolves. If they are frustrated, neglected, and exhausted, the next generation will be the same. Now is the time to put the teacher back at the center of education—because if the teacher is gone, the school will remain, but the education will not.

This isn't just a problem for teachers, but a challenge for society's future. If education's core essence—the teacher—is weakened, the intellectual and moral development of future generations will remain incomplete. Policies, plans, apps, and portals are only useful if they empower teachers, not burden them. We must recognize that the center of education is teachers and students—not data, files, and photos. Teachers must once again be given an environment of freedom, respect, and trust. They aren't just doing a job; they're shaping the future. If they lack inspiration and dignity, so education will remain limited only to buildings and statistics. We must remember this – when the teacher is gone, the school will remain, but the education will not.

The challenges posed by Artificial Intelligence

Artificial intelligence, the most remarkable creation of recent technological advancements, has brought about a fundamental transformation in the foundations, operations, and ethical framework of human society. This technology has pushed the boundaries of knowledge forward, but at the same time, it has posed numerous profound and complex challenges before us, the full scope and depth of which are not yet entirely comprehensible. These challenges are not merely matters of technical security or efficiency; rather, they are deeply intertwined with critical issues such as human existence, social justice, and collective life. At this juncture of the rapid development of artificial intelligence, a comprehensive, in-depth, and thoughtful discussion on these challenges is necessary, so that we can direct this powerful tool toward the welfare of humanity.

The most significant technical and ethical challenge of artificial intelligence is the opacity or lack of clarity in its decision-making process. Current state-of-the-art artificial intelligence systems, especially deep learning models, are constructed with such a complex architecture that it becomes nearly impossible for humans to precisely understand the chain of reasoning it uses to arrive at a decision. This condition is commonly referred to as the "black box" problem. If this technology is used in critical areas such as disease diagnosis in medicine, bail decisions in the legal system, or action determination during accidents involving autonomous vehicles, this opacity can lead to disastrous consequences. If the machine makes a mistake, the inability to identify the source or cause of that error will inevitably erode public trust and reliance on the system. As a result of this ambiguity, a major crisis of accountability arises. If an individual's harm is caused by an artificial intelligence decision, upon whom should moral and legal responsibility be imposed? The creator of the system, the provider of the training data, or the end user? Until answers to these fundamental questions are found, the widespread acceptance and regulation of artificial intelligence will remain a significant challenge. To address this issue, researchers are now placing greater emphasis on explainable artificial intelligence (XAI), the goal of which is to make the decision-making process of artificial intelligence more transparent and comprehensible to humans.

In the economic sphere, automation driven by artificial intelligence and the radical transformation of the labor market pose an enormous challenge. Artificial intelligence is beginning to automate not only physical and repetitive tasks but also knowledge-based work, data analysis, and even certain aspects of creative industries. This will lead to a massive shift in employment, where the need for the skills of many traditional workers will diminish. Dealing with the widespread unemployment and job displacement created by this change will be a difficult task. Unless the human workforce is equipped with new skills, the number of unemployed and economically disadvantaged people in society will increase, leading to greater socioeconomic inequality. If the benefits of artificial intelligence are concentrated only among a small group of technology experts and capital owners, income gaps and unequal wealth distribution will deepen further. This situation poses a major threat to societal stability. To confront this challenge, we must establish a robust system of lifelong learning and skill development, enabling workers to adapt to market changes. Moreover, there is a need for deep deliberation on new policies such as universal basic income or equivalent social security systems for the distribution of wealth created by artificial intelligence. It must be ensured that technological progress brings opportunities for an improved life for all, not just a handful.

Another major challenge in the realm of ethics and social justice for artificial intelligence is the reflection of bias and the amplification of discrimination. The foundation of artificial intelligence systems' learning is vast datasets provided by humans. If these datasets contain traces of historical or current societal biases, gender discrimination, racial prejudice, or other forms of social injustice, the artificial intelligence system absorbs those biases and reflects them in its decision-making. Thus, artificial intelligence not only perpetuates existing inequalities but, through its efficient automated decision-making capability, can spread that discrimination on a much larger scale. As a result, injustice and discriminatory treatment toward socially marginalized or minority groups can continue automatically and unknowingly. In critical areas such as hiring, loan provision, crime prediction, or education, these biases can cause profound social harm. To resolve this challenge, strict oversight and testing for equality, fairness, and ethics are essential at every stage of artificial intelligence development—data collection, model construction, and implementation. In addition to inventing specific technical methods to detect and reduce bias, it is indispensable for technologists and policymakers to be deeply educated on social justice.

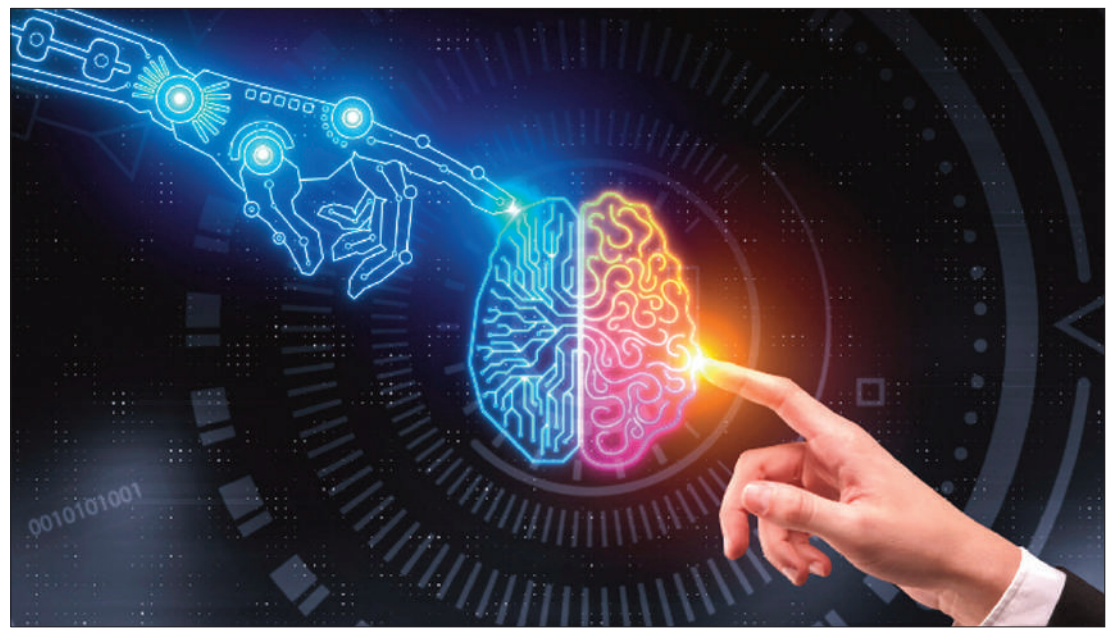
Personal data privacy and security are among the primary concerns of artificial intelligence. The performance and accuracy of artificial intelligence systems require

vast amounts of personal data. The continuous collection, processing, and analysis of this data are gradually blurring the boundaries of individual privacy. Artificial intelligence can create a deep and detailed picture of human behavior, preferences, locations, and other personal information, resulting in an unprecedented capacity for surveillance over individuals. Misuse or breach of this personal data can have serious impacts on an individual's freedom, autonomy, and dignity. Furthermore, there is a frightening possibility that such data repositories could be used by national or private institutions for mass control or political manipulation. If such technology is misused, it could weaken the foundations of democratic society, where individual autonomy and the right to privacy are indispensable. To address this challenge, strengthening data privacy laws, using robust data protection technologies such as privacy-enhancing technologies, and maintaining high ethical standards in data collection and use are crucial.

DEGREE OF THOUGHT

By: Himangshu Ranjan Bhuyan

The highly advanced infrastructure, computational power, and exceptionally skilled human resources required for the development of artificial intelligence systems are concentrated in the hands of only a few large technology companies and powerful nations. This centralization creates a significant risk that the future direction and policies of artificial intelligence will be influenced solely by the interests of this handful. As a result, there may be a lack of competition in technological innovation, and smaller enterprises or research centers may fall behind. Moreover, if control over such powerful technology remains in the hands of just a few individuals or institutions, their influence over society could increase unprecedentedly, weakening democratic oversight and control. To tackle this challenge, broader distribution of artificial intelligence resources and a democratic policy-making



process for its use are needed. Governments must ensure that the benefits and capabilities of artificial intelligence development are openly accessible to all. In the area of technical security and stability, the vulnerabilities of artificial intelligence and the potential for misuse are major concerns. Artificial intelligence systems can be deliberately or inadvertently misled. For example, there is the possibility of adversarial attacks that distort the machine's decisions through minor changes. If this technology is used in critical sectors such as autonomous vehicles, energy management, or defense systems, such attacks could lead to catastrophic outcomes. Additionally, the creation of fake information and deepfakes is another harmful application of artificial intelligence. Such technology can generate realistic but entirely false images, audio, and videos, which can misguide public opinion, interfere with political processes, and create rifts in social trust and relationships. Addressing this challenge requires emphasizing the security and robustness of artificial intelligence systems, as well as developing new technologies and social literacy for detecting fake information.

The impact of artificial intelligence on the human mind and culture presents a profound philosophical and psychological challenge. Artificial intelligence is increasingly becoming an integral part of human decision-making processes. As a result, people may lose their critical thinking abilities and capacity for independent decision-making. If machines make every small and large decision, human mental dependency will increase, and fundamental skills such as creativity, contemplation, and problem-solving may decline. Furthermore, emotional involvement with artificial intelligence companions and interactive systems could alter the natural nature of human-human relationships, leading to social isolation and a new form of emotional void. In this area, setting

limits on artificial intelligence use and actively protecting human skills and values are necessary. We must ensure that artificial intelligence serves as a supportive tool for human contemplation, not a substitute for it.

The most profound and fundamental challenge of artificial intelligence is the existential crisis associated with the creation of artificial general intelligence (AGI) and superintelligence. Although these concepts remain in the realm of the future, the rapid pace of artificial intelligence development makes it impossible to ignore them entirely. If a machine is ever created that can perform all human intellectual tasks and self-regulate and improve itself (at an astonishing rate), maintaining human control over it would become nearly impossible. If the goals and values of that superintelligence differ from human values, it could create a severe existential crisis for humanity, potentially leading to the complete loss of the importance and control of human life. For this fundamental challenge, it is extremely necessary for artificial intelligence researchers and world leaders to work deeply on safety and control policies through international cooperation starting now.

In conclusion, artificial intelligence is an unparalleled power that can bring unprecedented prosperity and convenience to our society. However, the challenges it poses are extremely complex, multifaceted, and fundamental. Addressing these challenges requires not only technical development but also a profound social, ethical, political, and legal reevaluation. We must advance the development of artificial intelligence based on a responsible and human-centered policy framework, so that it can serve humanity and realize its true potential. Determining the future of this technology will require a well-organized and thoughtful global effort, so that we can successfully overcome the challenges of this new era and build a better future for all.

Indo-US diplomatic tussle at ASEAN summit

The 47th Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Summit and related meetings began in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, on Sunday (26 October) under the theme "Inclusivity and Sustainability." The summit is keenly watched due to the absence of the Indian PM and presence of the POTUS, who'll try to get a deal done with the Chinese leadership, present at the summit

By: Asad Mirza

Prime Minister Narendra Modi did not travel to Malaysia but instead attended the ASEAN Summit's inaugural ceremony virtually on Sunday. In a social media post on Thursday, PM Modi said that he held a conversation with his Malaysian counterpart, Anwar Ibrahim and congratulated him on Malaysia assuming the ASEAN Chairmanship.

Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim will host leaders from ASEAN member states, along with top officials from the US, China, Japan, South Korea, and other key partners, for the three-day summit held from October 26-28. More than 30 heads of state and government from the 10 member states of the association, commonly referred to as ASEAN, are invited.

Among the invitees from outside the ASEAN bloc is US President Donald Trump. And PM Modi will be conspicuous by his absence in Kuala Lumpur. Currently the bromance between the two leaders seems to have vanished, as both claim to be working in the interest of their countries. PM Modi by buying Russian oil, despite American tariffs threat and POTUS determined to stop India from the cheap Russian oil. Meanwhile, both leaders have tried to downplay tensions as the tariff standoff continues.

However, PM Modi's decision could be described as one based on principles, the most obvious one being economic but also siding with a longtime trusted ally. While on the other POTUS might have brought-up the issue during a much-expected meeting between the two, but the core of his travel to Kuala Lumpur is to ease tensions with China, over tariffs imposed by him on Chinese goods.

At the moment the bromance between the two leaders seems to be facing choppy waters. When Modi and Trump shared a bear hug at the White House in February, expect-

tations were high that the warm relationship the leaders enjoyed during Trump's first term would continue. However, India soon realised it would not receive special treatment as Trump rolled out sweeping tariffs, which included a 25% levy on some Indian exports.

In August, the Trump administration said India's purchases of Russian oil were funding Moscow's war in Ukraine, and slapped on an additional 25% tariff, bringing the total to an eye-watering 50%, souring US-India ties to their lowest point in decades. Last week, Trump rocked the boat further by claiming for the first time that Modi "assured" him that India would stop buying Russian oil.

However, Reuters reported on Thursday that the top Indian buyer of Russian crude oil, Reliance Industries, was preparing for a "massive cut" in Russian oil imports. "We don't anticipate it will go to zero immediately as there will be some barrels coming into the market" via intermediaries, a refinery source told the news agency on condition of anonymity. "Recalibration of Russian oil imports is ongoing and Reliance will be fully aligned to the Government of India's guidelines," a Reliance spokesperson told Reuters.

The report comes after the US announced landmark new sanctions on Russia's largest oil producers, Rosneft and Lukoil, which US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said were responsible for funding the Kremlin's "war machine."

The move, the first direct targeting of Russia's war from the second Trump administration, freezes all US assets belonging to the Russian oil giants, while allowing for secondary sanctions on foreign banks that do business with them. This could mean banks in India would face penalties for facilitating Russian oil imports.

As the Russian oil rumours swirl, India's Foreign Ministry has continued to emphasise that the country's priority re-

mains maintaining Indian energy independence and keeping energy prices low for consumers.

Last week, Indian Foreign Ministry spokesman Randhir Jaiswal said Washington had shown interest in deepening energy cooperation and talks on that were underway. Jaiswal had emphasised that India's priority on oil imports was to "safeguard the interests of the Indian consumer in a volatile energy scenario."

India's oil purchases from Russia grew nearly 19-fold from 2021 to 2024, from 0.1 to 1.9 million barrels a day, making Russia India's top source of crude oil. In 2022, New Delhi began buying barrels from Russia at a discount after Moscow launched its war and was hit with sanctions to cut off oil revenues. India has argued that at one point, the US had actively supported Indian oil purchases from Russia to help stabilise global oil prices.

Meanwhile, US President Donald Trump has said he was confident of hashing out a deal with Chinese President Xi Jinping, after top economic officials from both countries reached a preliminary consensus in trade talks that concluded on Sunday.

US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent and Trade Representative Jamieson Greer met with Chinese Vice Premier He Lifeng and top trade negotiator Li Chenggang in Kuala Lumpur for a fifth round of in-person discussions since May. "I think we have a very successful framework for the leaders to discuss on Thursday," Bessent told reporters.

Bessent told NBC's "Meet the Press" that he anticipated the agreement would defer China's expanded export controls on rare earth minerals and magnets and avoid a new 100% US tariff on Chinese goods threatened by Trump.

He said Trump and Xi would discuss soybean and agricultural purchases from American farmers, more balanced trade and resolving the US fentanyl crisis, which was

the basis of 20% US tariffs on Chinese goods.

Trump arrived in Malaysia on Sunday, his first stop in a five-day Asia tour that is expected to culminate in a face-to-face with Xi in South Korea on October 30. After the trade talks, he struck a positive tone, saying, "I think we're going to have a deal with China."

The two leaders have spoken at least three times this year and Trump has said direct talks are the best way to resolve issues including tariffs, export curbs, agricultural purchases, fentanyl trafficking, geopolitical flashpoints such as Taiwan and the war in Ukraine.

"We'll be talking about a lot of things. I think we have a really good chance of making a very comprehensive deal," he said.

Among potential agenda items is the US's Taiwan policy. Xi has pushed for Washington to officially declare that it "opposes" independence for the self-ruled democracy, a concession that would amount to a major diplomatic win for Beijing. The longstanding US position is that it does not support Taiwan's independence. Secretary of State Marco Rubio told reporters on Saturday the Trump administration will not abandon long-standing US support for Taiwan in the negotiations.

It would not be wrong to surmise that PM Modi has exhibited the tough resolve of a good diplomat by not choosing to attend the ASEAN Summit and tossing the ball into the opponent's current. While for POTUS it could be said that currently he seems to be more focused on China and work out a mechanism by which the US could get the Chinese rare earth minerals, without any hindrance, and overall, his intentions seem to be obviously selfish, during his Asia tour. (Asad Mirza is a New Delhi-based senior commentator on national, international, defence and strategic affairs, environmental issues, an interfaith practitioner, and a media consultant.)

THE IRON MAN WHO FORGED A NATION

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's enduring legacy

By: Dipak Kurmi

In the pantheon of Indian independence leaders, few names command the respect and reverence accorded to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. While Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy of non-violence and Jawaharlal Nehru's vision of a modern, secular India are widely celebrated, it was Patel's pragmatic statesmanship and unwavering resolve that transformed the dream of independence into the reality of a unified nation. Born on October 31, 1875, in the modest town of Nadiad in Gujarat, Patel's journey from a village boy to the architect of modern India stands as a testament to determination, sacrifice, and an unshakeable commitment to national integration.

Patel's early life bore little indication of the towering figure he would become. As one of six children born to Jhaverbhai Patel and Ladba, young Vallabhbhai grew up in rural Gujarat, attending schools in Nadiad, Petlad, and Borsad while living self-sufficiently with other boys. A popular anecdote from his youth illustrates the stoic character that would define his later years: when a painful boil required lancing, Patel reportedly performed the procedure himself without hesitation, even as the barber charged with the task trembled in fear. This early display of fortitude and self-reliance would become hallmarks of his political career.

When Patel passed his matriculation examination at the relatively late age of twenty-two, his elders regarded him as an unambitious young man destined for ordinary employment. Yet Patel harbored grander aspirations, planning to study law, save funds, travel to England, and qualify as a barrister. He spent years studying independently with borrowed books, passing his examinations within two years and establishing himself as a fierce and skilled lawyer in Godhra, Borsad, and Anand. His dedication to his craft was matched only by his devotion to family, as demonstrated when he cared for a friend suffering from bubonic plague and subsequently contracted the disease himself, immediately isolating himself to protect his loved ones.

The trajectory of Patel's life took a dramatic turn when circumstances dictated that his elder brother Vithalbhai, who shared the same initials, would travel to England in his place to study law. Patel, honoring family tradition and his brother's seniority, sacrificed his own opportunity without complaint. This act of selflessness foreshadowed the personal sacrifices that would characterize his political career. Tragedy struck in 1909 when Patel's wife Jhaverba died following cancer surgery in Bombay. In a moment that has become legendary in Indian history, Patel received news of her death while cross-examining a

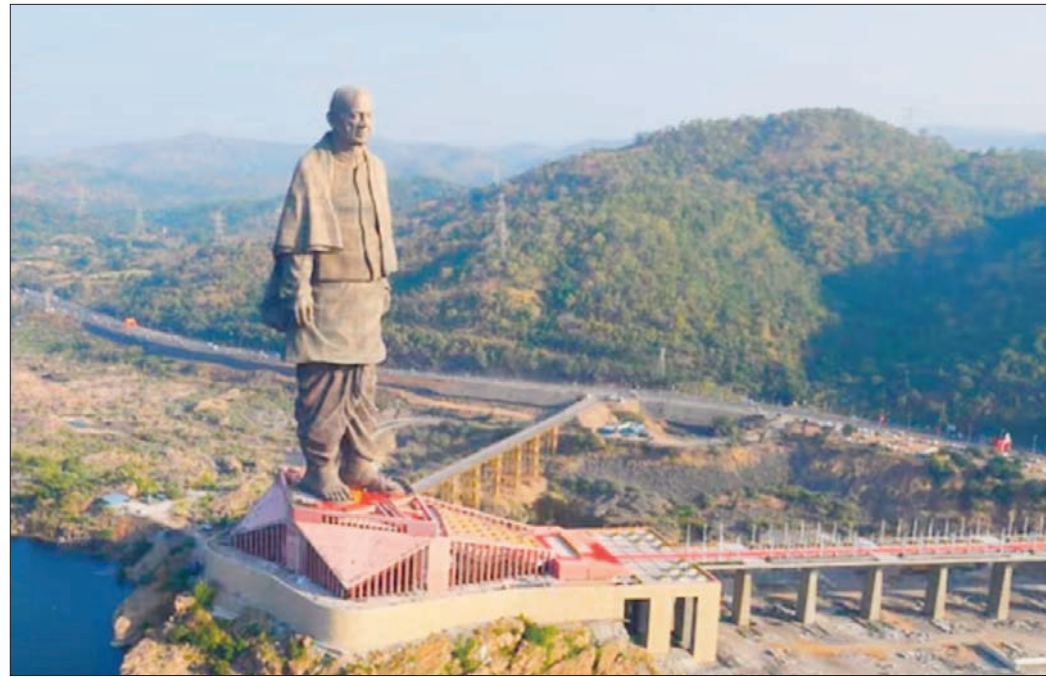
witness in court. He read the note, pocketed it, continued his examination, won the case, and only broke the news after proceedings concluded. This extraordinary display of professional dedication and emotional discipline exemplified the man who would later hold India together during its most turbulent period.

At the age of thirty-six, Patel finally traveled to England and enrolled at the Middle Temple in London, completing a thirty-six-month course in thirty months and finishing at the top of his class despite having no previous college background. Returning to India as a successful barrister wearing European-style clothes and sporting urbane mannerisms, Patel seemed destined for a life of professional success and material comfort. However, his encounter with Mahatma Gandhi in 1917 at the Gujarat Political Conference in Godhra transformed him from a prosperous lawyer into one of India's most influential freedom fighters.

Patel's entry into the independence movement was neither impulsive nor half-hearted. When Gandhi sought a Gujarati activist to lead the Kheda Satyagraha, Patel volunteered immediately, though he later admitted that his decision came after intense personal contemplation, as he realized he would have to abandon his career and material ambitions. Supported by Congress volunteers, Patel embarked on a village-by-village tour of the Kheda district, documenting grievances and rallying villagers for a statewide tax revolt. His emphasis on complete unity, non-violence, and preparedness for hardship became the template for future civil disobedience movements. When the British government sent police and intimidation squads to seize property, Patel organized a network of volunteers to protect villagers and their valuables. The eventual government capitulation and agreement to suspend taxes elevated Patel to heroic status among Gujaratis.

The Bardoli Satyagraha of 1928 further cemented Patel's reputation as an organizational genius and fearless leader. When the region faced both famine and a steep tax increase, Patel initiated a complete tax denial after carefully consulting with village representatives. His organization of volunteers, camps, and information networks across affected areas demonstrated a mastery of logistics and strategy that would prove invaluable in later nation-building efforts. The successful resolution of the crisis, which included repealing the tax hike and returning seized property, earned Patel the title "Sardar," meaning "chief," bestowed upon him by the grateful women of Bardoli. This honorific would remain with him throughout his life, symbolizing his leadership and the trust people placed in him.

Patel's role in the Quit India Movement of 1942 showcased



his evolution from regional leader to national figure. While Nehru, Rajagopalachari, and Maulana Azad initially criticized Gandhi's proposal for an all-out civil disobedience campaign, Patel emerged as its most fervent supporter. His climactic speech to more than one hundred thousand people at Gowalia Tank in Bombay on August 7, 1942, electrified nationalists who had been skeptical of the proposed rebellion. Historians credit Patel's organizational work during this period with ensuring the success of what became the most serious rebellion against British rule since 1857. His subsequent arrest and imprisonment with the entire Congress Working Committee from 1942 to 1945 demonstrated his willingness to suffer for the cause of independence.

However, Patel's greatest achievements came after independence, when the practical challenges of nation-building replaced the idealistic struggles of the freedom movement. As India's first Home Minister and Deputy Prime Minister, Patel faced the monumental task of integrating more than five hundred and sixty-five princely states into the newly independent nation. The British Indian Independence Act of 1947 had given these self-governing states the option of joining India, Pakistan, or remaining independent, threatening to fragment the subcontinent into hundreds of small kingdoms. Gandhi recognized the enormity of the challenge, telling Patel, "The problem of the States is so difficult that you alone can solve it."

Working with V.P. Menon as his chief secretary, Patel employed a sophisticated combination of diplomacy, persuasion, and when necessary, force to secure the accession of princely states. He invited rulers to informal lunches and teas at his Delhi home, where he explained that there was no inherent conflict between the Congress and the princely order. He invoked their patriotism, asking them to join in their nation's independence and

act as responsible rulers concerned about their people's future. He proposed favorable terms including privy purses for rulers' descendants, while simultaneously making clear that he would not hesitate to use force if patriotic appeals failed. His deadline of August 15, 1947, for signing instruments of accession created urgency without appearing dictatorial.

The cases of Junagadh and Hyderabad illustrated Patel's strategic brilliance and resolve. Junagadh, located in his home state of Gujarat with an eighty percent Hindu population, had acceded to Pakistan under pressure from Sir Shah Nawaz Bhutto despite its geographic distance from Pakistan. Patel combined diplomacy with military pressure, occupying three principalities to demonstrate resolve while demanding Pakistan annul the accession. Following the Nawab's flight to Karachi, Indian forces marched into the state, and a subsequent plebiscite produced a ninety-nine point five percent vote for merger with India. Hyderabad presented an even greater challenge as the largest princely state, where the Muslim Nizam Osman Ali Khan resisted accession despite ruling over an eighty percent Hindu population. When the Nizam's Razakar forces launched attacks on Indian territory and negotiations failed, Patel authorized military action in September 1948, successfully integrating Hyderabad into India.

Patel's contribution to independent India extended far beyond political integration. As chairman of committees responsible for minorities, fundamental rights, and provincial constitutions in the Constituent Assembly, he played a significant role in shaping India's constitutional framework. He worked closely with Muslim leaders to end separate electorates and protected civil servants from political interference, earning the sobriquet "patron saint of India's civil servants." His founding of the Indian Administrative Service and

Indian Police Service created the institutional backbone that would support India's democratic governance for generations. In his addresses to civil service probationers, Patel emphasized impartiality, incorruptibility, and the crucial role these services play in maintaining law and order while upholding the institutions that bind society together.

The partition of India and the communal violence that followed tested Patel's leadership to its limits. While neither he nor other Indian leaders had foreseen the intense violence and mass population transfers, Patel took charge of organizing relief efforts, establishing refugee camps, and working to restore peace. When Delhi and Punjab police, personally affected by partition tragedies, were accused of organizing attacks on Muslims, Patel called in the Indian Army with South Indian regiments to restore order, imposing strict curfews and shoot-on-sight orders. His visit to the Nizamuddin Auliya Dargah area, where he prayed at the shrine and reassured fearful Muslims while reinforcing police presence, demonstrated his commitment to protecting all citizens regardless of religion. His intervention in Amritsar, where he persuaded Sikh and Hindu leaders to guarantee Muslim refugees' safety, prevented further massacres and helped restore peace across the region.

Patel's relationship with Gandhi and Nehru defined much of his political life. Intensely loyal to Gandhi, Patel looked to him for guidance and arbitration in disputes with Nehru. While the two leading figures of independent India sometimes clashed over policy issues—particularly regarding Kashmir, states' integration, and dealings with Pakistan—they recognized their interdependence. Gandhi's insistence that independent India needed both men proved prophetic. Patel was the last person to speak privately with Gandhi before the Mahatma's assassination on January 30, 1948.

At Gandhi's wake, Patel and Nehru embraced and addressed the nation together, putting aside their differences in the face of national tragedy. Within two months, Patel suffered a major heart attack, which he later attributed to grief over Gandhi's death.

Following Gandhi's assassination by Hindu nationalist Nathuram Godse, Patel took decisive action against the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, which he held partially responsible for creating the climate that enabled the assassination. The RSS was banned on February 4, 1948, and many of its prominent leaders were arrested. When RSS chief Golwalkar sought to have the ban lifted, Patel demanded that the organization adopt a formal written constitution pledging loyalty to the Indian Constitution, accepting the national flag, defining organizational leadership powers, establishing internal democracy through elections, and renouncing violence and secrecy. After protracted negotiations and Golwalkar's imprisonment, the RSS eventually met most of Patel's demands, and the ban was lifted in July 1949, though internal democracy remained largely theoretical within the organization.

Patel's health declined rapidly through the summer and autumn of 1949. Despite his deteriorating condition, he continued working until he was no longer physically able. A dramatic incident occurred in March 1949 when the aircraft carrying Patel, his daughter Maniben, and the Maharaja of Patiala lost power in an engine and made an emergency landing in the Rajasthan desert. All passengers survived, and when Patel returned to Delhi, thousands of Congressmen welcomed him, while Members of Parliament gave him a half-hour standing ovation. However, this brush with death foreshadowed his imminent mortality.

By November 1949, Patel was coughing blood and losing consciousness frequently. He was flown to Bombay on December 12, where he died on December 15, 1950, after suffering a massive heart attack at Birla House. In an unprecedented gesture that spoke to his unique relationship with India's administrative services, more than fifteen hundred officers of India's civil and police services congregated the day after his death at Patel's Delhi residence to mourn and pledge "complete loyalty and unremitting zeal" in India's service. Prime Minister Nehru declared a week of national mourning, and Patel's cremation at Sonapur in Bombay attracted a crowd of one million people, including the nation's highest leaders.

Patel's legacy extends far beyond his lifetime achievements. Posthumously awarded the Bharat Ratna in 1991, India's highest civilian honor, Patel is remembered as the "Iron Man of India" for his commitment to national integration and the "Bis-

mark of India" for his unification of the princely states. His birthday, October 31, was declared Rashtriya Ekta Diwas (National Unity Day) in 2014, providing an annual opportunity to reaffirm India's commitment to unity, integrity, and security. The Statue of Unity, erected at a cost of four hundred and twenty million dollars and standing one hundred and eighty-two meters tall, was inaugurated in 2018 as the world's tallest statue, symbolizing Patel's towering contribution to Indian unity.

Numerous institutions across India bear Patel's name, including the Sardar Vallabhbhai National Institute of Technology, Sardar Patel University, the Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel National Police Academy, and Ahmedabad's international airport and cricket stadium. The Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel National Memorial in Ahmedabad houses a museum, portrait gallery, and library preserving his personal effects and documents. These monuments and institutions serve not merely as commemorations but as continuing embodiments of Patel's vision of a united, strong, and administratively efficient India.

In assessing Patel's place in history, it becomes clear that his contribution was fundamentally different from that of his more celebrated contemporaries. While Gandhi provided the moral foundation and Nehru articulated the intellectual vision for independent India, Patel built the actual structure. His practical wisdom, organizational genius, and unflinching resolve transformed abstract ideals into concrete reality. He understood that freedom without unity would be meaningless, that democracy without strong institutions would be chaotic, and that idealism without pragmatism would be ineffective. In a speech to the Constituent Assembly, Patel warned that without a good All-India Service with independence and security, "The Union will go, you will not have a united India."

Today, as India navigates the complexities of the twenty-first century, Patel's legacy remains profoundly relevant. His emphasis on administrative efficiency, institutional integrity, and national unity over narrow sectarian interests provides guidance for contemporary challenges. His ability to balance firmness with flexibility, idealism with pragmatism, and local concerns with national interests offers a model for political leadership. Most importantly, his demonstration that seemingly impossible tasks can be accomplished through determination, strategic thinking, and unwavering commitment to the greater good continues to inspire generations of Indians. The Iron Man of India may have passed away seventy-five years ago, but the nation he forged with his iron will stands as his eternal monument. (the writer can be reached at dipakkurmipltd@gmail.com)

World Cities Day - 31 October 2025

Cities where Beauty, Possibilities, and Sensitivities blossom

By: Lalit Garg

World Cities Day is observed every year on 31 October. Its purpose is to raise global awareness about the challenges and opportunities of urbanization, promote international cooperation in addressing urban issues, and encourage the creation of sustainable, human-centric, crime-free, and environmentally supportive cities. The day was celebrated for the first time in 2014. It aims to enhance understanding of urban trends, foster collaboration among nations, and contribute to global efforts toward building equitable, prosperous, resilient, and inclusive cities that offer better living conditions and quality of life to their communities.

This year, the global observance of World Cities Day will take place in Bogotá, Colombia, under the theme "People-Centered Smart Cities." The event will highlight how data-driven decision-making, technology, and artificial intelligence (AI) can be used to improve urban living and help cities recover from current shocks and crises. It will also emphasize initiatives that make smart cities more citizen-focused and participatory. Indeed, cities should become spaces where beauty and sensibilities unfold in countless forms — where the old and the new coexist in harmony, creating an atmosphere that is both inspiring and humane.

The theme for this year reflects the growing realization that digital technologies are transforming urban life worldwide. They are reshaping the way cities are designed, planned, managed, and governed — offering vast opportunities to make them more efficient, inclusive, and responsive. The focus on building "people-oriented smart cities" underlines the impor-

ance of adopting digital and data-based solutions to improve services, address urban challenges, and enhance quality of life. The underlying message — "Empowered Communities, Prosperous Cities" — emphasizes that true urban prosperity arises when communities are aware, cooperative, and self-reliant. At a time when the entire world is moving rapidly toward urbanization, this day has become an occasion for self-reflection: Are our cities merely expanding as jungles of concrete and glitter, or are they nurturing human sensitivity, culture, environmental balance, and social harmony?

Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India has presented a new model of urbanization — one that links urban growth not only with physical infrastructure but also with human values and citizen participation. Schemes like the AMRUT Mission, Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, Smart Cities Mission, and Clean India Mission have infused new vitality into the country's urban landscape. These programs have demonstrated that when transparency and public participation become integral to governance, development manifests not only in statistics but in people's lives.

Urbanization is not merely about tall buildings, wide roads, or shining marketplaces — it is a living social process that embodies the quality of life, thought, and behavior. Cities have given humankind opportunities for employment, education, healthcare, and comfort; yet they have also brought pollution, crowding, stress, crime, inequality, and emotional isolation. Every major city today is gasping for fresh air, clean water, and a peaceful life. In the name of development, nature is being degraded, and

along with material progress, mental exhaustion is on the rise.

Ancient Indian cities such as Kashi, Ujjain, Pushkar, Mathura, and Ayodhya were not merely centers of trade or politics — they were living laboratories of culture, spirituality, and coexistence. For them, a city was not just a place to live, but a way of living itself. If modern cities could once again embrace these timeless values, they would become not only modern but also humane. In the West, urbanization has reached remarkable heights in terms of technology and convenience, but there is often a lack of human warmth and emotional connection.

If India succeeds in blending humanity, environment, and culture within its urban growth, it can offer a model to the world. Cities will truly become alive only when their inhabitants are environmentally conscious, socially responsible, and emotionally committed. Preventing pollution, increasing greenery, making cleanliness a way of life, providing dignified housing for the poor, and fostering public participation — these are the true pathways to genuine urban development.

Indian cities today are transforming rapidly. Metros, skyscrapers, wide roads, and glittering malls have reshaped their faces. This change dazzles with the light of progress, yet beneath it lies a silent pain — the loss of the city's soul, its warmth, and its identity. The lanes that once smelled of friendship and belonging now echo with rush, indifference, and loneliness. Since independence, India has moved swiftly toward modernity, but in this race of material growth, human emotions and social bonds have been left behind. Cities are expanding not according to people's needs but the demands of the mar-



ket. New colonies and high-rises are replacing old neighborhoods, yet they lack the intimacy and sensitivity that once connected human hearts.

Cities today are no longer mere habitats; they have become centers of consumerism and competition. Modernity has brought convenience but has faded the colors of culture, history, and tradition. The crossroads that once hosted dialogues and empathy now resound only with the noise of machines and haste. For the new generation, cities are symbols of glamour, jobs, and opportunities — not the carriers of heritage and soul. This deepens the question: Does development only mean tall buildings, broad roads, and malls — or should it also include the warmth of relationships, the pulse of culture, and the living memory of history?

Today's cities shine brightly on the outside but often feel empty within — full of facilities yet devoid of peace; full of speed yet lacking stillness of the soul. It is time to pause and ask: Are we creating cities where humanity still has a place? Where history and sensitivity can breathe together?

True development will be that which allows cities to expand while keeping the roots of humanity deep and strong. The message of World Cities Day is precisely this — a city is not just a network of walls and roads; it is a living culture. A city becomes truly beautiful not because of its buildings but because of the thoughts, behaviors, and sensitivities of the people who live there. When communities are empowered, cities become prosperous — and when cities prosper, humanity truly progresses.

We do not have too many major stumbling blocks, says Trump

Trump cuts tariffs on China after meeting Xi in South Korea

ABOARD AIR FORCE ONE, Oct 30: President Donald Trump described his face-to-face meeting with Chinese leader Xi Jinping on Thursday as a roaring success, saying he would cut tariffs on China, while Beijing had agreed to allow the export of rare earth elements and start buying American soybeans.

The president told reporters aboard Air Force One that the US would lower tariffs implemented earlier this year as punishment on China for its selling of chemicals used to make fentanyl from 20 per cent to 10 per cent. That brings the total combined tariff rate on China down from 57 per cent to 47 per cent.

"I guess on the scale from 0 to 10, with ten being the best, I would say the meeting was a 12," Trump said. "I think it was a 12."

Trump said that he would go to China in April and Xi would come to the US "some time after that."

The president said they also discussed the export of more advanced computer chips to China, saying that Nvidia would be in talks with Chinese officials.

Trump said he could sign a trade deal with China "pretty soon."

"We do not have too many major stumbling blocks," Trump said.

Sources of tension remain

Despite Trump's optimism after a 100-minute meeting with Xi in South Korea, there continues to be the potential for major tensions between the world's two largest economies. Both nations are seeking dominant places in manufacturing, developing emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, and shaping world affairs like Russia's war in Ukraine.

Trump's aggressive use of tariffs since returning to the White House for a second term, combined with China's retaliatory limits on exports of rare earth elements, gave the meet-



ing newfound urgency. There is a mutual recognition that neither side wants to risk blowing up the world economy in ways that could jeopardise their own country's fortunes.

When the two were seated at the start of the meeting, Xi read prepared remarks that stressed a willingness to work together despite differences.

"Given our different national conditions, we do not always see eye with each other," he said through a translator. "It is normal for the two leading economies of the world to have frictions now and then."

There was a slight difference in translation as China's Xinhua News Agency reported Xi as telling Trump that having some differences is inevitable. China did not provide immediate comment on the meeting or any outcomes.

Finding ways to lower the temperature

The leaders met in Busan, South Korea, a port city about 76 kilometres (47 miles) south of Gyeongju, the main venue for the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit.

In the days leading up to the meeting, US officials signalled that Trump did not intend to make good on a recent threat to impose an additional 100 per cent import tax on Chinese goods, and China showed

signs it was willing to relax its export controls on rare earths and also buy soybeans from America.

Officials from both countries met earlier this week in Kuala Lumpur to lay the groundwork for their leaders. Afterwards, China's top trade negotiator Li Chenggang said they had reached a "preliminary consensus," a statement affirmed by US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent, who said there was "a very successful framework."

Shortly before the meeting on Thursday, Trump posted on Truth Social that the meeting would be the "G2," a recognition of America and China's status as the world's biggest economies. The Group of Seven and the Group of 20 are other forums of industrialised nations.

But while those summits often happen at luxury spaces, this meeting took place in humbler surroundings: Trump and Xi met in a small grey building with a blue roof on a

Made in India new generation heart stent receives major global recognition



SAN FRANCISCO, Oct 30: An Indian medical innovation has achieved a major global recognition with a new generation heart stent manufactured in India achieving a lower failure rate in high-risk patients against a US-made international market leader.

At a largely attended global conference of cardiologists, which concluded here on Wednesday, well-known Indian heart specialist, Dr Upendra Kaul, Chairman and Dean of Delhi's Batra Hospital, presented the results of a trial in India named TUXEDO-2, which rigorously compared the new generation Indian-made heart stent, Supraflex Cruz, against the international market leader Xience of the USA.

Conducted across 66 Indian cardiology centres, the trial focused specifically on a highly complex patient population, such as patients with diabetes and advanced multivessel disease. Eighty per cent of the participants had triple vessel disease, according to Dr Kaul, under whose leadership the trial was conducted.

The results were overwhelmingly positive for the Indian device, demonstrating that Supraflex Cruz was non-inferior to the established international standard.

The data revealed that the Indian stent resulted in a remarkable lower Target Lesion Fail (TLF), which measures serious outcomes including cardiac death, target vessel myocardial infarction (MI) and need for a clinically-driven repeat procedure.

Dr Kaul said that the Indian stent, manufactured by a company in Surat, additionally showed a numerically lower rate of heart attacks in one year. The results were commended at the conference as an example of the technical excellence of Indian medical device manufacturing, Dr Kaul said.

The trial was successfully executed under the leadership of Dr Kaul, Co-Chairman Dr Sripal Bangalore, and Project Director Dr Priyadarshini Arambam. (PTI)

Putin claims Russian troops have surrounded 2 Ukrainian cities

KYIV, Oct 30: Russian President Vladimir Putin claimed on Wednesday that Russian troops have surrounded Ukrainian forces in two key eastern cities of Ukraine and offered to negotiate a deal for their surrender. Ukrainian military officials vigorously denied the claim.

Putin, speaking at a meeting with wounded soldiers at a Moscow military hospital, suggested that the Russian military was ready to open safe corridors for Ukrainian and Western journalists to "let them see with their own eyes what's going on."

He claimed Ukrainian troops are encircled in Pokrovsk, a key Ukrainian stronghold in the eastern Donetsk region, and in Kupiansk, an important rail junction in the northeastern Kharkiv region.

the areas would allow reporters to see "the condition the encircled Ukrainian troops are there so that Ukraine's political leadership could make the relevant decisions regarding the fate of their citizens," he said.

Small groups of Russian soldiers are engaging in house-to-house battles in both Kupiansk and Pokrovsk, Ukrainian officials and Russian war bloggers have said, while artillery and drones target roads. The Ukrainian military is increasingly relying on drones to supply troops.



The Institute for the Study of War, a Washington think tank, said late Tuesday that Russian forces had advanced in the Pokrovsk area but "almost certainly do not currently control any positions within the city of Pokrovsk itself."

It added that the advances "are unlikely to cause an immediate collapse of the Ukrainian pocket in the Pokrovsk direction."

Asked about the situation in Kupiansk, the spokesman of Ukraine's Joint Forces Task Force, Viktor Trehubov, said Putin's claim does not match the reality on the ground. "To put it simply, there is no encirclement," Trehubov told The AP.

Russian forces have been trying for more than a year to take Pokrovsk, which Ukraine stopped using as a logistical hub in the region as Russia piled on the pressure at the end of last year. The city, which was home to around 60,000 people before the war, is largely in ruins.

Meanwhile, Ukraine has kept up its long-range drone and missile attacks on Russian rear areas in an effort to disrupt logistics by striking oil refineries and manufacturing plants.

Russia's Defence Ministry said that air defenses downed 100 Ukrainian drones over five regions overnight, with 13 airports, including three in the Moscow region, briefly suspending flights because of the attack.

Russia, in the meantime, continued its campaign against Ukraine's power grid and civilian infrastructure in at least six regions. At least 13 people, including a nine-year-old, were injured, officials said.

The Ukrainian air force said Russia fired 126 strike and decoy drones overnight. (AP)

Russia has recently been pushing its significant advantage in troops and weapons at key points along the around 1,000-km front line, almost four years after it invaded its neighbour.

But the Ukrainian armed forces said claims of Kupiansk being surrounded are "fabrications and fantasies" while the spokesman for Ukraine's eastern forces, Hryhoriy Shapoval, told The Associated Press that the situation in Pokrovsk is "hard but under control."

The Ukrainian Army's 7th Rapid Reaction Corps, which is defending Pokrovsk, said Russia had deployed some 11,000 troops in a bid to encircle the city. Some Russian units had managed to infiltrate Pokrovsk, it acknowledged in a social media post.

Russian officials have in the past made claims about capturing Ukrainian strongholds that have turned out not to be true. Independent verification of the claims was not possible.

Putin's comments coincided with his diplomatic efforts to persuade the United States, which is seeking a peace deal to end the war, that supporting Ukraine is pointless because it can't hold out against Russian military superiority. He has also stressed what he says is Russia's improving nuclear capability as he refuses to budge from his war aims.

Putin on Wednesday indicated that Russia is open for a deal for the Ukrainian troops in the two cities to surrender. A media visit to

Neck-and-neck finish in Dutch election as Wilders' far-right party, D66 tie

THE HAGUE (NETHERLANDS), Oct 30: Anti-Islam lawmaker Geert Wilders' far-right Party for Freedom and the centrist D66 were tied with nearly all votes counted Thursday in the Dutch general election in an unprecedented neck-and-neck race to become the biggest party.

The near total vote count showed each party winning 26 seats in Wednesday's election, according to the vote count tallied and published by Dutch national news agency ANP and cited by Dutch media.

The nail-biting finish is expected to lead to delays in starting the process of forming a new coalition. No Dutch election has previously ended with two parties tied for the lead.

Wilders' Party for Freedom is forecast to lose 11 seats in the 150-seat House of Representatives, while D66, led by Rob Jetten, gains 11, according to the vote count. Wilders insisted early Thursday that his party should play a leading role in coalition talks if it is the largest.

"As long as there's no 100 per cent clarity on this, no D66 scout can get started. We will do everything we can to prevent this," he said. A scout is an official appointed by the winning party to look into possible coalitions.

"It's a neck and neck, a few thousand votes" difference, D66 lawmaker Jan Paternotte told national broadcaster NOS. "I don't know if it's been this close in the Netherlands before. There are often close elections ... but this time it's exceptionally close."



The NOS said that votes from a small number of municipalities including three overseas municipalities and postal votes were yet to be tallied. It was not immediately clear when those votes would be registered.

The result remains a momentous win for D66, whose biggest previous seat tally was 24. When the party reached that number in 2021, the leader at the time, Sigrid Kaag, danced for joy on a table at a party meeting.

Despite his party's big gains, with a victory now in the balance, Jetten is unlikely to be dancing on any table Thursday, when parties traditionally gather at parliament to digest the result.

"Millions of Dutch people today chose positive forces and a politics where we can look forward together again," Jetten told cheering supporters on election night.

Despite vying for the top spot, Wilders' party, known by its Dutch acronym PVV, saw a sharp decline in its support in the early election,

which he forced when he torpedoed the outgoing four-party coalition in June in a dispute over migration. His party was the biggest in the coalition which lasted just 11 months and was marked by infighting between its members.

Even so, the election is "unlikely to mark the end of populism in The Netherlands," said Armdia van Rij, senior research fellow at the Centre for European Reform think tank. She noted that another right-wing party, JA21, which she described as a "PVV-light party with equally undemocratic ideas," made big gains. The party had one seat in the last parliament and is forecast to rise to nine seats.

Jetten said Wednesday night that political leaders need to seek common ground "to form a stable and ambitious Cabinet." In the splintered Dutch political landscape that is likely to take weeks or months.

In fallout from the vote, Frans Timmermans, the former European Commission vice president, said he was quitting Dutch politics after the center-left bloc the Labor Party and Green Left that he led lost seats in an election it had hoped to win.

The vote came against a backdrop of deep polarization in the Netherlands, a nation once famed as a beacon of tolerance. Violence erupted at a recent anti-immigration rally in The Hague — when rioters smashed the windows of the D66 headquarters — and protests against new asylum-seeker centres have been seen in municipalities around the country. (AP)

US end automatic extension of work permits for foreigners

WASHINGTON, Oct 30: Weeks after raising H1B visa fees to USD 100,000, the US authorities announced the end of automatic extension of work permits for foreigners, in a move likely to impact a large number of Indian immigrants and workers.

In its latest efforts to crack down on immigration, the US Department of Homeland Security made the announcement on Wednesday while prioritising "the proper screening and vetting of aliens (foreigners)" before extending the validity of their Employment Authorisation Documents (EAD).

As per the new rule, foreigners who file to renew their EAD on or after October 30, 2025, will no longer receive an automatic extension, the DHS said in a news release.

"It's a commonsense measure to ensure appropriate vetting and screening has been completed before an alien's employment authorisation or documentation is extended. All aliens must remember that working in the United States is a privilege, not a right," USCIS Director Joseph Etlow was quoted as saying in the release.

The move results in more frequent vetting of foreigners who

The DHS asked foreigners to "seek a timely renewal of their EAD by properly filing a renewal application up to 180 days before their EAD expires."

"The interim final rule does not affect EADs automatically extended before October 30," the DHS said.

As per the old rule under the Biden administration, foreigners who used to timely file a Form I-765 to renew their EAD used to get 540-day automatic extension.

US President Donald Trump, on September 19, signed a proclamation raising the fee for H1-B visas to a staggering USD 100,000 annually.

The United States was home to about 4.8 million Indian Americans as of 2022, according to data from the US Census Bureau. Out of this, 66 per cent of Indian Americans are immigrants, while 34 per cent are US born. (PTI)



apply for employment authorisation to work in the United States.

Those impacted by the decision include spouses of certain H-1B principal nonimmigrants, spouses of an L nonimmigrants, spouses of an E nonimmigrants, and foreigners with Refugee or Asylee status.

US will share tech to let S Korea build nuclear-powered submarine: Trump

GYEONGJU (SOUTH KOREA), Oct 30: The United States will share closely held technology to allow South Korea to build a nuclear-powered submarine, President Donald Trump said on social media on Thursday after meeting with the country's president.

President Lee Jae Myung stressed to Trump in their Wednesday meeting that the goal was to modernise the alliance with the US, noting plans to increase military spending to reduce the financial burden on America.

The South Korean leader said there might have been a misunderstanding when they last spoke in August about nuclear-powered submarines, saying that his government was looking for nuclear fuel rather than weapons. Lee said that South Korea's current diesel-powered submarines have limits in tracking other countries' submarine activities. If South Korea was equipped with nuclear-powered submarines, he said, it could help US activities in the region.

Diesel-powered submarines have to surface regularly to recharge their batteries. But nuclear-powered submarines have superior endurance and can stay submerged for a significantly longer period.

Trump said in a separate post that the country would build its nuclear-powered submarine in the Philly Shipyard, which was bought last year by South Korea's Hanwha Group.

It was unclear what the size or cost of the sub project would be, but South Korea had said as part of talks with Trump that it had committed USD 150 billion to invest in America's shipbuilding capacity.

US nuclear submarine technology is widely regarded as some of the most sensitive and highly guarded technology the military possesses. The US has been incredibly protective of that knowledge, and even a recently announced deal with close allies the United Kingdom and Australia to help the latter acquire nuclear submarine technology doesn't feature the US directly transferring its knowledge.

Trump's post on social media comes ahead of his meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping, whose country possesses nuclear submarines, and after North Korea in March unveiled for the first time a nuclear-powered submarine under construction. It is a weapons system that can pose a major security threat to South Korea and the US. (AP)

China says it's on track to land astronauts on the moon by 2030 ahead of space station mission

JIUQUAN (CHINA), Oct 30: China said Thursday it's on track to land astronauts on the moon by 2030 as it introduced the next crew of astronauts who will head to its space station as part of the country's ambitious plans to be a leader in space exploration.

"Currently, each programme of the research and development work of putting a person on the moon is progressing smoothly," said Zhang Jingbo, spokesman for the China Manned Space Programme, citing the Long March 10 rocket, moon landing suits and exploration vehicle, as fruitful efforts of that work. "Our fixed goal of China landing a person on the moon by 2030 is firm."

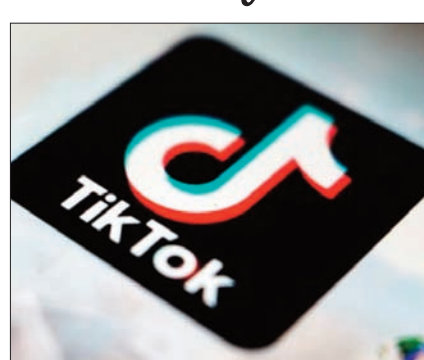
China is also preparing to send up its latest rotation of astronauts who make up part of the ongoing mission to complete the Tiangong space station, part of its broader space exploration plans. Each team stays inside the station for six months, conducting research.

The latest crew joining others on the station will be made up of Zhang Lu, Wu Fei and Zhang Hongzhang. They will take off from the Jiuquan launch center Friday at 11:44 pm in China. Zhang was previously part of the Shenzhou 15 mission to the station. For Wu and Zhang, this will be their first time in space.

The astronauts will also carry four mice with them on this trip, two male and two female. They will study the effects of weightlessness and confinement on the animals.

China began work on the Tiangong, or "Heavenly Palace," after the country was excluded from the International Space Station over US national security concerns over the Chinese space programme's direct link to the People's Liberation Army. (AP)

China says it will work with US to resolve issues related to TikTok



BUSAN, Oct 30: President Donald Trump's meeting on Thursday with China's top leader, Xi Jinping, produced a raft of decisions to help deal back trade tensions, but no agreement on TikTok's ownership.

"China will work with the US to properly resolve issues related to TikTok," China's Commerce Ministry said after the meeting.

It gave no details on any progress toward ending uncertainty about the fate of the popular video-sharing platform in the US.

The Trump administration had been sig-

nalling that it may have finally reached a deal with Beijing to keep TikTok running in the US.

Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent had said on CBS's "Face the Nation" on Sunday that the two leaders will "consummate that transaction on Thursday in Korea."

Wide bipartisan majorities in Congress passed — and President Joe Biden signed — a law that would ban TikTok in the US if it did not find a new owner to replace China's ByteDance. The platform went dark briefly on a January deadline, but on his first day in office, Trump signed an executive order to keep it running while his administration tries to reach an agreement for the sale of the company.

Three more executive orders followed, as Trump, without a clear legal basis, extended deadlines for a TikTok deal. The second was in April, when White House officials believed they were nearing a deal to spin off TikTok into a new company with US ownership. That fell apart when China backed out after Trump announced sharply higher tariffs on Chinese products. Deadlines in June and September passed, with Trump

saying he would allow TikTok to continue operating in the United States in a way that meets national security concerns.

Trump's order was meant to enable an American-led group of investors to buy the app from China's ByteDance, though the deal also requires China's approval.

However, the TikTok deal is "not really a big thing for Xi Jinping," said Bonnie Glaser, managing director of the German Marshall Fund's Indo-Pacific program, during a media briefing on Tuesday. "(China is) happy to let (Trump) declare that they have finally kept a deal. Whether or not that deal will protect the data of Americans is a big question going forward."

"A big question mark for the United States, of course, is whether this is consistent with US law since there was a law passed by Congress," Glaser said.

About 43 per cent of US adults under the age of 30 say they regularly get news from TikTok, higher than any other social media app, including YouTube, Facebook and Instagram, according to a Pew Research Centre report published in September.

A recent Pew Research Centre survey

found that about one-third of Americans said they supported a TikTok ban, down from 50 per cent in March 2023. Roughly one-third said they would oppose a ban, and a similar percentage said they weren't sure.

Among those who said they supported banning the social media platform, about 8 in 10 cited concerns over users' data security being at risk as a major factor in their decision, according to the report.

The security debate centres on the TikTok recommendation algorithm, which has steered millions of users into an endless stream of video shorts. China has said the algorithm must remain under Chinese control by law. But a US regulation that Congress passed with bipartisan support said any divestment of TikTok would require the platform to cut ties with ByteDance.

American officials have warned that the algorithm — a complex system of rules and calculations that platforms use to deliver personalised content — is vulnerable to manipulation by Chinese authorities, but no evidence has been presented by US officials proving that China has attempted to do so. (AP)

Arunachal poised to become export-oriented economy: Khandu

CM inaugurates Reverse Buyer-Seller Meet, highlights industrial growth and global trade potential



ITANAGAR, Oct 30: Chief Minister Pema Khandu on Thursday said Arunachal Pradesh is set to transition from a producer state to an export-oriented economy, leveraging its natural resources, agro-climatic advantages and traditional craftsmanship.

Inaugurating the two-day Reverse Buyer-

Seller Meet (RBSM) in Itanagar, Khandu said the event is more than a trade platform—it is an opportunity to connect the state's farmers, artisans and entrepreneurs with domestic and global markets.

Organised by the Indian Chamber of Commerce (ICC) in collaboration with the state's

trade and commerce department, the meet brings together producers, exporters, investors and buyers from India and abroad to explore investment and trade opportunities in Arunachal Pradesh.

The Chief Minister noted that major improvements in road, rail, air and digital connectivity over the past decade have opened new export avenues. He also highlighted the Industrial Development and Investment Policy, 2025, which focuses on sustainable growth through skill development, investment facilitation and entrepreneurship.

The policy offers incentives such as transport and interest subsidies and insurance support for resource-based industries. Khandu said the state has strengthened the ease of doing business through simplified registration for MSMEs and improved access to credit and markets via district industries centres.

"Sustainable trade and investment are not just about profit; they are about people, progress and partnership," Khandu said, urging participants to build collaborations that would integrate Arunachal Pradesh into global value chains. (PTI)

Lottery decides women-reserved wards in Pasighat



HT Correspondent

PASIGHAT, Oct 30: A lottery was held on Thursday to determine the wards reserved for women candidates in the upcoming Pasighat Municipal Council (PMC) elections. The draw took place at the Deputy Commissioner's Conference Hall under the chairmanship of East Siang Deputy Commissioner and Municipal Election Officer Sonalika Jiwani, IAS. The lottery, conducted in the presence of political party representatives, selected three of the eight PMC wards for women's reservation: Ward-2, Ward-3 and Ward-6. The draw was carried out in accordance with Sections 30(1) and (2) of the Arunachal Pradesh Municipal (Elections) Act, 2009 and Rule 30 of the Arunachal Pradesh Municipal Election Rules, 2013. The initiative aims to promote active participation and representation of women in local governance.

Hostel warden arrested for sexually abusing minors

HT Correspondent

MEBO, Oct 30: A hostel warden of Sanggo Residential School in Mebo under East Siang district has been arrested for allegedly sexually abusing several minor students. East Siang district police chief Pankaj Lamba said the arrest followed complaints filed by parents and school authorities after some children reported incidents of molestation. Preliminary investigations indicated that the accused had been engaging in inappropriate behaviour with students for some time.

A case has been registered under relevant provisions of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act at the Women Police Station and the suspect is being interrogated. District authorities said the victims are receiving medical attention and counselling. Senior police officials said an internal inquiry has been ordered to review safety protocols in residential institutions and strengthen child protection measures.

AISU reiterates four-point demand to state government

Union seeks liquor ban near schools, renaming of IG Park, teacher biometrics and implementation of AFRA Act



HT Correspondent

ITANAGAR, Oct 30: The Arunachal Indigenous Students' Union (AISU) has reiterated its four-point charter of demands, urging the state government to take immediate action on issues concerning indigenous welfare. The union has also submitted a reminder letter to the Chief Minister in this regard.

Addressing media persons at the Arunachal Press Club on Wednesday, AISU president Techi Talik said the union has repeatedly submitted its demands but has not received any response or action from the government.

The four-point charter includes renaming Indira Gandhi Park in Itanagar as Abo Tani Park in honour of the great forefather of the Tani tribes, introduction of biometric attendance for teachers in all government schools to curb irregularities, banning India-made foreign liquor (IMFL) near educational institu-

tions and implementation of the Arunachal Pradesh Freedom of Religion Act (AFRA), 1978.

Talik said the availability of liquor near schools and colleges has led to alarming levels of alcohol consumption among students and urged the government to cancel the licenses of wine shops located near educational premises.

Expressing concern over the increasing cases of religious conversion and loss of indigenous identity, he appealed for the immediate enforcement of the AFRA Act to protect the cultural and spiritual heritage of indigenous communities.

He added that since 2016, the union has been raising issues related to the welfare of indigenous students and communities, but the state government has not given them due priority.

Parnaik interacts with NSS volunteers, stresses empathy, innovation and social responsibility

Guv urges youth to be agents of change for Viksit Bharat



HT Correspondent

ITANAGAR, Oct 30: The Governor of Arunachal Pradesh, Lt Gen K T Parnaik (Retd), interacted with National Service Scheme (NSS) volunteers and Programme Officers of Rajiv Gandhi University (RGU), including Bharat-Rashtriya Sewa Yojna Puraskar awardee Raja Bosumotary, at Raj Bhavan on Wednesday.

Addressing the gathering, the Governor encouraged NSS Programme Officers and volunteers to cultivate inquisitiveness, empathy and positivity in their daily lives.

He urged them to develop a spirit of problem-solving and to face challenges with a constructive mindset.

Calling upon the youth to become agents of transformation, the Governor exhorted them to actively contribute to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of a Viksit Bharat—a developed and self-reliant India. He said the youth must harness technology, innovation and creativity to address rural challenges, raise social awareness and inspire collective action.

Expressing concern over the

growing menace of drug abuse, the Governor urged volunteers to lead awareness campaigns that reach every section of society and promote healthy, purposeful living.

He also emphasised environmental responsibility, advising NSS members to focus on conservation, sustainable waste management and village adoption programmes that promote self-sufficiency and community participation. The Governor further appealed to them to engage with parents and guardians to ensure that every child completes basic education.

Earlier, the NSS volunteers and Programme Officers briefed the Governor about their ongoing initiatives, including blood donation camps, cleanliness drives and awareness programmes on social and health issues.

The Governor appreciated their dedication and urged them to continue their work with renewed energy and commitment to nation-building. RGU Vice Chancellor Prof Sushanta Kumar Nayak and Registrar Dr Nabam Tadar Rikam were also present at the meeting.

Guv, CM discusses tech-driven development and youth empowerment

HT Correspondent

ITANAGAR, Oct 30: Chief Minister Pema Khandu, called on the Governor Lt General K T Parnaik (Retd), at Raj Bhavan on Wednesday to discuss key developmental issues and review the progress of ongoing initiatives across the state.

During the meeting, both leaders reaffirmed their commitment to ensuring that development in Arunachal Pradesh remains inclusive, technology-driven and people-centric. The Chief Minister briefed the Governor about his recent visit to Japan, where he explored opportunities for skill development and employment exchange for the youth of Arunachal Pradesh. He also highlighted potential collaborations to enhance workforce participation in emerging sectors.

The Governor emphasised the importance of adopting geospatial technology for monitoring projects using reliable and verifiable data to ensure better planning and effective dispute resolution. He noted that the North Eastern Space Applications Centre (NESAC), Shillong, has the necessary satellite imagery and expertise to support the state government in this initiative.

APSHRC takes suo motu cognizance of Mebo molestation case

HT Correspondent

ITANAGAR, Oct 30: The Arunachal Pradesh State Human Rights Commission (APSHRC) has taken suo motu notice of the alleged sexual molestation of minor students at Sanggo Residential English School in Mebo, East Siang District. The incident, reported by ADI News on October 29, involves the boys' hostel warden, Hen Johnson Baithei (33) from Manipur, who allegedly abused three students from Classes I, VI, and VIII. The accused has been arrested and an FIR has been registered at Mebo Police Station under Officer-in-Charge Shri Akai Chama.

The Commission termed the case a serious violation of children's rights under Article 21 of the Constitution and the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012, emphasising the need for accountability, victim protection and institutional reform. Exercising its powers under the Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993, the Single Bench of APSHRC issued directions on October 30, requiring the Superintendent of Police, East Siang, to submit a detailed action taken report within 15 days covering investigation progress, medical examinations and protection of victims. The Deputy Commissioner-cum-District Child Protection Officer has been asked to provide a report on school management, hostel safety and psychosocial counselling provided to the children.

The Principal of Sanggo Residential English School has been instructed to appear before the Commission on November 13 with all relevant records, including staff details, hostel management minutes and child protection policies. The Commissioner of the Education Department has been directed to ensure effective child protection mechanisms in all residential schools and submit an action taken report within two months. Copies of the order have also been sent to the Chairperson of the Arunachal Pradesh State Commission for Protection of Child Rights and the Chief Secretary for coordinated follow-up.

Guv extends Rashtriya Ekta Diwas greetings

HT Correspondent

ITANAGAR, Oct 30: Governor, Lt General K T Parnaik, PVSM, UYSM, YSM (Retd), extended his greetings to the people of the state and the nation on the birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, observed as Rashtriya Ekta Diwas (National Unity Day).

In his message, the Governor highlighted Patel's role as one of India's most nationalist freedom

fighters and the architect of modern India, who united over 560 princely states to form a strong and united nation. He praised Patel's foresight, determination and administrative skills, noting that his legacy continues to inspire citizens to rise above differences and work for the greater good.

The Governor urged people to rededicate themselves to the values Sardar Patel stood for, including

national unity, integrity, discipline and selfless service. He emphasised that preserving the country's unity and fostering brotherhood is the best tribute to the Iron Man of India. Concluding his message, the Governor wished that Patel's ideals guide everyone's thoughts and actions in building a strong, secure and inclusive India, moving closer to the vision of a Viksit Bharat.

Lt General KT Parnaik presents degrees to graduates, calls for curiosity, critical thinking and nation-building through education

Guv urges research, integrity and service at first APU convocation

HT Correspondent

PASIGHAT, Oct 30: Governor Lt General K T Parnaik, PVSM, UYSM, YSM (Retd), graced the first convocation of Arunachal Pradesh University (APU) as Chief Guest at the university campus in Pasighat. The Governor, who is also the Chancellor of the University, presented degree certificates to the graduating students.

Congratulating the first graduates of the State University, the Governor urged them to take up the greater responsibility of shaping Arunachal Pradesh's future and contributing to the vision of Viksit Bharat. He emphasised that the Prime Minister's call for a developed India by 2047 is a collective mission that rests on the youth's innovation, integrity and leadership. The Governor encouraged graduates to stay connected with their alma mater through a vibrant Alumni Association and to use their knowledge and skills to serve the State and the nation while staying true to their values and cultural roots.

The Governor noted that the new university stands at a defining moment in history, with the unique opportunity to learn from global institutions while building an education model rooted in the values and aspirations of the people. He urged that research and innovation be the soul of the university, fostering curiosity, critical thinking and the courage to ask



transformative questions.

He called for aligning academic programmes with the needs of industries,

service sectors and public institutions, emphasising collaboration with entrepreneurs and innovators to make graduates

both work-ready and world-ready.

Highlighting the importance of integrity in public life, the Governor stated that Arunachal Pradesh and the entire North Eastern region are experiencing a golden era of growth under the visionary leadership of the Prime Minister through his action-oriented and outcome-driven Act East Policy, which has brought unprecedented financial and infrastructural support to the State. He urged that this progress must not be undermined by selfish motives or personal interests and called upon all to uphold honesty, fairness and selfless service, especially towards people in frontier and border areas.

Advising the graduating students, the Governor said they should let transparency guide their actions, integrity shape their decisions and professionalism define their conduct, reminding them that true success lies not only in what one achieves but in how it is achieved. He further urged graduates to give back to the society that nurtured them through leadership, compassion and service, reflecting on the Fundamental Duties enshrined in the Constitution as guiding principles for a purposeful life.

The Governor encouraged youth to work with sincerity, stay focused on their goals and be ready to sacrifice personal comfort for the greater good. He stated that education should not only serve per-

sonal advancement but also contribute to collective progress, adding that by serving the community, upholding justice and protecting democratic values, they become true nation-builders.

He emphasised that true education, as envisioned in the National Education Policy (NEP), must go beyond classrooms and textbooks to shape character, build courage and instill compassion. Education should inspire leadership, active participation and lifelong curiosity for learning, with the process of education continuing throughout life.

The Governor highlighted that education and teaching are deeply connected, as a great education system depends on great teachers. He noted that NEP 2020 places teachers at the centre of educational reforms, recognising them as true nation-builders shaping the future of society. He urged that teachers be honoured and empowered to inspire generations and contribute to building a stronger and enlightened India.

Sharing his decadal vision for Arunachal Pradesh University, the Governor said the institution must evolve into a model of academic excellence and human development. He urged commitment from all stakeholders and emphasised promoting sports, arts and community service as integral parts of campus life. He encouraged initiatives like village adoption, cleanliness drives,

anti-drug campaigns and women and child health programmes to instill social responsibility among students.

Delighted that 66% of successful candidates and nearly all toppers were female students, the Governor said this reflects women's empowerment and the changing social fabric of the State. He also proposed establishing a Centre of Excellence for Tribal Studies to celebrate Arunachal's cultural diversity and a Community Radio Station to serve as a voice of the people, promoting awareness, education and positive stories across the region.

The Governor presented the Chancellor's Gold Medal to Lemsang Bhangyang, the overall topper of the University in the Academic Session 2024-25. Anisha Kri in Master of Commerce, Mumne Tayeng in Master of Arts in Economics, Lemsang Bhangyang in Master of Arts in Education, Saniya Mossang in Master of Arts in Social Work and Raibom Ripuk in Master of Arts in Tribal Studies received the Vice Chancellor's Gold Medal as subject toppers from the Governor.

APU Vice Chancellor Prof Tomo Riba and Registrar Narmi Darang also spoke on the occasion. Local MLA Er Tapi Darang, Commissioner Education Amjad Tak, East Siang District Deputy Commissioner Sonalika Jiwani and Superintendent of Police Pankaj Lamba were present among others.

'The INDI Alliance, the RJD-Congress, are capable of nothing except politics of appeasement and vote bank'

Congress-RJD leaders insulting 'Chhathi Maiyya', Bihar will never forgive them: Modi

CHHAPRA/MUZAFFARPUR, Oct 30: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday charged the opposition Congress-RJD combine in Bihar with insulting 'Chhathi Maiyya', having "problems with Ram temple at Ayodhya" and "protecting infiltrators" for the politics of vote bank and appeasement.

He made the remarks at back-to-back rallies in Muzaffarpur and Chhapra towns, a day after Congress leader Rahul Gandhi alleged that Modi had tried to enact a "drama" by planning to take a dip in the Yamuna on the occasion of Chhathi Pujā, but it was shelved after it was exposed that a puddle had been created with clean water since the river was filthy.

The PM urged the people of the state to repose their trust in the "Narendra-Nitish" combine, an obvious reference to the JD(U) president, who has been the longest serving chief minister of Bihar.

"It is my first tour of Bihar after Chhathi Pujā, which is now famous world over. The festival stands not just for devotion but also for equality, a reason why my government is trying to get a UNESCO

heritage tag for this festival," he said. "I listen to Chhath songs while travelling. I was once moved to listen to one of these songs rendered by a girl from Nagaland. But while this son of yours is busy ensuring that Chhath gets the honour that is its due, the Congress-RJD people are heaping scorn on the festival, calling it a drama, a nautanki," he added, without mentioning any leader by name.

Gandhi had alleged that the PM would do "anything for votes, even dance".

Modi said, "Look at the depths to which these people can stoop while seeking votes. This is an insult to the festival of Chhath that Bihar will not forget for centuries."

"Just look at the contempt these people have for the people of Bihar. One of their leaders, while holding the post of Punjab CM, had declared at a public rally that Bihar should be driven away. And the daughter of a big family in the Congress, who is now sitting in the Parliament, giggled and clapped," he said.

The allusion was to an incident involving former Punjab CM Charanjit Singh



Chhathi and Wayanad MP Priyanka Gandhi Vadra.

"The INDI Alliance, the RJD-Congress, are capable of nothing except politics of appeasement and vote bank, for which they are protecting infiltrators," said the PM, in an apparent reference to the opposition coalition's strident stance against Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls.

"They always have a problem with our cultural heritage. Their leaders can take time off to go abroad on tours. But you may have never seen them visiting the Ram temple at Ayodhya, which was constructed after a struggle that lasted for 500 years," he said.

Termining his opponents as "naamdar" (people with a pedigree), Modi said they cannot stomach the fact that a backward class leader, who used to sell tea, has attained such heights.

"They need to know I do not owe my achievements to their benediction but to the blessings of the people and the Constitution framed by Babasaheb Ambedkar," he said.

He alleged that Ambedkar was insulted by the Congress and RJD leaders.

He claimed that all surveys were showing that the RJD-led coalition would face a humiliating defeat in the assembly polls, so it was making "unrealistic promises".

"RJD-Congress manifesto is in fact a rate chart, their promises are for 'rang-dari', ransom, corruption, loot," he alleged.

"All surveys are indicating that the NDA is heading for a big victory. And the RJD-Congress combine will face the worst drubbing in their history," he claimed.

Modi also alleged that the Congress-RJD combine stood for five 'Ks' -- 'katta' (country-made weapons lawlessness), 'kroorta' (cruelty), 'katuta' (social resentment), 'kushasan' (misgovernance) and corruption. He remarked, with a hint of alarm, "What type of songs are being played at the rallies of RJD. These speak of 'katta', 'chhura' (dagger), 'dunaali' (double-barreled guns), and kidnapping sisters and daughters."

Modi claimed 35,000-40,000 abductions took place during the RJD regime in the state, and "goons used to loot vehicle showrooms", an indirect reference to the wedding of Misa Bharti, the eldest daughter of former Chief Minister Rabri Devi, who is currently the MP from Patliputra.

"The NDA, on the other hand, stands for preserving and honouring cultural heritage and ensuring all-round development of all states, including Bihar," asserted the

PM, who began his speech by making the crowds chant 'phir ek baar NDA sarkar' and 'phir ek baar susashan sarkar' (NDA government once again, good governance once again).

"Your parents voted for ending 'jungle raj', you have to vote for a prosperous Bihar," he told the young voters.

Referring to the land for jobs scam, in which the INDIA bloc's CM candidate Tejaswini Yadav has been named an accused, Modi asked, "Can those who have looted railways, develop connectivity in the state?"

The PM also made a mention of the Golu kidnapping and murder case of 2001, involving the eight-year-old son of a bank employee in Muzaffarpur, which had remained in headlines.

He alleged that during the RJD regime, the Bihar CM's Office had turned into a haven for mafias.

Without mentioning Champa Biswas by name, he also spoke of "the wife of an IAS officer writing to the then governor of Bihar that she has been raped by leaders of the ruling party". (PTI)

INDIA bloc to be routed as Rahul insulted Chhathi Maiyya: Shah

'Congress workers abused PM's mother'

NALANDA/LAKHISARAI/MUNGER (BIHAR), Oct 30: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Thursday said the INDIA bloc will be "wiped out" in Bihar polls as people will "take revenge" for Congress workers allegedly insulting Prime Minister Narendra Modi's mother and Rahul Gandhi "deriding" the PM and 'Chhathi Maiyya'.

Addressing back-to-back rallies in Nalanda, Lakhisarai and Munger districts, he charged Gandhi, the Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha, with having insulted 'Chhathi Maiyya' by claiming Modi, and others who worshipped the goddess were doing "drama". In a jibe at former Congress president Sonia Gandhi, he called upon people to press on EVM buttons having NDA symbols with "such rage that the tremors are felt in Italy".

"Sita Mata had worshipped 'Chhathi Mata' in Munger... Rahul Gandhi insulted the goddess as he is ignorant of India's culture since Italy is his maternal home," Shah said.

The former BJP president lambasted the Congress and its allies for "thwarting for 70 years" the construction of a Ram temple at Ayodhya for which "a struggle had been on for five centuries, since the times of the Mughals".

He also lauded the Modi government for developing a modern university in Nalanda, which "no marauder like Bakhtiyar Khilji will be able to destroy".

He also pointed out that work was on for giving a facelift to Punaura Dham, the shrine situated at the birthplace of goddess Sita in Sitamarhi district of Bihar, and said that "in two years from now, you will see PM Modi performing the consecration ceremony".

Shah began his rally in Nalanda by invoking the memories of



Chanakya and Chandragupta, the master-disciple duo who lived in the region and are credited with having established the Maurya kingdom, arguably the most powerful empire in ancient India.

The Union minister claimed that Bihar witnessed 'jungle raj' during the chief ministership of Lalu Prasad and Rabri Devi, while asserting that every vote to NDA will bring development to the state.

"Bihar witnessed over 32,000 kidnappings and 12 major massacres during the Lalu-Rabri regime from 1992-2004... Nitish Kumar ended the 'jungle raj'... but RJD is trying to bring back 'jungle raj' in the state with a new face," he alleged.

Shah also highlighted the contrast between 20 years of Nitish Kumar's rule, which witnessed "not a single massacre", unlike the period when RJD was in power and Naxal-infested areas saw "38 carnages".

The home minister claimed that ever since JD(U) president Nitish Kumar formed an NDA government in the state, "there has been a 20 per cent drop in murders while dacoities and kidnappings have gone down by 80 per cent".

"We are preparing the youth of Bihar to win medals in the 2036 Olympics that will happen in India," he claimed.

Shah alleged that the UPA gov-

ernment indulged in scams worth ₹ 12 lakh crore during 10 years of rule, whereas nobody could point fingers at Modi and Chief Minister Nitish Kumar for corruption.

"Lalu Prasad was involved in fodder, land-for-jobs, bitumen and flood relief scams... whereas Bihar moved on the path of development under the Nitish Kumar regime and the Centre hiked MSP for agricultural produce and bolstered infrastructure," he said. He claimed that terrorists unleashed mayhem in India during the UPA regime without any consequences, while the Modi regime repaid every attack with strikes inside Pakistan.

"We will also drive out infiltrators from Bihar who usurp poor people's foodgrains, employment and indulge in anti-national activities," he said.

Shah announced that a medical college will be set up in Lakhisarai over the next two years in the name of Bihar's first chief minister Shri Krishna Sinha.

Hailing Goddess Sita as "daughter of Bihar", he said that a grand temple will be built at Punaura Dham in Sitamarhi at a cost of ₹ 850 crore and it will be connected to Ram Temple at Ayodhya through a direct train. Under the NDA rule, the Centre has spent ₹ 18 lakh crore on road, railways, greenfield expressway projects in Bihar, while a Makhana Board has also been established, he said.

He said that the Centre has spent ₹ 9,500 crore on reviving Barauni fertiliser plant, ₹ 900 crore on infrastructural projects in Munger and gave the GI tag to Katrani rice from the region.

Shah said that 8.52 crore people in Bihar have received free ration, 87 lakh farmers got ₹ 6,000 per year, 44 lakh got homes and 1.17 crore women got LPG cylinders in the state. (PTI)

Under NDA govt, Bihar progressed from darkness to light: JP Nadda

NALANDA (BIHAR), Oct 30: BJP president JP Nadda on Thursday asserted that the development of Bihar has acquired pace under the NDA government which brought the state out of an era of darkness into light.

Addressing a rally in Bakhtiyarpur assembly constituency of Nalanda district, he also claimed that the RJD and its ally Congress are not concerned about people's welfare.

"Before 2005, Bihar was living in an era of darkness, but now there is light all around. Bihar has progressed from being a BIMARU state to a leading state, and it was made possible through people's power to vote," said Nadda, also a Union minister.

BIMARU is an acronym for Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh, which used to lag behind on social and economic parameters.

"The RJD and the Congress are not concerned about your welfare. Lalu ji is concerned about making his son a CM, while Sonia ji is concerned about making her son the PM," the BJP president told the gathering.

Development took place in Bihar in the last 20 years during the NDA rule, he said, adding that the state's railway budget increased 9-fold under the NDA and it state got 20 Vande Bharat and 26 Amrit Bharat trains. (PTI)

Nitish Kumar is BJP's 'Chunavi dulha', not CM choice: Akhilesh Yadav

LUCKNOW, Oct 30: Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav on Thursday claimed the BJP was "using" JD(U) leader Nitish Kumar to sail through the Bihar Assembly election, and he won't be allowed to remain chief minister after the polls.

Asserting that Bihar is demanding a change and wants to move towards a better and prosperous future, he claimed that RJD's Tejaswini Yadav is going to become the chief minister after the Mahagathbandhan wins the polls.

Taking a swipe at Nitish Kumar while talking to reporters in Ghazipur, Yadav said, "He is definitely the BJP's 'Chunavi dulha', but for the post (of CM) he is not the 'dulha' (groom)."

"The BJP, under a conspiracy, is using Nitish Kumar. The INDIA bloc was making him the prime ministerial face. Today, he is only a face for the sake of elections," he remarked. The former Uttar Pradesh chief minister further said, "I am telling you again, the people of Bihar know everything. Even leaders from the opposition platforms are saying that Nitish Kumar has been brought only for election purposes."

Yadav predicted the BJP would not make Kumar the chief minister after the elections. "You can ask on what basis I'm saying this. Look at what happened in Maharashtra and other states. Those who were projected as

faces before elections were not made chief ministers later. The same will happen in Bihar too," he claimed.

Extending his full support to RLD leader Tejaswini Yadav, the Samajwadi Party chief said, "Tejaswini Yadav is going to become the chief minister. We are all in his support. And not only are we supporting him, but we are also ready to help in running the government in every possible way -- to guide him and assist wherever needed."

Accusing the Election Commission of not acting impartially, he said the BJP wanted to do a scam in the special intensive revision (SIR) of electoral rolls.

"The Election Commission does not act impartially. It is the responsibility of the EC to maintain an accurate voter list and ensure that every vote is cast. But do you really see impartiality? Look at any bypoll in Uttar Pradesh or even the general election -- the EC acts with bias, and that's why such allegations arise," he said.

"The BJP wants to commit a scam in SIR. Check the list of booth-level officers if there is even one name from the PDA (Pichhda, Dalit, Apsankhyak) community."

"There is a large number of 'Pidit' (suffering), 'Dukhi' (unhappy) and 'Apmanit' (humiliated), and the BJP is scared of them. The BJP cannot fight against the unity and strength of the PDA," Akhilesh Yadav added. (PTI)

Such decentralisation brings significant strategic and operational advantages, he said, adding that this study paves the way for the development and demonstration of a proof-of-concept for a hybrid rocket-powered VTOL platform.

Ramakrishna explained that, given the study's positive outcomes, an experimental study of the landing platform with multiple degrees of freedom could be conducted as a future study.

"Once attitude stabilisation (maintaining orientation in a desired direction) of the platform is achieved, a hardware-in-the-loop simulation for landing without the assumption of an attitude-stabilised system could be carried out. This would be a step closer to realising a VTOL platform with hybrid rocket thrusters," he said.

Attitude stabilisation of a VTOL platform is the process of maintaining orientation in a desired direction while hovering, taking off and landing.

The developed VTOL technology can be extended to fixed-wing UAVs as an initial implementation, he said.

This not only serves as a proof-of-concept for broader aerospace applications but could also attract attention from industries interested in next-generation air mobility solutions, he said. (PTI)

BJP MLAs walkout of J-K Assembly over demand for discussion on floods

SRINAGAR, Oct 30: The opposition BJP MLAs staged a walkout from the Jammu and Kashmir assembly on Thursday to protest the rejection of their adjournment motion for a discussion on the situation in the aftermath of the recent floods in the Union territory.

The BJP MLAs staged a walkout after remaining standing for the entire Question Hour.

The opposition members also demanded the resignation of Chief Minister Omar Abdullah and an apology from him for "unfulfilled promises".

As soon as the House assembled, BJP leaders stood on their feet, demanding adjournment of the Question Hour and a half-hour discussion on flood-affected areas of Jammu. Speaker Abdul Rahim Rather asked the BJP members to take their seats and let the Question Hour proceed.

"We will see after Question Hour. I will allow him to speak after the Question Hour," the Speaker said. However, the BJP members did

not relent and continued with their demand.

"Don't you want the Question Hour," the Speaker asked, and said, "I promise I will find some way."

Rather said the adjournment motion has been disallowed as Rule 58 (12) puts a bar on admitting an adjournment motion on a subject which has already been disallowed in the session. Responding to that, BJP MLA from Jaserota, Rajiv Jaserota, said, "You (Speaker) had promised to allow the resolution. But, you did not keep it."

The Speaker responded by saying the resolution did not come up due to the paucity of time.

"You could have extended time yesterday," Jaserota said.

"You should have raised this yesterday," the Speaker shot back.

Amid the din, Leader of Opposition (LoP) Sunil Sharma said the August rainfall affected most areas of J&K, and the people of the Union territory have expectations with this House that the MLAs will raise their issues. (PTI)

India perfect harbour for investments in maritime sector: PM Modi

NEW DELHI, Oct 30: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday invited international companies to invest in the maritime sector in India which has infrastructure, innovation and intent to emerge as a global leader in the area.

The government has simplified laws, developed ports and approved an umbrella package of ₹ 70,000 crore for the maritime sector, with a focus also on promoting shipbuilding. The prime minister addressed the Maritime Leaders Conclave in Mumbai on Wednesday evening and interacted with key CEOs and leading stakeholders of the sector.

He said since assuming office in 2014, the maritime sector has witnessed many transformations with a focus on infrastructure, reforms and public participation. (PTI)

IIT Madras achieves breakthrough in vertical take-off, landing technology

NEW DELHI, Oct 30: Researchers at the Indian Institute of Technology, Madras, have achieved a breakthrough in developing a vertical take-off and landing (VTOL) aircraft and unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) with hybrid rocket thrusters.

In a sophisticated experiment that combined a real-time hybrid rocket thruster with a virtual simulation, the researchers achieved the necessary velocity for "soft landing", a crucial feature for all craft ranging from planetary landing of an unmanned or manned exploration module to terrestrial landing of a VTOL aircraft, they added.

Touchdown velocity is an important parameter to ensure safe vertical landings.

The findings of the research were published in a paper in the reputed peer-reviewed International Journal of Aeronautical and Space Sciences.

The researchers studied the feasibility of using hybrid rocket motors for vertical landing platforms, as they are simpler and safer than liquid engines.

Moreover, hybrid rocket systems are gaining popularity due to their inherent safety and throttling capabilities, apart from the possibility of combining the advantages of liquid and solid rocket engines.

Currently, VTOL systems are complex and require high maintenance. Therefore, the



researchers conceived the concept of a hybrid rocket thruster-powered platform as part of a system development study to develop an effective propulsion unit for achieving VTOL in aircraft and UAVs.

According to PA Ramakrishna, professor at the Department of Aerospace Engineering, IIT Madras, VTOL enables an aircraft to take off and land vertically, eliminating the need for infrastructure like long runways.

"VTOL capability will enable access to remote locations and rugged terrains where

long runways and large airports are difficult to establish. Currently, helicopters are the system operating on those terrains; however, they face limitations in terms of speed, range and efficiency compared to a fixed-wing aircraft," Ramakrishna said.

"Once the VTOL system reaches the Technology Readiness Level (TRL) for commercial application, it will be a game-changer in both civil and military aviation. VTOL will help to decentralise air transport to multiple locations rather than a single big airport or an airbase," he said.

Nagaland hosts National Red Run 3.0 against HIV, AIDS



HT Correspondent
DIMA PUR, Oct 30: Nagaland joined the nationwide movement against HIV and AIDS by hosting the National Red Run 3.0 at the Agri Expo site, 4th Mile, Chümoukedima on Thursday.

Organised by the Nagaland State AIDS Control Society (NSACS), in collaboration with the National AIDS Control Organisation (NACO) and the Nagaland health & family welfare department, the event witnessed enthusiastic participation from students, youth groups, health workers, and runners from across the state, symbolising unity in the fight against HIV.

Commissioner & secretary, health & family welfare department and chairman, NSACS, Anoop Khinchi, in his welcome address, emphasised the importance of youth-led initiatives and collective efforts in promoting awareness on HIV and STIs during the event.

Khinchi described the Red Run as not just about running, but running with purpose, adding it is a celebration of energy, awareness, and unity in the fight against HIV and STIs. He underscored that the national marathon aims to break stigma, spread knowledge, and promote prevention, while also encouraging a

healthy lifestyle and empowering youth across the country.

Abu Metha, adviser to the CM, conveyed chief minister Neiphiu Rio's message on the occasion, appreciating NACO and NSACS for organising the event in the state.

Delivering the keynote address, Hekali Zhimomi, additional secretary and director general, NACO, underscored the vital role of young people in raising awareness about HIV and promoting overall health during the event.

The programme, held as part of the Red Ribbon Club (RRC) activities, brought together students, youth groups, and health advocates from across the state to foster dialogue and action on HIV prevention and youth health empowerment.

A total of 528 runners, including 136 participants from 35 states and Union territories, both men and women, participated in the run. Panchanan Bera from West Bengal emerged winner in the men's category, while Anisha from Uttarakhand bagged the first prize in the women's category.

Woman among two militants arrested in Manipur

IMPHAL, Oct 30: Security forces arrested two militants, including a woman, belonging to different proscribed outfits from Imphal West and East districts, police said on Thursday. They also seized a cache of arms and ammunition in an unrelated operation.

A woman cadre of the banned People's Liberation Army (PLA) outfit was arrested from Langol Game Village in Imphal West district on Wednesday. She has been identified as Ningthoujam Anita Devi (44), a police statement said.

Preliminary investigation suggested that she was involved in the recruitment of a girl from Jiribam district in the militant outfit, it said.

A cadre of the proscribed Kangleipak Communist Party (City Meitei) outfit was nabbed from Wangkhei Andro Parking in Imphal East district on Tuesday. He has been identified as Wahengbam Kiran Singh (45). Intelligence-based combing, cordon and search operations are being carried out extensively to nab those involved in extortion and criminal activities in the state, the statement said.

Security forces, meanwhile, seized four firearms during an operation in Ngairangbam Maning Loukon area in Imphal West district on Wednesday. The seized items included a modified .303 rifle along with magazine, two country-made single-barrel guns, a pistol along with a magazine, two hand grenades without detonators, and cartridges, it added. (PTI)

Minister felicitates teams behind new rail line projects

HT Bureau
GUWAHATI, Oct 30: Minister of Railways Ashwini Vaishnaw felicitated the Railway teams behind the successful completion of the Bairabi-Sairang and Araria-Galgolia new rail line projects at a ceremony held on October 29 at the Railway Board, New Delhi.

The event was attended by Satish Kumar, Chairman & CEO, Railway Board; Arun Kumar Chaudhary, General Manager, NF Railway (Construction); Anjani Kumar and Hitendra Goyal, Chief Administrative Officers, N.F. Railway (Construction); along with other senior officials and project team members.

The Bairabi-Sairang New Line Project, a milestone for the Northeast, brings rail connectivity to Aizawl, Mizoram's capital, for the first time.

Inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on September 13, the 51.38 km line features 45 tunnels, 143 bridges—including one taller than the Qutub Minar—and four new stations at Hortoki, Kawnpui, Mualkhang and Sairang.

Executed under challenging terrain, the project is expected to boost trade, tourism, and socio-economic growth in Mizoram and the wider region.

The Araria-Galgolia Broad Gauge Project, covering 110.75 km under NF Railway, was completed following inspection by the Commissioner of Railway Safety, Sumeet Singhal, from July 9-11. Prime Minister Modi flagged off train services on September 15, marking its operationalisation.

With 64 major bridges, 264 minor bridges, and 15 stations, the line—authorised for 100 kmph operations—will significantly strengthen connectivity in Bihar and adjoining areas.

The awards presented by the Minister recognised the dedication and innovation of Railway officials and engineers whose efforts made both landmark projects possible.

UP-GRADATION, MAINTENANCE AND MANNING OF AC WAITING ROOMS ETC.

E-Auction for Up-gradation, maintenance and manning of AC Waiting hall with modern facilities, amenities like multipurpose stall and Tourist kiosk at Guwahati Railway station under Lumding Division. Auction Catalogue No.: PNU-WH-2-GHY-25; Rate Unit: Annual Licensing Fee. Days: 1826; Auction Start Date & Time (All Lots) : At 11:00 hrs. on 12-11-2025.

Seq No.	Lot No./Category
AA/1	PnU-LMG-GHY-WRL-67-25-1 (Pay and Use-Lounges/Waiting/Retiring/Cloak Rooms)

Auction closing date & time: At 11:30 hrs. on 12-11-2025. Successive lots closing interval 10 minutes. Note : Prospective bidder are requested to visit e-Auction leasing module on IREPS website www.ireps.gov.in for more details.

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No.ACEH/CS/SSA/03/2025-26/20 Date. 29.10.2025.

Cancellation Notice

It is for information to all concerned that the Bids for "Construction of 50 bedded hostel separately for boys & girls" at 66 No's of school under the scheme "Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan" in Karbi Anglong District and West Karbi Anglong District, published earlier vide Press Notice Inviting No. ACEH/CS/SSA/03/2025-26/08, Dated 12-08-2025 is hereby cancelled for the following groups:-

1. Gr. No. 44 Tender ID 2025_KAAC 46528 _1 under Chinthong Block
2. Gr. No. 66 Tender ID 2025_KAAC 46551 _1 under Sochang-Block

Due to Technical Reason
Re-tender notice will be floated for the same shortly.

Sd/-
Director-Cum-Additional Chief Engineer,
P.W.D.(R&B), Hills, Assam, Diphu.

Memo NOACEH/CS/SSA/03/2025-26/20 (A) Date 29/10/2025.

GOVT. OF ASSAM OFFICE OF JOINT DIRECTOR OF HEALTH SERVICES, KARBI ANGLONG DISTRICT DIPHU-782460

No. KA/Esstt/H&FW/Post/Advt./2025-26/1590

Dated Diphu, the 30th Oct' 2025

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Applications are invited from the eligible candidates who are Indian Citizen as defined under Article 5 to 8 of the constitution of India in the prescribed Standard Form of Application published in part IX of Assam Gazette along with self-attested copies of educational certificates, Mark sheets and all other testimonials along with 02 (Two) copies of recent passport size photographs for filling up the following vacant posts under Joint Director of Health Services, Karbi Anglong District, Diphu and Joint Director of Health Services, West Karbi Anglong, Hamren.

This has an approval of KAAC vide letter No.KAAC/Esstt-686/P(B)/H&FW/Prior Approval/2025-26/18, Dated Diphu, the 28th Oct'2025.

Sl. No.	Name of the post (s)	No. of Posts	Location of Post	No. of Post	Scale of pay	Educational & other requisite Qualification
1	Health Educator	1 (One) No.	Dokmoka PHC	1	PB-2, (14000-70000)+ Grade Pay Rs. 7,600/- p.m.	Graduate in any stream and minimum 6 (six) month Diploma in computer application.
2	Pharmacist	1 (One) No.	Dhansiri State Dispensary	1	PB-2, (14000-70000) + Grade Pay Rs. 7,600/- p.m.	Diploma in ophthalmic Technology passed from Govt. recognized institute.
3	Auxiliary Nurse Midwife	1 (One) No.	Donkamokam CHC	1	PB-2, (14000-70000) + Grade Pay Rs. 6,200/- p.m.	ANM course passed from any institution recognized by Indian nursing Council and registered with "Assam Nurses Midwife and Health Visitors Council"
4	Surveillance worker	5 (Five) Nos.	Bokajan BPHC Chowkihola BPC Dengtaghat CHC Howraghat BPHC Center Bazar PHC	1 1 1 1 1	PB-2, (14000-70000)+ Grade Pay Rs. 5,600/- p.m.	HSSLC passed and minimum 6 (six) month Diploma in computer application.
5	Vaccinator	6 (six) Nos.	Phuloni PHC Bokajan PHC Dokmoka PHC Tumpreng SHC Dist. Organization, Diphu O/o Jt. DHS, Diphu	1 1 1 1 1 1	PB-2, (14000-70000) + Grade Pay Rs. 5,600/- p.m.	HSSLC passed and minimum 6 (six) month Diploma in computer application.
6	Dresser	1 (One) No.	Howraghat CHC	1	PB-2, (14000-70000) + Grade Pay Rs. 5,000/- p.m.	HSSLC passed with diploma in Physician Assistant course/OT Technician course.
7	Peon	1 (One) No.	Health Education Bureau	1	PB-1, (12000-52000) + Grade Pay Rs. 3,900/- p.m.	Minimum qualification read up to Class VIII
8	Ward Boy	1 (One) No.	Diphu Civil Hospital	1	PB-1, (12000-52000) + Grade Pay Rs. 3,900/- p.m.	Minimum qualification read up to Class VIII
9	Chowkidar	1 (One) No.	Diphu Civil Hospital Chest Clinic.	1	PB-1, (12000-52000) + Grade Pay Rs. 3,900/- p.m.	Minimum qualification read up to Class VIII
10	Van Cleaner	1 (One) No.	District Malaria Office, Diphu.	1	PB-1, (12000-52000) + Grade Pay Rs. 3,900/- p.m.	Minimum qualification read up to Class VIII
11	Grade IV	4 (Four) Nos.	Bokajan BPHC Urpanai PHC Baithalangso PHC Hamren Civil Hospital	1 1 1 1	PB-1, (12000-52000) + Grade Pay Rs. 3,900/- p.m.	Minimum qualification read up to Class VIII
12	Sweeper	2 (Two) Nos.	Diphu Civil Hospital Diphu Civil Hospital 100 bedded.	1 1	PB-1, (12000-52000) + Grade Pay Rs. 3,900/- p.m.	Minimum qualification read up to Class VIII

Terms & Conditions: -

1. The Candidate should not be less than 18 years and not more than 40 years as on 01/01/2025. The upper age limit is relaxable.
 - a. By 5 years for SC/ST candidate, i.e. upto 45 years.
 - b. By 3 years for OBC/MOBC candidates i.e. upto 43 years.
 - c. By 2 years for Ex-Servicemen i.e. upto 42 years.
 - d. By 10 years for Person with Disabilities (PWD) i.e. upto 50 years.
2. Incomplete applications shall be summarily rejected on the spot.
3. Application received either by post or by hand after the last date of submission of application will not be accepted under any circumstances.
4. The Selected candidates will be entitled with new pension scheme (NPS) 2005 as per direction of Government.
5. Self-Attested copies of all testimonial certificate of educational qualification, Birth Certificate, Caste Certificate, Current Employment Exchange Registration Number and two copies of recent passport size photograph.
6. The Authority reserves all rights to cancel/reject the application without assigning any reason thereof and no further communication will be entertained.
7. Candidates willing to apply for more than one post shall have to submit separate application form for each post.
8. The complete application should address and submit to the Joint Director of Health Services, Karbi Anglong, Diphu on or before 17th November 2025 during office hours except on holidays under NI Act. Candidates should indicate the name of post applied for on the front cover of envelope.
9. The eligible candidates shall apply in Standard Form of application along with KAAC money Receipt of Rs. 10/- (Rupees ten) for ST/SC and Rs. 20/- (Rupees twenty) for other candidates as application fee.
10. Canvassing in any form will lead to disqualification.
11. No T.A. or D.A. will be provided to any candidate from the Department for the same.
12. The Competent Authority reserves all the rights to enhance or reduce the posts and also to cancel/Postpone the interview at any time without assigning any reason thereof and without any intimation to the candidate.
13. The date of Written/Interview will be notified later on in the local papers.
14. The applicant shall write his or her preferred place of posting in the space given between "Department/Office and 1. Name in full (Block Letter)" in the Standard Form.
15. The Transfer of the employees shall be governed by order No. 22 October, 2025. KAAC/Esstt-675/P(B)/Misc/2025-26/15 Dated

Memo No. KA/Esstt/H&FW/Post/Advt./2025-26/1590 A

Sd/-
Jt. Director of Health Services,
Karbi Anglong District, Diphu.
Dated Diphu, the 30th Oct' 2025

ENRIQUE IGLESIAS LIGHTS UP MUMBAI WITH HIS MAIDEN CONCERT IN THE CITY, THANKS FANS FOR THEIR LOVE



MUMBAI, Oct 30: Global music sensation and Grammy Award winner, Enrique Iglesias, took thousands of fans into a sea of nostalgia with his classic hits like 'Hero' and 'Bailamos' with his debut performance in Mumbai.

The 50-year-old singer captivated over 25,000 fans with his performance spread over 90 minutes, in the commercial hub of Mumbai, at the MMRDA grounds in Bandra-Kurla Complex on Wednesday night. This is his third visit to the country, the first being in early 2000 and later in 2012.

At around 8.20 pm, Enrique appeared on stage with his band members, looking effortlessly cool in all-black attire and his signature cap. He began the concert with his songs like 'Subeme La Radio', 'Freak', 'Chasing The Sun', 'Be With You', 'Heartbeat', 'Cuando Me Enamoro', and many others.

He said, "Namaste, Mumbai, raise your hands", before transporting fans back in time with his crowd favourites like 'Hero', 'Tonight', 'Bailamos', and 'Bailando'. The infectious energy rippled through the crowd, with fans of all ages singing along and swaying to the rhythm.

"Thank you... Thank you so much. I came here in 2004 first. It feels amazing (to be here)." Enrique said to his ardent fans, who gathered from various parts of India to attend the concert.

A Pune-based couple in their

early 50s told PTI, "We came here to relive our youth. We have CDs of his songs. Our daughter booked the tickets for the concert as a Diwali gift, and we thoroughly enjoyed the concert as he sang some of our most favourite songs."

Noted celebrities, including Vidya Balan, Rakul Preet Singh and her husband, Jacky Bhagnani, Malaika Arora, TV star couple Rubina Dilaik and Abhinav Shukla, actor-singer Meiyang Chang, singer Rahul Vaidya, Gurmeet Choudhary, Debina Bonnerjee, El-naaz Norouzi, and others attended the concert.

"We enjoyed every bit of the concert," Rubina and Abhinav told PTI post the show. "I came here to fulfil the wish of my wife, who loves him and his music a lot," said Abhinav.

However, some fans expressed displeasure about the concert and the arrangements around it. "He didn't sing it all. I'm a bit disappointed," an office-goer from Mumbai said, while another remarked, "The road traffic was a complete mess."

As the night drew to a close, Enrique left the stage amid a dazzling display of fireworks and concluded the concert with his popular track 'Baby I Like It'.

The two-day concert series is promoted and produced by EVA Live, powered by Mastercard, with District By Zomato serving as the exclusive ticketing partner. (PTI)

MUSIC FINDS A WAY TO BE AUTHENTIC: VISHAL DADLANI



NEW DELHI, Oct 30: Singer-composer Vishal Dadlani, who is judging the reality show 'Indian Idol' for the ninth time, says music is a genuine expression of emotion and it will always find a way to be authentic.

At a time when AI can replicate the voice of singers of the past, Dadlani is not too worried. He rather believes technology can be beneficial if used properly.

"When it comes to music, everything is positive. Music finds a way to be authentic and to be a genuine expression of emotion. Any machine or any software, including AI, these are tools, right? Human beings can decide how they want to use them.

"If we become dependent on it, the beauty of authentic human expression through music is lost. And if people add it correctly, it will just make things faster. People might have access to different types of sounds and samples, and creativity," he told PTI in an interview.

The singer is judging the 16th season of 'Indian Idol' alongside singers Shreya Ghoshal and Badshah. The theme of the season is 'Yaadon Ki Playlist', which premiered on Sony Entertainment Television on October 18 and is also available for streaming on Sony LIV.

Dadlani, one half of the Vishal-Shekhar duo and known for hits like 'Kurban Hua', 'Jee le Zara', 'Jab Mila Tu', 'Tu Meri and 'Har funn Maula', said judging the reality show is a way to "musically refresh" himself as every season comes with new surprises.

"Every set of contestants has its own personalities, its own idiosyncrasies, its own talents, its own limitations. And I always say this, for me it's a way to musically refresh myself," he said.

Asked what makes him continue to be associated with the singing show for so many years, Dadlani said, "The connection is essentially music. And then also just the joy that we all sort of bring each other. There's an understanding. It's home ground," he added.

Speaking on the theme of the show, Dadlani said, "In India, life is celebrated through music, films are celebrated through music. Every major occasion in everybody's life is celebrated through music. So your memories are always associated with music, and it's the same for all of us. So songs are markers of time."

For Dadlani, who was introduced to music at an early age, everything around him serves as an inspiration to continue his musical journey.

"As a musician, life is your inspiration. Everything inspires you. There's not a day in my life that I don't hum a tune that I've just made. As a thought process starts going, I put something down on my phone. You know, all of those ideas eventually become songs that people have. What continues to inspire me is the joy and the fun," he said.

'Indian Idol' first began airing on Sony Entertainment Television in 2004 and has produced multiple seasons since then. (PTI)

'The Family Man' season 3 to debut on Prime Video on November 21

MUMBAI, Oct 30: The much-awaited third season of hit spy action-thriller series "The Family Man" will premiere on Prime Video on November 21, the streamer said on Tuesday.

Created by filmmaker duo Raj & DK, the new chapter will raise the stakes for Manoj Bajpayee's Srikant Tiwari, an elite undercover agent who continues to juggle the complexities of national duty with his turbulent personal life.

"In this season, the stakes and dangers are higher than ever before, as he is pushed to his limits when he comes face-to-face with formidable new adversaries in Jaideep Ahlawat (Rukma) and Nimrat Kaur (Meera).

"On the run, Srikant must navigate uncharted territories while confronting threats and enemies from both within and beyond the nation's borders," read the official plotline for the third installment.

Season three also brings back Sharib Hashmi, Priyamani, Ashlesha Thakur, Vedant Sinha, Shreya Dhanwanthary, and Gul Panag.

"We know the audience has been patient, and we wanted to ensure that the wait was worth it. This season, the hunter becomes the hunted, as Srikant faces a threat unlike any before -- one that endangers not just him and his career, but his family too." Raj & DK said in a joint statement. Written by Raj, DK, and Suman Kumar, with dialogues by Sumit Arora, the series is directed by Raj & DK, with Suman Kumar and Tusshar Seyth also coming on board as directors for the upcoming season.

Nikhil Madhok, Director and Head of Originals, Prime Video India, hailed the show as one that has "redefined long-format storytelling, becoming part of everyday conversations and cultural discourse". (PTI)

Amitabh Bachchan sends best wishes to grandson Agastya Nanda for 'Ikkis': 'You are special'

NEW DELHI, Oct 30: Megastar Amitabh Bachchan has sent his best wishes to grandson Agastya Nanda for his second feature film "Ikkis", saying he is filled with pride to see the youngster on screen and hopes that he brings glory to the family.

The official trailer of the Sriram Raghavan-directed war drama, based on the life of the Param Vir Chakra recipient Arun Khetarpal, was unveiled by production banner Maddock Films on Wednesday.

Bachchan shared the trailer on his official X handle and wrote, "Agastya! I held you in my hands as soon as you were born... few months later, I held you again in my hands and your soft fingers reached out to play with my beard."

"Today you play in theatres all over the World... You are Special... all my prayers and blessings to you... may you ever bring glory to your work and the greatest pride for the family," he added.

Nanda, son of Bachchan's daughter Shweta Bachchan-Nanda and businessman Nikhil Nanda, made his acting debut with Zoya Akhtar's Netflix film "The Archies" in 2023.

In "Ikkis", the 24-year-old actor essays the role of Khetarpal, who was martyred at the age of 21 during the Battle of Basantar in the 1971 Indo-Pak war. For his courage and sacrifice, he was posthumously awarded the Param Vir Chakra, making him the youngest recipient of India's highest military honour at the time.

Besides Bachchan, Nanda's uncle, actor Abhishek Bachchan, extended support to the movie by sharing its trailer on his official social media handles. "Ikkis" will also mark the acting debut of Simar Bhatia, niece of superstar Akshay Kumar. She is playing the female lead opposite Nanda in the movie.

In a post on his Instagram Stories, Akshay sent best wishes to both Bhatia and Nanda. (PTI)

Audiences will experience 'Baahubali' like never before: Shobu Yarlagadda on 'Baahubali: The Epic'

HYDERABAD, Oct 30: "Baahubali" producer Shobu Yarlagadda opened up about the upcoming re-release of "Baahubali: The Epic", which he says will be a whole new experience for the fans of the popular pan-Indian franchise.

The SS Rajamouli directed two part saga, which released in 2015 and 2017, is credited for the rise of Pan-Indian cinema by grossing over Rs 2,000 crore worldwide.

"Audiences will experience 'Baahubali' like never before," Yarlagadda said, adding that the goal was to deliver a cinematic spectacle for a new generation of viewers while rekindling nostalgia for the original fans.

The film, which featured Prabhas, Rana Daggubati, Tamannaah Bhatia, Anushka Shetty, Sathyaraj, Ramya Krishnan and Nasser in prominent roles, will rerelease with a remastered combination.

The producer said the remastered edition would feature advanced technologies such as Dolby Atmos sound, IMAX upscaling, and a freshly re-edited presentation, supervised by Rajamouli.

The franchise has spawned many projects such as the 2017 novel "The Rise of Sivagami" which was written as a prequel to the first film and "Baahubali: The Lost Legends", an animated series. Yarlagadda said they are not done with the universe just yet.

"There are plans in the pipeline for spin-offs and expansions, which we will announce soon," he said. Reflecting on the journey of the franchise, Yarlagadda admitted that he never expected "Baahubali: The Beginning" to set a benchmark in Indian filmmaking.

"It not only broke box-office records but also united the Indian film-

industry as one," he said.

However, the producer confessed that he would not take on another project of such massive scale.

"The challenges were enormous — from maintaining the grandeur to keeping within the budget. We made no compromises on quality despite the constraints," he explained.

Yarlagadda also credited social media marketing for the film's phenomenal reach.

"It was cost-effective and helped us build engagement across languages and regions," he said. The viral question — "Why did Kattappa kill Baahubali?" — became an organic marketing hook for the sequel, he added.

"While the first film built anticipation, the second offered instant satisfaction by answering that question," he said, noting how the storytelling structure sustained public interest for years. (PTI)



Kotian, Suthar strikes help India A limit SA A to 299/9 despite Hermann, Hamza, Rubin fifties



BENGALURU, Oct 30: South Africa A resisted through a century-stand between Jordan Hermann and Zubayr Hamza, but India A spinners, led by Tanush Kotian, plucked wickets at regular intervals to keep the visitors to 299 for nine on the first day of the opening four-day match here on Thursday.

Hermann (71) and Hamza (66) shared a 130-run stand for the second wicket after being asked to bat first, holding the SA innings

together for a session and a half. But once Hamza fell to pacer Gurnoor Brar (1/45) while attempting a ramp shot to be caught behind by Rishabh Pant, the Indian bowlers wrested back the control.

Hamza was not precisely happy with the call as Hermann later with the umpire's leg-before decision in favour of off-spinner Kotian (4/83), the most impressive Indian bowler on show on this day.

But the other three top-order batters should have little grouse in their dismissals.

Opener Lesego Senokwane slashed pacer Anshul Kamboj to Ayush Mhatre at first slip, and Rivaldo Moonsamy edged left-arm spinner and Manav Suthar (2/62) to Ayush Badoni at the cordon.

Skipper Marques Ackermann upishly flicked Kotian to Suthar inside the circle, as the Proteas lost 27 for three to slip to 197 for five.

However, until Hermann and Hamza were in the middle, South Africa were in cruise mode, and the three Indian pacers — Brar, Kamboj and Khaleel Ahmed — were guilty of insipid spells despite some early assistance on the pitch.

Hermann started with a flurry of fours off Ahmed before settling into Hamza's sidekick role. The right-hander played a typically fluent innings, filled with crisp cuts and flowing drives.

A cover drive off Brar and a lofted-drive over mid-off for a six off Kotian helped him bring his fifth 50-plus score in the last eight innings off 73 balls.

Hermann was more sedate while going past the milestone in 85 balls, as a reverse sweep of Suthar was, perhaps, the most beligerent moment of his innings.

But the Indian bowlers, especially Brar, came out with a bit more fire in the belly in the middle session, and tested the SA batters with some well-directed short-pitched deliveries.

The improved effort helped the hosts' bowlers pluck three wickets in the second session, conceding a mere 85 runs.

They seemed to have cemented the advantage with an early wicket in the final passage of the day, but the visitors found some more resistance through Rubin Hermann, elder brother of Jordan, and Tiaan Van Vuuren (42).

They added 72 runs for the sixth wicket, riding on pluck and luck before a turf-smoothing delivery sneaked below Hermann's pull to disturb his stumps, as India clawed back.

But till then, Hermann made his stay count while bringing up his fifty in 82 balls.

Pant took a bit to settle into his rhythm behind the stumps, and once he came to terms with the surface and bowlers the wicket-keeper was quite tidy.

This was Pant's first competitive outing since getting injured in the fourth Test against England in July, and he did give plenty of positive signs. (PTI)

Bayern racks up its 14th win in a row as Harry Kane scores twice to beat Cologne



MUNICH, Oct 30: Harry Kane scored twice as Bayern Munich racked up its 14th straight win in one of soccer's best-ever starts to a season after overcoming a rare setback to beat Cologne 4-1 in the German Cup.

Vincent Kompany's team has won every game it has played in the Bundesliga, German Cup and Champions League so far in 2025-26, and the win over Cologne surpassed a historic mark of 13 wins in all competitions set by AC Milan at the start of its 1992-93 campaign.

Bayern did it despite falling behind in a game for the first time since July as Ragnar Ache's 31st-minute header put Cologne ahead.

Bayern turned it around with two goals in two minutes, first for Luis Diaz — who seemed clearly offside, though there's no video review until later in the competition — and then Kane, with an acrobatic turn and shot over the keeper in the 38th.

Kane extended Bayern's lead with a header at a corner, his 22nd goal for Bayern in 14 games this season, and Diaz set up Michael Olise to score Bayern's fourth on a counter soon after.

Bayer Leverkusen scored twice in the final minutes of extra time to win a thrilling game 4-2 over second-division Paderborn and book a spot in the third round.

Leverkusen avoided another embarrassing cup exit after its semifinal loss to a third-tier team last

season, but it was another shaky defensive performance from a Leverkusen team that lost 7-2 to Paris Saint-Germain last week.

The game was a festival of late goals as Paderborn's Stefano Marino headed his 10th-man team level at 1-1 in the 90th minute to force extra time. Paderborn briefly led in extra time through Sven Michel's goal, only for former Liverpool defender Jarell Quansah to level for Leverkusen.

With a penalty shootout looming, Ibrahim Maza showed fancy footwork to score a crucial goal in the second minute added on to the second half of extra time. After Paderborn's goalkeeper joined the attack, Alex Garcia scored into the empty net to seal Leverkusen's win.

In other games, defending German Cup champion Stuttgart beat Mainz for the second time in three days with a 2-0 win to reach the third round. Stuttgart also beat Mainz 2-1 in the Bundesliga on Sunday.

Union Berlin needed extra time to beat last season's runner-up Arminia Bielefeld 2-1.

The lowest-ranked team left in the competition, fourth-tier Illertissen, was beaten 3-0 by second-tier Magdeburg. Kaiserslautern won 1-0 at Greuther Fürth, who had a player sent off four minutes after coming off the bench. Freiburg beat second-tier Fortuna Düsseldorf 3-1. Darmstadt beat Schalke 4-0. (AP)

PSG loses Doue and settles for 1-1 draw with Lorient

PARIS, Oct 30: Ligue 1 leader Paris Saint-Germain dropped points with a 1-1 draw at lowly Lorient and picked up another injury as forward Désiré Doué went off in the second half.

PSG was not punished however, as Marseille conceded six minutes into stoppage time in a 2-2 home draw with Angers.

Victory would have moved Marseille into first place on goal difference. That looked likely after 18-year-old forward Robinio Vaz came on in the second half to score twice. But Angers defender

Ousmane Camara punished Marseille for dropping deep in the closing stages.

The draw allowed Monaco to leapfrog Marseille and go up to second following a 5-3 win at Nantes. Earlier, Doué clutched his right thigh before being removed on a stretcher in the 61st minute with his hands on his face.

"It was a bit of a strange injury. I don't know yet what his condition is," PSG coach Luis Enrique said. "I hope it is not a serious one, but we must wait and see." Doué missed several weeks ear-

lier in the campaign with a calf strain while Ousmane Dembélé — his PSG and France teammate — was also sidelined several weeks with a hamstring injury.

The Ballon d'Or winner Dembélé returned to the starting lineup as left back Nuno Mendes gave defending champion PSG the lead in the 49th minute with a downward header from a Doué cross.

But Lorient hit back two minutes later through Igor Silva's powerful shot.

"The players had almost nothing left in the tank at the end," Lo-

rient coach Olivier Pantaloni said.

Midfielder Aleksandr Golovin scored twice in Monaco's victory, which also featured a goal from United States forward Folarin Balogun.

Bahereba Guirassy, a 19-year-old forward who is the younger brother of prolific Borussia Dortmund striker Serhou Guirassy, grabbed two goals for Nantes.

Argentine striker Joaquín Panichelli continued his fine form with a goal as Strasbourg won 3-0 at home to Auxerre to move into fourth, after fifth-place Lyon's de-

fense collapsed in a 3-3 draw at Paris FC.

Pavel Sulc netted twice and France midfielder Corentin Tolisso also scored as Lyon moved 3-0 up with an hour played, only to concede three times in 20 minutes.

Lens lost 2-0 at rock-bottom Metz, which secured its first win of the season with two late goals from midfielder Gauthier Hein.

Hein was sent off after receiving a second yellow card when he celebrated his second goal by removing his jersey. (AP)

Jannik Sinner's No. 1 bid starts with 2nd-round win over Zizou Bergs at Paris Masters

PARIS, Oct 30: Jannik Sinner's bid to reclaim the No. 1 ranking got off to a good start with a 6-4, 6-2 victory over Zizou Bergs in the second round of the Paris Masters, which the Italian needs to win to knock Carlos Alcaraz off the top spot.

Sinner's 65-week reign as No. 1 ended in September when Alcaraz won the U.S. Open final against him for his sixth major title and the top spot. But Alcaraz lost in Paris on Tuesday in the second round to unseeded Cameron Norrie, opening the door for Sinner in their seesaw rivalry. Sinner had Bergs under constant pressure, forging 11 break-point chances and converting three, while not conceding a break point of his own.

"I was very precise, and I also started off with a break straight away, which gives you a bit more confidence," said Sinner, who is chasing a fifth title of the year and 23rd overall. "I'm very happy how I served today."

The 24-year-old Sinner clinched victory on his first match point and plays unseeded Francisco Cerundolo in the third round.

"I felt like mostly the movement (was good)," said Sinner, who won an ATP 500 tournament in Vienna on Sunday despite having cramps.

Defending champion Alexander Zverev joined Sinner in round three by rallying from 3-1 down in the final set to beat Camilo Ugo Carabelli 6-7 (5), 6-1, 7-5.

The third-seeded German made a telling difference on his second serve, winning 78% of points compared to 42% for his oppo-

nent, who dropped his serve four times. Zverev next plays 15th-seeded Alejandro Davidovich Fokina.

Elsewhere, ninth-seeded Felix Auger-Aliassime of Canada rallied from a break down in the second set and 3-0 down in the third set tiebreaker in a 5-7, 7-6 (5), 7-6 (4) win over Frenchman Alexandre Muller.

Auger-Aliassime's erratic performance combined 50 winners and 55 unforced errors as he maintained his chances of reaching the season-ending, eight-player ATP Finals in Turin, Italy.

He next faces unseeded Daniel Altmaier, who beat eighth-seeded Casper Ruud 6-3, 7-5 to end the Norwegian's Turin chances. Seventh-seeded Lorenzo Musetti lost 3-

6, 6-3, 6-1 to fellow Italian Lorenzo Sonego, who next plays No. 11 Daniil Medvedev, the 2020 champion and 2021 runner-up.

Medvedev had a walkover after Grigor Dimitrov — the 2023 tournament runner-up — pulled out of their match with a shoulder injury.

Valentin Vacherot came out on top again in the battle of the cousins as he beat Arthur Rinderknech 6-7 (9), 6-3, 6-4. "It was very physical. Mentally, it was hard, as well," Vacherot said. "We were very tense, I think the crowd could see it." A little more than two weeks ago, Vacherot won the Shanghai Masters final against Rinderknech, making a run from qualifying in China to win his first career tournament.

The 40th-ranked Vacherot, who is from Monaco, plays Norrie next. (AP)

Dabang Delhi, Puneri Paltan to clash for PKL season-12 title



NEW DELHI, Oct 30: Dabang Delhi and Puneri Paltan, the two standout performers of the season, will clash in the grand finale of the Pro Kabaddi League Season 12 at the Thyagaraj Indoor Stadium here on Friday.

The journey to the final has been strikingly similar for both teams, who finished in the top two on the points table.

Dabang Delhi, the season 8 champions, edged past Puneri Paltan in a dramatic 6-4 tiebreaker in Qualifier 1 after the scores were locked 34-34 in regulation time.

Led by captain Ashu Malik and coached by former Dabang Delhi

skipper Joginder Narwal, the side has shown remarkable grit in crunch moments, an attribute that's been their hallmark through the season.

Puneri Paltan, meanwhile, bounced back in style, winning their Qualifier 2 clash against Telugu Titans to seal their third final appearance in four seasons.

Under Aslam Inamdar's leadership and Ajay Thakur's coaching prowess, the Paltan have set the benchmark this season, finishing atop the league table and boasting one of the most balanced squads in this season.

Their ability to rotate raiders and maintain de-

fensive shape has made them a nightmare for opposition teams.

They've faced off thrice this season — and all three duels went into the tie-breaker. Each has tested the other's limits, with Dabang Delhi relying on Ashu Malik's explosive raids and the Paltan thriving on their corners' composure and synchronised tackles.

For Dabang Delhi, the stakes couldn't be higher. With the final being played on home turf, they'll look to draw energy from the crowd and lean on their experienced campaigners such as Fazel Atrachali, Saurabh Nandal, and Ashu Malik.

Their defensive unit has grown in confidence with every match, while their ability to close out tight games has set them apart in knockout situations.

Puneri Paltan, on the other hand, will aim to correct last season's heartbreaking. They've been the most consistent unit in PKL 12 — combining youth, depth, and discipline.

Their raiding department, led by the young and fearless Aditya Shinde alongside Aslam Inamdar, has complemented a rock-solid defence that thrives on teamwork rather than individual brilliance. (PTI)

League Cup: Liverpool's woes grow with 3-0 loss to Palace; Arsenal, City, Chelsea and Newcastle win

LONDON, Oct 30: Liverpool fielded a weakened team and got duly punished in a 3-0 loss to Crystal Palace in the League Cup on Wednesday, the latest setback to strike the beleaguered English champions.

Ismaila Sarr scored two first-half goals at Anfield and Yeremy Pino added a third for Palace, which consigned Liverpool to a sixth defeat in its last seven games in all competitions.

Also advancing to the quarterfinals were Premier League leader Arsenal, Manchester City and Chelsea, while defending champion Newcastle beat Tottenham 2-0.

After four straight losses in its tottering Premier League title defense, Liverpool is now out of one of the two domestic cups in what is proving to be an unexpectedly poor start to the season for a club that spent \$570 million in the summer transfer window.

This latest loss can at least be explained by manager Arne Slot rest-

ing most of his top players — like Mohamed Salah, Virgil van Dijk, Cody Gakpo and Alexander Isak — and not even putting them on the bench.

A team filled mostly with youngsters was cut apart by Sarr, who scored in the 41st and 45th minutes to add to his goals for Palace in victories over Liverpool in the Community Shield — in a penalty shootout — and the Premier League already this season.

Amaro Nallo, an 18-year-old defender, came on as a 67th-minute substitute for Liverpool and was sent off 12 minutes later for committing a foul as the last defender. In his only other appearance for the Reds — in the Champions League in January — Nallo was also red-carded four minutes after coming on as a sub.

Pino scored Palace's third goal in the 88th.

"It might increase a little bit but not so much because the pressure was already very high," said Slot,



whose team's next three games are against Aston Villa, Real Madrid and Man City starting Saturday.

"Everyone can have their opinion about it," he added about his team selection, "but with the squad we have — maybe 15, 16 first-team players available — this is the choice I've made."

Max Dowman became Arsenal's youngest-ever starter, at 15 years,

302 days, in the team's 2-0 win over Brighton.

The league leaders also played a weakened team but that didn't affect them, with Ethan Nwaneri and Bukayo Saka — on as a substitute for Dowman — netting the goals.

Man City came from behind to beat second-tier Swansea 3-1, with Jeremy Doku, Omar Marmoush and the impressive Rayan Cherki scor-

ing. Prolific City striker Erling Haaland was rested completely, not even making it onto the bench.

Chelsea held on to beat Wolverhampton 4-3 in a wild match at Molineux featuring a fifth red card of the season for Enzo Maresca's ill-disciplined team.

Chelsea went 3-0 up by halftime thanks to goals by Andrey Santos, Tyrrique George and Estevao, only for Wolves to reply through Tolu Arokodare and David Moller Wolfe.

Liam Delap, making his comeback from injury, was sent off in the 86th for collecting two yellow cards before Jamie Gittens made it 4-2. Wolfe scored again for Wolves, the Premier League's last-placed team, in stoppage time.

Newcastle's first goal against Tottenham — a header from Fabian Schär at a corner — was contentious, with the set piece swung in just as Spurs defender Djed Spence got to his feet after putting his boot back on. (AP)

After washout, India head to Melbourne with nose ahead

MELBOURNE, Oct 30: Formidable India have their tails up as they head to the gargantuan MCG for the second T20I against Australia here on Friday, thanks to the influx of young talent and the return to form of skipper Suryakumar Yadav.

The likes of Abhishek Sharma, Tilak Varma, and Shivam Dube arrived on Australian shores after having redefined the art of T20 batting with their relentless power-hitting, but the lack of big runs from their captain's blade has been a bit of dampener for the team in recent times.

Entering the opener of the five-match series under scrutiny, Suryakumar, however, roared back to form with a 24-ball 39, and his humongous 125-metre six off Josh Hazlewood will stay in memory for long.

However, rain had the last word in Canberra as the match was abandoned with India strongly placed at 97 for one after

9.4 overs, and both Suryakumar and Shubman Gill in the mood to decimate the Australian attack.

Rain is also forecast for Friday in Melbourne but, without worrying about what's beyond their control, the visitors will look to pick up where they left off in the abandoned series opener.

Going into the second match, what must have gladdened Indian hearts most was the return to form of Suryakumar, as the team continues on its World Cup path with its high-risk, high-reward approach implemented by head coach Gautam Gambhir.

Gambhir wants his team to regularly go for totals in excess of 250, 260, and even if they end up getting bowled out for 120-130 in trying to do that and lose a few matches in the process, he wouldn't mind.

Their explosive batting in recent months is a clear indication that the batters have embraced Gambhir's philosophy, months



before the T20 World Cup gets underway in India and Sri Lanka, where the 'Men in Blue' will look to defend the title they won in the Americas last summer. India didn't get to bowl in

Canberra but as far as that department is concerned, they boast of Jasprit Bumrah's class and Varun Chakravarthy's guile, with the likes of Kuldeep Yadav and Axar Patel forming a potent attack that can also defend a small total should the batters fail to fire.

They will, nevertheless, have their task cut out against big hitters Mitchell Marsh and Travis Head, who has troubled India in the past.

Australia's T20 template is pretty similar to the one adopted by the Indian team with focus primarily on playing attacking cricket irrespective of the match situation. In men like Head, Marsh, Marcus Stoinis, Tim David and Josh Inglis, they have the personnel to put up big totals or pull off tricky chases.

With pace ace Mitchell Starc retiring from T20Is and Pat Cummins recovering from an injury, the bowling looks a bit thin on

experience and onus is on Hazlewood to lead the attack that comprises Xavier Bartlett, Matthew Kuhnemann, and Nathan Ellis among others.

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, 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 at 1:45 pm. (PTI)

Abhishek Nayar named head coach of KKR



NEW DELHI, Oct 30: Kolkata Knight Riders on Thursday expectedly named former India assistant coach Abhishek Nayar as its new head coach following the departure of Chandrakant Pandit after a three-season tenure. Nayar has been associated with the KKR since 2018 and is one of the key members of their think-tank, often viewed as someone who held a lot of influence in the dressing room when it came to team selection.

For close to nine months, Nayar was a part of Gautam Gambhir's coaching set-up in the national team but was sacked unceremoniously after India's Champions Trophy triumph with Sitanshu Kotak replacing him.

"Abhishek has been a vital part of the Knight Riders setup since 2018, shaping our players both on and off the field. His understanding of the game and connection with players have been key to our growth. We're thrilled to see him take over as Head Coach and lead KKR into its next chapter," said Venky Mysore, CEO, Kolkata Knight Riders.

Nayar has worked closely with the franchise's players as part of its support staff and academy structure. Nayar's expertise and ability as a coach have been well established over the years. During his tenure as assistant coach of KKR, he played a vital role in shaping the growth of young talents.

The 43-year-old, who played three ODIs for India, is well respected as a personal coach and has worked in an individual capacity with players like Rohit Sharma, KL Rahul, Dinesh Karthik to name a few apart from his own find Angkrish Raghuvanshi. (PTI)

To save time, tea could be taken before lunch in India-SA Test Guwahati

NEW DELHI, Oct 30: The second Test between India and South Africa, scheduled in Guwahati's Barsapara and starting November 22, might feature a swapping of breaks with tea taken after the first session and lunch being called during the second session in order to counter the early sunset during the winter months in eastern India.

Unlike Test matches in India, which start at 9:30 am and whose scheduled close of play is 4:30 pm, the game in Guwahati will begin at 9 am and end at 4 pm.

"There is a possibility that first break will be tea break from 11 am to 11:20 am while lunch could be taken at 1:20 pm to 2 pm. The post tea session will be from 2 pm to 4 pm. In Guwahati, normally the sun sets by 4:15 pm. Swapping breaks is a possibility that could be included in the playing conditions," a BCCI source told PTI on conditions of anonymity.

When an Assam Cricket Association (ACA) official was contacted, he said: "We haven't yet got any official notification from the BCCI. We can confirm that Assam's home Ranji Trophy games starts at 8:45 am and ends at 3:45 pm. The first break is lunch at 11:15 am." (PTI) (PTI)

Australian teen cricketer dies after getting hit in neck during training

MELBOURNE, Oct 30: Ben Austin, a 17-year-old Australian cricketer, has died after being hit in the neck during a training session in Melbourne, evoking widespread grief and painful memories of the tragic passing of Phillip Hughes in 2014.

Austin was rushed to hospital in a critical condition after being struck in the neck and the head area by a ball while training for his club at Ferntree Gully in suburban Melbourne on Tuesday.

Austin was facing bowlers in the nets ahead of a T20 match when the injury took place in front of his teammates.

He was put on ventilator after the incident but he succumbed to his injury.

The Ferntree Gully Cricket Club confirmed the player's death on Thursday.

"We are absolutely devastated by the passing of Ben, and the impacts of his death will be felt by all in our cricket community," the club said in a statement.

"Our thoughts and prayers are with his family - Jace, Tracey, Cooper and Zach, his extended family, his friends and to all of those who knew Ben and the joy that he brought."

He was wearing a helmet but not a neck guard, and the tragic



incident is likely to trigger calls to make such protection mandatory at every level of the sport, like it is in top-flight cricket.

Earlier on Thursday, Cricket Victoria released a statement from Ben's father, Jace Austin, on behalf of the family.

"We are utterly devastated by the passing of our beautiful Ben, who died earlier on Thursday

going down to the nets with mates to play cricket. He loved cricket and it was one of the joys of his life."

In this hour of grief, the family did not forget to comfort the bowler who was bowling at the nets to Austin.

"We would also like to support his teammate who was bowling in the nets - this accident has impacted two young men and our thoughts are with him and his family as well."

"We would like to thank the cricket community including Ferntree Gully Cricket Club, Mulgrave Cricket Club and Eildon Park Cricket Club for their support since Tuesday evening and to the dozens of people who visited Ben in hospital."

"Finally, we would also like to thank all the first responders at the scene and the staff at Monash Children's Hospital who worked so hard to help Ben."

"We will cherish Ben forever," the family said in the statement.

Back in November 2014, Australia player Hughes died in a Sydney hospital at the age of 25, two days after being hit near the ear by a ball while batting for South Australia against New South Wales in a first-class match. (PTI)

Punjab FC crowned Punjab Super League 2025 champions

MOHALI, Oct 30: Punjab FC on Thursday claimed the Punjab State Super Football League 2025 title with a game to spare as closest rivals Sher-e-Punjab Sports Club dropped points in their penultimate match against Border Security Force Football Club.

After 17 matches, Punjab FC have 39 points while Sher-e-Punjab Sports Club have 34 points from the same number of matches, effectively making it impossible for any other team to catch up to the Shers.

This is the club's second Punjab State League title, the first one in 2022-23. They finished runners up in the 2024-25 season, finishing below Namdhari Sports Academy.

A key factor in their title-winning run has been the team's rock-solid defense, with 12 clean sheets recorded in 17 matches, a testament to their discipline and tactical organisation.

The Shers won 12, drew three and lost two matches in the season, scoring 32 goals and conceding only 11 throughout the campaign.

The squad under Head Coach Praveen Kumar, fielded their reserves squad for the league with all players under the age of 25, including nine players from the Under-19 squad and 16 players from Punjab.

"We came into this campaign with a young group with all of them under 25 and several straight from our U-19 setup and they showed tremendous maturity and hunger throughout," said Praveen Kumar.

"Winning the league with a game to spare is a reflection of their discipline, consistency, and the identity we are building as a club." (PTI)

Indian coach educators participate in FIFA Development Pathway Programme in Jakarta

NEW DELHI, Oct 30: A group of Indians took part in the FIFA Coach Educators Development Pathway Programme, a five-day intensive course held in Jakarta and organised by the world football governing body's coaching development department.

The Indian contingent included Vivek Nagul (AIFF head of coach development), Sajid Dar, Mariano Dias, Shakti Chauhan, Caetano Pinho, Shekhar Kerkar, and Parthasarthy Thulasi.

The workshop aimed to strengthen the knowledge and capacity of coach educators, focusing on modern coaching principles, advanced educational methodologies, and peer-to-peer learning.

The sessions were conducted under the leadership of Branimir Ujevic, FIFA head of coach education, and facilitated by Oscar Diaz, coaching development delivery manager for AFC and OFC.

Technical expertise was pro-



vided by Scott O'Donnell, Savio Medeira, Sean Douglas, and Jamal Alhassani.

The programme also served as an important platform for collaboration and knowledge exchange among participants from India, Malaysia, Singapore, and Cambodia, fostering cross-regional dialogue and the sharing of best practices in coach education.

The All India Football Federation (AIFF), in collaboration with Reliance Foundation Youth Sports (RFYS), conducted a three-day

workshop for referees from October 24 to 26 in Mumbai, as part of their preparation for the Indian Women's League (IWL) 2025-26 season. This workshop was led by instructors Maria Rebello and Uvena Fernandes and saw participation from 23 referees.

Chaitali Paul, member, referees committee, served as the observer.

Hands-on sessions were conducted to enhance the participants' on-field knowledge on positioning, mobility, and decision-making during key match incidents. (PTI)

Getting better everyday, says Shreyas



SYDNEY, Oct 30: Star Indian batter Shreyas Iyer on Thursday said he is on the road to recovery

and getting better every passing day" after sustaining a ruptured spleen and rib cage injury during

the third ODI against Australia.

The 30-year-old had sustained a lower left rib cage injury while attempting a difficult running catch to dismiss Alex Carey off Harshit Rana's bowling last Saturday.

"I'm currently in recovery process and getting better, every passing day," Iyer posted on his X and Instagram account for the first time since sustaining the injury.

"I'm deeply grateful to see all the kind wishes and support I've received - it truly means a lot. Thank you for keeping me in your thoughts," he added.

Though Iyer, who is India's ODI vice-captain, initially walked off the field with assistance from the physio, but his condition deteriorated later as his vital parameters dropped, prompting immediate hospitalisation.

Subsequent tests revealed internal bleeding caused by a laceration

in the spleen, following which he was admitted to the ICU for close monitoring.

The BCCI on Tuesday confirmed that Iyer's condition had stabilized and he was moved out of the Intensive Care Unit (ICU).

"The injury was promptly identified, and the bleeding was immediately arrested. His condition is now stable, and he continues to be under observation. A repeat scan done on Tuesday, 28th October, has shown significant improvement, and Shreyas is on the road to recovery," said the BCCI in a statement.

"The BCCI Medical Team, in consultation with specialists in Sydney and India, will continue to monitor his progress."

Initially, Iyer was expected to be out of action for about three weeks, but now it appears the recovery period may be longer. (PTI)