

**10 REGION**  
 ● Assam cabinet approves Tiwari Commission Report on Nellie Massacre  
 ● BTC venture schools seek inclusion under state Provincialisation Act

**12 NATION**  
 ● Helpless travellers living proof of NDA's deceitful policies: Rahul  
 ● This election will decide if 'jungle raj' returns to Bihar or development prevails: Shah

  
 Government of Assam  
 Higher and School Education Department

## Nijut Moina 2.0

### Distribution of Cheques

An endeavour to support **10 lakh** girls in pursuing higher education

## CENTRAL PROGRAMME

**Chief Guest**  
**Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma**  
 Chief Minister, Assam

In august presence of  
**Dr Ranoj Pegu**  
 Minister, Education, etc., Assam

**Smti Bijuli Kalita Medhi**  
MP, Guwahati HPC

**Shri Siddhartha Bhattacharjee**  
MLA, East Guwahati LAC

**Shri Atul Bora**  
MLA, Dispur LAC

**Shri Hemanga Thakuria**  
MLA, Palashbari LAC

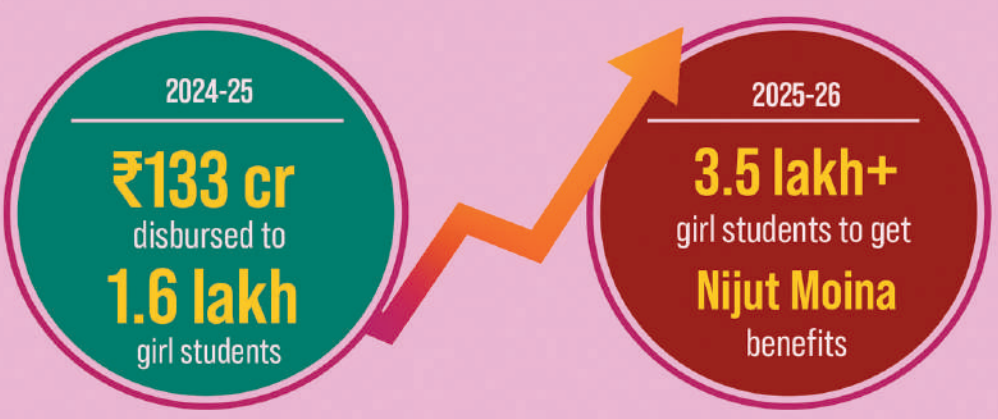
**Shri Diganta Kalita**  
MLA, Kamalpur LAC

 **27 October 2025**
 **11 AM**
 **Arjun Bhogeswar Baruah Sports Complex, Sarusajai, Guwahati**

### District-wise Number of Girls

District	HE	SE	SCERT	Total
Kamrup	10975	11433	13	22421
Kamrup Metro	13163	7901	20	21084
Nagaon	9633	9736	7	19376
Barpeta	7272	11031	46	18349
Cachar	6107	10558	19	16684
Dhubri	5792	10181	-	15973
Lakhimpur	6622	8579	24	15225
Dhemaji	5244	7656	14	12914
Kokrajhar	6092	6599	47	12738
Dibrugarh	5942	6323	49	12314
Goalpara	4573	7411	54	12038
Marigaon	4069	7801	114	11984
Nalbari	5883	5919	47	11849
Golaghat	4854	6676	35	11565
Sonitpur	5473	5816	83	11372
Jorhat	5552	5272	69	10893
Sribhumi	4531	5487	24	10042
Tinsukia	4030	5771	-	9801

District	HE	SE	SCERT	Total
Darrang	4544	4380	8	8932
Sivasagar	3712	4417	-	8129
Udalguri	4245	3720	-	7965
Bongaigaon	3791	3943	55	7789
Hojai	4211	3482	-	7693
Biswanath	2744	4455	32	7231
Hailakandi	2547	4354	24	6925
Baksa	1917	3471	-	5388
Bajali	2925	2261	-	5186
Tamulpur	1270	3334	-	4604
Chirang	2471	2120	-	4591
Charaideo	1706	2785	-	4491
Karbi Anglong	2172	2227	19	4418
South Salmara Mankachar	1869	1802	-	3671
Majuli	1453	1615	-	3068
Dima Hasao	990	1725	32	2747
West Karbi Anglong	163	652	-	815
<b>Total</b>	<b>158537</b>	<b>190893</b>	<b>835</b>	<b>350265</b>



#### Social Outcome

- More enrolment of girl students in higher education
- Prevent child marriage and reduce teenage motherhood
- Delay marriage until emotional, mental, and physical maturity
- Protect children's rights to education, health, and safety

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# Nijut Moina 2.0



Government of Assam

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## Distribution of Cheques Across Assam on 27 October 2025

### Central Programme at Arjun Bhogeswar Baruah Sports Complex, Sarusajai

#### Chief Guest

**Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma**  
Chief Minister, Assam

#### In august presence of

**Dr Ranoj Pegu**  
Minister, Education, etc.

**Shri Atul Bora**  
MLA, Dispur LAC

**Smti Bijuli Kalita Medhi**  
MP, Guwahati HPC

**Shri Hemanga Thakuria**  
MLA, Palashbari LAC

**Shri Siddharta Bhattacharjee**  
MLA, East Guwahati LAC

**Shri Diganta Kalita**  
MLA, Kamalpur LAC

Sl. No.	Educational Institution	Total Girls
<b>Kamrup</b>		
1	DK College, Mirza	1609
2	DK Girls' College, Mirza	1540
3	Saraighat College, Changsari	557
4	Pub Kamrup College, Baihata Chariali	1247
5	Bezera Higher Secondary School	323
<b>Kamrup (M)</b>		
6	Gauhati University	2278
7	Cotton University	2164
8	Dimoria College (Autonomous)	951
9	Sonapur College	821
10	Arya Vidyapeeth College (Autonomous)	1153
11	Guwahati College	853

12	B Boroah College (Autonomous)	1069
13	Beltola College	288
14	Handique Girls' College	1499
15	Dispur College	684
16	Gauhati Commerce College	515
17	KC Das Commerce College	536
18	Karmashree Hiteswar Saikia College	304
19	KRB Girls' College	377
20	SB Deorah College	332
21	Pandu College	1037
22	Malaybari Senior Secondary School	179
23	Sonapur HS School	101
24	Guwahati Refinery Higher Secondary School	59

25	Dakshin Guwahati Senior Secondary School	55
26	Panbazar Higher Secondary School	121
27	TC Govt Girls' HS & MP School	201
28	Banikanta Memorial Girls' HS School	32
29	Ganesh Mandir HS School	108
30	Gopal Boro Govt HS School	134
31	Kamrup Academy HS School	97
32	Arya Vidyapeeth HS & MP School	230
33	Sonaram HS School	52
34	Jalukbari HS School	68
35	Bidyamandir HS School	153
36	Ulubari Higher Secondary School	80
37	Rajdhar Borah Higher Secondary School	202

Sl. No.	Educational Institution	Total Girls	Chief Guest/Guests
<b>Bajali</b>			
38	BHB College	295	Shri Navadeep Kalita, Director & VC, AIDC
39	Bhawanipur Anchalik College	921	Shri Mridul Kumar Das, DC, Bajali & Smti Nipamoni Kalita, Social Worker
40	Nirmal Haloi College	1183	Shri Manoj Baruah, Social Worker
41	North Kamrup College	415	Smti Jolly Choudhury, Chairperson, Pathsala MB
42	Bhattadev University	1192	Smti Minakshi Das, Chairperson, Bajali MB
<b>Baksa</b>			
43	BB Kishan College, Jalah	192	Shri Pranab Jyoti Barman, GM, KAC
44	Salbari College	571	Shri Phanidhar Talukdar, MLA
45	Barama College	590	Shri Bhupen Baro, MLA & Shri Diganta Goyari, MCLA
46	Koklabari Chapaguri College	403	Shri Urkhao Gwra Brahma, Minister & Shri Pramod Boro, MCLA
47	Govt. Model Degree College, Baksa	100	Smti Rekha Rani Das Boro, MCLA & Shri Ridip Deka, Social Worker
48	Gyanpeeth Degree College	463	Shri Augustush Tigga, EM, BTC & Shri Ram Dahal, Social Worker
49	Mushalpur College	528	Begom Akhtara Ahmed, EM, BTC
<b>Barpeta</b>			
50	BH College	1603	Shri Ranjeet Kumar Dass, Minister
51	Barnagar College	1056	Shri Bhakarjyoti Das, Social Worker
52	GL Choudhury College	1200	Shri Manoranjan Talukdar, MLA & Rajesh Sarkar, Chairperson, Barpeta Road MB
53	Govt Model Degree College, Baghbor	96	Sherman Ali Ahmed, MLA; Simanta Sekhar, Chairperson, ASFFDC & Abdus Samad Ahmed, Social Worker
54	Mandia Anchalik College	362	Shri Gautam Pathak, Social Worker
55	Nabajyoti College, Kalgachia	1010	Rafiqul Islam, MLA & Md Faruk Khan, Social Worker
56	Janapriya College	319	Dhani Ali, Social Worker
57	Govt Model Women College, Chenga	112	Shri Jitu Talukdar, Director, APCL
58	Luitparia College	288	Muktar Hussain Khan, Ex-MLA
59	Srimanta Sankar-Madhab Mahavidyalaya	235	Ashrafal Hussain MLA, Zakir Hussain, Social Worker & Kapil Bhuyan, Social Worker
60	BBK College	720	Shri Pradip Kr Das, Social Worker
61	Barpeta Bongaigaon College, Langla	482	Shri Badal Arjya, Social Worker
62	Madhab Choudhury College, Barpeta	1440	Abdur Rahim Ahmed, MLA & Shri Anil Kumar Das, Chairperson, Barpeta DA
63	Madhya Kamrup College, Subha	489	Shri Jayanta Deka, Social Worker
64	Uttar Barpeta College	271	Rajen Talukdar, VC, BMB
65	Barpeta College, Barpeta	501	Jaya Das Baruah, Social Worker
66	Bapujee College	448	Shri Jakir Hussain Sikdar, MLA, Swarnalata Barman, Chairperson, Sarthebari MB
67	Harendra Chitra College	355	Shri Dhanmani Deka, Social Worker
68	Kayakuchi College	345	Utpal Bharali, Social Worker & Shri Anup Barman, Social Worker

69	Milanjyoti College	314	Smti Anjali Das Choudhury, Chairman, Howly MB
<b>Biswanath</b>			
70	Biswanath College	1281	Shri Pramod Borthakur, MLA
71	Behali Degree College	614	Shri Diganta Ghatowal, MLA
72	Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya Adarsha Mahavidyalaya, Behali	225	Shri Amarjyoti Borthakur, Chairperson, Biswanath MB
73	Chaiduar College (Autonomous)	1305	Shri Utpal Borah, MLA
74	Kalabari College	506	Shri Nitul Hazarika, ZP Member
<b>Bongaigaon</b>			
75	Abhayapuri College	1190	Shri Phani Bhushan Choudhury, MP & Shri Bhupen Roy, Ex-MLA
76	Indira Gandhi College	206	Smti Himani Adhikari, Member, ASCW
77	Mahatma Gandhi College, Chalantapara	408	Shri Pradip Sarkar, MLA & Shri Rupam Goswami, Social Worker
78	Manikpur Anchalik College, Manikpur	818	Abdul Batin Khandakar, MLA & Smti Monalisha Koch, Social Worker
79	PDUAM, Tulungia	602	Shri Ramendra Narayan Banikya, Chairperson, Abhayapuri MB
80	Rajiv Gandhi Memorial College, Lengtisinga	432	Smti Nilima Devi, Social Worker
81	Birjhora Kanya Mahavidyalaya	844	Shri Gopeshwar Talukdar, Chairperson, BDA
82	Birjhora Mahavidyalaya	304	Shri Subodh Chandra Das, Chairperson, BMB
83	Bongaigaon University	1228	Smti Diptimoyee Choudhury, MLA
<b>Cachar</b>			
84	Assam University	735	Shri Parimal Suklabaidya, MP
85	Nehru College	451	Shri Kaushik Rai, Minister
86	Satindra Mohan Dev College	242	Smti Reena Singha, Social Worker
87	Jagannath Singh College	288	Shri Mihir Kanti Shome, MLA
88	Govt Model College, Borkhola	112	Khaliluddin Mazumdar, MLA & Shri Kankan Narayan Sikdar, Social Worker
89	Satya Ranjan College	369	Shri Kamalakhya Dey Purkayastha, MLA
90	West Silchar College	520	Misbahul Islam Laskar, MLA & Shri Amitabh Rai, Ex-Chairperson, Cachar ZP
91	Cachar College	768	Dr Chandan Dey, Social Worker & Shri Rupam Saha, Social Worker
92	Guru Charan University	1728	Shri Dipayan Chakraborty, MLA
93	Radhamadhab College	518	Shri Mridul Yadav DC Cachar, Shri Amarendra Paul, Social Worker
94	Silchar College	235	Shri PK Sinha, Social Worker
95	Women's College, Silchar	751	Shri Kanad Purkayastha, MP, Shri Sushmita Purkayastha, Social Worker
96	Janata College	535	Shri Swapan Suklabaidya, Social Worker
97	Madhab Chandra Das College	568	Karimuddin Barbuia, MLA & Shri Amiyoy Kanti Das, Social Worker
98	Mohendra Kumar Dey College	460	Shri Nihar Ranjan Das, MLA
<b>Charaideo</b>			
99	Borhat BPB Memorial College	201	Shri Tara Chand Agarwala, Chairperson, SDA
100	Sapekhati College	108	Smti Nabanita Handique, Ex-MLA
101	Sonari College	760	Shri Dharmeswar Konwar, MLA
102	Sonari Commerce College	136	Shri Topon Kr Gogoi, Ex-MP



Contd. from P2



# Nijut Moina 2.0



## Distribution of Cheques Across Assam on 27 October 2025

Sl. No.	Educational Institution	Total Girls	Chief Guest/Guests
103	Moran College	1164	Shri Jogen Mohan, Minister
104	Moran Mahila Mahavidyalaya	664	Shri Haren Gogoi, President, AP
105	Patsaku College	81	Smti Gitamoni Chiring, ZP Member
<b>Chirang</b>			
106	Janata College, Serfanguri	700	Shri Paniram Brahma, EM, BTC
107	Basugaon College	609	Shri Nirmal Kumar Brahma, MLA & Shri Ratan Roy, Social Worker
108	Bengtol College	309	Shri Jayanta Basumatary, MP & Shri Sukursing Muchahary, MCLA
109	Upendra Nath Brahma College	535	Shri James Basumatary, MCLA & Shri Ukhandoi Musahary, Social Worker
110	Bijni College	981	Shri Ajay Kumar Ray, MLA
111	Borobazar College	295	Shri Dhiraj Borgoyari, EM, BTC & Shri Prabhat Basumatary, Social Worker
112	Govt Model Degree College, Chirang	70	Shri Biswajit Biswas, Social Worker
113	Runikhata College	164	Shri Lwmsrao Daimary, EM, BTC
<b>Darrang</b>			
114	Deomorno Degree College	842	Shri Dhiren Deka, Social Worker
115	Sipajhar College	1581	Shri Parmananda Rajbongshi, MLA
116	Mangaldai College (Autonomous)	2438	Shri Dilip Saikia, MP & Shri Basanta Das, MLA
117	Mangaldai Commerce College	184	Shri Gurujyoti Das, Ex-MLA
118	Kharupetia College	1092	Shri Bhubaneswar Kalita, MP & Smti Krishna Saha, Chairperson, Kharupetia MB
119	Govt Model Women College, Mangaldai	500	Sehnaz Yasmin, Social Worker
120	PDUAM, Dalgaoan	972	Shri Biren Prasad Baishya, MP; Mazibur Rahman MLA & Biswajit Ghosh, Social Worker
<b>Dhemaji</b>			
121	Bordoloni Central College	268	Smti Khyomali Bordeori Daimary, Vice-Chairperson, ZP
122	Dhemaji City College	1022	Smti. Diprekha Das Baghri, Chairperson, Dhemaji MB
123	Dhemaji College	684	Shri Bhupen Chuita, Chairperson, ZP & Shri Lakhidhar Hensua, ZPM
124	Dhemaji Commerce College	256	Shri Tulan Konwar, Chairperson, TCP
125	Gogamukh College	633	Shri Parmananda Chayengia, CEM, MAC
126	Jiadhal College	415	Shri Tankeswar Sonowal, Ex-CEC, SKAC
127	Dimow Chariali College	100	Shri Kanak Doley, GM, MAC
128	Machkhowa Degree College	487	Shri Parag Jit Gogoi, Social Worker
129	Moridhal College	516	Smti Pranita Gogoi, ZP Member
130	Paschim Dhemaji College	156	Shri Jibon Gogoi, ZP Member
131	Purbanchal College, Silapathar	494	Shri Johan Doley, EM, MAC
132	Silapathar College	499	Shri Pratap Taye, GM, MAC
133	Silapathar Science College	352	Shri Bhubon Pegu, MLA
134	Silapathar Town College	686	Shri Pradan Baruah, MP & Shri Jagyeswar Kutum, EM, MAC
135	Sissi Bargaon College	446	Shri Bhupen Chutia, President, Dhemaji ZP
136	Jonai Girls' College	859	Shri Naresh Kumbang, EM, MAC
137	Murkong Selek College	249	Shri Jayanta Bori, ZP Member
138	Simen Chapari College	492	Shri Mihineswar Basumatary, CEM, BKWAC
<b>Dhubri</b>			
139	Chilarai College	856	Shri Ashwini Ray Sarkar, Ex-MLA
140	Halakura College	487	Shri Alok Saha, Social Worker
141	Pramathesh Barua College	564	Shri Ranjit Ray, Social Worker & Smti Sabitri Roy, Chairperson, GMB
142	Progati College, Agomani	640	Shri Upam Bhokot, Social Worker
143	Alamganj Rangamati College	326	Nijanur Rahman MLA
144	BN College (Autonomous)	1178	Nazrul Haque, MLA & Dr Debamoy Sanyal, Chairperson, Dhubri MB
145	Dharmasala college	252	Shri Bimal Oswal, Social Worker
146	Dhubri Girls' College	1123	Shri Dibakar Nath, DC & Shri Prasenjit Dutta, Social Worker
147	Hamidabad College	530	Shri Deepak Saha, Chairperson, DDA
148	Govt Model Women College, Majer Alga	35	Shri Nirmalya Paul, Social Worker
149	Bilasipara College	1300	Shri Ashok Singhi, Ex-MLA
150	Govt. Model Women College, Bilasipara	417	Hafiz Bashir Ahmed, MLA & Smti Binita Das Saha, Chairman, BMB
151	Ratnaphith College	686	Shri Jibesh Ray, CEM, Kamatapur Autonomous Council
152	Sapatgram College	648	Samsul Huda, MLA & Mala Mandal, Chairperson, Sapatgram MB
<b>Dibrugarh</b>			
153	DDR College	619	Shri Binod Hazarika, MLA

154	DHSK College (Autonomous)	1994	Shri Prasanta Phukan, Minister
155	DHSK Commerce College	578	Shri Akhim Hazarika, Chairperson, Dibrugarh DA
156	Dibru College	955	Shri Ujjal Phukan, Deputy Mayor, Dibrugarh MC
157	Dibrugarh University	240	Shri Rituparna Baruah, Chairperson, ATDC
158	Manohari Devi Kanoi Girls' College	1250	Shri Sarbananda Sonowal, Union Minister & Shri Pulak Gohain, Chairperson, ASHB
159	Nandalal Borgohain City College	271	Dr Saikat Patra, Mayor, Dibrugarh MC
160	Khowang College	144	Shri Chakradhar Gogoi, MLA
161	Pithubar College	223	Shri Hemanta Buragohain, Social Worker
162	Duliajan College	667	Shri Sudorshon Basumatary, Chairperson, Duliajan Nagarik Committee
163	Duliajan Girls' College	160	Shri Terosh Gowala, MLA
164	Tengakhat College	364	Smti Priyanath Chetia, Member, Tengakhat ZP
165	Moran Commerce College	14	Shri Bikul Deka, Social Worker
166	Tingkhong College	523	Shri Bimal Borah, Minister
167	Naharkatiya College	477	Shri Mridul Kalita, ZP Member
168	Namrup College	240	Shri Taranga Gogoi, MLA
<b>Dima Hasao</b>			
169	Haflong Govt. College	1092	Shri Debolal Gorlosa, CEM, DHAC
170	Govt Model College, Dibrong	50	Shri Projith Hojai, MAC
171	Maibang Degree College	331	Smti Nandita Gorlosa, Minister
<b>Goalpara</b>			
172	Jaleswar College	292	Aftab Uddin Mollah, MLA
173	West Goalpara College	691	Shri Pradip Timung, DC, Goalpara
174	Agia College	328	Abdur Rasheed Mandal, MLA & Smti Tinamoni Daimary, Social Worker
175	Lakhipur College	518	Dr Prakash Kashyap, Director, APDCL
176	Goalpara College	1980	Shri Dipak Nath, Chairperson, Goalpara DA
177	Habraghat Mahavidyalaya	441	Abdul Kalam Rasheed Alam, MLA & Smti Suchitra Nath, Social Worker
178	Bikali College	1104	Shri Dipanka Nath, Social Worker
179	Dalgoma Anchalik College	184	Shri Jacab Sawargiary, MLA & Shri Deepak Rabha, Ex-MLA
180	Dudhnoi College (Autonomous)	1317	Shri Tankeswar Rabha, CEM, RHAC
181	Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya Adarsha Mahavidyalaya, Amjonga	208	Shri Sibsaran Basumatary, Ex-MLA
<b>Golaghat</b>			
182	Birangana Sati Sadhani Rajyik Vishwavidyalaya	16	Shri Rajkumar Bedanta Bikas Gohain, Social Worker
183	Debraj Roy College (Autonomous)	1041	Smti Dulmoni Borbora, Chairperson, Golaghat MB
184	Furkating College (Autonomous)	616	Shri Jitu Barua, Social Worker
185	Golaghat Commerce College (Autonomous)	547	Smti Ajanta Neog, Minister
186	HPB Girls' College	720	Smti Archana Bora, Social Worker
187	DKD College	1044	Shri Bhabendra Nath Bharali, MLA
188	Golaghat Purbanchalik College	105	Shri Rajmohan Sarma, Chairperson, Dergaon DA
189	Kamarbandha College	184	Smti Madhumita Borah, Chairperson, Dergaon MB
190	Chandra Nath Bezbaruah College, Bokakhat	158	Shri Ratneswar Baruah, Chairperson, Bokakhat MB
191	Govt Model College, Kaziranga	134	Shri Debopratim Bora, Social Worker
192	JDSG College	724	Shri Atul Bora, Minister
193	Kamargaon College	513	Shri Animesh Saikia, Social Worker
194	Joya Gogoi College	309	Shri Munindra Mohan Gogoi, Social Worker
195	Marangi Mahavidyalaya, Golaghat	292	Smti Jumoni Barua Phukan, Social Worker
196	Melamara College	182	Shri Mrinal Saikia, MLA
197	Barpathar College	324	Shri Biswajit Phukan, MLA
198	Sarupathar College	938	Shri Sanjib Kumar Baruah, Chairperson, BMB
<b>Hailakandi</b>			
199	AL Choudhury College	410	Shri Swapan Bhattacharjee, Social Worker
200	Lala Rural College	609	Smti Tursi Roy, Chairperson, Lala MB
201	Moinul Hoque Choudhury Memorial Science College	388	Shri Rajkumar Das, Social Worker
202	SK Roy College, Katlicherra	446	Shri Bimal Baroi, Social Worker
203	Srikishan Sarda College	1140	Zakir Hussain Laskar MLA & Shri Kalyan Goswami, Social Worker
204	PDUAM, Katlicherra	160	Suzam Uddin Laskar, MLA & Nizam Uddin Choudhury, MLA
205	Sarada Charan Dey College, Kalinagar	324	Smti Moon Swarnakar, Social Worker & Shri Pritish Das, Social Worker

Contd. from P3



# Nijut Moina 2.0



## Distribution of Cheques Across Assam on 27 October 2025

Sl. No.	Educational Institution	Total Girls	Chief Guest/Guests
<b>Hojai</b>			
206	Jamunamukh College	223	Smti Chaturthi Rani Biswas, Chairperson, Hojai MB
207	Alhaz Sunai Bibi Choudhury College	242	Shri Pranab Ghosh, VC, Hojai MB
208	Haji Anfar Ali College	708	Sirajuddin Ajmal, MLA
209	Murazar College	458	Habib Md Choudhury, Social Worker
210	Rabindranath Tagore University	1075	Shri Anup Kr Borthakur, Social Worker
211	Hojai Girls' College	1432	Shri Ram Krishna Ghosh, MLA
212	Lanka Mahavidyalaya	986	Shri Shiladitya Deb, Ex-MLA & Smti Paramita Roy Saha, Chairperson, Lanka MB
213	Lumding College	1027	Shri Sibum Mishra, MLA
214	Udali College	700	Smti Swastika Routh Majumdar, Chairperson, Lumding MB
<b>Jorhat</b>			
215	CKB Commerce College	300	Shri Prasant Jyoti Goswami, Chairman, JDA
216	DCB Girls' College	1411	Shri Pabitra Margherita, Union MoS & Dr Lakhimi Khargharia, Chairperson, JMB
217	Jagannath Barooah University	1197	Shri Hitendra Nath Goswami, MLA
218	Jorhat College (Amalgamated)	463	Shri Rana Goswami, Chairperson, Assam Urban Water Supply & Sewerage Board
219	Assam Women's University	170	Smti Biswaprava Saikia, Chairman, MMB
220	Mariani College	489	Shri Rupjyoti Kurmi, MLA
221	Nakachari College	151	Shri Deep Suri, ZP Member
222	Borholla College	427	Smti Rashmi Bhattacharjee, Chairperson, TMB
223	Cinnamara College	194	Shri Bipanchi Dutta, CDC, Titabor & Shri Kumud Kachari, Chairperson, Thengal Kachari AC
224	Dr NB College	146	Smti Barnali Saikia, Member, ASWC
225	Nanda Nath Saikia College	777	Shri Bhaskar Jyoti Baruah, MLA, Shri Dhiraj Gowala, Social Worker
226	Bahona College	468	Shri Nabajyoti Das, Social Worker
227	CKB College, Teok	552	Shri Surajit Saikia, ZP Chairman
228	Ghana Kanta Borah College, Tamulichiga	148	Shri Jogen Koch, Social Worker
229	Jorhat Institute of Science and Technology, Jorhat	129	Smti Rumi Chetia, Social Worker
230	Jorhat Kendriya Mahavidyalaya	460	Shri Shantanu Pujari, Chairperson, AIIDC
231	Kakojan College	571	Shri Laki Borborah Gogoi, Chairperson, TMB
232	Sarbodaya College	340	Shri Jitendra Pathori, Social Worker
<b>Kamrup</b>			
233	BP Chaliha College, Nagarbera	765	Shri Mrinmoy Boro, Social Worker
234	Chhamaria Anchalik College	295	Shri Prahlad Biswas, Social Worker
235	FA Ahmed College	506	Rekibuddin Ahmed, MLA & Shri Dipak Talukdar, Social Worker
236	Sontali Anchalik College	523	Shri Prafulla Medhi, Social Worker
237	Jawaharlal Nehru College, Boko	1324	Smti Nandita Das, MLA; Shri Anjan Goswami, Social Worker & Shri Himangshu Shekhar Baishya, Social Worker
238	Chhaygaon College	1022	Shri Mihir Ranjan Das, ZP; Shri Kamleswar Das, Social Worker & Shri Anup Kr Medhi, Social Worker
239	Rampur Anchalik College	60	Smti. Rina Das Kalita, Chairperson, Palashbari MB
240	Bamundi Mahavidyalaya	103	Shri Rebati Deka Majumdar, Social Worker
241	Binandi Chandra Medhi College, Ramdia	288	Smti. Suman Haripriya, MLA
242	Damdama College	504	Shri Prakash Das, Social Worker
243	Paschim Barigog Anchalik Mahavidyalaya	223	Shri Bhaskar Jyoti Kalita, Social Worker
244	Pub Bongsor College	235	Shri Madan Sarma, Social Worker
245	SBMS College, Sualkuchi	624	Dr Kartik Medhi, Social Worker
246	Suren Das College (Autonomous)	1077	Smti Arpana Barman, Social Worker
247	Madhya Kampeeth College	165	Shri Kumud Kakati, ZP Member
248	Manabendra Sarma Girls' College	1276	Shri Nipon Bhuyan, Social Worker
249	Puthimari College	367	Shri Amarendra Lahkar, Chairperson, Rangia MB
250	Rangia College	2169	Shri Bhabesh Kalita, MLA
251	Patidarrang College	732	Shri Umesh Deka, ZP Member
252	Vidya Bharati College	196	Shri Kiran Kakoti, ZP Member
253	North Gauhati College	525	Shri Durga Ram Das, Social Worker
<b>Kamrup Metro</b>			
254	Narangi Anchalik Mahavidyalaya	597	Shri Dilip Das, VC, ATDC
255	Geetanagar College	271	Shri Mrigen Saraniya, Mayor & Smti Smita Roy, Deputy Mayor
256	Pragjyotish College	1221	Shri Dhrubajyoti Moral, Social Worker
257	RG Baruah College	746	Shri Subhash Dutta, VC, ASHB
258	Krishna Kanta Handique Govt Sanskrit College	12	Shri Kamini Kanta Kalita, Social Worker
259	LCB College	340	Dr Hirak Jyoti Sarma, Social Worker
260	Paschim Guwahati Mahavidyalaya	465	Dr Dilip Kumar Kalita, Social Worker
261	West Guwahati Commerce College	261	Shri Ramendra Narayan Kalita, MLA & Shri Shyamal Bhattacharjee, Social Worker
262	Hari Gayatri Das College	116	Shri Bhaben Medhi, Social Worker
<b>Karbi Anglong</b>			
263	Eastern Karbi Anglong College	386	Shri Horen Sing Bey, Ex-MP
264	Government Model College, Deithor	115	Dr Numol Momin, Deputy Speaker, ALA
265	Thongnokbe College, Dokmoka	828	Shri Dorsing Ronghang, MLA
266	Diphu Govt College	1147	Shri Tuliram Ronghang, CEM, KAAC
267	Rukasen College	470	Shri Amarsing Tisso, MP & Shri Bidya Sing Engleng, MLA
<b>Kokrajhar</b>			
268	Janata College, Serfanguri	700	Shri Paniram Brahma, EM, BTC
269	Gossaigaon College, Gossaigaon	698	Shri Jiron Basumatary, MLA & Shri Jubiraj Basumatary, MCLA
270	Zamduar College	345	Shri Mritunjoy Narzary, EM, BTC
271	Bodofa UN Brahma College	516	Shri Prakash Basumatary, EM, BTC
272	Bodoland University	74	Shri William Narzary, MCLA & Azamul Haque, MCLA
273	Commerce College, Kokrajhar	105	Shri Rabiram Narzary, MLA & EM, BTC
274	Kokrajhar University	1315	Shri Hagrama Mohilary, CEM, BTC
275	Science College, Kokrajhar	273	Shri Rudhir Kumar Daimary, Chairperson, Kokrajhar DA
276	Fakiragram College	264	Shri Derhast Basumatray, EM, BTC
277	Girls' College, Kokrajhar	1154	Shri Lawrence Islary, MLA, & Shri Dhaneswar Goyari, MCLA
278	Gurudev Kalicharan Brahma College	177	Smti Moon Moon Brahma, EM, BTC
279	Swami Yogananda Giri College	201	Shri Banendra Kumar Muchahary, Ex-MLA
<b>Lakhimpur</b>			
280	Bihpuria College	362	Shri Debananda Hazarika, VC, ASTP-PCL
281	Kherajkhat College	326	Smti Deepshikha Bora, Chairperson, Bihpuria MB
282	Madhabdev Univesity	892	Shri Amiya Kumar Bhuyan, MLA
283	Pub-Dikrong College	266	Shri Khagen Hazarika, ZP
284	Sankardeva Mahavidyalaya	446	Smti. Monalisha Baruah, ZP
285	Laluk College	484	Shri Rishiraj Hazarika, Member, ASYC
286	Nowboicha College	340	Shri Shyamal Sarma, Social Worker
287	LTK College	336	Dr. Nripen Bora, Social Worker
288	Panigaon OPD College	336	Shri Kukheswari Das, ZP
289	Rengam Subansiri College	252	Shri Bharat Narah, MLA & Shri Rajesh Payeng, Social Worker
290	Telahi Tuwaram Nath College	129	Shri Hitesh Bora, Social Worker
291	Lakhimpur Commerce College	727	Shri Samiran Konwar, Chairperson, Lakhimpur DA
292	Lakhimpur Girls' College	1545	Shri Manab Deka, MLA & Shri Krishna Dhar Sen, Chairperson, North Lakhimpur MB
293	Lakhimpur Kendriya Mahavidyalaya	259	Shri Prafulla Dutta, Social Worker
294	North Lakhimpur University	1312	Shri Manab Deka, MLA
295	Brahmaputra Degree College	408	Shri Migam Pegu, Social Worker
296	Dhakuakhana College (Autonomous)	686	Shri Naba Kumar Doley, MLA
297	Harhi College	360	Shri Swarup Konwar, Social Worker
298	North Bank College	352	Shri Sobhan Dutta, Social Worker
299	United Tribal Degree College	43	Shri Mohan Doley, Social Worker
300	Subansiri College	338	Smti Pinki Hazarika, Social Worker
<b>Majuli</b>			
301	Majuli University of Culture	129	Shri Jiten Deka, Social Worker
302	Pub Majuli College	283	Shri Promod Borah, Social Worker
303	Rangachahi College	196	Shri Lalit Hazarika, Social Worker
304	UMK College	276	Shri Lakhikanta Pegu, EM, MAC
305	Jengraimukh College, Majuli	504	Shri Bhogeswar Shastri, EM
306	Majuli College	638	Shri Bhuban Gam, MLA
<b>Morigaon</b>			
307	Jagiroad College (Autonomous)	1125	Shri Apurba Deka, Social Worker
308	Mayang Anchalik College	580	Shri Pijush Hazarika, Minister



Contd. from P4



# Nijut Moina 2.0



Government of Assam



## Distribution of Cheques Across Assam on 27 October 2025

Sl. No.	Educational Institution	Total Girls	Chief Guest/Guests
309	Bhuragaon College	391	Smti Pranati Kalita, Chairperson, ZP
310	Moirabari College	974	Asif Mohammad Nazar, MLA & Khalilur Rahman, Ex-Vice Chairperson, AMFC
311	Govt Model Degree College, Laharighat	70	Shri Ram Prasad Sarkar, Social Worker
312	Charaibahi College	540	Smti Archana Patar, Vice-Chairperson, ZP
313	Ghanakanta Baruah College	933	Shri Jogesh Tamuly, Chairperson, Morigaon MB
314	Morigaon College (Autonomous)	1435	Shri Rama Kanta Dewri, MLA
<b>Nagaon</b>			
315	Dhing College	960	Shri Sushanta Kumar Nath, Chairperson, Dhing MB & Smti Rohini Bora, Social Worker
316	Katahguri College	374	Aminul Islam, MLA & Shri Ranjit Mazumder, Social Worker
317	Rupahi College	1348	Nurul Huda MLA & Shri Anil Saikia, Social Worker
318	Kaliabor College	926	Shri Keshab Mahanta, Minister
319	Dr BKB College	547	Shri Mintu Sarma, ZP Member
320	Juria College	1130	Shri Kamakhya Prasad Tasa, MP & Shri Suresh Bora, Social Worker
321	Samaguri College	326	Shri Diplu Ranjan Sarmah, MLA
322	Kampur College, Nagaon	468	Shri Jitu Goswami, MLA
323	Nonoi College	374	Shri Mohendra Konwar, VC, AUWSSB
324	Anandaram Dhekial Phookan College	1615	Smti Geetanjali Hazarika, Chairperson, ZP
325	Batadraba Sri Sri Sankardev College	554	Smti Sibamoni Bora, MLA & Shri Rana Borah, President, AP
326	Hatichong College	345	Smti Sangeeta Bhuyan, Social Worker
327	Khagarijan College	364	Shri Abhijit Nath, Social Worker
328	Nagaon GNDG Commerce College	132	Shri Simanta Bora, Vice-Chairperson, Nagaon MB
329	Nowgong University	1708	Shri Rupak Sarma, MLA
330	Nowgong Girls' College	1665	Smti Ambika Mazumdar, Chairperson, Nagaon MB
331	Raha College	928	Shri Sashi Kanta Das, MLA
<b>Nalbari</b>			
332	Barbhag College	547	Shri Diganta Barman, MLA & Smti Gitu-moni Baishya, ZPC Member
333	Barkhetri College	1404	Shri Narayan Deka, Chairperson, GMDA
334	Uttar Kampeeth College	336	Smti Dipti Talukdar, ZP Memebr
335	Dhamdhama Anchalik College	871	Smti Joyshree Talukdar, Chairperson, Nalbari MB
336	Kumar Bhaskar Varma Sanskrit and Ancient Studies University	165	Shri Banadip Deka, Chairperson, Nalbari DA
337	MNC Balika Mahavidyalaya	1730	Shri Jayanta Buzarbaruah, Social Worker & Dr Robin Das, VC, Nalbari MB
338	Nalbari College, Nalbari	1219	Shri Jayanta Mallabaruah, Minister
339	Nalbari Commerce College	122	Shri. Nibedan Das Patowary, DC, Nalbari & Shri Diljit Barman, Social Worker
340	Kamrup College, Chamata	1017	Shri. Bhaben Pathak, Social Worker & Shri Anup Barman, Social Worker
341	Swahid Smriti Mahavidyalaya, Belsor	328	Shri. Nripen Patowary, Social Worker
342	Tihu College, Tihu	1056	Shri Chandra Mohan Patowary, Minister
<b>Sivasagar</b>			
343	Bir Lachit Borpuhan College	254	Shri Sushanta Borgohain, MLA
344	Demow College	408	Smti Pallabita Baruah, Chairperson, Demow MB
345	Gargaon College	1245	Shri Pranab Chetia, Social Worker
346	HCDG College, Nitaipukhuri	208	Smti Anima Chungkran, Chairperson, ZP
347	Amguri College	388	Smti Anamika Baishya, Chairperson, Amguri MB & Smti Asabonti Tirkey Badra, Social Worker
348	Dikhowmukh College	189	Smti Rebika Handique, VC, ZP
349	Jhanji Hemnath Sarma College	172	Shri Pradip Hazarika, MLA
350	SMD College, Charing	57	Shri Harekrishna Neog, ZP Member
351	Sibsagar University	1238	Shri Kushal Dowari, Ex-MLA & Shri Sa-meer Gogoi, Social Worker
352	Sibsagar Commerce College	300	Dr Prakash Katak, Chairperson, Sivasagar DA
353	Sibsagar Girls' College	1202	Shri Akhil Gogoi, MLA & Smti Mrinali Konwar, Chairperson, Sivasagar MB
354	Gelakey College	79	Smti Kabita Mech, Chairperson, Simaluguri MB & Smti Mousumi Gogoi, ZP Member
355	Nazira College	403	Shri Debabrata Saikia, LoP & Shri Mayur Buragohain, Chairperson, TADC
356	SPP College	312	Smti Bornali Chetia, Chairperson, Nazira MB & Jinita Sahu, ZP

<b>Sonitpur</b>			
357	Tezpur University	324	Shri Ranjit Kumar Dutta, MP
358	Govt Model College, Borsola-Doomdooma	82	Shri Kishore Upadhyay, Chairman ASIDC & Shri Hemanta Deka, Chairman, Dhekiajuli, GP
359	Lokanayak Omeo Kumar Das College	1346	Shri Ashok Singhal, Minister
360	Darrang College (Autonomous)	1999	Shri Ritubaran Sarma, VC, Amtron & Shri Prithiraj Rava, MLA
361	LGB Girls' College	621	Shri Prajanoo Bhattacharyya, Chairperson, Tezpur MB
362	Tezpur College	1766	Shri Pallab Lochan Das, Ex-MP
363	Govt. Model Degree College, Balipara	432	Shri Biswadev Bhattacharjee, Chairperson, Tezpur DA
364	Rangapara College (Autonomous)	1039	Shri Krishna Kamal Tanti, MLA
365	Chatia College	302	Smti Dipsikha Handique, Social Worker
366	Tyagbir Hem Baruah College	1053	Shri Padma Hazarika, MLA
<b>South Salmara-Mankachar</b>			
367	Hatidhura College, Hatidhura	696	Abdus Sobahun Ali Sarkar, MLA & Shri Debabrata Singha, Social Worker
368	South Salmara College	369	Wazed Ali Choudhury, MLA & Ashadul Islam, Social Worker
369	Hatsingimari College	816	Aminul Islam, MLA & Javed Islam, Ex-MLA
370	Mankachar College	458	Shri Rahul Kumar Gupta, DC, South Salmara Mancachar
<b>Sribhumi</b>			
371	Karimganj College	1044	Shri Kripanath Mallah, MP & Rabindra Ch Deb, Chairperson, SMB
372	Nabinchandra College	1588	Abdul Aziz, MLA & Shri Mission Ranjan Das, Ex-MP
373	Rabindra Sadan Girls' College	724	Shri Subrata Bhattacharjee, Social Worker
374	Nilambazar College	640	Siddique Ahmed, MLA
375	Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya Adarsha Mahavidyalaya, Eraligool	321	Sri Biswarup Bhattacharjee, Chairperson, SDA & Smti Sipra Goon, Member, Women Commission
376	Patharkandi College	828	Shri Anil Kumar Triparthi, Chairperson, ZP & Shri Rati Ranjan Das, Social Worker
377	Swami Vivekananda College	280	Shri Krishnendu Paul, Minister
378	RK Nagar College	1077	Shri Bijoy Malakar, MLA
<b>Tamulpur</b>			
379	Tamulpur College	746	Shri Jalen Daimary, MLA & Shri Bhajan Das, MCLA
380	Tamulpur Degree College	216	Shri Ganesh Kachary, EM, BTC & Shri Bijit Gwra Narzary, Dy Speaker, BTC
381	Goreswar College	916	Shri. Victor Das, Social Worker & Shri Ratul Sarma, Social Worker
<b>Tinsukia</b>			
382	Padmanath Gohain Baruah Govt Model College	271	Shri Simanta Moran, EM, Moran Autonomous Council
383	Sadiya College	456	Shri Bolin Chetia, MLA
384	Bir Raghav Moran Govt Model College	422	Smti Kanta Bhattacharjee, Chairperson, Doomdooma MB
385	Doomdooma College	900	Shri Rupesh Gowala, Minister
386	Ledo College	127	Shri Ananda Kumar Sarma, Chairperson, MMB
387	Margherita College	693	Shri Bhaskar Sarma, MLA
388	Digboi College (Autonomous)	868	Shri Suren Phukan, MLA
389	Digboi Mahila Mahavidyalaya	477	Sri Sudip Dutta Choudhury, Chairperson, Digboi MB
390	Makum College	48	Shri Punakan Baruah, MLA
391	Tinsukia College	1236	Shri Sanjay Kishan, MLA
392	Tinsukia Commerce College (Autonomous)	232	Shri Kajal Gohain, Chairperson, Tinsukia DA
393	Women's College	1008	Shri Pulok Chetia, Chairperson, Tinsukia MB
<b>Udalguri</b>			
394	Bhergaon College	261	Shri Fresh Musharai, EM, BTC
395	Dimakuchi College	412	Shri Diganta Baruah, MCLA & Shri Jousrang Boro, Social Worker
396	Khoirabari College	525	Shri Biswajit Daimary, Speaker, ALA
397	Udalguri College, Udalguri	1288	Shri Rihon Daimari, Deputy CEM, BTC
398	Kalaguru Bishnu Rabha Degree College	1068	Shri Charan Boro, Minister
399	Mazbat College	501	Shri Gobinda Chandra Basumatary, MLA & Shri Arjun Daimary, MCLA
400	Tangla College	1970	Shri Durga Das Boro, MLA
401	Govt Model College, Hari Singha	14	Shri Tridip Daimary, Speaker, BTC & Shri Sunil Basumatary, Social Worker
<b>West Karbi Anglong</b>			
402	Rangsina College	225	Shri Rupsing Teron, MLA

# US starts investigating China's compliance with 2020 trade deal as Trump heads to Asia

WASHINGTON, Oct 25: U.S. officials are launching an investigation into whether China lived up to its commitments under a 2020 trade pact that President Donald Trump described at the time as "an incredible breakthrough."

The announcement Friday by U.S. Trade Representative Jamieson Greer came the same day Trump was scheduled to head to Asia, where he said he will meet Chinese President Xi Jinping in an effort to ease trade tensions between the world's two biggest economies.

Beijing has announced that Xi will travel to South Korea to attend a regional economic meeting and for a state visit, but it has yet to confirm that he will meet with Trump while both are in South Korea.

The possible leaders summit is highly watched as trade tensions have risen again, with both countries imposing more trade restrictions on the other and Trump threatening a new 100% tariff on China. Beijing has demanded that the U.S. not threaten new restrictions while seeking talks with China, and it's not immediately clear how Greer's announcement could affect the negotiations.

In starting the investigation, "the administration seems to be looking for new sources of leverage to use against Beijing, while adding another pressure point to get China to



buy more U.S. soybeans as well as other goods," said Wendy Cutler, a former U.S. trade negotiator who is now vice president at the Asia Society Policy Institute.

During his first term, Trump imposed tariffs on a wide swath of Chinese imports — and Beijing retaliated by targeting American products — in a dispute over China's aggressive efforts to supplant U.S. technological leadership. The Americans charged that China unfairly subsidized its own tech companies, stole technology and forced U.S. and other Western companies to hand over trade secrets in return for access to the Chinese market.

The two countries held talks

over two years and ultimately reached a truce that took effect in early 2020. The so-called Phase One deal called for China to dramatically step up purchases of U.S. exports, especially soybeans and other farm products. But it left tougher issues — such as China's subsidies — for future talks.

The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted trade between the two countries just as the Phase One deal went into effect. In 2022, U.S. farm exports to China did hit a record but then fell. They are down sharply this year as tensions between the two countries have escalated over a new tariff war following Trump's return to the White House.

In fact, China has stopped buying American soybeans. It had been the top overseas market for U.S. soybean farmers.

An analysis by the Peterson Institute for International Economics shows that China purchased only 58% of the total U.S. goods and services exports in 2020 and 2021 that it had committed to buy under the agreement.

Cutler said it is "no secret that China did not live up to its obligations under the Phase One agreement, most notably its commitments to buy more U.S. goods."

The investigation announced Friday is being carried out under Section 301 of the Trade Act of 1974, which is meant to counter unfair trading practices by other countries. The Office of the U.S. Trade Representative has scheduled a public hearing on the case for Dec. 16.

The investigation could result in additional trade sanctions on China. U.S. tariffs on Chinese products already come to 55%, including tariffs left over from Trump's first term.

The president in early October threatened to add an additional 100% levy, possibly bringing the total to 155%, after Beijing expanded export rules on rare earth materials. However, Trump also said the triple-digit tariff would be "not sustainable." (AP)

## Govt plans seamless immigration process for passenger transfer through hub airports

NEW DELHI, Oct 25: The government is looking to put in place a seamless immigration process in which a passenger planning to travel overseas through Delhi or Mumbai airports can complete immigration at select origin airports.

The plan being considered by the Civil Aviation Ministry is part of efforts to make key Indian airports international aviation hubs by ensuring seamless, smooth transfer processes.

In response to a PTI query on efforts to address issues related to making India an international aviation hub, Civil Aviation Minister K Rammoan Naidu on Saturday said the ministry has identified Delhi and Mumbai airports for the first phase to make them international hubs.

For example, Naidu said that if a person is flying from Surat to London, can he or she come to Surat, complete the immigration process there, and then take the flight from Delhi without leaving the terminal.

"So, these are some things that we are working on, where the passenger, even if he is coming from another point and wanting to travel outside the country, can come to the hub destination, and without doing another immigration, can travel from there.

"This is the D to I (Domestic to International) travel, and there is I to I (International to International) travel also," the minister said.

On the policy framework side, the ministry is actively looking at all these things, Naidu said, adding that the aim is to build a comprehensive passenger transfer ecosystem over the next two to three years.

He spoke on the sidelines after inaugurating the refurbished Terminal 2 (T2) at the Delhi airport.

According to him, the challenge is to ensure seamless passenger transfers in efforts to make India an international aviation hub.

"How do we make it more seamless for D to D (Domestic to Domestic), I to D (International to Domestic), D to I (Domestic to International) and I to I (International to International) transfers. This is the challenge..." the minister said.

India is one of the world's fastest-growing civil aviation markets, and domestic airlines have placed orders for nearly 1,500 aircraft.

The Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA) is the country's largest airport. It has three terminals and four runways. (PTI)

## Prime office rent in Bengaluru, NCR, Mumbai grew 4.3 pc annually

NEW DELHI, Oct 25: India's three major office markets, Bengaluru, Delhi-NCR and Mumbai, have seen an average 4.3 per cent annual growth in rentals of prime workspaces during the July-September period, according to Knight Frank.

Real estate consultant Knight Frank mentioned in its latest report that the office space leasing in Bengaluru, Delhi-NCR and Mumbai together is expected to touch 50 million sq ft in the 2025 calendar year, surpassing the previous record of 41 million sq ft set in 2024.

"The surge is fuelled by sustained leasing commitments from Global Capability Centres (GCCs) and a revival in third-party IT services, highlighting India's attractiveness as a global business hub," it added.

On rentals, Knight Frank said prime office rents increased 4.3 per cent year-on-year (Y-o-Y) on average across the three major cities.

Bengaluru remained the most dynamic market, posting 2 per cent QoQ (quarter-on-quarter) growth and 8.8 per cent YoY. There has been a strong demand in emerging corridors such as the Outer Ring Road and Whitefield.

Delhi-NCR saw a 2 per cent QoQ and 3 per cent YoY growth in rentals, while Mumbai recorded 2 per cent QoQ and 3.9 per cent YoY increase in prime office rent during the July-September period of this year. (PTI)

Contd. from Page 1...

## Late astrophysicist Jayant

Science), Shweta Prem Agrawal (Mathematics and Computer Science), Suresh Kumar (Medicine), Amit Kumar Agarwal (Physics), Surhud Shrikant More (Physics), Ankur Garg (Space Science and Technology), and Mohanasankar Sivaprakasam (Technology and Innovation).

The CSIR Aroma Mission Team, which heralded the Lavender Mission in Jammu and Kashmir, has been named for the Vigyan Team award.

The Rashtriya Vigyan Puraskar, billed as the top national honour in the field of science and technology, was unveiled in 2023, and the first awards were presented on the eve of the National Space Day on August 22 last year. (PTI)

## Democracy 'alien concept'

saying, "In a world fractured and fragmented along multiple fault lines, the United Nations... is the only vehicle we possess to harness our collective energies for global public good."

Harish invoked India's civilisational ethos of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, "the world is one family", and urged all member states to come together and join hands towards realising "this vision for making the UN fit for purpose for the new era". (PTI)

## CJI holds meetings

met the Chief Justice of Bhutan together with other judges of the Supreme Court of Bhutan in Thimphu on October 23.

The two chief justices held discussions on strengthening India-Bhutan judicial cooperation and exchanges.

CJI Gava also planted a tree in the premises of the Supreme Court of Bhutan.

On October 23, Justice Gava delivered the keynote address at an event organised by the Jigme Singye Wangchuck (JSW) School of Law at the Royal Institute of Management, Thimphu.

Observing that public trust is the judiciary's "most valuable asset", the CJI had said that courts have an active and indispensable role to play in the system of constitutional governance and in fulfilling the mandate of the Constitution.

Speaking on the theme of "courts and constitutional governance", he had touched upon many aspects, including the active role of courts. (PTI)

## Indian Medical colleges

to academics and research, and uphold the prestigious legacy and brand of the AIIMS through excellence in their professional and ethical conduct.

He encouraged them to remain lifelong learners and innovators, committed to advancing medical science and serving the society with compassion. (PTI)

## EC may roll out

the mapping of current electors with the voters according to the last SIR held in their respective states or Union territories.

The primary aim of the SIR is to weed out foreign illegal migrants by checking their place of birth. The move assumes significance in the wake of a crackdown in various states on illegal migrants, including from Bangladesh and Myanmar. (PTI)

## Leader of Oppn opposes

not a genocide... it should rather be named a genocide due to the assailants' intent to wipe out a certain community," she said.

Handique Girls' College Assistant Professor (Political Science), Pallavi Deka, told PTI that the Nellie massacre is an event in history that is still relevant in Assam politics.

"This decision is an offshoot of that relevance. Seeing the turn of events after Garg's death and the decision to make the report public needs to be analysed together," she said.

Deka said the current government "trying to reap the maximum out of it is obvious", given the timing of the planned tabling of the report.

Defending the decision, Sarma had said the document was not tabled so far because the copy with the Assam government did not have the signature of the chairman.

"We didn't know whether the copy we have is actual. So, we interviewed the officials and clerks of that period who were involved in the report. The document was also sent to forensics for verification. When it was authenticated, we decided to make it public as people have the right to know what had happened and whose fault it was," he said.

Apparently supporting the government, AASU president Utpal Sarma told PTI that it was wrong to keep such an important document under wraps for such a long period.

"It was a commission formed by the government. So, why successive governments didn't table it is a big question. We will also not allow the demand for justice to Garg to get diverted because of this report," he asserted.

Following the Nellie massacre, a total of 688 cases were filed. The police submitted chargesheets for 310 cases. When the Assam Accord was signed in 1985, the perpetrators were given total impunity — a major aspect that indicated denial of the gruesome incident.

Yasmeen, in her paper, wrote, "Despite prevailing tensions and warnings from senior police officials, (assembly) elections were held on February 14 and 17, 1983. The leaders of the Assam Movement called people to boycott the elections."

"While most of Assamese society abstained from voting, a section of the Bengali-speaking Muslim minority voted, which enraged the Assam Movement leaders. The participation by a section of the Bengali-speaking Muslim minority is believed to have led to the massacre," she added. (PTI)

## Law to ban polygamy

able to buy pulses, salt and sugar at fair prices in addition to rice.

Families under the Orunodoi scheme will get an additional ₹ 250 for purchasing LPG cylinders on top of the existing monthly benefit of ₹ 1,250.

Giving an account of development initiatives in Lakhimpur constituency, Dr. Sarma said the government has sanctioned several projects including ₹ 55 crore for the road from LLR Road to Fulertoli, ₹ 60 crore for the Jiribam-Jaipur road under Assam Mala, ₹ 75 crore for a bridge over the Silghat River, and ₹ 160 crore for road construction under the Public Works Department.

He also announced ₹ 127 crore for Lakhimpur District Hospital, ₹ 20 crore for the Co-District Office complex, ₹ 35 crore for a Model Degree College, and ₹ 15 crore for Lakhimpur Law College.

Sarma added that four higher secondary schools will be built at a total cost of ₹ 28 crore, along with additional allocations for Adarsha Vidyalayas and tea garden area schools.

He also mentioned improvement of the Silchar-Jiribam road under the Bharatmala project at an estimated cost of ₹ 2,000 crore.

Minister for Barak Valley Development Kaushik Rai, Minister for Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Krishnaendu Paul, MPs Parimal Suklabaidya and Kripanath Mallah, MLAs Dipayan Chakraborty and Nihar Ranjan Das, senior officials and local leaders were present at the programme.

## Facebook picks 30 pc in AI venture of Reliance

NEW DELHI, Oct 25: Meta Platforms, Inc's Facebook Overseas will hold 30 per cent interest in the AI venture floated by billionaire Mukesh Ambani's Reliance Industries, according to a regulatory filing. Reliance will hold 70 per cent in Reliance Enterprise Intelligence Ltd, the company said in the filing. Reliance Intelligence, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Reliance Industries Ltd, and Facebook will jointly invest an initial ₹ 855 crore in the venture. In the filing, the company said Reliance Intelligence Ltd on October 24, 2025 incorporated Reliance Enterprise Intelligence Ltd. "RELL, incorporated in India as a wholly-owned subsidiary of Reliance Intelligence, will become the joint venture company as per the amended and restated joint venture agreement with Facebook Overseas, Inc. (Facebook), a wholly-owned subsidiary of Meta Platforms, Inc.," it said. (PTI)

## LOST

I lost my original Class - X Registration Certificate bearing Registration No. 15/PR/0012/202576/23 of Assam State School Education Board (ASSEB) at home. Any person finding it may kindly reach to the address mentioned below.

Mirlong Rongphar, S/o Babu Rongphar, Village - Rongmili, Doldoli Road, P.O. & P.S. - Diphu, Dist. - Karbi Anglong, Assam.

## AFFIDAVIT

I, Shri Tenzin Norbu, aged about 18 years, S/o Shri Phurba, a resident of village Muktur, P.O. & P.S. Lumla, district Tawang, Arunachal Pradesh. In my Aadhaar Card bearing Aadhaar No. 9379 3907 2573, my name is wrongly recorded as Sundar in place of Tenzin Norbu. This affidavit is required to produce before the concerned authority to prove that Tenzin Norbu and Sundar are the names of one and same person and he is none other than my name and this affidavit is a piece of legal document in support of my claim.

I, hereby verify on oath that all the statements made by me in this affidavit are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief and I sign in this affidavit on this 24th day of October, 2025 at Udalguri Court premises.

## AFFIDAVIT

I, Shri Dorjee Tsering, date of birth 15/10/1984, S/o Gyting Dorjee, a resident of Shergaon village, P.O. Shergaon, district, West Kameng, Arunachal Pradesh. In my daughter's Aadhaar Card bearing Aadhaar No. 5406 8626 0188, my daughter's name is wrongly recorded as Choinak Jangmo Monpa in place of Choening Zangmu.

This affidavit is required to be produced before the concerned authority to prove that Choening Zangmu and Choinak Jangmo Monpa are the names of one and same person and she is none other than my daughter's name and this affidavit is a piece of legal document in support of my claim.

I, Dorjee Tsering do hereby verify on oath that all the statements made by me in this affidavit are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief and I sign/put my thumb impression in this affidavit on this 24th day of October, 2025 at Udalguri Court premises.

## 'RannJypsy by Rannvijay's' first club unveiled in Guwahati

GUWAHATI, Oct 25: The capital city witnessed a new addition to its nightlife as film actor and MTV Roadies fame Rannvijay Singha unveiled the country's first 'RannJypsy by Rannvijay' Club at Aurus Mall here.

Rannvijay addressed a press conference at the club accompanied by Guwahati franchise owner Jitu Tapan Gogoi. Brand partners Vikas Shandil, Karan Chadha, Mukesh Agarwal and Ashish Gupta were present, along with Omkar Mali, VP (Operations).

Before interacting with the media, the gathering observed two minutes of silence in tribute to renowned Assamese singer Zubeen Garg (Zubeen Da) for his contributions to Assamese culture and music.

"I humbly acknowledge the monumental contributions of Zubeen Da in making Assamese society more inclusive and culturally resilient," Rannvijay said. Speaking about the initiative, Rannvijay said that RannJypsy is a lifestyle brand rooted in travel, adventure and community.

"Under the RannJypsy umbrella, we will bring together cafes, clubs, gyms, boutique stays and our unique 'RannJypsy Village' real estate concept, celebrating free-spirited living with a sense of purpose," he added.

Stating that the first outlet being

launched in Guwahati highlights the city's growing prominence as a cultural and hospitality hub, franchise owner Jitu Tapan Gogoi said, "Guwahati's cosmopolitan vibe and love for good food and music make it the perfect place to start. The club offers a premium space with a wide spread of food and beverages, along with music and live performances."

Brand partners Vikas Shandil and Karan Chadha will lead the hospitality division, covering cafes, clubs, boutique hotels, resorts and associated real estate projects.

Vikas informed that the group plans to roll out the 'RannJypsy Village' concept designed to bring modern lifestyle facilities to tranquil landscapes.

"RannJypsy Village is about reconnecting with nature without giving up comfort. We are developing curated living spaces in Himachal Pradesh where adventure and peace coexist," Karan added.

Ashish Gupta will look after business development, while Mukesh Agarwal will oversee expansion and real estate partnerships.

On the food and beverage offerings, Omkar Mali said, "Our menu blends bold global flavours with vibrant North-Eastern ingredients. Our handcrafted cocktails and exclusive bar selections aim to make this space a dynamic social hub."

## RNIT AI Solutions Ltd becomes India's first AI-driven governance company to be listed on the stock market



GUWAHATI, Oct 25: RNIT AI Solutions Ltd., a pioneer in Artificial Intelligence-driven governance and enterprise transformation, today achieved a historic milestone with its listing on the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE).

The ceremonial bell was rung by Raja Srinivas Nandigam, Managing Director and CEO of the company.

Speaking at the ceremony, Nandigam said, "Our public listing today is not just a financial milestone—it is a mission milestone. At RNIT, we believe Artificial Intelligence must become the backbone of governance and enterprise transformation in India. This listing empowers us to scale our vision of Responsible AI—AI that serves people, not replaces them—across governance, education, healthcare and food ecosystems."

Founded in 2019 with the aim of transforming governance through Artificial Intelligence, RNIT AI Solutions Ltd has emerged as an innovation partner to multiple state governments and enterprises.

The company has implemented AI-powered Facial Recognition and Beneficiary Tracking Systems that have handled over 3 billion identity verifications across 300+ departments, making it the country's largest SaaS provider of AI-centric identity and management systems.

In 2023, the company completed a strategic merger with Autopal Industries Ltd., approved by the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT), strengthening its technological and financial base.

RNIT's work in e-Governance and AI-driven automation has earned recognition including the Prime Minister's Award for Excellence in Public Administration (2024) and several State and National e-Governance Awards.

Following its market debut, RNIT is set to accelerate innovation-led growth, expand into new states and explore emerging global markets.

The company is investing in multi-modal AI that integrates text, voice and vision analytics to deliver predictive and insight-driven decision intelligence for governance and enterprise applications.

Guided by its core philosophy of "Innovation with Integrity," RNIT aims to continue developing fair, transparent and privacy-preserving AI systems, setting benchmarks for responsible large-scale AI implementation built in India for the world.

buy more U.S. soybeans as well as other goods," said Wendy Cutler, a former U.S. trade negotiator who is now vice president at the Asia Society Policy Institute.

over two years and ultimately reached a truce that took effect in early 2020. The so-called Phase One deal called for China to dramatically step up purchases of U.S. exports, especially soybeans and other farm products. But it left tougher issues — such as China's subsidies — for future talks.

The investigation announced Friday is being carried out under Section 301 of the Trade Act of 1974, which is meant to counter unfair trading practices by other countries. The Office of the U.S. Trade Representative has scheduled a public hearing on the case for Dec. 16.

The investigation could result in additional trade sanctions on China. U.S. tariffs on Chinese products already come to 55%, including tariffs left over from Trump's first term.

The president in early October threatened to add an additional 100% levy, possibly bringing the total to 155%, after Beijing expanded export rules on rare earth materials. However, Trump also said the triple-digit tariff would be "not sustainable." (AP)

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# Kokrajhar rail IED blast prime accused killed

Police ops against militants in Nadangiri Hills led to encounter • Presence of Maoist groups suspected

## HT Correspondent

**KOKRAJHAR, Oct 25:** A suspected militant believed to be the prime accused in Thursday's IED blast on the railway track between Kokrajhar and Salakati was killed in a police encounter in the Nadangiri Hills area on Saturday morning.

The blast, which took place in the early hours of Thursday near Singimari gate, had damaged a section of the track and disrupted train movement under the Northeast Frontier Railway.

"We had credible inputs about the involvement of certain extremist elements in the blast. Based on further intelligence, we launched an operation in the Nadangiri Hills today morning," Kokrajhar Superintendent of Police Pushpraj Singh said.

According to police, a search team moved into the area around 6 am. As the security forces approached, the suspected militants allegedly opened fire. "Our team was fired upon. In re-



tiatory fire, one militant was injured. He was shifted to the hospital where he was declared dead," Singh added.

The deceased has been identified as April (Apil) Murmu alias Rohit Murmu, aged around 40, originally

from the Kachugaon area. Police said Murmu was a former cadre of the NSLA and had later developed links with Maoist groups.

"He was one of the key suspects in the IED blast in Kokrajhar. We also

have information about his involvement in a similar rail blast incident in Jharkhand last year," the SP said. Officials confirmed that a team of Jharkhand Police was already in Kokrajhar assisting in tracking him.

From the encounter site, police recovered one pistol, two grenades, identity documents and other materials, which have been seized for forensic examination.

Around ten suspected militants were believed to have been present during the exchange of fire. "Several others managed to escape taking advantage of the terrain. We have intensified operations to trace them," Singh said.

He also confirmed that four police personnel sustained minor injuries during the encounter. "They are out of danger," he added.

Security forces have since strengthened their presence in and around the Nadangiri Hills region. (With Inputs from PTI)

# Law to ban polygamy on the anvil: CM

'Safety and respect of women one of govt's core priorities'

## HT Bureau

**GUWAHATI, Oct 25:** Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Saturday said the State government will soon introduce a law to ban polygamy in Assam, as part of its continued measures to ensure women's dignity and safeguard their rights.

He said this while addressing a public meeting at the Labak Tea Garden playground in Lakhipur, Cachar district, where he distributed cheques of ₹. 10,000 each as seed capital to 19,318 members of self-help groups under the Mukhyamantr Mahila Udyamita Abhiyan.

The Chief Minister said the ban on polygamy will go hand in hand with the government's mission to eliminate child marriage and strengthen women's social and economic empowerment.

He reaffirmed that protecting the status, safety and respect of women is one of the government's core priorities.

At the event, Sarma said the seed capital being provided under the scheme is the first step towards helping women become financially independent.

Out of the beneficiaries, 18,600 are from rural areas and 718 from urban areas. He said that Assam has nearly four lakh self-help

groups with around 40 lakh members.

Inspired by the vision of the Prime Minister to help three crore women in the country become lakhpati, the State government is working to help women belonging to SHGs in Assam earn at least ₹ 1 lakh annually.

The Chief Minister cited examples of women who have achieved financial independence through SHG support.

He mentioned Nandarami Devi of Lakhipur, who set up a beauty parlour and now earns about ₹ 10,000 per month, and Ranjita Sinha of Tamna Self-Help Group, who earns between ₹ 12,000 and ₹ 14,000 per month through dairy farming.

Calling them "Lakhpati Baidews", Sarma said their success reflects the transformation taking place across rural Assam.

Sarma said that if the initial capital of ₹ 10,000 is used productively, each member will receive ₹ 25,000 next year and ₹ 50,000 in the third year, amounting to a total support of up to ₹ 85,000.

If all 40 lakh women in Assam access such support, the State's rural economy will undergo major growth. The chief minister also announced that from November 7, ration card holders will be (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

## BJP holds 'We are Zubeen fans' rally in Tezpur demanding justice

### HT Bureau

**GUWAHATI, Oct 25:** Supporters of singer Zubeen Garg took to the streets of Tezpur this evening to demand swift justice in the case surrounding his death. The rally, organised under the banner 'I am a Zubeen Fan, We Are Zubeen Fans,' was led by Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leaders and attended by hundreds of party workers and citizens. BJP general secretary said that the event was a demonstration of respect and love for the singer, not a protest or political agitation. "As fans of Zubeen Garg, we are here to support the justice process. Zubeen Garg will get justice, and like all his admirers, we are patiently waiting for it," he said.

The rally began around 4 pm from Tezpur Collegiate Playground and proceeded through the city streets before concluding at Court Chariali. Attending the rally, Padma Hazarika, MLA of Na-Duwara, said, "We are all fans of Zubeen Garg. We urge the Assam government to expedite the investigation, the SIT to file the charge sheet soon, and the court to ensure strict punishment for the guilty. We have come out on the streets to respect public sentiment and demand justice for Zubeen Garg."

Other participants included MTR Vice-Chancellor Ritubaran Sharma, BJP Sonitpur district president Madhusmita Deka Hazarika, and leaders and workers from five assembly constituencies in the district. Supporters carried banners and feostoons, singing Zubeen Garg's songs as they marched.

## EC may roll out first phase of all-India SIR next week, beginning with 10-15 states

**NEW DELHI, Oct 25:** The Election Commission is likely to roll out the first of pan-India Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of voters' list next week beginning with "10 to 15 states", including those going to polls next year, officials said Saturday.

Assam, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Kerala and West Bengal will go to polls in 2026 and they are amongst the states where the voters' list cleanup exercise will begin first.

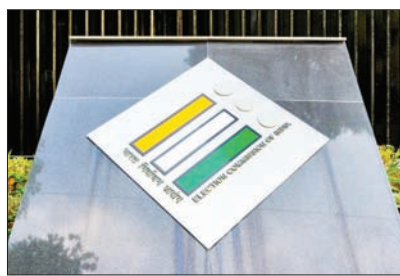
The poll authority is likely to announce the first phase of SIR middle of next week, in which as many as "10 to 15 states" would be included, officials said.

The EC will not hold the electoral roll cleanup exercise in states where local body elections are taking place or are due, as the grassroots poll machinery is busy with it and may not be able to focus on SIR, they said.

The SIR in such states will be held in later phases.

The voters' list cleanup exercise has concluded in Bihar where the final list with nearly 7.42 crore names was published on September 30.

Bihar will go to polls in two phases, on November 6 and November 11, and the counting will take place on November 14.



The Commission has already held two conferences with state chief electoral officers (CEOs) to firm up the SIR rollout roadmap.

Several CEOs have already put the voter lists published after their last SIR on their websites.

The website of the Delhi CEO has the 2008 voter list when the last intensive revision took place in the national capital.

In Uttarakhand, the last SIR took place in 2006, and that year's electoral roll is now on the state CEO website.

The last SIR in states will serve as the cut-off date, just as the 2003 voter list of Bihar was used by the EC for intensive revision.

Most states had the last SIR of the voter list between 2002 and 2004. Most have nearly completed (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

## Leader of Oppn opposes move, AASU extends support

Govt decision to table report on 1983 Nellie massacre receives mixed reaction

**GUWAHATI, Oct 25:** Two days after the Assam government announced plans to make public the Tewary Commission Report on the Nellie massacre of 1983, the Leader of Opposition and a film-maker on Saturday voiced apprehension that the move could jeopardise peace among communities.

However, the All Assam Students' Union spoke in favour of the state government, asserting that it was wrong to keep an important document under wraps for such a long time.

Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma had on Thursday told reporters that the state cabinet decided to table the Tewary Commission Report in the next assembly session in November.

During the Assam Agitation from 1979 to 1985 against infiltration, over 2,100 people were butchered, mostly Muslims, in a single night in the infamous Nellie massacre of 1983.

"I don't understand why such an old report will be made public after almost 43 years of the incident. When the wounds have already healed, why scratch those now? Is it being done to instigate people ahead of the assembly elections?" Leader of the Opposition Debabrata Saikia told PTI.

He said when people are living in harmony in the greater Nellie area, tabling of the report may destabilise the prevailing peace and trust among communities.

"It seems the CM is frustrated with people of all castes and religions uniting after Zubeen Garg's death. People from all communities are demanding justice for him and showing allegiance to Garg's ideology, which was against communalism," Saikia said.

Nellie (in Morigaon) is a cluster of around 16 villages. On February 18, 1983, Assamese Hindus and indigenous tribal neighbours attacked the villages and killed over 2,100 people in a span of about six hours.

The attacked residents primarily belonged to the Bengali-speaking Muslim community whose predecessors had migrated from former East Bengal from as early as the 1930s.

On July 14, 1983, the Assam government had set up a commission under the leadership of T P Tewary.

The 551-page report was submitted to the erstwhile Hiteswar Saikia government in May 1984, but never tabled or made public.

Parthajit Baruah, who made a full-

length feature film on the massacre - 'The Nellie Story' - opined that bringing out the report at a time when the entire state is grieving Garg's death is "surprising and disappointing".

"The time is not conducive now. The people are emotionally broken. We expect the government to unearth the truth behind Garg's death in the first place," he said.

Baruah also said tabling and discussing the Tewary report is likely to divert the entire attention from Garg's case.

"There is another aspect. Against the popular notion of killing only Bengali Muslims in the massacre, many tribal locals also died in the incident in Raha area. I have shown that angle in my film, which surprisingly was not discussed in society," he said.

As per a research paper 'Denying the Animosities: Understanding Narratives of Harmony from the Nellie Massacre, 1983' by Jabeen Yasmeen of IIT-Bombay, the carnage was one of the worst mass-killing in post-Independent India.

"It is debatable whether the Nellie massacre should be referred to as a massacre and (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

## Indian Medical colleges increased in 11 years: Nadda

**NEW DELHI, Oct 25:** The number of medical colleges in the country has gone up from 387 to 819 in the last 11 years, Union Health Minister Nadda said on Saturday.

Addressing the 50th Annual Convocation Ceremony of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) here, Nadda said similarly, the number of undergraduate medical seats has risen from 51,000 to 1.29 lakh and that of postgraduate seats from 31,000 to 78,000.

He said an additional 75,000 seats are expected to be added across the undergraduate and postgraduate levels in the next

five years.

The health minister congratulated the graduating students and commended the AIIMS for its unparalleled contribution to advancing medical science, education and patient care in the country.

He exhorted the young doctors to serve people with empathy, uphold the highest standards of ethics and harness innovation to meet the country's evolving healthcare needs.

Nadda also noted that the country has made considerable progress in maternal and child health, with the Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) declining from 130 to

88 and the Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) from 39 to 27, according to the Sample Registration Survey (SRS) data.

The Under-five Mortality Rate (U5MR) and Neonatal Mortality Rate (NMR) have also shown significant reductions of 42 per cent and 39 per cent, respectively, both exceeding the global average.

Nadda further stated that TB incidence in India has dropped by 17.7 per cent, more than twice the global rate of 8.3 per cent, as reported by The Lancet Report.

Concluding his address, the health minister requested the graduating students to actively contribute (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

## Democracy 'alien concept' for Pak, must end rights abuses in occupied areas: India at UN

**UNITED NATIONS, Oct 25:** Asserting that democracy is an "alien" concept for Pakistan, India has called upon Islamabad to end grave human rights violations in territories under its illegal occupation, where the population is in "open revolt" against military occupation, repression, brutality and exploitation.

Responding to references made by Pakistan's envoy at the UN Security Council's open debate on 'The United Nations Organisation: Looking into the Future' on Friday, India's Permanent Representative to the UN, Ambassador Parvathaneni Harish, said,

"The people of Jammu and Kashmir exercise their fundamental rights in accordance with India's time-tested democratic traditions and constitutional framework."

"We, of course, know that these are concepts alien to Pakistan," he said.

The envoy reiterated that Jammu and Kashmir "has been, is, and will always be" an integral and inalienable part of India. Strongly rebuking Islamabad, Harish said, "We call upon Pakistan to end the grave and ongoing human rights violations in the areas illegally occupied by it, where the population is in open revolt against Pakistan's military occupation, repression, brutality and illegal exploitation of resources."

Harish also emphasised that the UN must undertake "real, comprehensive reforms," saying that the 80-year-old Security Council architecture no longer reflects contemporary geopolitical realities.

"An outdated Council architecture that mirrors the geopolitical realities of 1945 is not equipped to handle the challenges of 2025," he said, calling for expansion in both permanent and non-permanent categories through "time-bound" and "text-based negotiations".

He underlined that the Global South must have a greater voice in global decision-making, adding that "postponing reforms indefinitely does immense disservice to our citizens, especially in the Global South".

"This bloc of countries represents the overwhelming proportion of humanity and has its unique set of challenges, particularly in the areas of development, climate and financing," Harish said, adding that global decision-making must be more democratic and inclusive.

Highlighting India's commitment to multilateralism, he said the world must move beyond "pennies and posts" to craft a new vision for the UN that is more agile and responsive to global challenges such as pandemics, terrorism, economic instability, and climate change.

Harish noted that the world's largest multilateral body faces questions of "relevance, legitimacy, credibility, and efficacy".

He cautioned that international cooperation is increasingly being viewed as charity and that prosperity is being "ring-fenced amid shrinking access to resources and technologies necessary for growth". He said progress that is not universal is "neither sustainable nor tenable in moral terms or on a practical basis".

Harish also called for making UN mechanisms more agile, noting that peacekeepers face "newer challenges every day" and need realistic mandates, adequate resources, and technological support.

"Structural adjustments of different UN bodies are welcome, but not enough," he said, urging that UN80, the 80th anniversary of the organisation, should aim for "real, comprehensive reforms of the UN and its principal organs."

Harish further emphasised the need to revitalise the General Assembly as the UN's principal deliberative and policymaking body, enhancing coordination with other organs, particularly the Security Council, to realise the purposes and principles of the UN Charter.

He cautioned member states against using the UN as a "theatre for divisive politics and parochial purposes," (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

## CJI holds meetings with Bhutan King, PM

**NEW DELHI, Oct 25:** Chief Justice of India B R Gavai has held meetings with Bhutanese King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck and Bhutan's Prime Minister Tshering Tobgay and discussed avenues for enhancing cooperation between the judiciaries of the two nations, according to an official statement.

The CJI, who is on an official visit to Bhutan, held a meeting with Wangchuck on Saturday. He met Tobgay on Friday.

"During these meetings, the Chief Justice discussed avenues for enhancing cooperation between the judiciaries of the two countries and reaffirmed the commitment to strengthening India-Bhutan relations," said a statement.

It said the CJI further expressed the Indian judiciary's readiness to support the Bhutanese judiciary in areas of technology integration, capacity building, and knowledge exchange.

The statement said Justice Gavai also had an extensive interaction with the students and faculty of JSW School of Law. The event was graced by Princess Sonam Dechen Wangchuck and Chief Justice of Bhutan Justice Norbu Tshering.

"Addressing the students, the Chief Justice emphasised the values of compassion, wisdom, and ethical responsibility within legal education," it said.

The statement said the CJI announced that two positions of law clerks at the Supreme Court of India shall be offered annually to law graduates from Bhutan, as part of an ongoing initiative to strengthen academic engagement and professional collaboration between the judiciaries of the two nations. The CJI also (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

## Vigyan Shri awards for 2025

# Late astrophysicist Jayant Naralika selected for Vigyan Ratna award

**NEW DELHI, Oct 25:** India's most celebrated astrophysicist Jayant Naralika, who passed away in May, was on Saturday selected for the Vigyan Ratna Puraskar, the country's top science award.

Naralika challenged the Big Bang theory, which states that the universe was created in a single moment. He, along with British astronomer Fred Hoyle, proposed that the universe had always existed with continuous creation of new matter into infinity.

Naralika died on May 20 at the age of 86.

The government also announced eight Vigyan Shri



awards for 2025 -- Gyanendra Prasad Singh (Agricultural Science), Yusuf Mohammad Seikh (Atomic Energy), K

neering Sciences), S Venkata Mohan (Environmental Science), Mahan Mj (Mathematics and Computer Science) and Jayan N (Space Science & Technology).

The 14 Vigyan Yuva awardees are Jagdis Gupta Kapuganti (Agricultural Science), Satendra Kumar Mangrauthia (Agricultural Science), Debarka Sengupta (Biological Sciences), Deepa Agashe (Biological Sciences), Dibyendu Das (Chemistry), Waliur Rahman (Earth Science), Arkaprava Basu (Engineering Sciences), Sabyasachi Mukherjee (Mathematics and Computer (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Thangaraj (Biological Sciences), Pradeep Thalappil (Chemistry), Aniruddha Bhalchandra Pandit (Engi-



By: Himangshu Ranjan Bhuyan

The Madan Kamdev Temple is a historic pilgrimage site located in the picturesque environment of Dewangiri Hill, approximately three kilometres from Baihata Chariali in Kamrup district. The natural beauty surrounding this temple, the exquisite examples of rock sculptures, and the ruins of ancient architecture have established it as one of the premier tourist centres in Assam. Due to the erotic rasa-dominant mithuna sculptures and various posture-specific carvings engraved on the temple walls, this place has been dubbed "Assam's Khajuraho". Madan Kamdev is not merely a religious pilgrimage site; it is a rich field for archaeological research and a glorious chapter in Assam's heritage.

Speaking of the historical background, archaeological evidence and analysis of architectural style indicate that the Madan Kamdev Temple was constructed during the rule of the Pala dynasty, that is, from the late tenth century to the middle of the twelfth century (around 990 CE to 1150 CE). The Pala dynasty ruled Kamrup, and their capital was initially at Pragjyotishpura, which is present-day Guwahati. Later, King Dharmapala shifted the capital to Kamrup Nagari, which historians believe to be the area of North Guwahati. Archaeological evidence such as the Pushpabhadra copper plate inscription supports this notion. Madan Kamdev was part of this Kamrup Nagari, and its distance from North Guwahati is only ten kilometres. The rulers of the Pala dynasty were Shaivites, although they also patronised Shaktism. The temples built during their reign featured the worship of the combined form of Shiva-Parvati, which is clearly evident in Madan Kamdev as well. However, there is no precise information available about which specific king constructed this temple. Nevertheless, as a result of the artistic and cultural contributions of the Pala dynasty, exquisite architecture like Madan Kamdev was created. Having remained neglected amidst forests and jungles for many centuries, this temple was rediscovered in the twentieth century. The Archaeology Department of the Assam Government declared it a protected site and conducted excavations in 1977 and 1982, through which numerous stone sculptures and more than twenty structures were recovered. These excavations re-established the historical importance of this site, and it gained recognition as a rich field for archaeological research.

The story behind the naming of

Madan Kamdev is highly fascinating and full of mythological significance. Although this temple is a centre for the worship of Shiva-Parvati, its naming is after Kamdev, the god of love and sexuality in Hindu mythology. According to mythological tales, Kamdev, who was reduced to ashes by Shiva's wrathful fire, regained his former form through penance at this place and reunited with his wife Rati. Although the historical credibility of this story is limited, the erotic rasa-dominant mithuna sculptures engraved on the temple walls and the surrounding scattered carvings have made the name Madan Kamdev prevalent in the public mind. The Kalika Purana mentions this place as 'Madanachal', and the nearby Madankuri stream as 'Madankunda'. It is believed that bathing in the water of this stream frees one from lust and anger, granting a place in Shiva's abode. This mythological information deepens the religious significance of Madan Kamdev. Every year, on the shukla trayodashi tithi of the month of Chaitra, the 'Madan Kamdev Trayodashi' festival is celebrated, during which the place comes alive with homa-yajna, puja-archana, and religious rituals. Local people as well as tourists and devotees from other states gather at this festival, reflecting the cultural and religious importance of this site.

The architecture of the Madan Kamdev Temple is an outstanding example of the artistic heritage of the Pala dynasty. Stone was primarily used in the construction of this temple, as the use of burnt bricks was relatively less prevalent in Assam at that time. The influence of



the Nagara style is evident in the temple's structure, which resembles the temple architecture of northern India in the

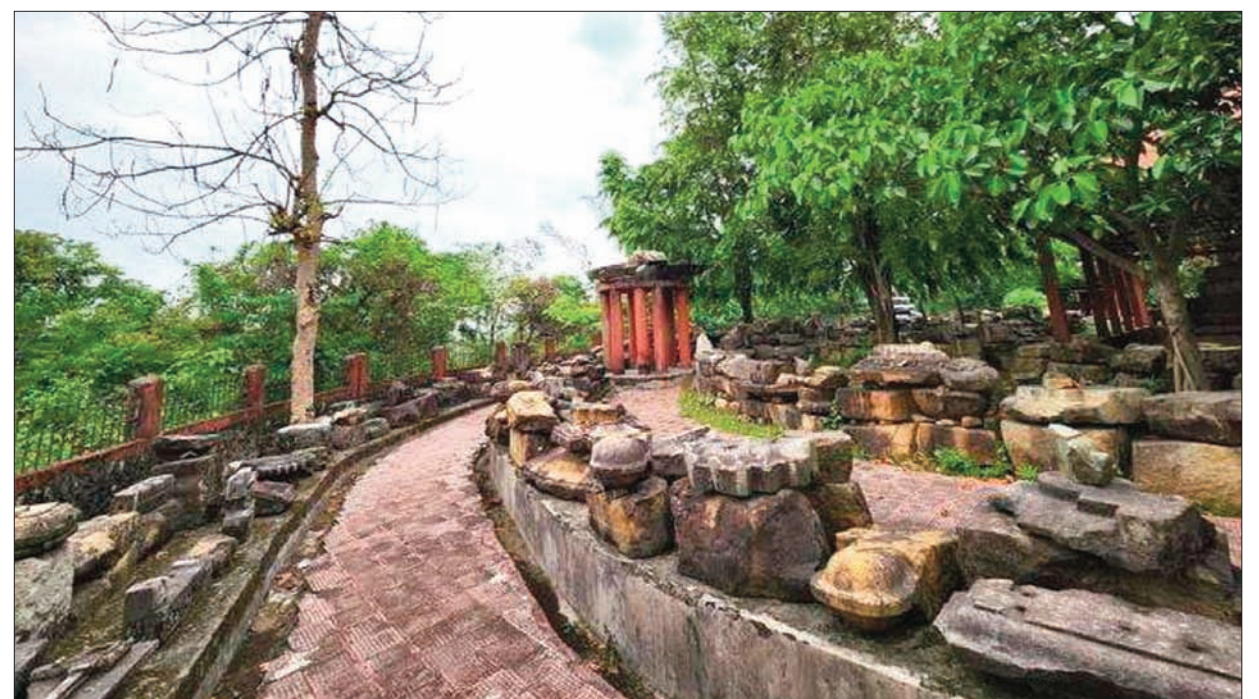
## THE HERITAGE AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE OF MADAN KAMDEV TEMPLE

*The Madan Kamdev Temple is a major centre for the worship of the joint form of Shiva-Parvati. The influence of Shaivism in Assam has continued since very ancient times. Along with the singular form of Shiva, the worship of the joint form of Shiva-Parvati is popular in this region. The worship of this joint form in Madan Kamdev is a symbol of the synthesis of Shaiva and Shakta religions. According to the Kalika Purana, the principal deity of the inhabitants of Kamrup was Shiva, and even after the influence of Shaktism increased during the rule of Narak, the importance of Shaivism remained intact. In the garbhagriha of the temple, the embracing sculpture of Uma-Maheshwara is worshipped as the main deity. This joint form is a philosophical symbol of the union of purusha and prakriti. The rulers of the Pala dynasty referred to this joint form of Shiva-Parvati as 'Kameshwar-Mahagauri', which is reflected in their copper plate inscriptions*

eleventh and twelfth centuries. The mithuna-engaged male-female figures engraved on the temple walls, scantily clad women, lions in battle, animals in union, Shiva linga, yoni mandala, six-headed Bhairava, and four-headed Shiva sculptures demonstrate the artistic diversity of this place. In the garbhagriha of the temple, the embracing joint sculpture of Uma-Maheshwara is worshipped as the principal deity. This joint form is a symbol of the synthesis of Shaiva and Shakta religions. Designs of Ganesha, Gaj Lakshmi, Garuda, and lotus flowers are seen on the temple's shirapatti and lalatabimba, expressing a blend of local Assamese style with Pala architecture. The Gajasingha sculpture, depicting a lion subduing an elephant, is also found in some temples of Odisha besides Assam. Such sculptures indicate external Indian influences on the architecture of Madan Kamdev. Architectural elements like the massive stone slabs and circular stone fragments recovered through excavations bear testimony to the extraordinary skill of the artists of that era. These sculptures have been classified into four categories: deities' images, male-female figures, symbolic sculptures, and decorative sculptures. Images of Nataraja, four-armed Shiva, Ganesha, Vishnu, Bhairava, Uma, Surya, and aparasa, along with carvings of animals like lions, elephants, foxes, and dogs on stone slabs, demonstrate the artistic richness of this site. The architectural style of Madan Kamdev is comparable to the temples of Khajuraho, especially due to its erotic rasa-dominant mithuna sculptures. However, a distinct influence of local Assamese style is also observed here, which, blending with the artistic vision of the Pala dynasty, has created a unique architecture.

The Madan Kamdev Temple is a major centre for the worship of the joint

form of Shiva-Parvati. The influence of Shaivism in Assam has continued since very ancient times. Along with the sin-



ular form of Shiva, the worship of the joint form of Shiva-Parvati is popular in this region. The worship of this joint form in Madan Kamdev is a symbol of the synthesis of Shaiva and Shakta religions. According to the Kalika Purana, the principal deity of the inhabitants of Kamrup was Shiva, and even after the influence of Shaktism increased during the rule of Narak, the importance of Shaivism remained intact. In the garbhagriha of the temple, the embracing sculpture of Uma-Maheshwara is worshipped as the main deity. This joint form is a philosophical symbol of the union of purusha and prakriti. The rulers of the Pala dynasty referred to this joint form of Shiva-Parvati as 'Kameshwar-Mahagauri', which is reflected in their copper plate inscriptions. As a result of this religious synthesis, Madan Kamdev emerged as a pilgrimage site. Every year, thousands of devotees gather during Mahashivaratri and Madan Kamdev Trayodashi festivals. Traditional homa-yajna, puja-archana, and religious rituals are performed at these festivals. The belief in the sanctity of the Madankuri stream further enhances the religious importance of this site.

The natural beauty and historical significance of Madan Kamdev have made it a major tourist centre in Assam. The green cover of Dewangiri Hill near Saraighat on the Brahmaputra River, the calm flow of the Madankuri stream, and the surrounding natural splendour captivate tourists' minds. In winter, migratory birds arrive at the nearby wetlands, making this place attractive for birdwatching. The tourism potential of Madan Kamdev is not limited to natural beauty alone. Its rock sculptures, temple ruins, and histor-

ical importance make this site an ideal destination for history enthusiasts and archaeological researchers. In the context of the historical and archaeological importance of Madan Kamdev, the need for its conservation is extremely urgent. The Archaeology Department is working to preserve the ruins of this temple, which remained neglected amidst forests and jungles for many centuries. However, population growth, urbanisation, and illegal encroachment have created threats to the natural and historical resources of this site. Environmental pollution of the Madankuri stream is having a negative impact on its biodiversity. Although the Archaeology Department has preserved some of the sculptures recovered through excavations, many stone slabs still remain neglected. Proper preservation of these sculptures and arrangements for their display in a museum would increase tourist attraction. Furthermore, tree plantation and cleanliness drives are needed to preserve the natural beauty of this site in collaboration with the tourism and forest departments. A large part of Madan Kamdev has fallen into the hands of encroachers, as a result of which its historical boundaries have shrunk. The Archaeology Department should take strict measures to resolve this issue.

The rock sculptures of the Madan Kamdev Temple bear testimony to the extraordinary skill and creativity of the artists of that era. The erotic rasa-dominant sculptures engraved on the temple walls provide an insight into the social and cultural life of Kamrup. These sculptures reflect not only religious significance but also social values and artistic perspectives. The cultural importance of

Madan Kamdev is also expressed through its festivals. The religious and cultural events held at this site during Mahashivaratri and Madan Trayodashi awaken a sense of unity among the local people. Traditional Assamese foods such as pitha, laddu, and kheer are distributed as prasad at these festivals, which are also popular among tourists. Moreover, the simple lifestyle and traditional livelihoods of the surrounding villages introduce tourists to rural life in Assam. Through homestay arrangements, tourists can savour local food and culture.

In conclusion, the Madan Kamdev Temple is an invaluable asset of Assam's historical, religious, and cultural heritage. Constructed as a result of the artistic contributions of the Pala dynasty, this temple is a living example of the synthesis of Shaiva-Shakta religions. Its rock sculptures and architecture bear testimony to the extraordinary skill of the artists of that era. The sanctity of the Madankuri stream and the natural beauty of Dewangiri Hill have made this site an attractive destination for tourists. Nevertheless, governmental and non-governmental initiatives are needed for the conservation of this heritage. Through proper preservation of sculptures and stone slabs in collaboration with the Archaeology Department, promotion of tourism, and cleanliness drives, it is possible to give Madan Kamdev a prominent place on the world tourism map. The Madan Kamdev Temple is a brilliant reflection of Assam's cultural diversity and historical importance. Through its conservation and promotion, this site will continue to shine as a sacred pilgrimage place and tourist centre for future generations.

## Jane Austen and the Art of Empathy

By: Satyabrata Borah

Jane Austen's novels, with their intricate social dynamics and keen psychological insight, offer readers more than just engaging stories; they serve as a training ground for sharpening cognitive abilities, particularly the skill known as theory of mind. Theory of mind refers to the capacity to attribute mental states such as thoughts, intentions, desires and emotions to others and to interpret their behavior based on these inferences. This ability is fundamental to human social interaction, allowing us to navigate complex relationships by predicting and understanding what others are thinking or feeling. In the context of literature, theory of mind becomes a lens through which readers engage with characters, and Austen's works, especially *Pride and Prejudice*, provide a rich environment for honing this skill. Through her nuanced portrayal of characters' inner lives and their misinterpretations of one another, Austen invites readers to practice mindreading, enhancing their ability to decipher human motivations and emotions in both fiction and real life.

At the heart of *Pride and Prejudice* lies a narrative driven by misunderstandings and evolving perceptions, particularly between the spirited Elizabeth Bennet and the reserved Mr. Darcy. The novel opens with a pivotal moment: Elizabeth overhears Darcy dismissing her as "tolerable, but not handsome enough to tempt me," setting the stage for her initial prejudice against him. Unbeknownst to her, Darcy's comment stems from his own discomfort and social awkwardness rather than genuine disdain. Meanwhile, Darcy remains unaware that his words have been overheard, planting the seeds for a prolonged emotional and psychological dance between the two. As the story unfolds,

both characters grapple with incomplete information about each other's intentions, forcing them to interpret subtle cues, reassess their judgments, and gradually uncover the truth. Readers, privy to the inner thoughts of both characters through Austen's omniscient narration, are drawn into this process of interpretation, actively engaging their theory of mind to make sense of the characters' evolving relationship.

This dynamic illustrates how Austen's writing mirrors the complexities of real-world social interactions. In everyday life, we rarely have direct access to others' thoughts and must rely on indirect signals like body language, tone, or context to infer their mental states. Similarly, Austen's characters often misread one another, as their perceptions are clouded by pride, prejudice, or incomplete information. For example, Elizabeth initially views Darcy's reserved demeanor as arrogance, while he misinterprets her wit as indifference. Readers, however, are given glimpses into both characters' minds, allowing them to piece together the motivations behind their actions. This dual perspective trains readers to consider multiple viewpoints simultaneously, a hallmark of advanced theory of mind. By following Elizabeth and Darcy's journey, readers practice attributing mental states, predicting behaviors, and revising their interpretations as new information emerges, much like they would in real-life social scenarios.

The cognitive benefits of engaging with literature like Austen's have been substantiated by research. A 2013 study published in the journal *Science* explored how reading literary fiction enhances theory of mind. The researchers, David Comer Kidd and Emanuele Castano, conducted experiments comparing the effects of reading literary fiction, popular fiction, non-

fiction, and no reading at all. They found that literary fiction, characterized by complex characters and ambiguous motivations, significantly improved participants' performance on tasks measuring empathy and social perception. Unlike popular fiction, which often relies on predictable plots and straightforward character motivations, literary fiction like Austen's demands active interpretation. Readers must infer characters' intentions from subtle hints and navigate the gaps between what characters say, think, and do. This process mirrors the mental work required to understand real people, making literary fiction a powerful tool for strengthening mindreading skills.

Austen's novels are particularly effective in this regard because of her masterful use of free indirect discourse, a narrative technique that blends a character's thoughts with the narrator's voice. This allows readers to slip seamlessly into the minds of characters like Elizabeth or Darcy, experiencing their emotions and perspectives while also maintaining an outside view of the story. For instance, when Elizabeth reads Darcy's letter explaining his actions, readers share her shock and gradual shift in understanding, but they also see how her initial misjudgments were shaped by her limited perspective. This narrative style encourages readers to hold multiple mental states in mind at once like the character's, the narrator's, and their own fostering a deeper engagement with theory of mind. By navigating these layers, readers practice the cognitive flexibility needed to understand that others' beliefs and feelings may differ from their own, a skill essential for empathy and social cooperation.

Beyond *Pride and Prejudice*, Austen's other novels, such as *Emma* or *Sense and Sensibility*, similarly challenge readers to interpret complex social cues. In *Emma*, the titular character's misinterpretations of others' romantic intentions drive much of the plot, requiring readers to untangle her flawed assumptions from the reality

of the other characters' feelings. Similarly, in *Sense and Sensibility*, the contrasting personalities of the Dashwood sisters force readers to consider how different temperaments shape perceptions and decisions. Across her works, Austen presents characters who are flawed, multifaceted, and often unaware of their own biases, much like real people. This complexity makes her novels an ideal training ground for mindreading, as readers must constantly adjust their understanding of characters' motivations based on new revelations.

The act of reading Austen's novels also engages readers emotionally, which further enhances theory of mind. When readers empathize with Elizabeth's humiliation or Darcy's regret, they are not just passively absorbing the story but actively simulating the characters' emotional states. This emotional engagement deepens the cognitive process, as readers draw on their own experiences to understand the characters' feelings while also recognizing the differences between their own perspectives and those of the characters. This dual process mirrors the way we navigate real-world relationships, where we must balance our own emotions with an understanding of others' mental states. Austen's ability to evoke this emotional and cognitive interplay makes her work particularly effective at strengthening readers' social perception.

Austen's focus on social dynamics reflects the intricacies of the society she depicted, where subtle gestures and unspoken rules governed interactions. Her characters operate within a web of social expectations, where a single misstep such as Darcy's initial insult can have far-reaching consequences. Readers must pay close attention to these nuances, interpreting not only what characters say but also what they leave unsaid. This mirrors the real-world challenge of navigating social hierarchies and unspoken norms, where understanding others' intentions is often key to success. By immersing readers

in this world, Austen's novels provide a safe space to practice these skills, allowing readers to experiment with interpreting motivations without the real-world risks of misunderstanding.

The benefits of reading Austen extend beyond individual enjoyment to broader cognitive and social advantages. Enhanced theory of mind can improve interpersonal relationships, as it fosters greater empathy and the ability to anticipate others' reactions. In professional settings, these skills translate to better communication and collaboration, as individuals who can accurately read others' intentions are better equipped to navigate conflicts and build trust. Even in an increasingly digital world, where face-to-face interactions are often replaced by text-based communication, the ability to infer meaning from limited cues remains crucial. Austen's novels, with their emphasis on subtle social signals, offer timeless practice in this regard.

Jane Austen's novels, particularly *Pride and Prejudice*, serve as a powerful tool for sharpening theory of mind. By immersing readers in the complex inner lives of her characters, Austen invites them to practice interpreting intentions, emotions, and behaviors in a way that mirrors real-world social interactions. Her use of narrative techniques like free indirect discourse, combined with her keen insight into human nature, creates a rich environment for cognitive growth. The 2013 *Science* study confirms what Austen's readers have long intuited: engaging with literary fiction hones our ability to understand others, making us better equipped to navigate the complexities of human relationships. Through the emotional and mental dance of her characters, Austen not only entertains but also trains us to become more perceptive, empathetic, and socially adept. Her enduring popularity is a testament to the universal appeal of her stories and their profound impact on our cognitive and emotional lives.

MRIDUL HALOI'S 'AKALE ASO KUSHALE ASO'

A Promising Voice in Assamese Poetry

By: Dipak Kurmi

In the contemporary landscape of Assamese poetry, where tradition intersects with modernity and established voices often overshadow emerging talents, the arrival of a genuinely promising poet is a rare and precious occurrence. Mridul Haloi's debut collection 'Akale Aso Kushale Aso', published in March, represents such a moment of literary significance.

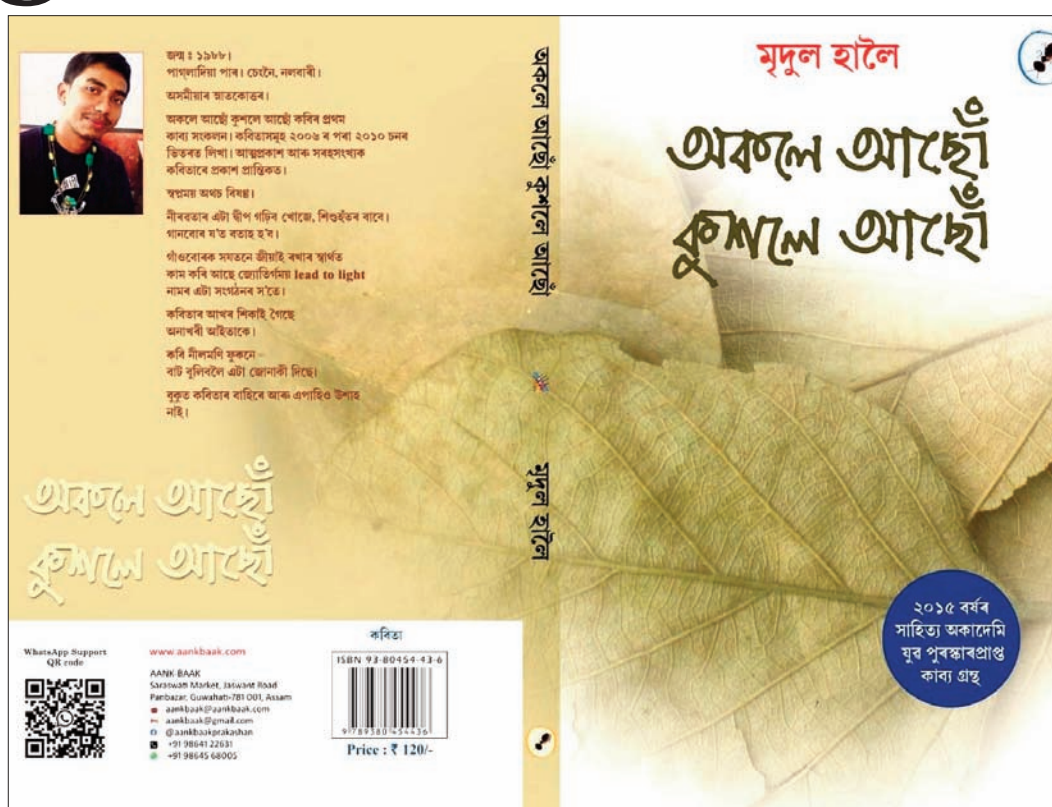
Haloi, who first appeared as a poet in the pages of Prantik magazine, belongs to that uncommon category of young poets who demonstrate not merely technical competence but genuine poetic sensibility. In an era when numerous young voices enter the literary arena with enthusiasm but limited staying power, Haloi's work stands apart. Having read the poetry of young poets over the past six to seven years in considerable number, one can affirm that very few will be considered worthy to represent the field of Assamese poetry in any meaningful sense.

The danger of self-satisfaction cannot be overstated when discussing emerging poets. It overshadows the awareness of the mind, curtails curiosity about life and world events, diminishes concentration on the practice of language, weakens self-criticism, and narrows the breadth of thought and imagination. When these qualities deteriorate, poetry becomes a mechanical exercise, a rote repetition of previously

successful formulas. The harmful effects of self-satisfaction have been observed in many talented poets who showed initial promise but failed to develop into the major voices they might have become. This is the peril that Haloi must vigilantly avoid if he is to fulfill the considerable potential his debut collection demonstrates.

Like many contemporary Assamese poets, Haloi has entered the world of poetry through the influence of established masters, particularly Nilomoni Phukan and Hiren Bhattacharyya. He himself admits to being heavily influenced by these luminaries, alongside Nilim Kumar, and acknowledges that his poems draw deeply from folk songs, verses, and folk tales heard from his grandmother. This acknowledgment of influence is both honest and instructive, for it reveals a poet who understands his own literary genealogy. The influence of strong predecessors is not inherently problematic; indeed, it serves a positive function. The new poet finds a way into poetic language through such influences, which are especially helpful in the practice of poetic craft.

The American literary critic Harold Bloom developed a comprehensive theory about such influences in his concept of the anxiety of influence. Bloom argues that all poets are influenced by strong predecessors, but if the younger poet possesses genuine strength, he overcomes this influence through a process of creative misrecognition, whereby his perceptual process misunderstands or deliberately misreads that influence. This process operates from the unconscious mind to the conscious mind, resulting in a transformation rather than



mere imitation. A poet who cannot escape influence, even while writing beautiful poetry, cannot become an influential poet himself. Bloom calls such a poet weak, though one might prefer the more generous term competent. These poets write good poems while under influence, but they would not be placed in the first line of poets who represent a particular time or generation.

The relevance of this discussion to Haloi's work is clear and pressing. He must remain always vigilant to overcome the influence of his predecessors and to forge his own language in the use of poetry. This is not merely an academic concern but a practical necessity if he is to rise to the forefront of talented youth and be recognized by literature as representing this time. The good news is that Haloi is an intensely sensitive poet who has demonstrated considerable skill in combining

emotions to create expression in poetry. Even while he has taken lessons from Nilomoni Phukan in this regard, there are signs that he possesses the strength to inherit Phukan's influence while mastering his own style of expression. Should he succeed in this crucial task, he would undoubtedly emerge as a distinctive voice, and his work has already given sufficient confidence to suggest he is a worthy contender for future recognition as a distinguished poet.

The poems in 'Akale Aso Kushale Aso' are characterized by a low-pitched intensity that poignantly expresses the pain of loneliness, sadness, and separation. Several poems in this collection possess a quality that genuinely fascinates, bringing what one might call the virginian feeling of reading poetry, that sense of encountering something fresh and authentic that has be-

come increasingly rare in contemporary verse. There is a sweetness of emotion and language in Haloi's poems that immediately distinguishes them from much contemporary work. His poetry represents a heritage of thought derived from Assamese culture, positioning itself at some distance from scientific modernity while embracing a romantic sensibility that nonetheless refuses to deny the real world. This romantic orientation is significant. In contrast to the decadence of modernity, Haloi's poetic hut contains silence and loneliness, but also an absolute commitment to the desire for life. His work demonstrates convincingly that good poems need not be direct interpretations of contemporary life in its most obvious sense. Instead, they can approach the contemporary obliquely, through the lens of personal emotion and cultural

memory, through the echoes of folk traditions and the intimate experience of solitude. This approach has its own validity and its own power, particularly in an era when much poetry attempts to engage with social issues in ways that can feel forced or superficial.

However, this strength also points toward an area where Haloi's poetry might benefit to develop. Currently, his work dwells primarily in the realm of solitude, exploring the inner landscape of personal emotion with considerable depth and sensitivity. When he moves from solitude to community, when his poetic consciousness expands to encompass the many new aspects of social life beyond the isolated self, his understanding will be enriched and his poetic resources will expand. The shadow of the poet cries in loneliness throughout 'Akale Aso Kushale Aso', but we should not ask the poet to weep in despair like his shadow, because his feelings are much deeper than that. Rather, his poetic mind should learn to look outward from itself into social life and draw new resources from that broader engagement, so that the horizons of his poetry may be broadened without sacrificing the emotional authenticity that currently characterizes his work.

The recognition that 'Akale Aso Kushale Aso' has received validates the assessment of Mridul Haloi's promise. The collection won the Munin Borkotoki Literary Award in 2013 and the prestigious Sahitya Akademi Yuva Puraskar, honors that acknowledge both the quality of the work and the potential of the poet. These awards serve an important function beyond mere recognition; they provide encouragement and validation to a young poet at a crucial stage of development, potentially helping to sustain the commitment and discipline necessary for continued growth.

Looking at the collection as a

whole, 'Akale Aso Kushale Aso' represents a promising beginning rather than a finished achievement. This is not a criticism but an acknowledgment of where Haloi stands in his poetic journey. The thirty poems gathered here demonstrate genuine talent, emotional depth, sensitivity to language, and a capacity to create affecting poetry that resonates with readers. At the same time, they also reveal a poet still finding his way, still working within the gravitational pull of his influences, still exploring what his distinctive voice might ultimately sound like.

The expectation from Haloi, then, is not that he should already be a fully formed master but that he should continue to develop, to deepen, to expand his range while refining his craft. He must guard against complacency, remain curious about the world, continue to practice and experiment with language, cultivate self-criticism, and broaden his imaginative horizons. He must work to transform influence into something uniquely his own. He must find ways to move beyond the poetry of pure interiority without abandoning the emotional authenticity that gives his current work its power.

'Akale Aso Kushale Aso' marks the arrival of a poet worth watching, worth reading, worth taking seriously as a potential major voice in Assamese poetry. Mridul Haloi has demonstrated that he possesses the sensitivity, the skill, and the seriousness necessary for significant poetic achievement. Whether he will fulfill that promise remains to be seen, dependent as it is on his continued development, his vigilance against self-satisfaction, and his ability to forge his own path while honoring his influences. For now, this debut collection offers considerable pleasure and even greater hope for what may come next from this promising young poet. (The writer can be reached at dipakurmi@rediffmail.com)

Echoes of a Promise

(CONTD FROM PREV ISSUE) By: Chafikhur Rahman

He turned to the witness statements. Most were short and stiff. "I saw them at the tea stall on Thursday." "They used to sit under the banyan near the back gate of the college." "They helped in flood relief last year." "He never fought with anyone." "She once argued with her father about a cousin's wedding." Nothing burned like a clear flame. But the sum made a gentle light: two good young people, liked by many, moving toward a life together with a simple condition—finish your studies, then marry.

Then came the day of the deaths. Statement of fisherman, Basu Teron: "We went to cast net at first light. Saw cloth near stone. Thought it was a deer caught in grass. Then we saw a hand. We shouted. The boy lay near the stone, head bleeding. The girl was in shallow water, face down. We sent a boy to call police."

Rudra felt the edges of the photograph in his fingers again, though he was not holding it. He could see the place in his mind—the river bend, the flat stone like a doorstep, the morning light falling on water like broken glass.

He kept reading. "No sign of robbery," wrote the officer. "Boy's watch found in pocket. Girl's ring on finger." "Marks of struggle?" "Grass disturbed near stone." "Footprints? Many. Too many. Village path near. Not conclusive."

Then, a page that made him sit up straight: Informal Note (not part of main file, kept inside by Inspector D. Chetia):

"Village talk says headman did not like boy in last week. Argument about land path near river. Headman's men sometimes guard river bend at night to stop cattle theft. Headman denies all. No direct witness. No one will speak against headman. Suggest quiet watch on one man, Nirmal Kathar (headman's nephew), short temper, seen in fights. No proof. Case cold."

Rudra read the note twice. He placed it back carefully. He felt a slow heaviness in his stomach. He knew this kind of "informal note." Young officers keep them when truth is close but not enough to stand in court. Time blows dust on them. Then they sleep for years.

He turned the last pages. There was a "Closure Report," written in a steady hand: "Despite efforts, no sufficient evidence. Case recommended for 'A Final' (undetected)." A stamp. A signature. A date. 15 March 1996.

Rudra sat still. Outside the window, the light shifted slightly. A cloud must have moved across the sun. The room felt a little cooler.

He looked again at the photograph. He brought it close and tried to read the expressions on the young faces. The boy's smile said: "I am ready." The girl's eyes said: "Do not be afraid." He turned the photograph over. On the back, someone had written in pencil, in a cheerful, open hand: "Diphu College Picnic, March '95 — Jitu's camera." A small doodle of a kite was drawn near the words.

"Biku," Rudra said softly, "can you bring me a soft brush? I want to clean the dust off these photos without scratching them."

"Yes, sa'ab," Biku said and left quickly. Rudra placed the photograph down and leaned back. The fan moved warm air around. His heart had slowed, but his mind was awake in a bright way. He did not believe in ghosts. He did not believe in signs. But he could not deny what the photo did to him. He felt as if the past had reached out and placed a hand on his shoulder.

His phone vibrated. A message from Kaberi: Field visit to school at 3. If free, join for 20 minutes? He typed back: Will try. Found an old file. Important. Will call later.

He almost did not send the second line. Then he did: The file has a photo. The girl looks like you.

There was a pause. Then her reply came: I am coming to your office now.

He stared at the screen. He typed: Not urgent. Another message from her: It is.

Biku returned with a soft paintbrush, the kind used for computer keyboards. Rudra brushed the edges of the photo and a second photo he had not noticed at first, tucked under: a group shot—six young men and women under a banyan tree, books in arms, someone's guitar, someone's flute, a picnic basket. The boy and girl from the first photo were in the middle. The girl's dupatta was caught by the wind. It had become a small red flag above her shoulder.

A knock came at the door. Mitali stepped in. "Sir, Madam DC has arrived."

"Send her in," Rudra said.

Kaberi entered without hurry but without waste. She wore a pale green saree today. Her eyes went straight to the table, to the open file, to the photographs. She did not sit. She stood by the table and looked down at the young faces.

Rudra watched her face. He saw the moment the likeness struck her. It was not drama. It was a quiet widening of the eyes, a small parting of the lips, a breath drawn in like a wave. Her hand lifted a little, then dropped. She spoke one word, almost like a thought escaping. "Kabita."

Rudra swallowed. "You know the name?"

Kaberi shook her head. "No. I don't know. It just came." She pointed to the girl's photo. "But that is me," she said softly, and then corrected herself with a small, brave smile. "Of course it is not me. But it looks like me. Too much."

"And the boy," Rudra said, "looks like me."

Kaberi looked at him then. The look was long and steady. It was not fear. It was not even surprise now. It was recognition of something larger than both of them. She sat down slowly.

"What is the case?" she asked, finding her official tone, as if she were saving herself by stepping on a familiar stone.

He summarized. Double murder by the river in 1995. Boy: Ratneswar Rahang. Girl: Kabita Kathar. Families had almost agreed to their marriage if they finished college. Then the deaths. No witness. Case closed. Informal note about the village headman's anger, his nephew Nirmal.

Kaberi listened without interrupting. At the end she said, "Reopen it."

"I thought the same," Rudra said. "But we need reason."

She pointed to the informal note. "This is reason. And the fact that both families had agreed and then something changed. Who changed it? Why? This is not only a love story. It smells of power and pride."

Rudra nodded. "I will write to the court for permission to reopen. We will record fresh statements. We will find the old officers if we can."

Kaberi was silent for a moment. Then she said, "Can we meet the father? Ratneswar's father?"

Rudra looked at her. The old man at the tea stall came back to his mind—the hair like ash, the cry, "My son has come back." He nodded. "Yes. Mintu—the shopkeeper on the hill—said the old man goes to the river every morning. We can go tomorrow. Early."



Kaberi stood. "I will come," she said simply. They were quiet for a minute. The room held their thoughts the way a quiet pond holds two leaves. Then Kaberi looked again at the photo. She touched the air above the girl's face, not touching the paper itself. "Her name is Kabita," she said again, as if testing the weight of the word. "And the boy—Ratneswar. The names fit like clothes."

Rudra felt a small pulling in his chest, like a thread being drawn through fabric. "Do you believe in past lives?" he asked. The question sounded strange in his own mouth, the mouth of a police officer trained to measure, to prove.

Kaberi did not answer at once. She looked out of the window. The banyan leaves outside made a slow hand-like shadow on the wall. "I believe in stories that do not end," she said at last. "Sometimes they stop at a cliff and start again in a valley. We think it is a new story. But it is the same river under another name."

He breathed out. The answer was not an answer, but it was enough.

Mitali knocked again, careful. "Sir, land survey team is waiting for your signature." She glanced at Kaberi, understood something without being told, and withdrew like a person closing a door softly in a house where a baby is sleeping.

"We will do the formal steps," Kaberi said, all official now. "We will protect the file. We will scan the pages. We will not let any paper vanish."

"I will put two constables at the records room," Rudra said. "And I will take photocopies of the key sheets today. The photographs will be kept in a zip pouch. I will also take high-resolution scans."

Kaberi nodded. "Good. And one more thing."

"Yes?"

"Tell no one outside our core team until we are ready," she said. "If the old power is still alive, it will try to choke this before it breathes. Let the story take one full breath first."

Rudra felt respect, clean and strong, rise in him like a straight tree. "Agreed."

When she left, the room felt a little emptier, but the file felt heavier, as if it had understood that it would be seen now.

Rudra called Prakash Dutta and Mitali and formed a small circle: themselves, Biku for handling, and two constables chosen for their steady hands. He gave short, clear instructions: secure the records room door, log all entries and exits for this file, begin scanning, prepare a draft application to court for reopening Case 13/1995.

Then, as the afternoon light thinned, he did something personal. He took a clean sheet of office paper and wrote two names in the middle, large and plain:

RATNESWAR RAHANG

KABITA KATHAR He underlined them once, not hard, just enough to make the letters feel held. He kept the sheet on his table. It felt like keeping two guests in the room. He did not know if it was foolish. He did not care. Evening came gently. The scanning machine hummed like a bee. The constables stood at the door, patient. Biku brought tea and placed it near the corner of the file, careful not to leave a ring. Rudra watched the pages pass under glass and become light on a screen, lines from 1995 walking into 2025.

In the middle of this, his phone buzzed again. A message from Kaberi: Thank you for letting me see. Tomorrow, river at 6?

He typed: Yes. I will pick you at 5:40.

Another message came, not from her, but from an unknown number. The text was short: Do not dig old graves. Dogs bite. No name. No emoji. The number was masked, a cheap internet message.

Rudra felt his back go straight. He read it once. He read it again. Then he called Prakash. "Trace this," he said, giving the number. "Also, inform cyber cell to watch for similar messages to senior officers in Diphu. Quietly."

Prakash said, "Yes, sir," without fear or fuss. He had the calm of an old hill tree.

Rudra looked at the file again. He felt no fear. He felt only a firmness, like a stone underfoot when the path is muddy.

Before leaving the office, he placed the photographs in a clear pouch and kept them in a small lockbox inside his table. He wrote a short note by hand, dated and signed, listing the items in the box. He asked Mitali to countersign. He locked the box and kept the key in his pocket.

Outside, the sky had turned the colour of ripe plums. A thin moon hung low, like a slice of silver fruit. The air smelled of hearth smoke and wet leaves. He stood for a moment and breathed.

On the way back to his quarters, he stopped at the small temple near the bend. The bell rope hung still. He touched the stone step with his fingertips. He did not pray with words. He only stood. In that small standing, a picture rose—the same river bend, a flat stone like a doorstep, a girl with a red dupatta, a boy with books, the curve of a smile, the weight of a promise.

"Tomorrow," he said softly to the air. "We are coming."

Far away, the river moved in the dark, making the sound that rivers make when they carry both water and memory. And somewhere near that water, an old man sat on a rock, his feet in the cold flow, whispering a name to the hills. The hills, patient, said the name back to him, again and again, until the night gathered all the names and kept them safe. (CONTD ON NEXT ISSUE)

The Desire

By: Otteri Selva Kumar

What about Those birds They don't know That flies are fast Just looking for food Flying in ... That freedom As with long Enjoying the birds of freedom Birds like that If you don't fly ...? They Get food?! That is the doubt that Flying is that Is the subject of comfort From the earth To keep flying To many people here Has been liked What is it? Like birds It is just that it is Impossible to fly The man's concern is ... But ... it is not a concern ... The reason is ... The man is like the bird The desire to fly Birds are tempted to Look like live man That's all ...

Flare of Faith

By: Aniruddh Oghori

How can one say How it feels To be in love Yet unloved again? A shimmering arrogance- How steep it stabs, The optimism you sowed The blooming you planned? A blunt kitchen knife Struggles with the loaf The cat turns away With utter sceptic loath. A tinge of beauty Wrinkles with high fever Sailing on the Philadelphia With a mind of a miser. How can one say How tormenting it is To be unloved Yet being in love again- Against all conspiracies With bad breath And diabolical eyes All the dreams un-ceased? I'm waiting at your gate Tell me when you're aware Of the last serenade Watering the fire flare.

Decades-old tragedy, ongoing progress: Cabinet approves Nellie Massacre Report amid development and welfare initiatives

## Assam cabinet approves Tiwari Commission Report on Nellie Massacre

**HT Bureau**

**GUWAHATI, Oct 25:** The Assam Cabinet has taken a significant step by approving the tabling of the Tiwari Commission Report on the 1983 Nellie Massacre in the upcoming Assembly session. The move comes as families affected by one of Assam's darkest chapters await justice and closure, and it is expected to spark important debates in the state legislature.

Alongside this, the Cabinet focused on development and welfare. The cost of the 500 TPD Methanols and 200 TPD Formalin project of Assam Petrochemicals Ltd has been revised to ₹ 2,267.22 crore, reflecting the government's push to strengthen industrial growth in the state.



On the social side, 224 land allotment proposals under Mission Basundhara 2.0 for indigenous

landless families were approved, ensuring long-overdue land rights for vulnerable communities.

Meanwhile, 12,000 contractual teachers under the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan now have the chance to apply for regularisation following amendments to the Assam Elementary and Secondary Schools Teachers' (Regulation of Posting and Transfer) Bill, 2025.

The Cabinet also moved ahead with measures for the Moran and Matak communities, clearing amendments to the Matak and Moran Autonomous Councils Ordinances, 2025, to be tabled in the Assembly.

With the Tiwari Commission Report on the agenda, Assam's lawmakers are set to revisit history while balancing ongoing development and welfare initiatives across the state.

## BTC venture schools seek inclusion under state Provincialisation Act



**HT Correspondent**

**GOSSAIGAON, Oct 25:** The BTC Venture Senior Secondary Schools' Association has urged Chief Executive Member Hagrama Mohilary and Executive Member

of Education Rabiram Narzary to take steps for including venture senior secondary schools under the state Provincialisation Act through an amendment to the Assam Education Bill.

The association emphasised the vital role of these institutions, formerly known as junior colleges, in promoting education in the BTC region. A five-point memorandum was submitted to the BTC leaders, outlining key demands such as a ten-year relaxation period for provincialisation, increased financial aid, recruitment of teaching and non-teaching staff, ex-gratia assistance of ₹ 5 lakh for retiring employees, and permanent resolution of institutional issues.

The meeting was described as cordial, with both BTC leaders assuring that the matter would be discussed with the Education secretary and Director for necessary action. Association president Saneswar Narzary, General Secretary Indrajit Basumatary and representatives from various schools were present during the discussion.

## KA territorial social society celebrates foundation day

**HT Correspondent**

**BOKAJAN, Oct 25:** Karbi Anglong Territorial Social Security (KATSSA) celebrated its foundation day with a day-long programme at Lahorijan PWD IB.

During the event, KATSSA Secretary Klengsarpo Tisso said the foundation of the Bokajan LA Constituency Committee aims to improve coordination among its members. Addressing the gathering, KATSSA president Samson Engti emphasised the importance of the organisation in providing security for the Karbi community. Social worker Molen Teron recommended strengthening KATSSA to promote unity among the Karbis.

The event was attended by Depani College Principal Boson Rongphar, KATSSA Bokajan LA president Buson Engti, KATSSA secretary Rangina Teron, Greater Khatkhati Press Club president Anand Terang and several others.

## NFR transforms holding areas into passenger friendly hubs

**HT Bureau**

**GUWAHATI, Oct 25:** Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) has introduced a series of comprehensive and passenger-friendly measures to ensure comfortable, safe and pleasant festive travel. Major stations such as Katihar, New Jalpaiguri, Guwahati, Joghani, and Kishanganj have been prepared with dedicated holding areas equipped with passenger information systems, clean drinking water, toilets, fans and ample seating, creating a welcoming environment. Proactive crowd management and safety arrangements have been implemented to make journeys smooth and stress-free. Festive spirit is enhanced with melodious Chhath Geet songs at major stations, including Katihar, Kishanganj, Barsoi, and Joghani in Bihar.

At Katihar Railway Station, an NGO supported travelers by serving refreshing water and 'sarbat' in holding areas. Divisional Railway Managers interacted with travelers, NGO members and railway staffs to ensure facilities meet the highest standards of comfort. Passengers expressed appreciation for the well-maintained amenities, making their wait pleasant and convenient.

To meet the increased travel demand during Puja, Diwali and Chhath, NFR is operating 620 special festival train trips across various routes, ensuring seamless connectivity. Over 200 trains operate daily



through the NFR network, serving thousands of travelers efficiently.

For enhanced safety and convenience, additional RPF, GRP and Commercial staff have been deployed round the clock at stations and on trains. Measures such as queue management, automatic ticket vending machines, real-time CCTV monitoring, drones, Segway scooters and war rooms at divisional offices and headquarters provide 24x7 operational oversight, ensuring a secure journey for every passenger.

With its focus on teamwork, vigilance, and a passenger-first approach, NFR remains committed to providing a safe, efficient, and joyful travel experience, reflecting the festive spirit and Indian Railways' dedication to passenger well-being.

## National seminar on emerging trends in AI

**HT Correspondent**

**MORIGAON, Oct 25:** A one-day National Seminar on "Emerging Trends in AI Research and Applications" was successfully organised by the Departments of Mathematics and Computer Applications of Morigaon College (Autonomous) in collaboration with the IQAC on October 22 at the college premises. The seminar brought together academicians and researchers to deliberate on the latest developments and innovations in Artificial Intelligence.

The inaugural session began with the lighting of the lamp by Dr Dhananjay Kusre, Vice Principal of Morigaon College, along with the invited guests. Prof Tarini Kumar Dutta of Assam Don Bosco University inaugurated the seminar and in his address highlighted the deep connection between mathematics and AI. Prof Pran Hari Talukdar, retired Head of the Department of Instrumentation and USC, Gauhati University, delivered an insightful talk on the evolution of AI over the years.

The keynote lecture was delivered by Prof Manoj Kumar Deka,

Academic Head and HoD, Department of Information Technology, Assam Skill University, on "AI in Academia: Enhancing Research, Innovation and Impact," where he emphasised ethical use of AI in research. Dr Jyotismita Talukdar of Tezpur University presented on "Machine Learning to Deep Learning: Impact on Modern Healthcare and Medicine," highlighting AI's role in transforming the healthcare sector. Dr Rupam Kumar Sharma of Rajiv Gandhi University spoke on "Breeding Technology," with insights into Generative AI and Agentic AI.

Participants presented research papers on topics such as neural networks, natural language processing, speech recognition and feature extraction. The seminar concluded with a valedictory session addressed by Dr Lila Kanta Barthakur, Principal of Morigaon College, who appreciated the organisers and participants. The event ended with a vote of thanks by Upashana Gogoi, Joint Coordinator, marking a successful exchange of ideas and advancements in AI research.

## 50 AMRS students qualify for IOQM 2025

**HT Correspondent**

**NAGAON, Oct 25:** Fifty students of Ajmal Modern Residential School (AMRS), Hojai, have successfully qualified for the Indian Olympiad Qualifier in Mathematics (IOQM) 2025. The exam was conducted by the Mathematics Teachers' Association (India) in collaboration with the Homi Bhabha Centre for Science Education (HBCSE), Mumbai, on behalf of the National Board for Higher Mathematics (NBHM), under the Department of Atomic Energy, Government of India. This achievement brings significant recognition to AMRS, Ajmal Super 40 and the Ajmal Foundation. The IOQM program aims to identify and nurture mathematical talent among pre-university students across the country, paving the way for participation in the International Mathematical Olympiad (IMO).

Principal Areef Ahmed congratulated the successful students, parents and teachers and expressed special gratitude to Nowid Kawasr Tipu, IOQM Coordinator of AMRS. The Managing Trustees of Ajmal Foundation, Maulana Badruddin Ajmal and Sirajuddin Ajmal, along with Dr Khasrul Islam Director of Ajmal Foundation, Dr MRH Azad General Manager and Abdul Kadir, Project Head of Ajmal Super 40, extended their best wishes to the students, parents, teachers, coordinator and Principal Areef Ahmed for this remarkable achievement.

## Cash theft at Sootea

**HT Correspondent**

**BISWANATH CHARIALI, Oct 25:** A cash amount of ₹ 80,000 was stolen from the house of Fatema Begum, a resident of Katarati village in southern Sootea, on Friday night. The thieves reportedly dug a hole to gain entry into the house. Fatema Begum had collected the money to arrange bail for her two sons, who are currently in jail, by selling a portion of her land and through daily wage earnings. The cash was kept in a bag inside her home. According to reports, Fatema sensed the intruders and tried to raise an alarm. However, the miscreants restrained her by pressing a cloth over her mouth and broke into her safe to steal the money. They also took her gold earrings.

A team from Sootea police visited the site on Saturday morning and an investigation is currently underway.

## Three arrested at Zubeen Kshetra

**HT Bureau**

**GUWAHATI, Oct 25:** Sonapur police arrested three individuals from Zubeen Kshetra late on Friday night following separate incidents of suspicious and disruptive behaviour. While the district administration was preparing to implement a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) specific to Zubeen Kshetra, police detained two individuals and brought them to Sonapur police station. Later, around 12:30 AM, another individual displaying suspicious activity was arrested. The person was identified as Boko's Ankur Pran Boro. In a separate incident, a man reportedly under the influence of alcohol challenged the SOP enforcement by shouting abusively and causing a disturbance at the site. Police arrested him along with an associate at around 2:00 AM and took both to the station. Authorities stated that measures will continue to maintain law and order at Zubeen Kshetra.

## Workshop on entrepreneurship at Biswanath College

**HT Correspondent**

**BISWANATH CHARIALI, Oct 25:** A one-day Entrepreneurship Awareness Programme was held at Biswanath College with the objective of fostering an innovative and entrepreneurial mindset among undergraduate students. The workshop was sponsored by the DC MSME, New Delhi, Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, Government of India, and organised by the Tool Room and Training Centre (TRTC), Guwahati, in collaboration with the Institution's Innovation Council of Biswanath College. Dr Naresch Thakur anchored the inaugural session and welcomed the resource persons. The first technical session, led by Manas Pathak, Senior Skill Training Coordinator of TRTC Guwahati, focused on innovation, entrepreneurship and the need for a supportive entrepreneurial ecosystem. Aishik Deka, Assistant Director, District Industries and Commerce Centre, Biswanath, delivered a session on government initiatives for promoting entrepreneurship and startups. The third session was conducted by Shouvik Roy from the Lead Bank Cell, Biswanath, provided insights into financial literacy.

## Tezpur prepares for safe and peaceful Chhath Puja

**HT Correspondent**

**TEZPUR, Oct 25:** A preparatory meeting was held on Friday at the District Commissioner's office in Sonitpur to discuss security and safety measures for the upcoming Chhath Puja, chaired by District Commissioner Anand Kumar Das. DC Das urged stakeholders to celebrate the festival with devotion and discipline, emphasising volunteer deployment, traffic and crowd management, loudspeaker use and overall security to ensure a peaceful event.

Additional District Commissioner Tawahir Alam reviewed last year's decisions and outlined rules for this year, including a ban on firecrackers between 10 PM and 6 AM and requiring children below 10 and senior citizens above 65 to be accompanied by guardians at Puja ghats. Representatives of various Puja Committees paid tribute to the late Zubeen Garg and resolved to observe the festival in a spiritual and serene manner. DC Das extended best wishes to the committees and instructed officials to hold similar preparatory meetings at the sub-divisional level.

## Workshop promotes natural farming among small tea growers in Udalguri

Tea farmers trained in eco-friendly practices under SusTAIN project



**HT Correspondent**

**KOKRAJHAR, Oct 25:** A three-day work-

shop on "Behavioral Changes towards Natural Farming Practices for Small Tea Growers

## Railway gears up for smooth return of passengers after Chhath Puja



**HT Bureau**

**GUWAHATI, Oct 25:** Indian Railways is ensuring smooth and comfortable travel for passengers during the festive season by operating more than 12,000 special trains across the country. Holding areas with passenger amenities have been set up at major stations including New Delhi, Anand Vihar Terminal, Udhna, Pune, Mumbai and Bengaluru to manage the festive rush. Railway staffs are working round the clock to guide passengers and maintain order.

As the return journey begins after Chhath Puja, 6,181 special trains have been announced between October 28 and November to help passengers return to their workplaces. Additional coaches are being attached to existing trains to meet the surge in demand. Weatherproof holding areas are being set up at key stations such as Patna, Danapur, Rajendra Nagar Terminal, Saharsa, Darbhanga, Muzaffarpur, Gaya, Samastipur, Barauni, Gorakhpur, Ballia and Banaras.

To enhance convenience, additional Automatic Ticket Vending Machines (ATVMs), Passenger Reservation System (PRS) counters and mobile unreserved ticketing (m-UTS) facilities have been introduced. The Railway Protection Force (RPF) has been deployed to ensure safety and smooth operations, supported by passenger assistance booths, information counters and improved queue management.

Cleanliness, lighting and sanitation are being strictly monitored at all major stations. Dedicated war rooms at the Railway Board, zonal and divisional levels are operating round the clock to coordinate real-time responses. Medical booths and emergency services have also been set up at major Bihar stations including Patna, Muzaffarpur, Darbhanga, Gaya and Saharsa.

Indian Railways reiterated its commitment to providing safe, reliable and comfortable travel for all passengers during the festive season.

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## Intervention of United Nations Organisations(UNO), international human rights organisations sought ANSAM condemns alleged drone attack in Khammoi village, claims two civilians killed

**SENAPATI, OCT 25:** The All Naga Students' Association, Manipur (ANSAM) has expressed its outrage and condemnation "in the strongest terms possible against the barbaric, unprovoked, and inhuman targeted drone attack carried out by the Indian armed forces upon Khammoi village under East Konyak Region on October 20, 2025, which resulted in the brutal killings of two innocent Naga civilians named Phiphot Wangsa, 7 years old, a grade 1 student of Khammoi Mission School and a committed student activist Khampei Wangsa, 27 years old, joint secretary of the Khammoi Students' Union".

The ANSAM said today that this "atrocious and cowardly act" is a flagrant violation of international human rights and the very principles of justice and civility. "It represents yet another chapter in a long and painful narrative of systematic, militarisation, occupation and subjugation of the Naga people in their own homeland under the oppressive shadow of Indian state power", the ANSAM also said.

The Naga student body then said the taking away of two innocent Naga lives and harming innocent children, elderly

men and women and many others is not an isolated incident but a continued and deliberate undeclared war unleashing upon the Naga civilians that negates the hard earned Indo-Naga peace process which has been built upon mutual understanding and respect since decades back of sacrifice, dialogue, and political understanding at the highest level between the two entities.

The ANSAM then questioned the Indian armed forces over the "illegal use" of drone attacks upon the Naga people. "It is pertinent to mention that the Government of India sponsored Indian armed machineries have targeted drone strikes twice on a Naga village this year. Such a cowardly act is nothing but a crime against humanity. Once again, the ANSAM condemns in the most absolute and uncompromising language this unforgivable crime against humanity", it added.

The ANSAM then said the Naga issue is not a law and order matter, but a political

conflict with historical legitimacy. The Naga student body also said the "continuous militarisation of our land and the indiscriminate killing of unarmed civilians



are acts of state terrorism, designed to suppress the rightful political aspirations of the Naga people for self-determination and peace with justice".

The All Naga Students' Association, Manipur then said it "stands unwavering solidarity" with the bereaved families of the "two martyrs" and the people of Khammoi village. Their sacrifices shall never be forgotten. The blood they shed shall be remembered as a sacred offering in the long

and righteous struggle for the freedom and dignity of the Naga nation, the ANSAM stated.

In the face of such "provocation and brutality", the ANSAM urged the Naga people living across the "imaginary boundary line" to remain united, vigilant, and resolute for our cause.

"We shall not be broken by fear, nor defeated by oppression. It said the Naga national spirit, forged in pain and purified in

sacrifice, shall continue to burn ever brighter", they said.

The ANSAM then said, "Let this incident stand as a solemn reminder to the world that the Naga struggle for justice, peace, and political recognition cannot be extinguished by bullets, drones and sophisticated weapons, nor buried by lies. The voice of truth shall echo louder than the roar of guns, and the Naga people shall triumph over the oppressors".

The ANSAM then sought the intervention of United Nations Organisations (UNO), international human rights organisations and "conscientious" international communities to act for ending the draconian law, the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958, "that has been weaponizing by the government of India to disseminate the lives and aspirations of the struggling people in the sub-continent".

In consonance with the Naga Students' Federation, the ANSAM reaffirmed its resolute stance of non-cooperation with the Indian armed forces across all the constituent units and sub-ordinate units until AFSPA is repealed. (NNN)

## Oil India to fund construction of 47 toilet facilities for girl students in Meghalaya

**SHILLONG, Oct 25:** State-run Oil India Ltd will fund the construction of 47 toilet facilities for girl students across various schools in Meghalaya's Ri Bhoi district, officials said on Saturday.

An MoU to this effect was signed between OIL representatives and Ri Bhoi District Deputy Commissioner Abhishek Baranwal on Friday, they said.

Under the agreement, OIL will provide financial assistance of around ₹ 72 lakh to support schools that currently lack dedicated sanitation facilities for girls, the officials said.

Baranwal said the initiative followed the visit of Union Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas Hardeep Singh Puri to Ri Bhoi a few months ago, when the issue of "inadequate toilet infrastructure in schools" was highlighted.

He said the construction work will be jointly monitored by OIL and the district administration to ensure quality and timely completion by December. The joint monitoring mechanism aims to ensure quality, sustainability, and proper utilisation of the sanctioned CSR funds, Baranwal added. (PTI)

## 400 personnel of Tripura State Rifles leave for Bihar for election duty

**AGARTALA, Oct 25:** Around 400 personnel of the Tripura State Rifles (TSR) have left for Patna for election-related duties in Bihar, an official said on Saturday.

Assembly elections in Bihar will be held in two phases on November 6 and November 11, while the counting of votes will take place on November 14. "A contingent of five companies of TSR departed for Patna by a special train to perform election-related duties in Bihar," Tripura Police spokesperson Rajdeep Deb said.

"The jawans are expected to reach Patna by Sunday morning," Deb said. He said the TSR personnel will stay in Bihar till the end of the polls. (PTI)

## Seven arrested for assaulting OC of police station in Tripura

**AGARTALA, Oct 25:** Seven people, including the secretary of a local club, were arrested on Saturday for assaulting the Officer in Charge (OC) of a police station in South Tripura district.

Shibu Ranjan Dey, the OC of Belonia police station, had switched off the sound system of Oriental Club on Friday night due to high-decibel sound and dance.

"As the OC switched off the sound system, angry club members pushed him to the ground and started assaulting him," said Tripura Police spokesperson Rajdeep Deb.

"A specific case has been registered against seven members of the Oriental Club, including its secretary, for voluntarily causing grievous hurt to deter a public servant from discharging his duty and other charges. All the accused persons were arrested. An investigation is on," the spokesperson said. (PTI)

## Over 54 grams of heroin seized in M'laya, two from Assam held

**SHILLONG, Oct 25:** Two persons from Assam were arrested in Meghalaya's East Khasi Hills district after heroin weighing over 54 grams was recovered from their possession, police said on Saturday.

Acting on a tip-off, the Anti-Narcotics Task Force (ANTF) of the state police set up a checking point at Sohryngkham on the Shillong-Silchar route and intercepted a vehicle on Friday, an



officer said.

During the search of the vehicle, four soap boxes containing heroin weighing 54.13 grams were recovered, and two persons, both residents of Silchar, were apprehended, he said.

The seized contraband and the accused were later handed over to the officer-in-charge of Sohryngkham Outpost under the East Khasi Hills district for further legal action.

An FIR has been registered by the ANTF Meghalaya at the Sohryngkham Outpost of the East Khasi Hills district, and investigation is underway, the officer added. (PTI)

## DAMPA BYELECTION Complaint filed against Mizoram CM, adviser over poll code violation



**AIZAWL, Oct 25:** Mizoram's main opposition party, the Mizo National Front (MNF), has lodged a complaint with the Election Commission against Chief Minister Lalduhoma for allegedly violating the model code of conduct, an election official said on Saturday.

The party has also filed a complaint against ruling Zoram People's Movement (ZPM) MLA and adviser to the chief minister Dr Lorrain Lalpekhlana Chinzah, the

official said.

The legal wing of MNF submitted a complaint to state joint chief electoral officer Ethel Rothangpui on Friday, alleging that Lalduhoma violated the poll norms by announcing a ₹ 700-crore water project for Dampa constituency and promising to provide turmeric processing machines to farmers during campaigning at Reiek village in Mamit district recently, he said. The MNF also alleged in its

complaint that Lorrain organised a free medical camp in Dampa area after imposition of the model code of conduct, he said.

The matters are being investigated, he added.

Five candidates are in the fray for the bypoll to Dampa seat on November 11.

Ruling ZPM has fielded Mizo singer and preacher Vanlalsailova, MNF nominated party senior vice-president and former health minister Dr. R. Lalthangliana and Congress fielded its vice-president and former transport minister John Rotluangliana.

The BJP nominated Lalthangthanga, who recently joined the saffron party, while former chief minister Brig. T Sailo's party (People's Conference) fielded its vice-president K. Zahmingthanga.

A total of 20,790 voters, including 10,185 women, are eligible to exercise their franchise to decide the fate of the five candidates.

Counting of votes will be held on November 14.

The bypoll was necessitated following the death of incumbent MNF legislator Lalrintluanga Sailo on July 21. (PTI)

## Four militants involved in extortion activities arrested in Manipur

**IMPHAL, Oct 25:** Security forces arrested four militants belonging to various proscribed outfits in Manipur for their alleged involvement in extortion activities, police said on Saturday.

All the arrests were made on Friday.

An active cadre of the banned United Kuki National Army (UKNA) was apprehended from his residence at Old Gelmoul in Churachandpur district, a

senior officer said.

"One pistol with ammunition was recovered from his possession, and he was involved in extortion and the collection of funds from the town area of Churachandpur," he said.

A member of the proscribed Kangleipak Communist Party (Taibanganba) was apprehended from his locality at Kakching Wairi Bamon in Kakching district, the officer said.

The police arrested an active cadre of the proscribed Prepak (Pro) from Brahmapur Nahabam in Imphal East district, he said.

An active cadre of the banned People's Liberation Army was also arrested from Sangaiithel in Imphal West district, the officer said.

Security forces have been conducting search operations in Manipur since ethnic violence broke out two years ago.

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

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

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

## Nagaland brings spirit of Hornbill Festival to Delhi

Nagaland is home to 17 major tribes, each with its own unique customs, beliefs, and expressions



**NEW DELHI, Oct 25:** As a prelude to the famed Hornbill Festival in Nagaland, a cultural evening was hosted in the national capital, showcasing the state's traditional music, attire, handicrafts, and cuisine, among others.

The event at Nagaland House, hosted by the Nagaland Tourism on Friday, attracted a large number of people from Delhi and other parts of the country, besides members of the Naga community.

The evening opened with a traditional Naga drum beat and song, followed by displays of tribal attire, handicrafts, traditional utensils, cuisine, and organically grown vegetables.

Union minister Jitendra Singh, Delhi Tourism

Minister Kapil Mishra, and the Ambassador of Thailand to India, Chavanart Thangsumphant, were present as guests.

Nagaland Tourism Minister Temjen Imna Along felicitated the dignitaries with traditional Naga headgear and delivered an introductory speech highlighting the connection between Nagaland and Delhi.

Along said the evening is dedicated to the people of Delhi, as it is not just the capital of India, but the heartbeat of the nation.

"Thousands of people from Nagaland have studied, worked, and built their futures here, and many continue to live in this great city. Delhi has always embraced the Naga commu-

nity with love, and the people of Nagaland have always felt deeply connected to Delhi. I thank you all for your warmth and affection," he said.

The event was a prelude to the Hornbill Festival, held annually from December 1 to 10 at the Kisama heritage village near Kohima, Along said.

It also included a mini ramp walk by Naga students, showcasing their tribal attire.

Speaking to the media, Kapil Mishra said he would visit Nagaland during the Hornbill Festival, and appealed to citizens across the country to attend the annual event.

He also announced plans to organise annual Naga cultural events in Delhi in the coming years.

Later, Along briefed the media about the 26th edition of the Hornbill Festival and other initiatives for Nagaland tourism.

"The Hornbill Festival will soon be celebrated in Nagaland. For the past few years, we have been offering a glimpse of this vibrant festival in the national capital, through the autumn festival held at the Nagaland House," he said.

Nagaland is home to 17 major tribes, each with its own unique customs, beliefs, and expressions. The Hornbill Festival brings together all 17 tribes along with partner states to showcase the true essence and spirit of Nagaland, the minister said.

"The event is known as the 'festival of festivals', a grand celebration of our unity in diversity. I warmly invite everyone to come to Nagaland this December and experience our traditions, music, and hospitality. On behalf of our chief minister (Neiphiu Rio), I extend this invitation to all," Along said.

He also spoke about Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision for the development of the North-east, and highlighted Nagaland's environment-friendly tourism initiatives. (PTI)

## Rio asks Nagaland architects to be at forefront of innovation



**DIMAPUR, Oct 25:** Nagaland chief minister Neiphiu Rio on Saturday called upon the architects of the state to be at the forefront of innovation, pointing out that "we live in Earthquake Zone 5".

"This is not a statistic in a manual but a reality that governs our lives. It demands not just compliance, but ingenuity," Rio said while addressing the 25th anniversary celebration of the Association of Nagaland Architects (ANA) as the guest of honour at JP Park & Banquets, 4th Mile, Chumoukedima.

Rio urged the architects to continuously seek and champion new and innovative solutions that are not just aesthetically pleasing, but fundamentally, uncompromisingly safe.

He also highlighted that the construction sector is the largest engine of employment in the state, providing livelihoods to thousands of youth and presenting a tremendous economic opportunity.

He called upon the ANA to take a lead role in encouraging and training the local people.

"Introduce them to new technologies, modern construction techniques, and sustainable practices.

"By empowering our local masons, engineers, and artisans, they are not just constructing buildings, they are constructing careers and strengthening our economy," he added.

Rio said the 25-year celebration is a remarkable milestone, a testament to vision, perseverance, and the unwavering commitment of a community of professionals dedicated to shaping the very fabric of the state.

He thanked the principal architect and founder of ANA Chitra Vishwanath for his pioneering work at Biome Environmental Solutions in Bangalore, which inspired a generation to build in harmony with nature.

He also paid tribute to the genesis of ANA, where they shared not just common concerns, but a common dream to elevate the practice of architecture in Nagaland.

Dr Gauri Nitin Shiurkar, member, Council of Architecture, India, in her address, said the silver jubilee marked the dedication of those who came together with a shared purpose to strengthen the architectural community in Nagaland, nurture young talent, and give voice to the profession in this beautiful and culturally rich state.

She pointed out that Nagaland's architecture is a profound reflection of its people, resilient, deeply rooted, and richly expressive.

Shiurkar added that the iconic Naga morungs with their stunning carvings and strong symbolism are more than just buildings but are living expressions of community, identity, and collective wisdom.

## The leader of opposition in the LS asserted that safe and respectable travel is a right HELPLESS TRAVELLERS LIVING PROOF OF NDA'S DECEITFUL POLICIES: RAHUL

**NEW DELHI, Oct 25:** The Congress claimed on Saturday that the Centre has not honoured its promise of running an adequate number of special Bihar-bound trains during the festive season, saying it "lied" in the run-up to the election in the state to garner votes and that "helpless travellers" are a living proof of the NDA's "deceitful policies".

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi claimed that trains to Bihar are "packed" and tickets impossible to get, with the journey becoming "inhuman" during the festive season. The leader of opposition in the Lok Sabha asserted that safe and respectable travel is a right, not a favour.

"It is a month of festivals -- Diwali, Bhai Dooj and Chhath. In Bihar, these festivals mean more than just faith, but also a yearning to return home -- the fragrance of the soil, the affection of family, the warmth of the village," Gandhi said in a post in Hindi on X. But this yearning has now become a struggle, he added.

"Trains to Bihar are packed, tickets are impossible to get and the journey has become inhuman.

Many trains are 200 per cent overloaded -- people are hanging onto doors and roofs," the former Congress chief said.

The "failed double-engine" government's claims are hollow, he said.

"Where are the 12,000 special trains? Why does the situation worsen every year? Why are the people of Bihar forced to return home in such deplorable conditions every year?" Gandhi asked.

If employment and a dignified life were available in the state, they would not have to wander thousands of kilometres away from their homes, he said.

"These are not just helpless travellers, they are the living proof of the NDA's deceitful policies and intentions. Safe and respectable travel is a right, not a favour," Gandhi said.

The Congress leader also shared a video montage of packed railway stations and trains on one hand and Prime Minister Narendra Modi flagging off trains on the other, on a split screen.

Addressing a press conference here along with party colleague Abhay Dubey, Congress MP



Akhilesh Prasad Singh said Chhath is very special for Bihar and its people.

"There was initially a great deal of relief when (Prime Minister) Narendra Modi and the railway minister announced that 12,000 trains would be used to transport people to their homes, but only 1,500 trains were actually run," Singh claimed.

"The Modi government lied during the election to garner votes and played with the faith of people, as we all saw how people re-

turned home amid heavy crowds and difficulties," he said.

"This is not the first case -- Modi has betrayed Bihar and its people many times. Modi's ally, (Bihar Chief Minister) Nitish Kumar, is also doing the same. This is why Bihar has continued to lag behind and lies at the bottom in every aspect today," the Congress leader said.

In his remarks at the presser, Dubey claimed that the entire state of Bihar is in distress and the BJP-led National Democratic Al-

liance (NDA) government has subjected passengers to immense hardship during train travel.

"The government has betrayed the people of Bihar on the occasion of Chhath Puja. Narendra Modi and several other BJP leaders had promised to run 12,000 trains. The Modi government makes many claims, but we all saw how much people were inconvenienced during their travels. All leaders, including Modi himself, travel by planes worth thousands of crores, but the public is forced to travel on crowded trains," Dubey said.

People will not forgive those who hurt Bihar's religious sentiments, he said, adding that the public will teach them a lesson with their votes and oust them from power.

Earlier this week, the railway ministry released a list of 12,011 train trips scheduled between October 1 and November 30, suggesting that on an average, 196 special trains are operating daily from various destinations in the country to cater to the heavy festive rush.

The highest number of special

trains operated so far on a single day during this period was around 280 on October 18, while the lowest was approximately 166 on October 8.

Officials said the ministry worked day and night for months with all the zones and divisions to identify and utilise all available coaches to ensure that passengers could reach their destinations in time to celebrate festivals.

Almost all the coaches, including those sent for repair, were retrieved, ensuring their fitness from all 70 railway divisions across the country, to facilitate 12,011 trips based on passenger movements, a railway official said.

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) president J P Nadda had, at a recent public rally in Bihar, said the Ministry of Railways has increased the number of special trains to 12,000 this time to meet the passenger rush during the Chhath festival.

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

## Delhi airport emerging as preferred transfer hub: Naidu

**NEW DELHI, Oct 25:** Delhi airport's refurbished Terminal 2 will be operational from October 26, enhancing passenger handling capacity at the country's largest airport, with Air India and IndiGo set to operate a total of 120 flights daily.

Inaugurating the revamped T2, Civil Aviation Minister K Ram-mohan Naidu on Saturday said the government is developing and transforming airports into world-class transit hubs at an unprecedented pace.

"Handling nearly 50 per cent of the Northern region's total passenger traffic and managing nearly 50,000 transfers every day, Delhi is emerging as a preferred transfer hub," he said. The Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA) can handle more than 100 million passengers annually.

The more than 40-year-old T2 was shut for renovation works in April this year and will become operational on the intervening night of October 25-26, coinciding with the start of the winter schedule, during which the airport is set to have around 13 per cent more flights than the previous winter schedule.

The winter schedule is from October 26, 2025, to March 28, 2026. Together, Air India and IndiGo will operate around 120 daily domestic flights from the upgraded T2, DIAL said in a release.

"This (T2) reopening also allows for more balanced airline operations across terminals, further enhancing efficiency and convenience for millions of travellers," DIAL CEO Videh Kumar Jaipuria said. Delhi International Airport Ltd (DIAL), a consortium led by the GMR Group, operates the IGIA, which is also the country's largest airport. At the inauguration, Naidu said India can become one of the world's largest civil aviation ecosystems.

The whole transfer ecosystem should be made more efficient for making the airport an international hub, he said and added that the airport can have an annual passenger handling capacity of around 130 million with efficient use of space. The minister also said the Delhi airport is focusing on sustainability, including concentrating on the use of Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF).

According to DIAL, the future-ready T2 will play a pivotal role in strengthening the airport's position as India's foremost aviation hub, equipped to handle the next phase of passenger growth efficiently and sustainably.

The revamped T2 will feature a Self Baggage Drop (SBD) facility, enabling passengers to check in bags independently and reducing queues and waiting time. Among others, there will be six new Passenger Boarding Bridges (PBBs).

In terms of infrastructure and safety, T2 has undergone comprehensive mechanical and electrical upgrades, and the refurbished air-side and apron areas are designed to support efficient aircraft movement and accommodate future traffic growth, DIAL said.

At the T2, the first arriving flight will be IndiGo's 6E 2058 from Lucknow at around 0025 hours on October 26, while the first departing flight will be IndiGo's 6E 2343 to Pune at 0215 hours on October 26. The Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA) in the national capital, also the country's largest airport, has three terminals -T1, T2, and T3 - and four runways. (PTI)

## Congress demands PAC probe after US daily claims LIC invested in Adani Group

**NEW DELHI, Oct 25:** The Congress on Saturday demanded that Parliament's Public Accounts Committee investigate the Life Insurance Corporation following a Washington Post report that the public sector company made huge investments in Adani Group's securities after they took a beating in the markets.

However, the Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) denied the allegations as "false, baseless, and far from the truth".

Congress general secretary in-charge of communications Jairam Ramesh alleged the savings of LIC's 30 crore policyholders were "systematically misused" to benefit the Adani Group.

In a statement, Ramesh said disturbing revelations have just emerged in the media about how the "Modani joint venture systematically misused the Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) and the savings of its 30 crore policyholders". The opposition party's attack came after The Washington Post, citing internal documents, reported that Indian officials drafted and pushed through a proposal to invest about Rs 35,000 crores of LIC funds in various Adani Group companies in May 2025.

Markets regulator SEBI cleared the Adani Group of stock manipulation allegations made by US short-seller Hindenburg Research, saying fund transfer between group companies did not fall foul of any regulation. The SEBI probe was initiated after intervention by the Supreme Court.

In a statement posted on X, the LIC said the allegations levelled by the Washington Post that its investment decisions were influenced by external factors are "false, baseless, and far from truth".

"No such document or plan as alleged in the article has ever been prepared by LIC, which creates a roadmap for infusing funds by LIC into Adani group of companies. The investment decisions are taken by LIC independently as per Board approved policies after detailed due diligence," the LIC said.

The Department of Financial Services or any other body does not

have any role in such decisions, it said. LIC has ensured the highest standards of due diligence and all its investment decisions have been undertaken in compliance with extant policies, provisions in the Acts and regulatory guidelines, in the best interest of all its stakeholders, the statement said.

There was no immediate response from the Adani Group on the Congress' allegations.

Taking a swipe at the government over the issue, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge said the real beneficiaries of the government's Direct Benefit Transfer initiative "are not the common people of India, but Modi's best friends".

"Does the average salaried middle-class person, who pays every penny of their LIC premium, even know that Modi is using his savings to bail out Adani? Isn't this a breach of trust? Isn't it loot?" Kharge said in a post in Hindi on X.

The Congress president asked if the Modi government would answer why LIC money was invested in Adani's companies, and Rs 33,000 crore was planned to be invested in May 2025.

Even before this, in 2023, despite a more than 32 per cent decline in Adani's shares, why was Rs 525 crore of LIC and SBI invested in the Adani FPO, he asked.

"Why is Modi busy filling the pockets of his 'best friend', looting the hard-earned money of 30 crore LIC policyholders?" Kharge said.

In his statement, Ramesh said, "Internal documents reveal that Indian officials drafted and pushed through a proposal to invest about Rs 33,000 crores of LIC funds in various Adani Group companies in May 2025".

The reported goals were to "signal confidence in the Adani Group" and to "encourage participation from other investors", he said.

"The question arises: under whose pressure did the officials of the Ministry of Finance and NITI Aayog decide that their job was to bail out a private company facing funding difficulties due to serious allegations of criminality? Is this not a textbook case of 'mobile phone banking'?" Ramesh said. (PTI)

## This election will decide if 'jungle raj' returns to Bihar or development prevails: Shah

**KHAGARIA (BIHAR), Oct 25:** Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Saturday said the assembly elections will decide whether the 'jungle raj' will return to Bihar or the state remains on the path of development.

Addressing a public rally in Khagaria district, he slammed the INDIA bloc for opposing the special intensive revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in poll-bound Bihar, and asserted that every infiltrator would be detected, deleted from the voters' list and deported to their countries.

"Rahul baba says that let the infiltrators stay in Bihar. You tell me, should we let the infiltrators stay here? I want to clearly tell Rahul baba that no matter how many rallies you hold to save infiltrators...He can not protect infiltrators by taking out 'Ghuspetiya Bachao Yatra'," Shah told the gathering. His allusion was to Congress MP and leader of the opposition in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi.

The union home minister also asserted that the NDA will return to power in Bihar, and said, "Our government will handpick and throw out every single infiltrator from the country...They will be detected and deported to their countries". He also said this electoral battle is "not about making someone a legislator, minister, or chief minister".

"This election will decide whether 'jungle raj' will return to Bihar or the state remains on the



path of development. If the government of Lalu-Rabri is formed, only 'jungle raj' will come, and if the NDA comes to power, a developed Bihar will make its mark in the entire country," Shah said.

He alleged that the opposition grand alliance has two identities -corruption and nepotism. Shah accused RJD supreme Lalu Prasad of concentrating only on the prosperity of his family.

"Nitish babu wants overall development of the state, while Lalu Ji wants to make his son the chief minister, and Sonia Gandhi wants to make her son the prime minister.

"Therefore, only Narendra Modi ji and Nitish Kumar ji can care for the sons and daughters of

Bihar. There is not a single charge of corruption against Modi ji and Nitish ji. Whereas Lalu Ji has committed countless scams, from the fodder scam to the Bihar PSC scam, and so on," Shah said. During Lalu's rule, murder, robbery, extortion and kidnapping were an everyday affair, he alleged.

"Under the RJD's rule, industries fled from the state, and they turned Bihar into a backward state. Under the leadership of Nitish Babu, the NDA freed Bihar from 'jungle raj', ended dynastic politics and the biggest thing is that we worked to free Bihar from Naxalism", Shah claimed. He extended greetings to people on the occasion of Chhath Puja.

"Today, the great festival of Chhath has begun. I want to extend my heartfelt wishes for the Chhath Mahaparv to all the people of Bihar and pray to Chhath Maiya that our Bihar remains forever free from 'jungle raj', that law and order remains strong, our sisters and daughters remain safe, and that Bihar progresses to become a developed state...these are my prayers to Chhath Maiya", the BJP leader said.

Shah said the NDA's policy is quite clear. "There should be schools and colleges with all infrastructural facilities, medicine on time, irrigation facilities for farmers, and water supply in every home. Bihar will now move forward on these principles," Shah said. (PTI)

## EC may roll out first phase of all-India SIR next week

**NEW DELHI, Oct 25:** The Election Commission is likely to roll out the first of pan-India Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of voters' list next week beginning with "10 to 15 states", including those going to polls next year, officials said Saturday.

Assam, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Kerala and West Bengal will go to polls in 2026 and they are amongst the states where the voters' list cleanup exercise will begin first.

The poll authority is likely to announce the first phase of SIR middle of next week, in which as many as "10 to 15 states" would be included, officials said.

The EC will not hold the electoral roll cleanup exercise in states where local body elections are taking place or are due, as the grassroots poll machinery is busy with it and may not be able to focus on SIR, they said.

The SIR in such states will be held in later phases.

The voters' list cleanup exercise has concluded in Bihar where the final list with nearly 7.42 crore names was published on September 30. Bihar will go to polls in two phases, on November 6 and November 11, and the counting will take place on November 14. The Commission has already held two conferences with state chief electoral officers (CEOs) to firm up the SIR rollout roadmap. (PTI)

## RS polls: Farooq Abdullah, BJP reject allegations of 'fixed match'

**SRINAGAR, Oct 25:** The National Conference and the BJP on Saturday rejected allegations that the Rajya Sabha polls were a "fixed match", with NC president Farooq Abdullah saying his party had rejected an offer from the BJP and had preferred a contest.

Abdullah also denied the charge by People's Conference chief and MLA from Handwara, Sajad Lone, that the NC had "gifted" seven votes to the BJP.

On Friday, the ruling NC won three seats, while the BJP managed one in the first Rajya Sabha elections held in Jammu and Kashmir after it became a Union territory in 2019. J-K BJP president Sat Sharma defeated NC candidate Imran Nabi Dar by securing 32 votes.

"Had we gifted it, then how did our fourth candidate secure 21 votes? We did not give any gift. They (BJP) had come to us (saying) -- let there not be an elec-

tion and we (NC) take three and give them (BJP) one. We said no, we will contest and it will be decided on the ground," Abdullah said while replying to queries from reporters. He expressed gratitude to the Congress and the PDP for supporting NC candidates in the Rajya Sabha polls, and also asserted all his party MLAs were united and the BJP could not break even one of them.

"All MLAs of our party remained united; they could not break even one. There were some media reports that we are not united, but we remained united. We are thankful to Mehbooba (Mufti) ji's party (PDP), Congress party and those independents, including Langate and Shopian MLAs, and others who supported us," he said.

When asked whether the PDP had supported the NC, Abdullah said, "Yes, PDP supported us". (PTI)

## Not just CPI, entire Kerala kept in dark about signing PM SHRI MoU: Cong leader

**KOCHI, Oct 25:** Leader of Opposition in the Kerala Assembly V D Satheesan on Saturday said that the CPI(M) and Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan kept the whole of Kerala, and not just its ally CPI, in the dark while signing the PM SHRI Schools MoU and alleged that there was some "conspiracy" behind it.

Congress leader Satheesan claimed that the Pradhan Mantri Schools for Rising India (PM SHRI) scheme MoU was signed on October 16, less than a week after the CM met Prime Minister Narendra Modi on October 10, but was not informed to the state cabinet when it met on October 22.

He said that Vijayan needs to disclose what alleged pressure or blackmailing from the Centre forced them to sign the MoU so "secretively".

"The MoU was signed secretly without any information to its allies or the state cabinet. Even CPI(M) general secretary M A Baby and LDF convener T P Ramakrishnan were unaware," the opposition leader claimed.

Satheesan said that all this indicated that the CM and state General Education Minister V Sivankutty "were cheating their allies". He further said that Sivankutty cited lack of funds and financial crisis in the department as the reasons for signing the MoU.

"But, that is not what the CM and the state finance minister are saying. They are claiming there is no financial crisis in the state. They are all contradicting each other. There is no consultation, discussion or communication within the LDF.

"The CM's arbitrary decisions are being imposed on everyone and he is being pressured by Sangh Parivar forces," Satheesan contended. He further questioned the need for a state cabinet in such circumstances and said that the ministers from CPI and other allies should resign.

His hard hitting remarks come a day after CPI state secretary Binoy Viswan had said that the party and other LDF constituents were kept "in the dark" about the decision. Viswan had characterised the

move as a "breach of the front's collective discipline".

Meanwhile, senior CPI(M) leader A K Balan brushed aside Viswan's remarks as "an expression of his emotions".

"I don't think there is any basis for his harsh remarks made a day ago. I consider it as an expression of his emotions. I believe he will correct it himself," he said.

Balan further said that no one should wait in hopes of the CPI leaving the LDF.

"The CPI(M)-CPI bond cannot be severed like that. The UDF invited the CPI into its front the day the Left party expressed its views on the PM SHRI scheme. That means the UDF knows it cannot come to power without the help of a LDF constituent party. "Rest assured neither CPI nor any other LDF constituent party is going to leave the alliance," he asserted.

Union Minister of State for Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying and Minority Affairs George Kurian too said that the CPI was not going to leave the LDF. (PTI)

## Delhi-NCR sees rise in respiratory, pregnancy-related cases due to post-Diwali pollution

**NEW DELHI, Oct 25:** The days following Diwali have once again brought a sharp decline in Delhi-NCR's air quality, with hospitals reporting a noticeable surge in respiratory and pregnancy-related complications.

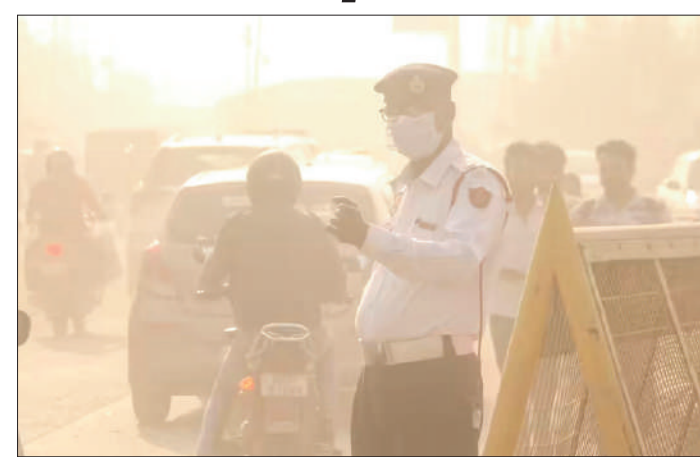
Doctors across the region have attributed this spike to the combined effects of air and noise pollution caused by the widespread bursting of firecrackers, particularly during late-night hours.

According to pulmonologists and gynaecologists, both outpatient and emergency cases saw a sharp rise between October 20 and 23, as pollution levels soared far beyond permissible limits.

Delhi's Air Quality Index remained in the "very poor" category in the period.

The sudden exposure to smoke, toxic gases, and fine particulate matter has left the elderly, children, pregnant women, and those with chronic respiratory or cardiac illnesses struggling to cope.

"The post-Diwali smog is particularly dangerous because it comes with a sudden, dense concentration



of pollutants. We've seen a nearly 30 per cent jump in patients with breathing difficulties, asthma flare-ups, and allergic bronchitis within just two days after Diwali," said Dr Pulkit Agarwal, Consultant Pulmonologist, SilverStreak Superspecialty Hospital.

Echoing the concern, Dr Mohit Bhardwaj, Consultant Pulmonology, Shalby International Hospital, Gurugram said, "The combination of stagnant winter air

and smoke from crackers traps pollutants close to the ground. People with pre-existing conditions must avoid outdoor exposure during peak pollution hours, wear N95 masks, and continue prescribed inhalers or medications without interruption."

Gynaecologists are equally alarmed about the less visible but serious effects of pollution on maternal and foetal health. "High levels of particulate mat-

ter can cross the placental barrier and interfere with foetal growth and brain development. We have observed an increase in expectant mothers reporting shortness of breath, dizziness, and elevated blood pressure following Diwali festivities," explained Dr Astha Dayal Director Obstetrics and Gynecology, CK Birla Hospital Gurugram Robotic and Laparoscopic Surgeon. Post-Diwali, PM2.5 levels peaked at 675, a four-year high. Dr Yashica Gudekar Director and unit head Obstetrician and Gynaecology, Max Super Speciality Hospital, Dwarka highlighted that continuous exposure to polluted air during pregnancy could also raise the risk of preterm birth and low birth weight.

"We advise pregnant women to stay indoors when air quality dips, use air purifiers at home, and increase fluid intake to flush out toxins." "Working women should also ensure the use of air purifiers at home, in their offices, and even in cars to minimize continuous exposure to harmful pollutants," she said. (PTI)

# Preserve culture while embracing progress: Deputy CM

## Mein urges preservation of Tagin culture and heritage while supporting development

ITANAGAR, Oct 25: Arunachal Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Chowna Mein on Saturday stressed the need for preserving cultural heritage alongside modern education as he inaugurated the Tagin Cultural Society (TCS) secretariat-cum-heritage centre at Daporijo in Upper Subansiri district, an official statement said.

Mein also attended the first-ever Tagin seminar on 'Traditional System of Tagin: Change and Continuity', it added. Speaking on the occasion, Mein called for greater efforts to document and make traditional knowledge accessible to younger generations. "Apart from documenting the traditional chanting of the priests, we need to translate it into a simple language for the younger generations to understand, in order to keep our shamanistic traditions alive," he said. "We must respect every religion, and without criticising other beliefs, there should be no harm in protecting and practicing our own indigenous cultures and practices," he added.

The deputy chief minister high-

lighted the importance of inter-generational cultural transmission, emphasising that modernisation must not come at the cost of indigenous knowledge. "Our oral traditions, folklore and rituals carry centuries of wisdom. It is our collective responsibility to ensure they are not lost in translation but carried forward in spirit and understanding," he noted.

Mein lauded the TCS for its sustained efforts in promoting cultural identity and unity. He praised the society for fostering awareness and education, and for safeguarding traditional values, language and customs that enrich the state's cultural fabric. He also appreciated the collaboration between TCS and the Vivekananda Kendra Institute of Culture (VKIC), calling it a meaningful step toward academic engagement and documentation of indigenous knowledge. "By combining cultural experience with scholarly research, we are creating a bridge between traditional wisdom and contemporary understanding," he remarked.

Touching upon development is-



sues, Mein urged the public to create a conducive atmosphere for hydropower projects, terming them vital for socio-economic growth in

the region. State Industry, Commerce, Labour and Employment and IPR minister Nyato Dukam; MLAs

Tanya Soki, Nakap Nalo and Rode Bui; TCS president Largi Rika; Chairman of VKIC (Guwahati) Joram Begi; Chairman of VKIC

(Arunachal Chapter), Hage Kojin; along with community elders, scholars and others were present on the occasion. (PTI)

## Civil-military trek to Athupopu concludes

**HT Correspondent**  
DIBANG VALLEY, Oct 25: A joint civil-military trek to the Idu Mishmi sacred site of Athupopu concluded on Saturday with a flag-in ceremony at Anini. Flagged off on 12 October, the trek aimed to promote civil-military cooperation and honor the cultural legacy of Athupopu.

Civilian participants and Army personnel of Spear Corps traversed scenic high-altitude terrain, including mountains and lakes and offered prayers at the sacred site. The trek strengthened mutual trust, community connection, and cooperation in the border district.

The District Administration, Dibang Valley, appreciated the initiative, noting that such activities preserve local traditions and foster confidence-building between the local population and the Army.

## NER NCC launches 10-day Border Outreach program in Tawang



**HT Correspondent**  
TAWANG, Oct 25: The North Eastern Region (NER) NCC Directorate has launched a 10-day Border Outreach Program-cum-

Vibrant Village Tour, organised by 2 Arunachal Pradesh Battalion NCC, Tawang, under Tezpur Group Headquarters, with active support from the Indian Army's

Gajraj Corps. The program, held from October 22 to 31, 2025, aims to instill nationalism, adventure and awareness among NCC cadets about life in India's border regions.

## Patriotic and cultural tour for cadets to promote nationalism and awareness

The Flag-Off Ceremony took place at the Giant Buddha Statue, Tawang, with Brigadier Bhupal Singh, Sena Medal, Commander 190 Mountain Brigade, as Chief Guest and Namgyal Angmo, IAS, Deputy Commissioner, Tawang, as Guest of Honour, along with senior civil administration officials. A total of 40 NCC cadets (19 Senior Division boys and 21 Senior Wing girls) from Arunachal Pradesh and Assam are participating in the program, which combines patriotic exposure, cultural awareness and adventure activities in the high-altitude landscapes of Tawang.

Cadets will visit key heritage and cultural landmarks, including Tawang Monastery, Buddha Park, Tawang War Memorial and Major Bob Kathing Museum. They will also witness the Light and Sound Show on the 1962 Indo-China War

and attend the International Tawang Marathon at 10,000 feet above sea level.

During forward area visits, cadets will interact with Indian Army soldiers in challenging terrains and explore destinations like Mago-Chuna, Damteng, Chumi Gyatse (Holy Waterfalls), Bumla Pass, Taksang, Nuranang Falls and Shungetsar Lake.

The initiative aims to foster patriotism, discipline and awareness of border security, while providing cultural exchange and youth empowerment. It highlights the courage, camaraderie and sacrifices of Indian soldiers, inspiring cadets with pride and respect for the nation's defenders.

The Border Outreach Program reflects NCC's commitment to nurturing responsible, patriotic and well-informed youth dedicated to national service and unity.

## Environmental hearing for Subansiri Upper Project rescheduled



ITANAGAR, Oct 25: The Arunachal Pradesh State Pollution Control Board has rescheduled the environmental public hearing for the 1,650 MW Subansiri Upper Hydroelectric Project from October 30 to October 28, Upper Subansiri Deputy Commissioner Tasso Gambo announced that the hearing will take place at Menga Government Secondary School.

Residents from Siyum, Taliha, Payeng, Jaring, Daporijo, Gusar and Dimporijo circles, who are likely to

be affected by the project, have been requested to attend. The Subansiri Upper Hydroelectric Project, to be implemented jointly by NHPC Ltd and the Arunachal Pradesh government, is planned on the Subansiri River, a tributary of the Brahmaputra. Formerly known as the Oju-I and Oju-II projects, it has faced opposition from students and local residents. Earlier this month, protestors in Daporijo demanded that the project be scrapped, citing environmental and social concerns. (PTI)

## Balo Raja urges restoration of cargo services at Donyi Polo airport



ITANAGAR, Oct 25: Arunachal Pradesh Civil Aviation Minister Balo Raja has called for the early restoration of air cargo services at Donyi Polo Airport in Hollongi. The services were temporarily suspended after operations shifted to the airport's new terminal building on September 4.

In a letter to Airport Director P Narendra, the minister said the resumption of air cargo operations is crucial for the state's development. He noted that many MSMEs from Arunachal are preparing to participate in the India International Trade Fair 2025 in New Delhi from November 14 to 27.

Raja also mentioned that air cargo services would be essential for transporting EVMs and other election materials ahead of the local body elections scheduled in December. (PTI)

## Itanagar residents join cleanliness drive at P sector



**HT Correspondent**  
ITANAGAR, Oct 25: A mass social service and cleanliness drive was conducted early Saturday morning at P Sector on the way to Rajbhawan in Itanagar to create awareness among local residents about hygiene and a clean environment.

The drive was organised under the leadership of former Itanagar Municipal Corporation (IMC) councillor Gora Lotak and supported by IMC. Dozens of locals, including youths, women, students, government employees and members of the general public, participated in the initiative.

Speaking to the media, Lotak said the effort was

not just a social service but a motivation to encourage residents to maintain cleanliness for a healthy, disease-free society. He emphasised that collective efforts from all sections of society could ensure a clean and green environment.

Lotak recalled his previous tenure as councillor, during which he focused on cleanliness, earning the ward recognition as the cleanest in the city. He added that the drive also aimed to manage accumulated garbage from residents and buildings across the capital complex.

He appealed to all citizens of IMC to support and cooperate in making Itanagar a cleaner, hygienic and better place to live.

## Lookout notice issued against IAS officer in twin suicide case

**HT Correspondent**  
ITANAGAR, Oct 25: Arunachal Pradesh police have intensified their investigation into a twin suspected suicide case, including the death of 19-year-old Gomchu Yekar, by forming a special investigation team (SIT) and issuing a nationwide lookout notice against senior IAS officer Talo Potom, one of the accused.

Itanagar DIG Range, Deputy Inspector General of Police Tumme Amo, IPS, said a special team has been constituted to ensure focused supervision of Nirjuli PS Case No 92/2025, registered under Sections 108/271/272/3(5) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita. Dy SP Kengo Dirchi, SDPO Naharlagun, will lead the team, assisted by Inspector Talom Moya Nekam, SI Gopal Tok, Head Constable Dakter Lombi, SCL Sanu Raj T and Constable Hano Pii. The team is tasked with collecting evidence and submitting daily progress reports.

The case originates from the death of Yekar, found hanging in his rented room at Lekhi village on Thursday. A criminal case was registered after Yekar's father named former Capital Complex deputy

commissioner Potom and Rural Works Department executive engineer Likwang Lowang. Several handwritten notes, believed to be suicide notes, were also submitted to police.

In a shocking development, Lowang later died by suspected suicide in Tirap district the same night. His death has been included under the same case jurisdiction. Raids have been conducted at multiple locations, but IAS officer Talo Potom has not yet been traced. A lookout notice has been issued, circulating his photo, description and contact details. Potom is currently posted as Special Under secretary, PWD in New Delhi and authorities have communicated with the New Delhi office.

Police have seized multiple mobile phones and other items for forensic examination, including analysis of blood samples mentioned in the allegations. Search operations are ongoing across several locations. Yekar had earlier been involved in an impersonation case at Itanagar police station, adding further complexity to the investigation.

Authorities have urged public



cooperation while assuring a fair and thorough probe into a case that has caused statewide shock due to its sensitive nature and involvement of high-ranking officials.

The All Tagin Students Union (AT-SUCCU) condemned the crime and extended full support to the victims' families.

The union urged law enforcement to conduct a swift, fair and transparent investigation, emphasising that no individual, regardless of position or influence, should escape the rule of law.

## NERIST launches WiSTEM club to empower women

### A new platform to mentor, inspire and lead women in STEM at NERIST

**HT Correspondent**  
NIRJULI, Oct 25: The North Eastern Regional Institute of Science and Technology (NERIST) inaugurated the Women in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (WiSTEM) Club at the Mechanical Engineering Department Seminar Hall, marking a milestone in encouraging women's participation and leadership in STEM fields.

The ceremony was graced by Prof Narendranath S, Director, NERIST, as Chief Guest and Prof Sarsing Gao, Dean (Academics & Student Affairs, In-charge), as Guest of Honour. The event began with the traditional lamp lighting, followed by felicitation of dignitaries and a welcome address by Dr Sohini Chowdhury, Assistant Professor and Founder & Faculty Coordinator of the WiSTEM Club.

Dr Chowdhury highlighted that WiSTEM is a movement to foster mentorship, interdisciplinary collaboration and leadership among

young women in STEM, creating opportunities for them to connect, create and lead.

Keynote speakers Pamela Satpathy, IAS, Collector and District Magistrate of Karimnagar, Telangana and Prof Usha Ananthakumar from IIT Bombay, inspired students with talks on leadership, education and women's empowerment in science and technology.

Winners of WiSTEM competitions in Drawing, Essay Writing, and Logo Design —Ananya Baishya, Shailja Kaushal and Ritika Debnath were felicitated for their creativity and participation.

The event concluded with a Vote of Thanks by student representatives Anindita Madhuri Gogoi and Arpana Sarmah.

The formation of the WiSTEM Club underscores NERIST's commitment to diversity, inclusion and excellence in STEM education and research, providing a platform for women to exchange ideas, gain mentorship and lead with purpose.



## AYUSHMANN KHURRANA WELCOMES ANEET PADDA TO MADDOCK FILMS' HORROR COMEDY UNIVERSE



**NEW DELHI, Oct 25:** Bollywood actor Ayushmann Khurrana extended a warm welcome to "Saiyaara" star Aneet Padda, who is set to feature in "Shakti Shalini", the next title of Maddock Films' popular horror comedy universe. Padda's entry was announced with the release of Khurrana's latest film "Thamma", which released in theatres on October 21. The film, also starring Rashmika Mandanna, is a part of MHCU (Maddock Horror Comedy Universe). Khurrana shared a note on his Instagram story on Saturday expressing his excitement to know another actor from Punjab is making it big in the industry. The actor hails from Chandigarh, whereas, Padda comes from Amritsar. "Welcome to the MHCU. @aneetpadda. Punjabi aa gaye aye!! From one dreamer to another-keep chasing what you want. Nothing is impossible.. soproud to see someone from Punjab making us all proud. Can't wait to see you shine in 'Shakti Shalini!' Onwards and upwards, Aneet," he wrote. "MHCU" comprises several films, including 'Stree' featuring Shradha Kapoor and Rajkumar Rao, 'Bhediya'. Headlined by Varun Dhawan and "Munjya", starring Sharvari and Abhay Verma and the latest addition, 'Thamma'. Padda made her acting debut with the 2022 'Salaam Venky', but it was her performance in Mohit Suri's 'Saiyaara', which released in July and went on to earn over ₹ 500 crore at the worldwide box office. (PTI)

## Jennifer Coolidge, Nicole Scherzinger to feature in comedy film 'Girl Group'



**LOS ANGELES, Oct 25:** Hollywood actors Jennifer Coolidge and Nicole Scherzinger have become the latest additions to the star cast of the upcoming comedy film "Girl Group". Coolidge is best known for her roles in projects such as "American Pie" and "Legally Blonde", among others. Scherzinger, who is popular for being the singer of The Pussycat Dolls band, has acted in "Men in Black 3" and also voiced for the character Sina in the 2016 animated film "Moana". According to the entertainment news outlet The Hollywood Reporter, the film is written and directed by Rebel Wilson, who will also produce and feature in the

project for Live Nation Studios and Future Artists Entertainment. Wilson essays the role of a pop diva in the film, who's been kicked out of her own girl group's reunion tour and slapped with a sentence of court-ordered community service. She seizes this to stage a comeback by deciding to coach a group of misfit teen girls for a major record label audition. Actors Randall Park, Sheridan Smith (Mrs Biggs, Cilla), Jamie Lee O'Donnell, Guz Khan, Jolene Blalock and singers Ashley Roberts, Melanie Chisholm and Shaznay Lewis, round off the cast of the film. (PTI)

## Veteran actor Satish Shah dies at 74

**MUMBAI, Oct 25:** Bollywood actor Satish Shah, whose very presence in films such as "Jaane Bhi Do Yaaron" and "Main Hoon Na" and sitcom "Sarabhai vs Sarabhai" elicited smiles and many a laugh, has died. He was 74. The ever amiable Shah passed away at his residence in Bandra East in the afternoon, Ramesh Kadatala, his trusted aide and personal assistant for over 30 years, told PTI. Ashoke Pandit, Shah's friend and industry colleague, also confirmed his demise and said, "It is a huge loss for our industry. He was a very jovial person."

Born on June 25, 1951, Shah was a prominent figure in Indian cinema and television. His career spanned several decades, during which he earned acclaim for his comedic timing in movies such as "Jaane Bhi Do Yaaro", "Maalamaal", "Hero Hiralal", "Main Hoon Na" and "Kal Ho Naa Ho".

A graduate of the Film and Television Institute of India (FTII), he initially appeared in minor roles in films such as "Arvind Desai Ki Ajeeb Dastaan" (1978) and "Gaman" (1979).

He became a household name after he featured in filmmaker Kundan Shah's 1983 cult classic "Jaane Bhi Do Yaaro", playing the role of the corrupt Municipal Commissioner D'Mello.

The film, a satirical comedy on corruption, starred Shah alongside renowned actors like Naseeruddin Shah, Om Puri, and Pankaj Kapur.

He was also known for his roles in television series

such as "Yeh Jo Hai Zindagi" (1984), where he portrayed 55 different characters across 55 episodes, and "Filmy Chakkar" (1995), where he played the character Prakash.

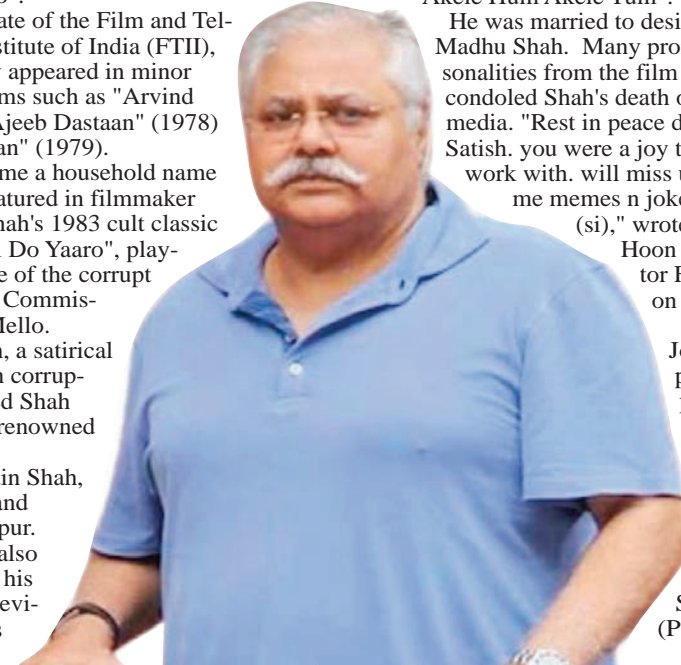
In the early 2000s, he starred in the popular sitcom "Sarabhai vs Sarabhai" alongside Ratna Pathak Shah, Rupali Ganguli, Sumeet Raghavan and Rajesh Kumar.

Shah portrayed Indravadan Sarabhai, the sarcastic yet endearing patriarch of the Sarabhai family, in the show, which maintained a loyal fan base even years after it went off air. The series returned briefly in 2017 for a second season.

Shah also appeared in several mainstream blockbuster films, including Shah Rukh Khan's "Kabhi Haan Kabhi Naa", "Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge", "Main Hoon Na", "Kal Ho Naa Ho", "Om Shanti Om" and Aamir Khan's "Fanaa" and "Akele Hum Akele Tum".

He was married to designer Madhu Shah. Many prominent personalities from the film industry condoled Shah's death on social media. "Rest in peace dearest Satish, you were a joy to know n work with, will miss u sending me memes n jokes everyday (si)," wrote "Main Hoon Na" director Farah Khan on Instagram.

Karan Johar posted a photo of Shah on his Instagram Stories and said, "Satish Shah, Om Shanti." (PTI)



## JOHNNY DEPP TO LEAD 'EBENEZER: A CHRISTMAS CAROL'

**LOS ANGELES, Oct 25:** Hollywood star Johnny Depp is set to join the cast of Paramount Pictures' "Ebenezer: A Christmas Carol".

The upcoming film is an adaptation of Charles Dickens' classic holiday story and will be directed by Ti West, known for his horror film trilogy, "X" (2022), "Pearl" (2022), and "MaXXXine" (2024).

It will have a script by Nathaniel Halpern, according to entertainment news outlet Variety.

Depp will star alongside Andrea Riseborough of "Oblivion" and "To Leslie" fame in "Ebenezer: A Christmas Carol", which is set to release in theatres on November 13, 2026.

The film will feature Depp in the role of Ebenezer Scrooge, a misanthropic and miserly businessman in 19th-century London who is visited by the ghosts of Christmas past, present and future in an effort to save himself from an afterlife of torment.

The character has been essayed several times in different adaptations, including the 1951 adaptation titled "Scrooge" featuring Alastair Sim, the 1988 Bill Murray-starrer "Scrooged", 1992's "A Muppet Christmas Carol" with Michael Caine, and 2009's "A Christmas Carol" with Jim Carrey. (PTI)



## You will move forward only when you keep your critics close: Amar Kaushik on 'Thamma'

**MUMBAI, Oct 25:** There will be criticism but what's the true victory for a filmmaker? According to Amar Kaushik, who kickstarted the Maddock Horror Comedy Universe with his 2018 hit "Stree", it is when one manages to keep viewers engaged throughout a movie.

Kaushik, who has produced the franchise's latest entry "Thamma" with Dinesh Vijan, said he is not someone who discards reviews as long as the criticism is not personal.

"I listen to the critics, it's not that I don't... But sometimes when they say something personal, I feel bad. We have tried to do something, appreciate it. We are also learning," said Kaushik, responding to critics who have called the Ayushmann Khurrana-Rashmika Mandanna starrer as one of the weakest in the MHCU, which includes titles like "Stree", "Stree 2", "Bhediya" and "Munjya".

"Look at the bigger picture—whether you're entertained or not, whether you're engrossed in the movie or not... For me, if I called you (to the theatre) for 2-2.5 hours and if you don't take out your mobile, then it's a victory," he told PTI in an interview.

Quoting Kabir's famous lines "Nindak niyare rakhiye...", Kaushik said he is someone who takes into account all kinds of opinions on the movie and the

franchise.

"You will not move forward if you don't keep your critics close to you. So I understand what they want to say and I learn from them. But whether it's the weakest or not... Some think it's the strongest. A lot of people are saying that it's above 'Stree 2' and I also think that. Both are my films."

The filmmaker said he encountered a similar discourse when they released "Bhediya", starring Varun Dhawan and Kriti Sanon, in 2022. But now "Bhediya" is considered one of the bests in the MHCU.

"Stree 2" in 2024 was a major box office success and earned over Rs 500 crore in India. "Thamma", which released on Tuesday, has so far collected Rs 80 crore with makers hoping the collection to pick up over the weekend.

Asked how one determines the true success of a movie in the age of corporate bookings and other promotional campaigns, Kaushik said numbers is the last thing they think about while making a film.

"We didn't think about numbers in the first film or during 'Bhediya'. Sometimes they will be more, sometimes less. My priority is that it should be better in the way we are telling the story. It should be better in quality, the characters should evolve and it should engross the audiences... 'Bhediya's numbers were less, but



I think 'Bhediya' was the best film in what it was trying to say about saving the jungle.

"My producer should make money. He should make double of what he has invested or the money that I have invested, I should get it

back. I am happy with that," he said.

Kaushik is also aware that there will be people comparing "Thamma", about a man who transforms into a Betaal-like creature after encountering a mysteri-

ous woman named Tadaka, with the recent Hollywood vampire hit "Sinners" and Malayalam blockbuster "Lokah Chapter One".

"Thamma" is directed by Aditya Sapotdar, who earlier helmed "Munjya" for Maddock.

"I really enjoyed watching those movies. They did world building very well.

But our genre was different in terms of humour and our universe was already built up. So, we were a little different," he said.

Kaushik said when he was working on "Bhediya", writers Suresh Mathew and Arun Fulara came up with the vampire story, and he thought it would be interesting to introduce it in the franchise. They started looking into the folklore about 'Betaal' and the story of "Thamma" grew from there.

While horror and comedy formed the foundation for "Stree", "Bhediya", and "Munjya", Kaushik said they understood that "Thamma" needed to take a slightly different approach.

"The DNA of this film was always romance, though overall it is a horror-comedy. When you talk about vampires, then it can't have horror. When they are talking, you cannot bring horror. When does horror come? When you don't know anything and you have a curiosity that there might be a ghost in a dark place. You are playing with fear, then you get horror.

With this movie, we knew that romance is the biggest thing," he said.

Kaushik, who had earlier collaborated with Ayushmann for his 2019 satirical comedy "Bala", said he knew the actor would join the MHCU some day.

"We have known Ayushmann since 'Bala', so we knew that we would do something with him. And as for Rashmika, it was from Dino, who met and talked to her for the project."

The film also features veteran actor Paresh Rawal as the father of Ayushmann's Alok and Nawazuddin Siddiqui as the film's main antagonist, a vampire named Yaskhasan.

Kaushik said Rawal liked "Stree 2" a lot and had called him to congratulate for the movie.

"He said that we made a very good movie. I told him, 'There is one more character in the universe, will you do it?' He said, 'yes, definitely.' Nawaz was on my mind for a long time. I did a film called 'Aamir', in which I was an assistant. I saw Nawaz then. He was the acting coach in that film," he said.

The Maddock Horror Comedy Universe is poised for expansion with an exciting slate of upcoming films, including "Shakti Shalini", "Bhediya 2", "Chamunda", "Stree 3" and "Maha Munjya", culminating with "Pehla Mahayudh" and "Doosara Mahayudh". (PTI)

# England batters look to find rhythm against beleaguered New Zealand in Women's World Cup

**VISAKHAPATNAM, Oct 25:** Having already secured a place in the semifinals, England will be hoping to acquire some quality workout time for their batters in their last league match against a beleaguered and rain-tormented New Zealand in the Women's World Cup match, here on Sunday. England have made an impact in the tournament but, on the flip side, they have also descended into chaos, suffering batting collapses and making heavy weather of easy run chases.

While the four-time winners' 10-wicket win against South Africa in the opening World Cup game in Guwahati was an affirmation that the team, led by stalwart Nat Sciver-Brunt, was ready to challenge defending champions Australia, their struggle against Bangladesh, and Pakistan in an abandoned match highlighted the shortcomings in the side. While against Bangladesh, they managed to eke out a four-



wicket win, England's batters' frailty against the inswingers was laid bare by Pakistan pacer Fatima Sana, whose four-wicket haul restricted Sciver-Brunt's side to 133/9.

Had rain not stopped Pakistan's charge, who were cruising along nicely, England would have faced some embarrassment. The likes of opener Amy Jones and middle-order batter Sophie Dunkley have not quite made an impact, while skipper Sciver-Brunt and Tammy Beaumont have been inconsistent. Sciver-Brunt's century in the emphatic win against Sri Lanka has been followed by single-digit scores against Pakistan and Australia. Heather Knight, though, has shown consistency with fine knocks against India and Australia, and could once again make an impact against New Zealand, who curiously have not been able to live up to their billing in the tournament.

Their 53-run loss to India in

Navi Mumbai on Thursday, which helped the hosts seal a semifinal berth, would have dealt a shattering blow to their morale.

With nothing to lose, they might want to bow out of the ICC showpiece on a high ahead of a busy 2026 season when they play back-to-back series against Zimbabwe, South Africa and England.

New Zealand have not really clicked as a unit with their top- and lower-order batters misfiring and skipper Sophie Devine having to do bulk of the scoring, though the allrounder hasn't enjoyed a great run with the ball because of the spin-friendly wickets in the sub-continent.

The big loss to trans-Tasman rivals Australia in the World Cup opener at Indore, perhaps, set the tone for the White Ferns for whom two successive abandoned games in Colombo, against Sri Lanka and Pakistan, compounded the frustration. (PTI)

## Max Verstappen hoping Mexico's high altitude will boost his F1 title chase

**MEXICO CITY, Oct 25:** To stay in the hunt for a fifth F1 title in a row, Max Verstappen needs to keep closing the points gap on McLaren drivers Oscar Piastri and Lando Norris. Racing in Mexico City might help him to do just that.

The Red Bull driver hit the ground running in Mexico on Friday, finishing in first place in the second practice session with a time of 1 minute, 17.392 seconds, ahead of Ferrari's Charles Leclerc and Mercedes's Kimi Antonelli.

For McLaren, Norris finished in fourth place (0.251 seconds behind) while Piastri's struggles continued as he finished 12th (0.840 seconds behind).

Leclerc topped the first practice with Antonelli and Nico Hulkenberg behind him.

Verstappen has won five races in Mexico, including three of the last four. And he is coming off a win in the United States Grand Prix in Austin, Texas, last weekend as part of a recent surge that has seen him trim the gap to leader Piastri from 104 points to 40 in the last four races. He is 26 points behind Norris.

It wasn't long ago that Verstappen's chances of defending his title had been all but written off. Now another win could put him right back in contention.

"To be honest with you, to still be in this fight is very surprising," Verstappen said. "Like I said before, we need to be perfect. But for me, it's just positive pressure."

Verstappen was one several top drivers to sit out Friday's first practice session, with British teenager Arvid Lindblad in the car instead. But he already knows the track well — aside from the Red Bull Ring in Austria, it's the only circuit where he has won five races.

The Mexican GP is raced over 71 laps on the 4.304-kilometer (2.67-mile) track of Mexico City's Autodromo Hermanos Rodriguez circuit, which boasts 17 corners and sits at an altitude of 7,350 feet (2,200 meters) above sea level. The thin air generates less downforce, making the car setup more demanding for the teams.

"The circuit tends to suit our car, the high altitude always brings unique challenges," Verstappen said. "Mexico is always a fun party atmosphere so it will be exciting to round up the doubleheader there."

Piastri, who crashed in the sprint race and finished in fifth place at Austin, is winless in four races and has not reached the podium since Monza in Italy, when he finished third.

"I think (Verstappen) has been very consistent in the last few weekends," the Australian said on Thursday. "But there's no benefit worrying about that, the thing that's going to help me win this championship is trying to get the most out of myself."

McLaren has already secured the constructors' championship and some other drivers still view Piastri and Norris as the two big favorites for the title. "Max is always on top of things and always performing extremely well, but he's still 40 points behind and 40 points is significant. So, if I have to bet one dollar, I probably would on the McLaren drivers," said Leclerc, who is fifth in the standings. "But yeah, you can never rule out Max." (AP)

## Gayle fan Samardeep's switch to shot put after cricket rejection paying dividends

**RANCHI, Oct 25:** Cricket's loss is turning out to be athletics' gain as Chris Gayle fan Samardeep Singh Gill is fast emerging as India's next big hope in men's shot put, years after his dream of representing Madhya Pradesh in the "Gentlemen's Game" ended at the under-16 level. The 24-year-old Samardeep, who won a shot put gold with a meet record of 19.59m at the SAAF Senior Championships here, was a budding cricketer and represented Madhya Pradesh U-16 team when he was in a school in Ratlam.

"I was into cricket in my school days and played for Madhya Pradesh U-16 team. I was a medium pacer and pinch hitter. I once hit three sixes in the last over to win a match for my team (in a district tournament)," Samardeep told PTI in an interview.

"Chris Gayle is my favourite cricketer as I am also a big hitter. I wanted to play for MP team but could not get selection, they rejected me. Don't know the reason. Some of my then teammates are currently playing in the MP Ranji team," he added.

A huge frame of six feet and five inches and weighing 150kg, Samardeep said he was a bit overweight in his childhood and he worked with a friend of his father to burn the fats.

"My father's friend said I need to reduce my weight. He was also a former shot putter in the Railways. Initially, I was just doing work outs but after seeing my built, he one day told me to try out shot put and he gave me the shot.

"Sometime later, my older brother took me to a local competition and there I won gold in shot put with 10 or 11m throw. I was feeling good. That is how I took up shot put." Samardeep has also crisscrossed a large part of the country as his father Mahender Singh Gill, currently a senior BRI (Bridge Inspector) at Indian Railways, changed his place of posting from one city to another.

"I was born in Valsad (Gujarat) and did a part of my schooling in Ahmedabad. Then my family shifted to Ratlam due to my father's posting. My family is now in Junagadh as my father is posted there," he said.

He joined Madhya Pradesh State Athletics Academy of Excellence in Bhopal, a top class facility, in 2021 when he was in Ratlam and since then he has been there under his coach Sandeep Singh.

Samardeep began his national level career in 2018 but could not win a medal till he met his current coach Sandeep. His first medal -- a bronze -- came in the Khelo India University Games in 2022. The same year, he became India U23 champion.

He started competing in the senior level in 2023 after the COVID-19 pandemic and won gold in Goa National Games with a throw of 18.99m. In 2024, he breached the 19m mark and also won his first gold in a major senior event at the National Open Championships.

This year, he swept gold in all the three national championships, beating national record holder Tajinderpal Singh Toor who ruled men's shot put for six-seven years.

"I have immense respect for him (Toor), he is my senior and I have learnt a lot from him. His achievements in Indian shot put has been immense," Samardeep said of Toor, whose national record stands at 21.77m.

"My aim is to improve my personal best every time I compete. Next year is very important as there is Commonwealth Games and Asian Games," said Samardeep, who has a personal best of 19.82m. "I'm a power thrower, and currently paying a lot of attention to improving my technique in the first and second turn (before releasing the shot). I have major faults in that. If I do that and improve a bit in my explosive power by working on my strength, I can throw 20m plus and even 21m-plus next year." (PTI)

## Men's Hockey India League to begin on Jan 3 next year, to be held in three cities

**NEW DELHI, Oct 25:** Season two of the revived men's Hockey India League will commence in Chennai on January 3 with a clash between Tamil Nadu Dragons and Hyderabad Toofans, the organisers announced on Saturday.

The tournament, scheduled to be held in three legs across three different cities, will culminate on January 26 in Bhubaneswar.

The women's HIL will begin on December 28 this year in Ranchi with the final on January 10 next year.

Hockey India said the opening leg of men's HIL, which will be an eight-team affair, will be held in Chennai from January 3-9 at the Mayor Radhakrishnan Hockey Stadium.

Action will then move to Ranchi for the second leg,

scheduled from January 11-16 at the Marang Gomke Jaipal Singh Munda Astro Turf Stadium, before heading to Bhubaneswar for the final leg from 26 January 17-26 at the Kalinga Stadium, which has become the hub of hockey in the last few years.

As per the format, each team will face the others once in a single round-robin format, with the top-four teams advancing to the playoffs.

The knockout stage, comprising Qualifier 1 and the Eliminator on January 23, followed by Qualifier 2 on January 25 - will all take place in Bhubaneswar.

A total of 33 matches will be played in men's HIL, with international stars from more than 10 countries, including Argentina, Belgium, Germany, England,

Spain, and Australia taking part in the nearly month-long event.

The other teams in the fray are, JSW Soorma Hockey Club, defending champions Shraichi Ranchi Bengal Tigers, Vedanta Kalinga Lancers, Ranchi Royals, SG Pipers, and HIL Governing Council.

"The season will culminate in a grand finale on January 26 at the Kalinga Stadium, featuring the 3rd/4th place match earlier in the evening, followed by the final," said a Hockey India release.

The women's HIL will begin on December 28 with the match between Ranchi Royals and SG Pipers at the Marang Gomke Jaipal Singh Munda Astro Turf Stadium in Ranchi.

The other two teams in the fray are JSW Soorma Hockey Club, and

Shraichi Ranchi Bengal Tigers.

"The women's HIL will follow a double round-robin format, with each of the four teams facing every other side twice. Following the league stage, the top two teams on the points table will qualify for the final on January 10," said Hockey India.

A total of 13 matches will be played in women's HIL with players representing over 10 nations, including the Netherlands, Belgium, Argentina, Australia, Spain, and Great Britain, expected to compete.

"After the success of Hockey India League last season, we have expanded the men's league to three different cities to ensure everyone can enjoy the action right from the venues," said HIL Governing Committee Chairperson Dilip Tirkey. (PTI)

## Former middleweight champion Gennady Golovkin to run for presidency of Olympic boxing body

**LOS ANGELES, Oct 25:** Former boxing champ Gennady Golovkin is heading into an electoral fight as he runs to become president of World Boxing, the new body aiming to run Olympic bouts at the Los Angeles Games in 2028.

Golovkin is one of two candidates announced Friday as running for the post at a congress in Rome next month. World Boxing's founding president, Dutch official Boris van der Vorst, is stepping down. Golovkin's opponent will be Mariolis Charilaos from Greece, a former president of the Hellenic Boxing Federation.

Golovkin is likely to be the frontrunner after he headed a World Boxing delegation to rebuild ties with the International Olympic Committee, which had hinted at removing boxing from the Olympic program for 2028.

The IOC granted World Boxing provisional recognition in February, putting the sport back on track to be in Los Angeles.

Golovkin won an Olympic sil-



ver medal in 2004 and, after turning pro, was a longtime world middleweight champion who fought in some of the sport's most lucrative bouts, finishing with a 42-2-1 record. Since retirement, he has become president of Kazakhstan's national Olympic committee.

Golovkin said in a statement that he will work "to secure boxing's Olympic future, restore global confidence, and ensure

that every federation, coach, and athlete — no matter how small or far away — has a fair chance to grow."

Olympic status, feuds and sex testing

Whoever wins the World Boxing job will have a busy agenda.

Boxing's role in the Olympics came into question over a long-running dispute between the IOC and the International Boxing Association over the fairness of

judging, financial issues and the rule of IBA's outspoken Russian president Umar Kremlev.

The IOC ran the last two Olympic tournaments on its own after first suspending and then banishing the IBA from the Games and has said it no longer wishes to organize the tournament in-house.

While World Boxing has made progress mending relationships with the IOC, the IBA still exists and can attract fighters with lavish prize money, even if it can't offer Olympic places.

World Boxing also has to deal with the issue of sex testing in sports after Algerian boxer Imane Khelif and Lin Yu-ting from Taiwan won gold at the Paris Olympics last summer amid scrutiny over their eligibility.

Van der Vorst apologized to Khelif on behalf of World Boxing in June after it named her specifically when announcing it would make sex testing mandatory. Days later, Khelif skipped a World Boxing event in the Netherlands. (AP)

## MPCA shocked and anguished by stalking and molestation of Aussie women cricketers

**INDORE, Oct 25:** Madhya Pradesh Cricket Association on Saturday expressed its shock and anguish over the alleged stalking and molestation of two Australian women cricketers, who are here for the ICC World Cup, saying "no one should ever have to endure such trauma".

The police have arrested the man involved in the incident that occurred on the Khajrana Road area of the city on Thursday morning.

The two cricketers had stepped out of their hotel and were walking towards a café when a man on a motorcycle started following them. He allegedly touched one of them inappropriately and rode off, according to the Sub-Inspector of the area Nidhi Raghuvanshi.

"MPCA is deeply pained and shocked by the disturbing incident of misconduct and inappropriate behaviour with two players from the Australian Women's Cricket Team in Indore.

"No woman should ever have to endure such trauma, and our

thoughts and support are with those impacted by this distressing incident. This unfortunate event has deeply affected everyone from MPCA who cherishes the values of respect, safety, and dignity of women," said the MPCA statement.

"It is truly inspiring to see the players rise above this painful experience and continue to compete with courage and determination, carrying the pride of their nation on their shoulders in the match against South Africa on 25.10.2025."

The Aussie duo contacted their team security officer, Danny Simmons, who coordinated with local security liaison officers and dispatched a vehicle for assistance.

On getting information, Assistant Commissioner of Police Himani Mishra met the two players, recorded their statements and registered a first information report under section 74 (use of criminal force to outrage a woman's modesty) and 78 (stalking) of the Bharatiya Nyaya



Sanhita (BNS) at the MIG police station.

"Over the years, Indore has earned a proud reputation as a safe venue for the visiting teams and dignitaries from other fields. It is deeply painful that the disorderly action of one individual has caused such harm and cast a

shadow over the city's image," read the statement.

"As the host, MPCA extends sincere apologies to the Australian Women's team for this deeply distressing and unfortunate incident while in our city known for safety, grace, and hospitality."

MPCA also praised the local po-

## Aaronson scores early as Leeds beat struggling West Ham 2-1 in Premier League

**LEEDS, Oct 25:** Nuno Espirito Santo became the first West Ham coach since 2018 to go winless in his first four games as his struggling team showed the same defensive frailties that have plagued it all season in a 2-1 loss to Leeds in the Premier League.

The Portuguese coach joined the Hammers a month ago after leading Nottingham Forest to a place in Europe but he has been unable to turn things around quickly in east London. He now has three losses and one draw since taking over, a record equal to that of Manuel Pellegrini when he took charge of the club in 2018. Off the field, supporters have expressed their discontent with the board, with thousands boycotting Monday night's loss at home to Brentford.

The team has defended poorly all season — conceding nine goals from corners, three times more than any other side — leading to the sacking of Graham Potter. And it was 2-0 down after just 15 minutes at Leeds thanks once again to hesitant defending.

Goalkeeper Alphonse Areola could not hold Noah Okafor's header for three minutes and U.S. international Brenden Aaronson pounced to sidefoot home the loose ball as the West Ham defenders watched on.

The back line was equally lackadaisical 12 minutes later when Joe Rodon headed home unchallenged from a corner kick.

Mateus Fernandes' deft header in the final minute gave the Hammers a consolation goal but an equalizer never looked likely.

The win lifts Leeds into 13th place on 11 points, while West Ham is 19th with four points and the league's worst goal difference.

That points tally is its joint worst at this stage of the season. Only in the 1932-33 and 1973-74 campaigns have the Hammers started as poorly as now.

"We're in a real situation and we have to face the reality of that," West Ham captain Jarrod Bowen told Sky Sports. "You have to face up to the reality of where we are and we're in trouble now." (AP)

## Centurion Rohit, Kohli play vintage knocks to carry India to nine-wicket win over Australia

**SYDNEY, Oct 25:** (PTI) Rohit Sharma struck his 50th international hundred and Virat Kohli played time-bending knock in possibly their last outing in Australia, propelling India to a consolation nine-wicket victory in the third ODI here on Saturday.

After Harshit Rana-led bowlers restricted Australia to a below-par 236, Rohit (121 not out) and Kohli (74 not out) stitched a 168-run alliance in just 170 balls for the second wicket to take India to 237 for one in 38.3 overs.

Australia won the three-match series 2-1 but Rohit and Kohli gave the ecstatic Sydney crowd precisely what they wanted, while unfurling archetypal innings and in the process saved the team from an embarrassing whitewash.

Rohit was all fluency and whole-hearted shot-making, and Kohli resembled a mathematician solving a puzzle with meticulousness.

Once skipper Shubman Gill returned to the hut after helping his senior partner to milk 69 runs for the opening wicket, Rohit took over the chase in his inimitable manner and went on to produce his 33rd ODI century.

He has 12 Test and five T20Is hundreds to his name.

Starting with a couple of silken-smooth drives and flicks off Mitchell Starc, Rohit slipped into his punishing self once Adam Zampa was introduced.

The 38-year-old slog-swept Zampa for a six to nullify Australia's already weakened spin department, and followed it up with a wonderful inside out six over covers off the leg-spinner.

Kohli played trademark straight drive off Starc for a four after getting off the mark with a single, which he celebrated with a smile and punch, a small atonement for the two preceding successive ducks.

But soon Kohli found his groove, galloping for those quick singles interspersed with occasional boundaries.

Nathan Ellis took the DRS after hitting Kohli's pads, and the 'Chase Master' heaved a sigh of relief after the TV umpire concurred with the on-field umpire's not out decision. Kohli was on 36 then.

Rohit brought up his fifty soon in 63 balls and the next 50 flowed in 42 balls as the Mumbai man batted with panache and aggression in equal measure.



Kohli, who made his fifty off 56 balls, soon had his old mate a tight embrace as Rohit went past his 33rd ODI hundred in 105 balls.

A few overs, later Kohli slammed Ellis for a four to take the match to its logical

conclusion and the Australian players crowded around him and Rohit to congratulate them.

The Sydney crowd also had their fill while watching Rohit and Kohli, but there will be a tinge of sadness in their

hearts.

They might not get another look at them on these shores. But the last sighting of RoKo was worthy to freeze forever in their memories.

Before the two old boys went about their business in their respective ways, the Indian bowlers led by Rana (4/39) limited the Aussies to a sub-par total.

Australia's struggle was largely because Rana, who generated good pace and bounce off a fresh SCG turf, and spinners choked the home batters in the middle overs with splendid spells.

However, the Australians made a good beginning through skipper Mitchell Marsh (41) and Travis Head as they added 61 runs for the opening wicket.

But once Head departed after steering Mohammad Siraj to Prasad Krishna at point, Australia struggled for partnerships. Following that, a 54-run association between Renshaw (56) and Alex Carey kept the hosts afloat, but was not enough to carry them to a bigger total.

India was sharp on the field on this day, pulling off some excellent saves and catches.

The catch Kohli took at backward

point to get rid of Matthew Short off Washington Sundar could be counted among the best reflex catches.

But Shreyas Iyer bettered that effort with a running catch to oust Carey. The wicketkeeper batter tried to loft Rana, but a leading edge took the ball to the opposite direction.

Shreyas hared off from point and covered a fair bit of distance to make a diving catch, though he had to leave the field for medical assessment to know the extent of a left rib cage injury after that.

But Renshaw batted with assurance at one end. His focus was on taking singles and twos to wriggle out of the squeeze that the Indian bowlers applied in the middle overs, and his first boundary came in the 35th ball.

The left-hander fetched his fifty in 48 balls despite hitting just one four, but he could not extend his stay.

Washington beat his little shimmy with a quicker one and pinged his pads to win a leg-before appeal. A couple of cameos down the order took them to 230s, but just enough for Rohit and Kohli to unleash a vintage performance. (PTI)

## Rohit Sharma admits he is not sure of returning to Australia

**SYDNEY, Oct 25:** Rohit Sharma has always cherished playing in Australia and after a challenging ODI series against the old rivals, the former captain on Saturday admitted that there might not be another trip for him and Virat Kohli to their cricketing heartland.

Both Rohit and Kohli now play only one format after retiring from Tests and T20Is, and their careers have become a matter of intense speculation of late.

On Saturday, the two legendary batters joined forces yet again to save India from a series whitewash with their unconquered 168-run partnership, leading the side to a consolatory nine-wicket win in the third ODI here.

"Always love coming here and playing here. Fond memories of 2008. I'm not sure if we'll be coming back to Australia, but we enjoy our cricket no matter what accolades we achieve," Rohit said after being named Player of the Match and Player of the Series.

Rohit hit a magnificent 121 while Kohli produced a 74-run knock in India's victory.



"We started afresh in Perth — that's how I look at things," he added, acknowledging the challenges of touring Australia.

Rohit also stressed the importance of experience and mentorship at this stage of their careers.

"You expect tough pitches and quality bowlers in Australia. Playing here is never easy. We couldn't win the series, but there are plenty

of positives. It's a young side, and there will be a lot of learnings.

"When I came into the squad, seniors helped us a lot; now it's our job to do the same. We need to guide them, create game plans, and go back to basics, which I still do every time I play here," he said.

For Rohit, the connection goes beyond results.

"I've had great memories here —

from the SCG to Perth. I love playing here and hope to continue doing what I do," he said, highlighting his enduring love for Australian cricket and its passionate crowds.

Kohli echoed the sentiment.

"You might have played international cricket for a long time, but the game teaches you something at every stage. Situations in the middle bring out the best in me. From early on, we've understood the situation well, that's what we've always done well (as a pair)

We're probably the most experienced pair now, but back in the day when we were young - we knew we could take the game away from them with big partnerships.

"It all started in 2013 (the home series against Australia), if we put up a big partnership, we know we'll go a long way in helping the team win," Kohli said.

He also thanked the fans for their unwavering support.

"We've loved coming to this country, we've played some good cricket, thank you guys for coming in big numbers and supporting us," he added. (PTI)

## Alana King picks seven as Australia bowl out South Africa for 97



**INDORE, Oct 25:** Alana King's artistry was on full display as the wily leg-spinner ran through South Africa's batting line-up with her maiden seven-wicket haul, helping Australia bowl out the Proteas for a meagre 97 in their Women's World Cup clash here on Saturday.

King (7/18) once again showcased why she remains one of the most skillful wrist-spinners in the modern game, returning her career-best figures in Women's ODIs. Her performance was also the best by an Australian in WODIs and best-ever by a bowler in a World Cup match.

Her victims included some of South Africa's biggest names -- Sune Luus, Annerie Dercksen, Marizanne Kapp, and Chloe Tryon, as she single-handedly ripped through the South African line up.

In a contest that will decide the league leader after the league stage, the dangerous Laura Wolvaardt (31) looked in imperious touch early on, cracking seven boundaries in the first six overs.

She took full advantage of Megan Schutt's wayward lines, dispatching four boundaries in one over, three of them exquisite off-side drives and one a fortuitous edge past the keeper.

But Wolvaardt's fluent innings came to an end when she miscued a shot off Schutt, with King completing a sharp diving catch at short mid-wicket. Soon after, Tazmin Brits' painstaking 19-ball six ended courtesy of Kim Garth, leaving South Africa stuttering.

From there, it was the Alana King show. Luus was the first to fall, attempting a big heave only to offer an easy catch to Annabel Sutherland at mid-on.

Four balls later, King lured Marizanne Kapp into a false stroke with a teasing delivery wide outside off; the all-rounder misjudged the flight and picked out Garth behind square, leaving the Proteas reeling at 43 for 4. Sinalo Jafa (29) tried to inject some momentum, slamming three boundaries off Annabel Sutherland in the 15th over, but King's spell of wizardry was far from over.

She struck twice in quick succession in the 16th over, first uprooting Annerie Dercksen's off stump, then having Chloe Tryon caught by Ashleigh Gardner at mid-wicket for a golden duck.

Jafa continued to resist alongside Nadine de Klerk, finding five boundaries in a brief counterattack, but her defiance ended when King breached her defence to uproot her off stump, leaving South Africa's innings in complete disarray. (PTI)

## Pakistan cricketers likely to play in BBL after stalemate resolved: Report

PCB's decision to suspend the NOCs had come a day after Pakistan lost a thrilling Asia Cup final to India in the UAE



**SYDNEY, Oct 25:** Pakistan stalwarts like Babar Azam, Shaheen Shah Afridi and Muhammad Rizwan are likely to play in the upcoming Big Bash League after Cricket Australia has reportedly secured a last-minute reprieve on PCB banning its players from participating in franchise-based T20 tournaments overseas.

Last month, the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) had suspended all no-objection certificates for its players wanting to compete in T20 leagues outside the country.

PCB's decision to suspend the NOCs had come a day after Pakistan lost a thrilling Asia Cup final to India in the UAE.

The move came as a huge blow to Cricket Australia and BBL clubs as they had contracted several Pakistani players for the upcoming season.

A report in SEN Radio said a solution had been reached.

"About three weeks ago the Pakistan Cricket Board emailed

agents of star players to tell them no objections certificates would be on hold," Australian journalist Tom Morris told SEN.

"Pakistan - like India - would not allow its players to play in the Big Bash or any franchise league outside of the country. This rocked the Big Bash, it rocked Cricket Australia with seven of the eight clubs having one Pakistani player," he said.

"I've done more digging and I understand CA reached to the PCB on the issues and now they have clarified that these seven players will be allowed to play in the BBL and there is no material change."

The report did not mention how the stalemate was broken.

"How it transpired behind the scenes? We might never know, but what we do know is the stars can play this summer. Imagine getting an email on September 29 to say they can't play this season - absolute panic stations. Crisis averted." (PTI)

## India dominate Australian para badminton meet; Bhagat wins two gold medals

**VICTORIA (AUSTRALIA), Oct 25:** Paralympic champion Pramod Bhagat bagged two gold medals while Sukant Kadam returned with a gold and a silver as India dominated the Australian Para Badminton International 2025, finishing on top of the medals tally. Bhagat clinched the men's singles SL3 title after defeating compatriot Manoj Sarkar 21-15, 21-17 in the final, before pairing up with Kadam to win the men's doubles SL3-SL4 crown, beating the Indian duo of Umesh Vikram Kumar and Surya Kant Yadav 21-11, 19-21, 21-18.

"I'm really happy to win two gold medals here in Australia. The match against Manoj was tough, we know each other's game so well, and it's always a challenge when we face off," Bhagat said.

"I'm also very happy for Manoj winning the silver. It's great to see Indian players performing strongly on

the international stage."

Kadam settled for silver in men's singles SL4, going down fighting 21-23, 21-14, 19-21 to Surya Kant.

India's fine run continued as Manasi Joshi grabbed two gold medals -- women's singles SL3 and mixed doubles SL3-SU5 with Ruthvik Ragupathi. Ruthvik also combined with Chirag Baretha to win the men's doubles SU5 title.

In other results, Sivarajan Solaimalai and Sudarshan Muthuswamy took gold and silver in men's doubles SH6, while Yashodhan Ravankole and Dheeraj Saini claimed the men's doubles SU5 gold. Sarumathi secured the women's singles SL4 + SU5 title, defeating Australia's Zashka Gunson.

India's strong all-round showing reaffirmed its growing stature in world para-badminton ahead of next month's international circuit events. (PTI)

## India aim to iron out flaws in clash against Bangladesh ahead of semifinals

**NAVI MUMBAI, Oct 25:** India will have a final opportunity to iron out any flaws, especially while responding to pressure situations, when they face Bangladesh in their final fixture here on Sunday ahead of Women's World Cup semifinals.

The winner of Saturday's clash between Australia and South Africa at Indore will top the points table and subsequently meet India in the semifinal here on October 30.

A win over Bangladesh will not alter the World Cup hosts' fourth-place finish in the league stage.

India can get to a maximum of eight points with triumph over Bangladesh but will remain behind England, who are placed third with nine points and can take that tally to 11 if they defeat New Zealand on Sunday.

Their existence in the tournament under threat, India came out firing on all cylinders to thwart the New Zealand challenge and booked a spot in the semifinals in a rain-affected clash — but one that did not truly test them to the hilt.

India got the best of the batting conditions in the first half to pile up 340/3 in 49 overs, riding on centuries from Smriti Mandhana and Pratika Rawal before rains intervened, while Jemimah Rodrigues provided the much-needed impetus which was missing throughout at No. 3 with a brisk unbeaten 76.

Indian bowlers, who restricted New Zealand to 271/8 in 44 overs chasing a revised target of 325, were undoubtedly aided with the scoreboard pressure as the White Ferns failed to mount a challenge. Renuka Singh Thakur once again swung the new ball to snaffle two early wickets.

While there are prediction of "moderate



rain or thunderstorm", India would also be keen on garnering more experience in bowling with the dew if they field in the second half again.

India entered the contest with several question marks and they did manage to answer a great deal of them, especially when it concerned their batters' ability to convert starts into big scores but additionally, the rate at which they scored.

Mandhana's imperious ton — 105 off 95 balls with 10 fours and four sixes — was class-apart, whereas her partner Pratika Rawal grew in confidence as the innings progressed to finish with 122 from 134 balls with 13 fours and two sixes.

While those numbers from the young opener are indeed impressive, they included as many as 63 dot balls that Rawal faced

alone.

No doubt, it was a game India thoroughly dominated and Rawal caught up at the end against a sapless New Zealand attack, but on another day, those numbers may present a stark image.

Indeed, India enjoyed a near-perfect win to snap their three-match losing run to each of the other three teams that are in this World Cup's semifinals, but there would also be some focus on the form of skipper Harmanpreet Kaur, and also, if someone else steps up for death overs' acceleration other than Richa Ghosh.

In what has largely been a forgettable World Cup so far for the Indian captain, Harmanpreet's 70 against England at Indore has been the only knock of notice.

The contest here, will thus also present

her with a chance to garner big runs and momentum with the bat before the semifinals.

Richa Ghosh did not have much role to play against New Zealand as she surprisingly did not bat in the final 10 overs when she was expected to, and while keeping the wickets she suffered a finger injury and was replaced by Uma Chetry.

Ghosh remains a prominent figure in that brittle lower-order, which can resist in pressure situations but cannot turn tables with aggressive knocks which the wicketkeeper-batter has produced.

Bangladesh's campaign in this World Cup ended when they failed to make nine runs from the final over against Sri Lanka in their slow boiler here at the DY Patil a few days ago, despite Shorna Akter (3/27), skipper Nigar Sultana (77) and Sharmin Akhter (64 not out) doing the heavy lifting.

Despite having a win on their record that gave them two points, Bangladesh are set to finish last in this World Cup as Pakistan leapfrogged them with one point each with three wickets.

**Teams :**

**India:** Harmanpreet Kaur (c), Smriti Mandhana (vc), Uma Chetry (wk), Harleen Deol, Richa Ghosh (wk), Jemimah Rodrigues, Pratika Rawal, Amanjot Kaur, Sneha Rana, Deepthi Sharma, Kranti Gaud, Arundhati Reddy, Renuka Singh Thakur, Shree Chaurani, Radha Yadav.

**Bangladesh:** Nigar Sultana (c&wk), Fargana Hoque, Sobhana Mostary, Rubya Haider, Sharmin Akhter, Rabeya Khan, Ritu Moni, Shorna Akter, Sumaiya Akter, Fahima Khatun, Fariha Trisha, Marufa Akter, Nahida Akter, Nishita Akter Nishi, Sanjida Akter Meghla.

Match starts at 3:00pm IST. (PTI)