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Vol .No. XXVI Issue No. 298 RNI-ASSENG/2000/12862 DIPHU, KARBI ANGLONG, FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2025 PAGES 12 PRICE ₹ 8

## Planned journey, zigzag routes, Swiss app: Details emerge of blast suspect's modus operandi Delhi police reconstruct Dr Nabi's final hours

**NEW DELHI, Nov 13:** Using footage from more than 50 CCTV cameras, Delhi Police has reconstructed Dr Umar Nabi's last hours, right from leaving Faridabad the night before the Red Fort blast to driving an explosives-laden car slowly towards the metro station the next evening, seconds before it blew up.

Investigators have also found that the three suspects — Dr Umar Nabi, Dr Muzammil Ahmad Ganaie, and Dr Shaheen Shahid — allegedly used a Switzerland-based encrypted messaging app to plan and coordinate their activities related to the terror conspiracy.

Police said the four suspects had pooled more than Rs 26 lakh in cash, which was handed over to Umar for safekeeping and operational use.

Using the pooled money, the group had allegedly purchased around 26 quintals of NPK (nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium) fertiliser, approximately worth Rs 3 lakh, from suppliers in Gurugram, Nuh, and nearby towns. The fertiliser, mixed with other chemicals, is commonly used to manufacture Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs).

A senior police officer said a large bag — believed to have contained explosives — was placed



on the back seat of the car driven by Dr Umar, as he travelled to Delhi ahead of the blast.

The chilling hours of his journey from Haryana to the national capital have been pieced together bit by bit in a route-mapping exercise by police, showing how he halted for food at a roadside eatery and spent the night inside his car before entering the national capital the next morning.

According to police sources, Umar's movements indicate meticulous planning and deliberate attempts to avoid detection.

A police source said he started on the Delhi-Mumbai Expressway on Sunday and then got off the expressway, reaching Firozpur

Jhirka in Haryana's Nuh district. He reportedly stopped at a roadside dhaba there and spent the night inside his car.

"He appeared to be hiding but not in panic. He avoided major towns, preferring highways and small eateries," the police source said.

Later, on Monday morning, he was again seen on CCTV cameras installed along the Delhi-Mumbai Expressway, driving slowly toward Delhi. The footage shows him stopping twice, once for tea and once apparently to check his mobile phone.

Police said Umar entered Delhi through the Badarpur border. "He seemed to have planned every

step, including his entry and exit routes, to avoid detection," said the police source.

In the footage from the Badarpur toll plaza, Umar can be seen driving a white Hyundai i20 car and stopping at the toll gate around 8.02 am on November 10, the day of the explosion. The car pauses briefly as Umar takes out cash and hands it to the toll operator before proceeding.

Investigators said Umar, who was wearing a mask, repeatedly looked toward the CCTV camera, apparently aware that security agencies were on his trail. The large bag, likely to have contained explosives, can be seen in his car here, the senior police officer said.

The route-mapping also shows that Umar entered Delhi and made multiple loops across the city between 8 am and 3 pm before finally parking near the Red Fort at 3:19 pm.

"Umar's car was first seen leaving Faridabad at around 7:30 am near the Asian Hospital. He then crossed the Badarpur toll plaza at around 8:13 am, marking his entry into Delhi. From there, he moved through several parts of southeast Delhi, including Okhla and the industrial belt, crossed Connaught Place, before being spotted in east Delhi and later near central

Delhi's Ring Road," said the police source.

The reconstruction using the CCTV footage shows that Umar deliberately avoided major arterial roads and instead took a zigzag path through crowded areas, possibly to confuse surveillance or to study crowd movements.

He was seen on cameras in multiple districts — starting from Southeast Delhi, then East, New Delhi, Central, and Northwest Delhi's Ashok Vihar, where he stopped at a roadside eatery around midday.

"He appeared calm, ordered food, and stayed for a while before continuing his journey," the source said.

After this stop, he drove back towards central Delhi, where he visited a mosque near Asaf Ali Road, close to the Ramlila Maidan. He offered prayers there and stayed for around three hours in the parking area, the footage shows.

Police said his phone activity during this period is also being closely examined. Investigators suspect he might have received instructions before proceeding toward the site.

"At 3:19 pm, Umar's car entered the parking area adjacent to the (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

## 17 persons in police net, more arrests on cards

### 100 social media accounts of Pak sympathisers under scanner: Himanta

**HT Bureau**  
**GUWAHATI, Nov 13:** Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Thursday asserted that the Assam government has adopted a zero-tolerance policy against the people who are Pakistan sympathisers and at least 100 social media accounts are under scrutiny of security forces.

Sarma told reporters here, "We have already arrested 17 persons across the state for their posts in their social media profiles lauding the blast in the national capital. The government will tolerate any pro-Pakistan activities sitting on Indian soil and all the cases will be dealt with utmost strictness."

The Chief Minister mentioned that at least 100 social media profiles in the state are under scanner of security forces and more arrests will happen if any pro-Pakistan posts are seen in the social media handles. He said, "The crack down against Pakistan sympathisers have begun in the state and it will continue till the complete wipe out of these anti-national elements."

Earlier today, taking to the social media platform X, the Chief Minister

informed that 15 persons have been arrested across Assam in connection with objectionable posts that allegedly attempted to justify or celebrate the blasts.

He said that the government has directed the police to act firmly against any attempt to disturb communal harmony or spread hatred through online platforms.

"In connection with the offensive social media posts following the Delhi blasts, 15 persons have been arrested across Assam so far. Assam Police remains uncompromising against those who glorify violence," CM Sarma wrote on X.

According to the Chief Minister, nine persons were arrested overnight in addition to six arrests made earlier.

The latest arrests include Rafiqul Ali from Bongaigaon, Forid Uddin Laskar from Hailakandi, Inamul Islam and Firuj Ahmed alias Papon from Lakhimpur, Shahil Shoman Sikdar alias Shahidul Islam and Rakibul Sultan from Barpeta, Nasim Akram from Hojai, Taslim Ahmed from Kamrup, and Abdur Rohim Mollah alias Bappy Hussain from South Salmara.

## Gaurav's family acting like ISI agent: Himanta



**HT Bureau**  
**GUWAHATI, Nov 13:** In one of his most scathing attacks yet on the Opposition, chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Thursday accused Congress MP Gaurav Gogoi and his family of acting "like agents of Pakistan's ISI," alleging that their silence on issues related to terrorism and Pakistan was "deliberate and politically motivated."

Speaking to reporters in Guwa-

hati, Sarma launched a fierce tirade against the Kaliabor MP, saying, "Gaurav Gogoi is a Pakistani ISI agent. His wife is a complete agent, and he is a lesser one — and we have evidence to prove it. As the Chief Minister of Assam, I am clearly stating that Gaurav Gogoi is working in the interest of Pakistan, and his entire family functions like ISI agents. That is why he never dares to criticise the Pakistani gov-

ernment." The chief minister further accused the Congress leader of intentionally avoiding immediate condemnation of terror incidents. "Whenever any terror attack takes place in India, Gaurav Gogoi does not react right away. By the end of the day, he issues a mild statement — meaning he waits to take permission from Pakistan before speaking," Sarma alleged.

Citing Gogoi's social media posts following the recent Delhi blasts, the chief minister said, "If you look at his first Facebook post, there is no condemnation — only sympathy. He doesn't have the courage to speak out against terrorism." The comments are likely to ignite a major political controversy, intensifying the already heated war of words between the ruling BJP and the Congress in Assam.

While the Congress has yet to issue an official reaction, party insiders suggest that the remarks have shocked (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

## CRPF's annual parade to be held at Guwahati



**GUWAHATI, Nov 13:** The annual parade of the CRPF will be held for the first time in the North East at Guwahati, the Assam CMO said on Thursday.

The parade is likely to be held early in 2026.

"For the first time in Assam and the northeastern region, the annual parade of the @crpfindia is going to be held in Guwahati," the Chief Minister's Office (CMO) posted on X.

Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma held initial discussions on the matter with senior officials, including CRPF's Director General G P Singh at the Lok Sewa Bhawan on Wednesday, it said. (PTI)

## Schemes initiated by Assam Govt gaining nationwide recognition: CM

**HT Bureau**  
**GUWAHATI, Nov 13:** Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Thursday launched the distribution of entrepreneurship capital cheques to 36,834 members of self-help groups (SHGs) under the Mukhyamantri Mahila Udyamita Abhiyan at a programme held at Swahid Kanaklata Barua State University, Bholaguri in Biswanath district.

Of the total beneficiaries, 35,530 belong to rural areas and 1,304 to urban areas.

Speaking on the occasion, Sarma said the State Government has been working tirelessly over the past four and a half years to empower women across Assam in multiple sectors.

He said several flagship schemes of the State have earned national recognition, with many other states emulating Assam's models.

Citing examples, he noted that the Udyamita scheme's provision of ₹10,000 as seed capital for women became a major talking point during the Bihar Assembly elections, while the success of the Orunodoi scheme inspired states such as Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Haryana, and Delhi to launch similar initiatives.

The chief minister said government efforts have led to a significant decline in child marriages and that schemes like "Nijut Moina" have boosted girls'

enrollment in higher education. He also stated that crimes against women have fallen and women's representation in Panchayats, Zila Parishads, and other institutions has increased notably.

Referring to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of creating "Lakhpati Baideus," Sarma said many women in Assam have already achieved this milestone, with some even crossing the ₹10 lakh annual income mark—now being called "Mahalakhpati Baideus."

He shared success stories of Pankaja Hazarika of Aastha SHG, Krishnapur, and Ronika Basumatary of Maoria SHG, Milanpur under Gohpur LAC, both of whom became Lakhpati Baideus through entrepreneurship.

Describing the ₹4,000-crore Mahila Udyamita Abhiyan as a transformative initiative, Sarma urged women to make the best use of the assistance provided.

He announced that beneficiaries who effectively utilise the initial ₹10,000 grant would receive additional support of ₹25,000 and ₹50,000 in subsequent phases.

Highlighting the success of the Orunodoi scheme, he said the ₹1.250 monthly assistance has empowered women to contribute meaningfully to household management. (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

## Ragging in school: Teacher suspended, 9 students transferred

**MORIGAON, Nov 13:** A teacher has been suspended and nine students transferred to different schools for allegedly being involved in a ragging incident at an educational institute in Assam's Morigaon district, an official said on Thursday.

The district administration, along with Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya (JNV) authorities, on Thursday suspended the teacher, Bishwajit Chowdhury for dereliction of duty as House master of the school, Additional District Commissioner (Education) Anusuya Sarma said.

Vice Principal of the School Dhrubajyoti Sharma has been trans-

ferred to Mokokchung in Nagaland. Nine senior students allegedly involved in the ragging incident have been transferred to other JNV schools in Assam.

A group of senior students had allegedly physically assaulted a junior student on November 5, following which the district administration had formed a committee to investigate the incident.

The committee comprised representatives from the district administration, police, and JNV authorities.

The parents of senior students have been asked to submit an undertaking that (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

## Man arrested in connection with piracy of Zubeen Garg's last film

**GUWAHATI, Nov 13:** A man has been arrested in connection with the alleged piracy of Zubeen Garg's last film, 'Roi Roi Binale', which was released on October 31, police said on Thursday.

The person, identified as Rafiqul Islam, was arrested from Lakhimpur in Goalpara district for allegedly uploading video clips on his YouTube channel, Rafiqul R Vlogs.

He was produced before the Chief Judicial Magistrate's Court and remanded to three days police custody.

A case was registered at the Cyber Police Station, Panbazar under relevant sections of the Bharatiya Nyay Sanhita, read

with relevant sections of the Information Technology Act, 2000; the Copyright Act, 1957 and Cinematograph Act, 1952.

The complaint was filed by the film's producer Shyamantak Gautam with the Cyber Police Station, Panbazar, alleging that the film was being uploaded by unauthorised persons within a few days of the film's release on October 31.

Zubeen Garg's last film has become the highest-grossing film in the history of the Assamese film industry, earning ₹16 crore within the first 12 days of its release. (PTI)



## Government to promote tribal products in international markets: Piyush Goyal



**HT Bureau**  
**GUWAHATI, Nov 13:** Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal has said that all tribal products with export potential will be fully supported by the Department of Commerce through e-commerce platforms, international warehouses, and trade networks.

Addressing the Tribal Business Conclave 2025 in New Delhi in the presence of Union Minister of Tribal Affairs Jugal Kishore, Goyal said a scheme is being developed to promote tribal products in domestic and global markets.

Organised by the Department of Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade in collaboration with the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, the conclave marked a key event during Janjatiya Gaurav Varsh commemorating the 150th birth anniversary of Birsa Munda.

Goyal said that both domestic and international markets offer immense opportunities for tribal crafts and the government is taking steps to harness this potential. He emphasised that India can truly prosper only when its indigenous people prosper and that the upliftment of tribal communities remains a top government priority.

Paying tribute to Birsa Munda, he said his life continues to inspire efforts toward tribal progress.

He lauded the community's resilience in preserving its heritage, handicrafts, and traditions despite hardships.

Goyal noted that the budget allocation for the Ministry of Tribal Affairs has been raised by 50 percent this year and that under the PM-Janman Yojana, around 50 lakh families belonging to particularly vulnerable tribal groups have benefited. (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

## Astronauts, policymakers to address ISPA's space conclave on Nov 18-19

**NEW DELHI, Nov 13:** Astronauts and policymakers from India, Japan and European nations will brainstorm on the future of space exploration at a two-day conference organised by the Indian Space Association (ISPA) here next week.


The India International Space Conclave (IISC), scheduled for November 18-19, will have the theme 'Expanding Horizons: Innovation, Inclusion and Resilience in the New Space Age' and see the participation of astronaut Shubhan-shu Shukla and astronaut-designates Prashanth Balakrishnan Nair and Angad Pratap.

Science and Technology Minis-



ter Jitendra Singh, Indian Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre (IN-SPACe) Chairman Pawan

Goenka, Italy's Ambassador to India Antonio Bartoli, and former IAF (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)



**IN MEMORIAM**  
**LATE ANAI RAM NUNISA**  
 Died on: 14-11-2010

We all remember you on 15<sup>th</sup> Death Anniversary  
 May your soul be in everlasting peace!

Sons: Dr. Motilal Nunisa, Pradip Nunisa, Dr. Ruplal Nunisa & Dr. Biehnur Ram Nunisa  
 Daughter-in-law: Jayanti Nunisa, Prabhati Nunisa, Dr. Ritu Nunisa (wife of Late ER. Nirmal Nunisa) & Anima Nunisa.

Daughters: Usha Hojai, (wife of Late Dr. Dhruva Hojai), Aio Thaoson

Son-in-law: Ramesh Thaoson & all grand children

## Equity markets settle a tad higher amid global volatility, withdrawal of foreign funds

**MUMBAI, Nov 13:** Stock markets' three-day winning run paused on Thursday with benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty closing slightly higher as volatile global sentiment triggered profit-booking, aiding the withdrawal momentum for foreign capital.

After oscillating between gains and losses during the day, the 30-share BSE barometer Sensex ended with a gain of 12.16 points, or 0.01 per cent, at 84,478.67. During the session, it touched a high of 84,919.43 and a low of 84,253.05.

The broader NSE Nifty closed the session in green with just 3.35 points, or 0.01 per cent, higher at 25,879.15.

From the Sensex pack, Asian Paints, ICICI Bank, PowerGrid, Larsen & Toubro, Bajaj Finserv, Bharti Airtel, Sun Pharmaceutical, Maruti Suzuki India, Axis Bank, UltraTech Cement and HCL Technologies were the only gainers.

On the other hand, Eternal, Tata Motors' commercial vehicles arm, Mahindra & Mahindra, Tata Steel, Bharat Electronics Ltd, Tata Motors Passenger Vehicles, Trent, Tata Consultancy Services, Hindustan Unilever, and Infosys were among the laggards.

"National equities closed flat after a positive session, as profit-booking erased early gains despite optimistic global and domestic cues. Sentiment was buoyed by Trump signing a short-term funding bill to end the US government shutdown and hopes of tariff relief for India," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Investments Ltd, said.

Nair further stated that the record-low October inflation prints reinforced expectations of an interest rate cut by RBI, making rate-



sensitive sectors like metals and realty attractive to investors.

"However, amidst continued outflows from FII and a weak rupee, profit-booking emerged at elevated levels ahead of the Bihar election results, which left the benchmark indices largely unchanged by the close," he added.

The BSE Midcap gauge fell 0.34 per cent and smallcap closed 0.30 per cent lower. Among the sectoral indices, Consumer Durables climbed by 0.86 per cent, Telecommunication by 0.70 per cent, Realty by 0.43 per cent, Metal by 0.36 per cent, Utilities by 0.30 per cent, Services by 0.26 per cent, and Bankex by 0.13 per cent.

On the other hand, Capital Goods, Auto, FMCG, Consumer Discretionary, Oil & Gas, Energy, Healthcare, Industries, IT, Power and Teck closed lower.

A total of 2,450 stocks declined while 1,773 advanced and 144 remained unchanged on the BSE.

"Indian equity indices ended largely unchanged on November 13th, after a choppy trading session

marked by cautious sentiment.

Market participants stayed on the sidelines ahead of the Bihar election outcome due Friday morning.

Additionally, traders adopted a wait-and-watch approach ahead of the release of US CPI data, which is expected to offer fresh cues on the Federal Reserve's rate trajectory," Bajaj Broking Research said in a note.

"Markets traded volatile and ended nearly unchanged on the weekly expiry day, pausing after the recent strong upmove. Following an initial dip, the Nifty maintained a positive tone for most of the session; however, late profit-taking erased intraday gains, leaving the index flat at 25,879.15.

"Sectorally, the trend remained mixed -- realty, pharma, and metal ended higher, while FMCG and IT witnessed mild pressure. Meanwhile, the broader markets also saw profit-booking, with both mid-cap and smallcap indices declining by around half a per cent," Ajit Mishra - SVP, Research, Religare Broking Ltd, said.

Mishra noted that the early opti-

mism was underpinned by encouraging domestic macro data, particularly a sharp drop in retail inflation to a multi-year low of 0.25 per cent in October, fuelling expectations of a near-term RBI rate cut. Positive global cues, including strength in US equities, also supported sentiment through the day.

In Asian markets, Shanghai's SSE Composite Index, Hong Kong's Hang Seng, Japan's Nikkei 225 benchmark and South Korea's Kospi ended higher.

Markets in Europe were trading largely lower. The US markets finished higher in overnight deals on Wednesday.

Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, declined 0.29 per cent to USD 62.53 per barrel. Meanwhile, foreign institutional investors remained net sellers for the third day in a row and off-loaded equities worth ₹ 1,750.03 crore on Wednesday. Domestic institutional investors sustained their buying spree and picked up of stocks worth ₹ 5,127.12 crore, according to exchange data.

On Wednesday, the BSE Sensex rallied 595.19 points to settle at 84,466.51. The 50-share NSE Nifty climbed 180.85 points to close at 25,875.80.

The government on Wednesday approved an Export Promotion Mission (EPM) with an outlay of Rs 25,060 crore for six financial years, beginning this fiscal year, a move which will help exporters deal with high tariffs imposed by the US.

The mission will be implemented through two sub-schemes - Niryat Protsahan (₹ 10,401 crore) and Niryat Disha (₹ 14,659 crore). (PTI)

## World shares are mostly higher after Trump signs bill ending US government shutdown

**MANILA (PHILIPPINES), Nov 13:** World shares mostly gained on Thursday after US stocks settled near their records and US President Donald Trump signed a government funding bill, ending the record 43-day shutdown.

The future for S&P 500 edged up 0.1 per cent while that for the Dow Jones Industrial Average rose 0.2 per cent ahead of the reopening of the federal government following the standoff that caused financial stress for federal workers who went without paychecks, stranded scores of travellers at airports and generated long lines at some food banks.

"The shutdown had blocked not just spending, but also delayed a raft of federal economic data," Stephen Innes of SPI Asset Management said in a commentary, adding that "for markets, the only line that matters is simple: the lights are coming back on."

In early European trading, Germany's DAX slipped less than 0.1 per cent to 24,374.90, while the CAC 40 in Paris rose 0.7 per cent to 8,300.20. Britain's FTSE 100 shed 0.3 per cent to 9,881.42.

Asian shares were also mostly higher. Japan's Nikkei 225 rose 0.4 per cent to 51,281.83. But market heavyweight and tech giant SoftBank Group lost another 3.4 per cent on top of a 3.5 per cent drop on Wednesday after the company said it had sold all of its shares in computer chip maker Nvidia.

Hong Kong's Hang Seng index rose 0.6 per cent to 27,073.03, while the Shanghai Composite index jumped 0.7 per cent to 4,029.50 as mainland stocks climbed ahead of updates on lending in China.

Australia's S&P ASX 200 shed 0.5 per cent to 8,753.40, falling for a third straight session as hopes for near-term interest rate cuts were quashed by strong jobs data that showed unemployment falling to 4.3 per cent in October from 4.5 per cent in September.

South Korea's Kospi fluctuated between gains and losses, closing 0.5 per cent higher to 4,170.63.

Taiwan's Taiex index shed nearly 0.2 per cent while India's BSE Sensex added 0.2 per cent.

On Wednesday, the S&P 500 added 0.1 per cent and the The Dow Jones Industrial Average jumped 0.7 per cent, setting a record for a second straight day, at 48,254.82. The Nasdaq composite slipped 0.3 per cent.

Shares in airlines jumped on expectations of a recovery in air travel following the end of the shutdown.

Advanced Micro Devices led the market, gaining 9 per cent after its CEO, Lisa Su, said the chip company expects better than 35 per cent of annual compounded revenue growth over the next three to five years. She credited "accelerating AI momentum."

Stocks benefiting from the artificial-intelligence frenzy have been shaky recently, as investors question whether how much more they can add to already spectacular gains.

They are one of the top reasons the US market has hit records despite a slowing job market and high inflation. Their prices have shot so high, though, that critics say they're reminiscent of the 2000 dot-com bubble, which ultimately burst and dragged the S&P 500 down by nearly half.

Nvidia came into the day with a 4.6 per cent drop for the month so far, for example, after its stock price more than doubled in four of the last five years. The biggest player in AI chips swung between gains and losses throughout Wednesday. Palantir Technologies, another AI darling, fell 3.6 per cent for one of the day's larger losses in the S&P 500.

Similar questions about prices are dogging much of the US market, though not as pointedly as for Big Tech and AI superstars. In other dealings early Thursday, US benchmark crude oil fell 18 cents to USD 58.31 per barrel. Brent crude, the international standard, shed 16 cents to USD 62.55 per barrel.

The U.S. dollar fell to 154.55 Japanese yen from 154.70 yen. The euro rose to USD 1.1630 from USD 1.1594. (AP)

## 2,000 exhibitors will participate in Plastindia 2026

**KOLKATA, Nov 13:** More than 2,000 exhibitors and delegates from 80 countries will participate in the 12th edition of Plastindia to be held in New Delhi in February next year, an official said.

Plastindia 2026 National Executive Council Chairman Alok Tibrewala said here on Wednesday that "Plastindia 2026 will be the world's largest standalone plastics show. Other global shows combine rubber and chemicals, but ours will be entirely dedicated to plastics."

Speaking at the eastern region roadshow, Tibrewala said the 12th edition of Plastindia, themed 'Bharat Next', will be held from February 5-10, 2026, in New Delhi. The event will host over 2,000 exhibitors, attract more than six lakh visitors, and feature participation from 80 countries, he said.

The plastic show will introduce three strategic initiatives aimed at promoting growth, sustainability, and innovation in India's fast-expanding plastics industry, he

said. Tibrewala said the discussion held with representatives of Plastindia Foundation and Indian Plastics Federation focused on the exhibition's role in driving investment, employment, and technology adoption in the Indian plastics sector, which is currently growing at 12-13 per cent annually.

Plastindia has launched three new initiatives — zero waste, startup search (in collaboration with IIM), and invest India.

The invest India partnership targets Rs 1 lakh crore in new investments in plastic processing, while the startup search will connect innovators and entrepreneurs with potential investors and industrial partners, Indian Plastics Federation President Amit Agarwal said.

The zero waste initiative seeks to make Plastindia 2026 the world's first exhibition where not a single kilogramme of the estimated 400-500 tonne of waste generated will reach landfills. (PTI)

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## Astronauts, policymakers to

chiefs V R Chaudhari and RKS Bhaduria among others will address the conclave. Former Japan's astronaut Naoko Yamazaki and Deputy Chief of Mission, the Embassy of Japan, too will address the conference.

The conclave will witness various MoU exchanges in the presence of delegates from many countries, including France, Australia and a special delegation from Japan.

"IISC 2025 aims to bring together global policymakers, industry pioneers and innovators to march together and translate this vision into reality," Lt Gen A K Bhatt (retd), Director General of ISpA, said.

The conclave's agenda is designed to produce actionable outcomes featuring 11 focused sessions, with over 100 delegates to discuss Geospatial and SatCom Policy and Sustainable Space Operations.

"The key outcomes will be stronger international partnerships, a clearer policy path for private industry and a unified strategy to accelerate India's journey to becoming a self-reliant global space leader," Bhatt said. (PTI)

## Government to promote

with ₹24,000 crore disbursed to improve their lives. He announced that the fee for obtaining Geographical Indication tags has been reduced by 80 percent to encourage the registration of more tribal products.

Calling for a transformation from "Van Dhan to Vyapar Dhan," he urged all stakeholders to work together to empower tribal communities and take their craftsmanship to global platforms, realising the vision of "Local Goes Global."

The conclave, supported by FICCI and PRAYOGI as partners, witnessed participation from over 250 tribal enterprises, 150 exhibitors, and more than 100 start-ups showcasing their innovations.

It also featured cultural performances and distribution of GI certificates to artisans representing products such as Bodo Aronai of Assam, Apatani Textile of Arunachal Pradesh, Kannadippaya of Kerala, and Marthandam Honey of Tamil Nadu, among others, celebrating India's rich indigenous heritage.

## Schemes initiated by

He further announced that 3,000 more women from the constituency would soon be included under the scheme.

The event was attended by MP Ranjit Dutta, MLAs Utpal Bora, Pramod Borthakur and Diganta Ghatowal, Biswanath Zila Parishad Chairperson Sunita Tanti, Gohpur Municipal Board Chairman Atul Bora, ASRLM Mission Director Kuntalmoni Sarma Bordoloi, District Commissioner Simanta Kumar Das, social worker Ashim Das, and other dignitaries and senior officials.

## Ragging in school

their children will not be involved in any such incident in the future. All teachers have also been warned to perform their duties as House masters diligently, the official added. (PTI)

## Gaurav's family acting

many within the opposition ranks. Political observers believe Sarma's latest remarks underline the growing trend of national security and patriotism becoming central themes in Assam's political discourse.

The chief minister, known for his combative rhetoric, has often targeted Congress leaders over their alleged "soft" stance on terrorism and foreign threats.

Sarma's latest salvo against Gaurav Gogoi is expected to deepen the political fault lines in Assam, setting the stage for a fierce confrontation between the two parties in the days ahead.

## Delhi police reconstruct

Red Fort complex, where it remained stationary for around three hours. CCTV footage shows the car parked quietly among other vehicles near the Sunehri Masjid parking, an officer privy to the investigation said.

Around 6:22 pm, the car was seen leaving the parking area and heading towards the Red Fort Metro Station side. Barely 30 minutes later, at 6:52 pm, the vehicle exploded in a powerful blast that shattered windows, scattered body parts across the road, and triggered panic among visitors and commuters in the area.

The explosion was captured in traffic surveillance footage, which showed a slow-moving white car suddenly erupting into a ball of fire amid rush-hour traffic. The blast that killed 13 people also injured more than two dozen others.

A severed hand was also found on the roof of a shop near the Red Fort blast site on Thursday morning. The hand was found a few metres away from the spot of the explosion, behind the Jain Temple, they said. Umar, who was known as an academically accomplished professional in his circle, allegedly turned radical over the past two years. Investigators said he had joined several suspected messaging groups.

The DNA test of samples collected from the Red Fort blast site has confirmed that Dr Umar Nabi was driving the car that exploded on Monday.

Meanwhile, the National Assessment and Accreditation Council has issued a show-cause notice to Al Falah University -- which is under scanner following the Delhi blast -- for displaying false certification on its website. (PTI)

## Airtel Payments Bank crosses ₹800 crore in quarterly revenue for the first time

Reports 19.4% YoY growth; profit rises to ₹11.8 crore

**HT Bureau GUWAHATI, Nov 13:** Airtel Payments Bank on Thursday announced its financial results for the quarter ended September 30, 2025, posting a record revenue of ₹804 crore — its first-ever quarter to cross the ₹800-crore mark — registering a 19.4% year-on-year (YoY) growth.

EBITDA for the quarter stood at ₹89.3 crore, up 17.4% compared to the same period last year, while net profit rose to ₹11.8 crore. The annualised Gross Merchandise Value (GMV) touched ₹4,560 billion, driven by the growing adoption of the Bank's Safe Second Account, merchant propositions, and other product offerings.

Airtel Payments Bank remains the third-largest mobile bank in India by user base, underscoring rising customer trust and engagement. Anubrata Biswas, MD & CEO of Airtel Payments Bank, said, "Our consistent growth reflects the strength of our digital-first model and the deep trust our customers place in us. The Safe Second Account continues to be a key growth

driver, empowering customers to manage their everyday digital transactions with ease and confidence."

During the quarter, the Bank deepened its focus on the Safe Second Account proposition and rolled out its first-ever 360-degree brand campaign to highlight the differentiated offering for safe, seamless everyday digital payments.

The campaign has driven strong traction in new digital account openings and reinforced the Bank's position as a trusted partner for daily banking needs.

Customer balances stood at ₹3,987 crore in the quarter, reflecting a 35% YoY increase.

Airtel Payments Bank continues to lead the RuPay On-The-Go NCMC cards ecosystem, with over four million users and nearly 65% of total transaction volumes in the category — making it India's largest NCMC acquiring bank.

Its offline presence continues to expand, with a robust network of over five lakh active banking points, every fifth of which is operated by a woman banking correspondent.

## Nehru Sidhant Kender Trust honours changemakers with Sat Paul Mittal National Awards 2025

**HT Bureau GUWAHATI, Nov 13:** The

Nehru Sidhant Kender Trust, founded in 1983 by Late Sat Paul Mittal, presented the Sat Paul Mittal National Awards 2025 at a ceremony in Ludhiana.

Union education minister Dharmendra Pradhan graced the occasion as chief guest and felicitated the awardees alongside Trust President Rakesh Bharti Mittal.

Five recipients were honoured under the Platinum and Gold categories, receiving a total cash prize of Rs 20 lakh and citations.

Since 1991, the Trust has disbursed over Rs 11 crore in scholarships to 28,000 students, 76% of them girls.

This year, scholarships worth Rs. 2 crore will be awarded to 1,700 students under various initiatives, including the newly launched Satya Scholarship Programme, which covers 100% annual course fees for meritorious students from underprivileged backgrounds.

Addressing the event, Pradhan said the awards exemplify the nation's spirit of education, service and self-reliance.

Mittal added that the awards celebrate individuals and institutions whose compassion and commitment have created lasting social change.

The Platinum Award in the individual category went to Muktaben Pankajkumar Dagli of Gujarat for empowering visually impaired women through education and employment.

In the institutional category, Humans for Humanity and Parivar Education Society were jointly honoured for their work in menstrual hygiene awareness and child welfare, respectively.

Kiran Modi of Udayan Care received the Gold Award in the individual category for her contribution to child welfare and youth empowerment, while Smile Train India won in the institutional category for its community-based cleft care initiatives.

Instituted to recognise exceptional service to humanity, the Sat Paul Mittal National Awards have previously honoured figures such as Dr E Sreedharan, Anna Hazare, Ela Bhatt and organisations like Goonj, Akshaya Patra Foundation and SOS Children's Villages.

### NAME CORRECTION

I, Mrs. Agnes Angami w/o Mr. Aga Seb Rengma, a resident of Rengma Baptist Church Complex, Near Panchayat Office, Diphu, district Karbi Anglong, Assam. I would like to mention that my surname in the Birth Certificate of my son Moses Seb Rengma is wrongly written as Agnes Rengma. The correct name is Agnes Angami. Agnes Rengma and Agnes Angami is the same person.

### LOST

I lost my original Higher Secondary passed out certificate. (Admit Card bearing Roll 0563 No.10091 of 2015 and Registration No.156790 year 2013-2014) somewhere in and around Diphu market on 10th November, 2025, at around 1.30 p.m. Any person(s) finding my HS passed out certificate may please contact the address and mobile number mentioned below. Gobin Sharma, S/o Churamoni Sharma, Near Council Colony, Diphu P.O. & P.S., Diphu, District - Karbi Anglong, Assam. Mobile No.70025-45572.

### AFFIDAVIT

By an affidavit sworn before Executive Magistrate, Diphu Judicial Court I have declared that my daughter's actual name is Gunjan Chauhan which is recorded in birth certificate. Reg. No. B202518006600000920 but by mistake in AADHAAR Card vide No. 9776-1851-3534 it has been recorded as Gunja Kumari. On the other hand in Aadhar Card her date of birth has been wrongly recorded as 2009 but actual date of birth is 04-02-2012. The name of Gunjan Chauhan and Gunja Kumari is the same and single person. Which actual date of birth is 04-02-2012. Nandu Chauhan, Father Of Gunjan Chauhan Vill:- Mura Basti P.O.:- Pat Silputa P.S.:- Bakalia Dist:- Karbi Anglong (Assam)

# 'Once again, anti-Assam forces unite': BJP warns

## BJP alleges Congress, Rajior Dal and Assam Jatiya Parishad alliance threatens state's interests ahead of 2026 elections

**HT Bureau**

**GUWAHATI, Nov 13:** With the 2026 Assembly elections approaching, Assam BJP has accused a new political alliance of anti-Assam activities. On Wednesday, Assam Pradesh Congress president Gaurav Gogoi, Akhil Gogoi of Rajior Dal and Lurinijyoti Gogoi of Assam Jatiya Parishad reportedly joined forces, prompting concerns over their intentions toward Assam's development and identity.

At a press conference at Atal Bihari Vajpayee Bhawan, party spokesperson Suranjit Dutta criticised the alliance, claiming that personal ambitions drove the leaders to make hollow promises. He highlighted Akhil Gogoi's alignment with Congress, despite earlier protests accusing the party of corruption and maladministration. Dutta also accused Assam Jatiya Parishad of abandoning its pledge not to contest elections under a national party, calling it a betrayal of the 855 martyrs who sacrificed for Assam.

The BJP leader further cited remarks made



by Congress leaders during recent visits. Rahul Gandhi allegedly stated that lands evicted under Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma's administration—including forest lands, satra (monas-

tic) lands and government reserve lands—would be returned to illegal settlers of Bengali-origin Muslims if Congress regained power. Priyank Kharge reportedly claimed that Assamese people lacked the capacity to establish high-end industries such as semiconductors, suggesting such projects be relocated to other states.

Dutta warned that under Congress leadership, Assam's economy, land and political interests would be compromised, investors would move to other states and the people's trust would be undermined. He asserted that the so-called "Opposition Unity" is effectively anti-Assam and reaffirmed that BJP-led government under Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma will continue to focus on Assam's progress and development.

The party urged voters to reject the alliance in the upcoming 2026 elections, citing past electoral victories over anti-Assam forces in by-elections, Lok Sabha and Panchayat polls as evidence of the people's consistent support for BJP's pro-Assam agenda.

# KAAC-ERDE Agro Venture to generate 1,500 jobs in two years

**HT Correspondent**

**KHERONI, Nov 13:** In a landmark move to strengthen rural livelihoods and empower farmers, the Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council (KAAC) on Wednesday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with ERDE Agro Ecosystems Pvt Ltd to establish a Joint Venture Company named Hills Agro Development Corporation Limited.

The new entity will collaborate with Farmers Producer Companies (FPCs) across Karbi Anglong and West Karbi Anglong districts to promote contract farming for high-value crops, including organic ginger, turmeric, black pepper and Bird's Eye chillies. This partnership aims to ensure farmers receive the best market prices through assured linkages.

Under the initiative, processing and packaging centres will be set up in both districts, adding value to local produce and strengthening the region's farming ecosystem. The project is expected to benefit over 10,000 farmers, providing reliable market access and boosting income opportunities.



Financial projections suggest that the KAAC will earn at least ₹ 6 crore in the first year, scaling up to ₹ 17 crore annually within two years. The venture will also generate employment with 200 direct jobs in the first year and more than 1,500 jobs within two years, marking a significant step toward rural prosperity, agri-based employment and economic self-reliance.

The MoU signing ceremony held at the KAAC Secretariat in Diphu was attended by KAAC Chief Executive Member Tuliram Ronghang, Lok Sabha MP Amarsing Tisso, MLA Darsing Ronghang along with several executive members, representatives from the Missing Autonomous Council (MAC), KAAC officials and other dignitaries.

## Five highway robbers arrested

**HT Correspondent**

**SIVASAGAR, Nov 13:** Police arrested five youths last night in connection with a series of highway robberies targeting vehicles on the four-lane bypass at Taxi Mothadung. The accused, identified as Debabrat Gogoi, Saranga Gogoi, Manojyoti Hazarika, Joyadip Bhuyan and Mandep Gogoi, allegedly extorted money from motorists during nighttime incidents. The arrests follow a focused police operation aimed at curbing criminal activities along the busy bypass, ensuring safety for commuters.

# Panchayat and Rural Development contractual staffs protest

**HT Correspondent**

**KOKRAJHAR, Nov 13:** Hundreds of contractual employees of the Panchayat and Rural Development Department staged a sit-in protest at the Titaguri Development Block Office in Kokrajhar as part of a statewide demonstration organised by the All Assam Panchayat and Rural Development Department Contractual Employees' Association. The protest, now in its second day, has brought normal functioning of Panchayat of-

fices to a halt, affecting administrative work and public welfare services across the district.

The employees are demanding an increase in the minimum monthly salary to ₹ 30,000, an annual 10% increment in wages, service security up to 60 years of age and other benefits on par with regular government employees. They stated that despite years of dedicated service in rural development, they continue to face low pay and job insecurity, which has

affected their livelihoods and morale.

Protesters expressed their grievances, emphasising that the government must take immediate action to ensure fair pay, job regularisation and better working conditions. They warned that the peaceful sit-in will continue until their legitimate demands are addressed, underlining the critical role contractual staff play in the smooth functioning of rural development projects across Assam.

## Municipal Board launches 24-hour helpline

**HT Correspondent**

**DEMOW, Nov 13:** The Demow Municipal Board has introduced two 24-hour helpline numbers—7099932142 and 7099931892—for the convenience of local residents. Citizens can use these numbers to submit complaints or provide suggestions via WhatsApp or phone calls. Pallabita Baruah Gogoi, Chairperson of the Municipal Board, urged residents to actively share their grievances and opinions on relevant issues through the newly launched helpline service, as stated in an official press release.

## Youth's body brought home under 'Shraddhanjali' scheme

**HT Correspondent**

**JAGIROAD, Nov 13:** The body of Chanerika Chouhan, a 31-year-old resident of Hatiamukh Pathar village under Baghijap Gaon Panchayat in Jagiroad co-district was brought back to Assam from Orissa through the 'Shraddhanjali Scheme' of the Government of Assam and handed over to his family on Wednesday.

Chanerika, son of Sukdev Chouhan was traveling by train to Kerala when he was found dead on the tracks in Orissa on November 9. The recently launched Shraddhanjali Scheme facilitates the repatriation of bodies of economically backward persons who die in any other state of India at government expense. The body arrived in Jagiroad amid a grim atmosphere with BJP leaders and workers of the constituency present to pay their respects. The government-funded scheme ensured that Chanerika's body was safely returned to his family in his village.

## Pathways on railway bridges to boost safety

**HT Bureau**

**GUWAHATI, Nov 13:** In a major safety initiative, Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) has begun providing pathways on railway bridges across its network to ensure safe movement for personnel involved in inspection, maintenance and operational activities. As of October 2025,



work has been awarded for all sanctioned projects under NFR's safety enhancement plan.

A total of 943 railway bridges have been identified for pathway provision of which 382 are already completed and 561 are under progress. During 2024-25, work was carried out on 32 bridges, while the 2025-26 target includes completing pathways on 109 bridges, with 49 already in progress. Over the next five years, 452 bridges are planned to be covered. Rangiya Division leads with 250 bridges, followed by Lumding (227), Alipurduar (200), Katihar (163) and Tinsukia (103).

The pathways improve safety by providing secure routes for personnel, reducing accident risks and facilitating easier access for regular inspection and emergency situations, such as stalled trains on bridges. The initiative reflects NFR's commitment to modernising infrastructure, enhancing maintenance efficiency and building a safe, inclusive and people-friendly railway network in the northeastern region.

## 80 people apprehended at bus stop

**HT Correspondent**

**TEZPUR, Nov 13:** The Tezpur-Kacharigaon Police apprehended 80 individuals, including minors at Tezpur Mission Chariali bus stop on Wednesday afternoon. The passengers were traveling from West Bengal on two buses bearing registration numbers WB63 B 0214 and WB-85 0035.

During questioning, the group revealed that they were transported from the Koch Bihar area by a broker named Joyanal. However, they were unable to produce essential documents such as Aadhaar or PAN cards to verify their Indian citizenship. Preliminary investigations indicate that the individuals may have been recruited as laborers for brick kilns in Sonitpur district. The police investigation is ongoing.

# Police launch foot patrolling drive to boost public safety

**HT Correspondent**

**DIBRUGARH, Nov 13:** To strengthen public safety and maintain law and order, Dibrugarh Police have intensified foot patrolling across urban and rural areas of the district. The initiative aims to enhance police visibility, deter crime and foster closer engagement between law enforcement and citizens.

Police teams are conducting regular patrols in crowded marketplaces, transport hubs, educational institutions, residential colonies and other vulnerable areas. Special night rounds are also being carried out to monitor sensitive zones and ensure round-the-clock security.

A senior police officer said the

drive is a key component of community policing, encouraging citizens to interact with police personnel and share information that can prevent criminal activity. Officers are also engaging with shopkeepers, street vendors and residents to gather feedback and identify areas requiring increased surveillance.

Authorities have urged the public to cooperate with the police, report suspicious activity and use helpline numbers or approach patrolling officers for assistance. The foot patrolling initiative is expected to reinforce a sense of safety, curb criminal incidents and strengthen the partnership between the police and the community.

# Narayani Handique Memorial lecture highlights the life of Kanaklata Barua



**HT Correspondent**

**TEZPUR, Nov 13:** The Directorate of Historical and Antiquarian Studies, in collaboration with the Department of History, Lokanayak Omeo Kumar Das College, Dhekiajuli organised a Narayani Handique Memorial lecture entitled 'The Story of Kanaklata Barua'.

Eminent historian Professor Shiela Bora, participating as the keynote speaker shared her experiences while writing a book on Kanaklata Barua as part of a National Book Trust project. She lamented that heritage preservation remains largely neglected. In a compelling presentation, she highlighted the landmarks and influencers in Kanaklata's life, constructing a vivid narrative based on primary sources. She urged the audience to compile local history using evidence to ensure it receives its rightful recognition.

The lecture was followed by a lively interaction in which Dr Jogendra Saikia, Dr Arindam Kr Deka and Riyazuddin Ansari discussed different aspects of the 1942 movement. A Satriya dance performance by Khagen Mandal, a first-semester student of the de-

partment, added rhythmic moments to the programme. Principal Dr Sukdev Adhikari highlighted the importance of such programmes, expressing hope for similar initiatives in the future and informing about upcoming entrepreneurship development initiatives at the college.

The programme began with the lighting of a ceremonial lamp by Dr Jogendra Saikia, president of the Governing Body of the college, joined by invited speaker Professor Shiela Bora, Director-in-charge of DHAS Dr Sangeeta Gogoi, Riyazuddin Ansari (retired Vice Principal) and Dhrubajyoti Hazarika (retired HoD, History). This was followed by the traditional felicitation of the guest, supervised by Deepsikha Deka, Assistant Professor, Department of History. Indrajit Pathak a fifth-semester student, enthralled the audience with a Jyoti Sangit.

Dr Jogendra Saikia inaugurated the event, highlighting the importance of understanding the truth behind Kanaklata's martyrdom. Dr Sangeeta Gogoi spoke briefly on the objectives of the lecture programme and detailed the Directorate's plans for manuscript preservation and ongoing projects. HoD History, Dr Jyotshna Baruah introduced Professor Shiela Bora to the gathering.

The programme was attended by distinguished citizens of Dhekiajuli, including Ramesh Borah, Narayan Borah, Dilip Senapati (retired professor of Political Science) and Reezoo Dutta Gogoi, along with a large number of teaching faculty, students, NCC cadets and media personnel. The event concluded with Axom Sangeet. Dr Jyotshna Baruah offered a vote of thanks, while Assistant Professors Nabajit Saikia, Tapas Pujari and Purabi Kalita supervised the logistics and overall management of the programme.

## Karmapran Khirod Barua memorial one-act play competition

**HT Correspondent**

**MORIGAON, Nov 13:** The laikhuta for the Karmapran Khirod Barua Memorial All Assam One-Act Play Competition was erected on Thursday at Morigaon School Field, marking the commencement of preparations for the three-day drama festival scheduled from November 27 to 29. The erection ceremony followed traditional religious rituals and was carried out by Lipika Barua, president of the event's managing committee.

The programme was inaugurated by Mahendra Nath Hazarika, president of the Morigaon District Senior Citizen Body, who lit the ceremonial lamp. The event was moderated by working president Ajit Sarma and attended by several dignitaries including Pranabjyoti Barkatok chief advisor of the managing committee, Bubumoni Goswami MASS chief advisor, Babul Bora former secretary-general of SSS, senior journalist Pratap Hazarika and Dalim Phukan.

# Thousands participate in marches, cultural events and tree-planting drives to honour the Iron Man of India

## Grand unity march to mark Sardar Patel's 150th birth anniversary

**HT Bureau**

**GUWAHATI, Nov 13:** In a vibrant celebration of unity, patriotism and cultural pride, the District Administration Cachar in collaboration with Dholai Co-District Administration and My Bharat Cachar marked the 150th birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel at Dholai on Thursday. The day-long event, supported by various state government departments, NGOs, clubs and educational institutions, showcased India's spirit of integrity and resilience.

The celebrations commenced with a massive Unity March from BNMP School, Dholai flagged off by Silchar MP Parimal Suklabaidya, Dholai MLA Nihar Ranjan Das and Co-District Commissioner Raktim Baruah, ACS. Over a thousand students, youth volunteers and local citizens joined the march, carrying messages of peace, harmony and a self-reliant India. The procession passed through key roads of Dholai and culminated at the District Conference Auditorium, where thousands paid floral tributes to Bharat Mata.

Addressing the gathering, MP Suklabaidya lauded Sardar Patel's role in uniting 562 princely states into one nation and highlighted the Modi Government's initiatives like the Statue of Unity and the Run for Unity programme. He emphasised Patel's far-sightedness, political acumen and unwavering nationalism, stating that India owes its unity and stability to the Iron Man's leadership. MLA Nihar

Ranjan Das urged the youth to draw inspiration from Patel's ideals of discipline, nationalism and self-reliance to build a nation free from division and apathy. Co-District Commissioner Raktim Baruah described Patel's life as a roadmap for modern India, linking unity with collective development.

The event featured cultural performances including patriotic songs and traditional dances like Bihu, Dhmail, Manipuri and Dimasa, presented by local artists. Sonai Circle Officer Maria Tanim, ACS, administered an oath to youth to stay away from drugs and dedicate themselves to nation-building. A Swadeshi Mela by Self Help Groups showcased local crafts and foods, promoting the "Vocal for Local" initiative.

**Our Nagaon Correspondent adds:** To commemorate the 150th birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, a grand unity march was organised on Thursday from Nehrabali Field in Nagaon. Over 5,000 participants, including students, NCC and NSS cadets, police personnel and prominent citizens, took part in the march.

The event began with a tree plantation ceremony, lamp lighting and floral tribute to the Iron Man of India. District Commissioner Debashish Sarma flagged off the march, which was also attended by Arjuna Award winner Nayanmoni Saikia.

The procession passed through key parts of the town, featuring cultural performances such as a Satriya dance

by Nowgong Girls' College students and a Bodo dance by students of Holy Cross School. The march concluded back at Nehrabali, where stalls of self-help groups and government schemes were showcased.

Dignitaries present included Manoj Kumar Sikaria, CEO of Nagaon Zila Parishad, Geetanjali Hazarika, Chairperson of Nagaon Zila Parishad, Additional District Commissioner Sudip Nath and Debahuti Bora. The event highlighted Sardar Patel's contributions to India's unity and integrity while promoting the Prime Minister's vision of "Ek Bharat, Atmanirbhar Bharat."

**Our Haflong Correspondent adds:** The District Commissioner's Office, Dima Hasao, organised a Pad Yatra (Unity March) in Haflong on Thursday to commemorate the 150th birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, the Iron Man of India. The event was graced by Mohet Hojai, Chairman of NCHAC, as Chief Guest and Assam Minister for Sports and Youth Welfare Nandita Gorlosa as Guest of Honour.

In his welcome address, District Commissioner Munindra Nath Ngeatey, ACS, paid tribute to Sardar Patel, recalling his immense contribution to national integration and unity. He emphasised how Patel's leadership, vision and determination laid the foundation for a united India and continue to inspire citizens to work together in peace and harmony.

The programme included a tree plantation ceremony to promote environmental awareness and sustainability. Participants also took the 'Nasha Mukti Dima Hasao' pledge, reaffirming their commitment to building a drug-free society.

The 7 km-long Pad Yatra commenced from the Veer Sambudhan Phonglo Statue and concluded at the Mahatma Gandhi Statue, followed by a closing ceremony at the Council Gate of the NCHAC Secretariat. People from all walks of life joined the march, spreading messages of unity and peace.

Students from various educational institutions, including Don Bosco High School, Government Girls' High School, St Agnes High School, Dibrari High School, Fiangpui High School, Lodi High School, CHT Synod High School, GC Langthasa High School, Government Boys High School and Haflong Government College, actively participated and certificates were awarded in recognition of their involvement.

The event was attended by dignitaries and officials, including Executive Members NCHAC Dhriti Thaosan and Dhopainon Thaosan, MAC John Phiothong, ADCs Shaurya Sharma and Sangeeta Devi, Chairperson Haflong Municipal Board Ripa Hojai and several others. The programme celebrated the life and legacy of Sardar Patel, honouring his tireless efforts toward national unity and strength.

No. BTCLR-1618/2025/22, Dated Kokrajhar, the 13<sup>th</sup> November, 2025.

### NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Sealed quotation affixing a court fee stamp of Rs.8.25 (Rupees eight and paise twenty five only) is hereby invited from the intending registered farms/ submit Quotations for "Procurement of essential items/ tools for Tamulpur Revenue Circle, Tamulpur and Goreswar Revenue Circle, Goreswar, Dist.-Tamulpur" with the following terms and conditions.

The quotation will be received from 14.11.2025 to 05.12.2025 (11:00 AM till 3:00 PM) and will be opened on 05.12.2025 at 3:30 PM in presence of Quotationers or their representatives. In case of any unusual occurrence like Strike/ Govt. holiday etc. the receiving & opening of quotation will be on the next working day at the same time.

For details contact CALA, BTC Secretariat during office hours.

IPR(BTC)/C/2025-26/3133

Sd/-Secretary, CALA,  
Bodoland Territorial Council, Kokrajhar

No. BTCLR-1618/2025/23, Dated Kokrajhar, the 13<sup>th</sup> November, 2025.

### NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Sealed quotation affixing a court fee stamp of Rs.8.25 (Rupees eight and paise twenty five only) is hereby invited from the intending registered farms/ submit Quotations for "Procurement of essential items/ tools for Harishinga Revenue Circle, Tangla and Kalaigaon Revenue Circle, Kalaigaon, Dist.-Udalguri" with the following terms and conditions.

The quotation will be received from 14.11.2025 to 05.12.2025 (11:00 AM till 3:00 PM) and will be opened on 05.12.2025 at 3:30 PM in presence of Quotationers or their representatives. In case of any unusual occurrence like Strike/ Govt. holiday etc. the receiving & opening of quotation will be on the next working day at the same time.

For details contact CALA, BTC Secretariat during office hours.

IPR(BTC)/C/2025-26/3136

Sd/-Secretary, CALA,  
Bodoland Territorial Council, Kokrajhar

No. BTCLR-1618/2025/24, Dated Kokrajhar, the 13<sup>th</sup> November, 2025.

### NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Sealed quotation affixing a court fee stamp of Rs.8.25 (Rupees eight and paise twenty five only) is hereby invited from the intending registered farms/ submit Quotations for "Procurement of essential items/ tools for Mazbat Revenue Circle, Mazbat and Khoirabari Revenue Circle, Khoirabari, Dist.-Udalguri" with the following terms and conditions.

The quotation will be received from 14.11.2025 to 05.12.2025 (11:00 AM till 3:00 PM) and will be opened on 05.12.2025 at 3:30 PM in presence of Quotationers or their representatives. In case of any unusual occurrence like Strike/ Govt. holiday etc. the receiving & opening of quotation will be on the next working day at the same time.

For details contact CALA, BTC Secretariat during office hours.

IPR(BTC)/C/2025-26/3139

Sd/-Secretary, CALA,  
Bodoland Territorial Council, Kokrajhar

## QUOTE OF THE DAY

*It is the mark of an educated mind to be able to entertain a thought without accepting it. -Aristotle*

## Semi-final ahead of Assembly polls

The stage is set for the local body elections in Kerala with the State Election Commissioner A. Shajahan announcing the poll schedule. The elections will be held in two phases on December 9 and December 11. Elections are to be held to 1199 of the 1200 local bodies in Kerala. The number of wards in the 1200 local bodies has gone up to 23,612. The 2025 elections are being held to 23,576 wards, excluding the 36 wards of Mattannur municipality in Kannur where elections are due in September 2027. Elections will be held to 17,337 wards in gramapanchayats, 2,267 wards in the block panchayats, 346 district panchayat wards, 3,205 municipal wards, and 421 Corporation wards. In the 2020 polls, the CPI(M)-led Left Democratic Front (LDF) had prevailed over the Congress-headed United Democratic Front (UDF). The 2025 polls have come against the backdrop of a controversy. All the political parties with the exception of the BJP have vehemently opposed the holding of the Special Intensive Revision of the voters' list along with the local body elections, ahead of the 2026 Assembly elections. The stakes are high for the principal contenders, LDF and UDF. With the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance also in the fray, three-cornered contests are inevitable. The LDF and the UDF believe that the fight is mainly between them. The BJP does not count for much. At best, it can prove the spoilsport for both fronts in a few wards.

The high-voltage poll campaign will be fought on a variety of local and national issues, including the controversial Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of voters' lists. The LDF is in a confident frame of mind, basing its optimism on the achievements of the Pinarayi Vijayan Government over the years. It has an impressive record in boosting infrastructure development in the State and expanding the social welfare net, including the ongoing LIFED Mission housing scheme for homeless families. The declaration, recently, of erasing extreme poverty is also expected to boost the LDF's prospects in a big way.

As for the Congress, it is a life and death fight. The UDF has remained in Opposition for over two consecutive terms. The Congress is pinning its hopes on the anti-incumbency factor to upset the LDF's calculations. It also thinks that the so-called whittling down of allocations to the local bodies will also stand it in good stead. But, the UDF's organizational health is anything but good. The Front, especially the Congress is rocked by internal strife. The party High Command is trying hard to enforce discipline and end internecine infighting. Will the high command succeed? The past record is anything but positive.

## Trump's fair deal promise sounds more realistic than before

By: K Raveendran

President Donald Trump has declared that a 'fair trade deal' with India is forthcoming, asserting that once concluded, India will once again 'love' America. He framed it as a departure from past arrangements that, in his view, had been 'pretty unfair,' and suggested both countries were 'pretty close' to a deal that is 'good for everybody.'

The timing of Trump's statements matters because India's prior public posture has been muted while Washington has taken the lead in stating milestones. Trump's claim bears weight when viewed alongside India's increased oil imports from the United States and its simultaneous reduction in purchases from Russia—a combination that appears aligned with U.S. priorities. Data indicate India sourced about 36 per cent of its crude imports from Russia this year, and refiners are now actively seeking to reduce that share. India's biggest private refining group has signalled it will follow government guidelines in curtailing Russian-oil imports. The United States has interpreted this shift as removing a "sticking point" in trade discussions. Oil and energy flows are likely to form the backbone of the deal. India's oil import profile shows that Russian crude has accounted for a large chunk of its supply, at times exceeding one-third of its total purchases. Yet tracking data show a significant drop in Russian volumes as refiners prepare alternatives. While Russia remains the top source, the upward movement of U.S. crude into the Indian market is evident: India's imports of American crude in October rose to about 540,000 barrels per day, the highest since 2022, underlining the attractiveness of U.S. grades amid favourable arbitrage conditions. For the United States, the bargaining logic is clear. Washington has levied steep tariffs on various Indian imports—total duties of around 50 per cent have been reported in the context of India's continuing purchases of Russian energy. Under the envisaged deal, the U.S. is prepared to reduce those tariffs at some point, contingent on India's energy procurement and trade behaviour. Trump explicitly linked the reduction of tariffs to India's cut in Russian imports, saying that as the Russian-oil purchases have dropped very substantially, the U.S. will bring the tariffs down.

From India's perspective the calculus is more intricate. While New Delhi has not formally repudiated Trump's narrative—it has not denied that a deal is underway and has acknowledged talks are progressing 'very well'—it must balance strategic autonomy, energy security and diplomatic priorities. India's decision to diversify away from Russia is as much about global oil market pressure and sanction regimes as it is about negotiating with the U.S. For example, new sanctions against Russian producers have compelled Indian refiners to review Russian supply contracts, presenting New Delhi with an opening to shift sources. Making increased U.S. oil imports a key element of the deal both aligns with Washington's objectives and offers India a path to restructure its portfolio: from heavy reliance on Russian barrels to a more diversified supply chain. The prospect that the deal will allow continued flow of Russian oil at reduced levels recognises India's energy compulsions: the country remains one of the largest crude importers globally, consuming over five million barrels per day, and switching sources wholesale in a short period would carry risks for domestic refining margins and supply continuity.

However, there are material caveats. First, despite reductions, India remains significantly tied to Russian oil: data show Russian imports accounted for roughly 34 per cent of its crude in September, and major refiners are merely poised to curtail purchases—not yet fully committed. Second, while U.S. imports are rising, they still represent a fraction of Indian needs and face competition from Gulf and other suppliers. Third, trade talks go beyond energy: sensitive sectors such as agriculture, digital trade, investment protections and tariffs loom large in the negotiations. India has transmitted trade proposals to Washington and is awaiting U.S. responses, signalling that energy alone will not seal the deal.

Politically, the bargain carries risks. Washington's public framing—invoicing love and fairness—may convey American confidence but also raises expectations domestically in India and abroad. New Delhi must ensure that any accord protects its sensitive sectors, as it has emphasised, while avoiding the perception of succumbing to external pressure. (IPA Service)

# History and Significance of Children's Day

Children's Day is not merely a day of joyful celebration; it is a sacred moment of the entire nation's eternal and profound commitment to the lives, dreams, and rights of children, who are the country's most valuable asset. In India, this special day is observed every year on 14 November, the birthday of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the architect of independent India, visionary philosopher, and beloved 'Nehru Uncle' to children. An indispensable part of Nehru's life and political philosophy was his immense love for children and his unwavering faith in their latent potential. He repeatedly emphasized that the nation's future path, development, and position on the global stage all depend on how the country's children are nurtured today. He likened children to 'flower buds' of the nation, which cannot bloom into beautiful flowers without proper care, education, protection, and affection. It was because of this profound philosophy and his dedication to child welfare that the historic decision was made to observe his birthday as Children's Day, transforming this special day from merely a tribute to a great leader into the foundation of a national movement for the holistic development and well-being of children. Behind this decision lay the far-reaching resolve to provide every child in the country with a healthy, safe, and loving life, shaping them into strong, aware, and creative citizens.

Delving deeply into the history of Children's Day reveals that during Pandit Nehru's lifetime, his birthday was celebrated publicly across the country, though it was not officially declared as Children's Day. In various places, especially schools, educational institutions, and villages, events such as games, cultural programs, and public gatherings were organized for children. Nehru himself showed keen interest in participating in these events and spent time with children. His childlike and affectionate nature earned him a special place among the public, particularly children, for whom he was the loving 'Nehru Uncle'. However, the day gained a special dimension only after his demise on 27 May 1964. Following his death, the Indian Parliament unanimously passed a historic resolution to eternally commemorate his immense love for children and his ideals by observing his birthday, 14 November, as the country's 'Children's Day'. This decision was a practical step that elevated Nehru's child-centric philosophy to the core of national policy and social responsibility. Nehru established numerous institutions for the physical, mental, and intellectual development of children. As a result of his vision-

ary thinking, organizations like the Children's Film Society India were set up in 1955, with the primary objective of producing suitable, educational, and creative films for children. All these efforts ensured that the significance of Children's Day was not confined to a mere festival but established it as the foundation of a national duty to elevate the standards of children's lives. Understanding this historical background deeply helps in grasping the true significance of Children's Day.

The importance of Children's Day is profound and multifaceted. This day deeply reminds us that children are not just tomorrow's citizens but also a vital part of the present. The responsibility for their protection, nurturing, and proper development lies with every parent, teacher, citizen of society, and the state. This day plays a central role in creating widespread awareness about children's rights. Every child has the inherent right to education, to grow up in a safe and healthy environment, to enjoy childhood free from exploitation, and to express their opinions. Children's Day makes society more sensitive to these fundamental rights and commits it to working for children's welfare. In a vast and diverse country like India, where many children are deprived of basic facilities due to poverty, illiteracy, and social inequality, the relevance of Children's Day is extremely crucial. This day shakes the conscience of society regarding the plight of thousands of children who fall victim to curses like child labor, abduction, human trafficking, and various forms of physical and mental abuse. It reminds us

## DEGREE OF THOUGHT

By: Himanshu Ranjan Bhuyan

that this celebration should not be limited to privileged children who can attend school but should extend compassion, love, and help to street children, child laborers, and those forced to live at the lowest levels of society. This day provides an opportunity for evaluation and review of government and private schemes and programs for child welfare.

Pandit Nehru's child-centric philosophy was extremely profound and far-reaching. He not only loved children but also emphasized identifying their talents and creating an appropriate social and national environment for their full development. He believed that children's minds are free and flexible, so they should be educated from childhood with scientific temper, rationalism, human values, and a sense of global fraternity. He dreamed of a country where every child, irrespective of religion, caste, color, or economic status, is given equal opportunities to fully develop their latent talents. According to Nehru, children should be considered not just as tomorrow's citi-

zens but as an important part of the present, with their own interests, rights, and needs. Therefore, they must be shaped correctly from today. Children's Day reaffirms his ideals and offers an opportunity for self-analysis of how effective the country's education system, health services, and social security schemes are in meeting children's needs. This day compels parents, teachers, and policymakers to think deeply about their responsibilities. They must realize that without the physical and mental well-being of children, the country's certain and stable progress is never possible. The high-quality educational institutions established by Nehru in various parts of India were the result of this philosophy, aiming to equip the future generation with world-class education.

The celebration of this day should not be confined to formalities and festivities; it should instill new enthusiasm, hope, and confidence in children's minds. Various programs organized by schools, educational institutions, and social organizations on this day, such as discussion circles, quiz competitions, cultural events, and games, not only bring joy to children but also foster unity, sportsmanship, and leadership qualities among them. Through these programs, children get opportunities to express their thoughts, showcase their talents, and feel like an important part of society. Teachers treating children with love and friendship on this day creates a positive impression of teachers in their minds. Through this day, we can help our children gain knowledge about the country's greatness, the history of the freedom struggle, constitutional values, and their own rights and duties. This inspires them to become responsible, aware, and patriotic citizens. However, this celebration should not be limited to one day's joy; there is a need to make children feel this love and respect every day of their lives. For every child to consider themselves special and valuable, empathy and responsibility are required from people at all levels of society.

In the current era, due to rapid globalization and the expansion of information technology, many new challenges have entered children's lives, which should be given special importance in discussions on Children's Day. Twenty-first-century children face complex issues such as online safety, cyberbullying, social media addiction, and excessive academic pressure. Drawing the attention of parents, teachers, and government agencies to these modern challenges is one of the most important tasks of Children's Day. This day reaffirms children's mental health, emotional well-being, and right to play. There is a need to not burden children with books alone but to bring them

closer to nature, strengthen their emotionally, and educate them with human values. The education system should be reformed in such a way that it awakens children's natural curiosity for knowledge and innovation without creating fear and stress. The 'digital divide' created by poverty and economic inequality remains a major challenge. Many poor children are deprived of technological benefits, causing them to lag in modern education. Children's Day calls for an active and collective effort to eliminate this inequality.

In the realm of social responsibility and policy-making, Children's Day has a far-reaching impact. This day compels the government and policymakers to think deeply about what new schemes or programs they can adopt for child welfare. Investing in children's health and education is essential for the country's future security, stability, and progress. This day draws society's attention to issues like malnutrition, child mortality rates, and lack of primary healthcare. Providing accessible, high-quality, and equitable education to every child is not just the government's duty but a national necessity. Children's Day makes the country's citizens aware that using child labor is a heinous crime and everyone must fight against it. Every child should be able to fully enjoy their childhood, with play, love, and security. People at all levels of society, especially institutions working in education, health, and child welfare, should commit to working together for children's better lives. This day inspires voluntary organizations and social workers to review the importance of their work and become more actively dedicated to protecting children's rights.

In conclusion, Children's Day is an annual reminder that takes us to the depth of Pandit Nehru's child-centric philosophy and awakens our national conscience. The essence of his philosophy was that proper care, nurturing, and education in today's childhood lay the foundation for tomorrow's strong, prosperous, and just nation. This day firmly reminds us that the responsibility for every child's future is ours. If we cannot provide our children with a safe, loving, and inspiring environment, dreaming of a developed country is futile. Therefore, the main objective of celebrating Children's Day should be to provide equal opportunities to every child without discrimination, surround them with love and security, and help them grow in a healthy and inspiring environment. It is not just a day's joyful festival but a profound, sincere, and eternal commitment to work for children's welfare year-round, every moment. Fulfilling this commitment is the greatest and highest tribute to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.

## Children at the Heart of the Nation

# Advancing Nehru's vision through rights and responsibility

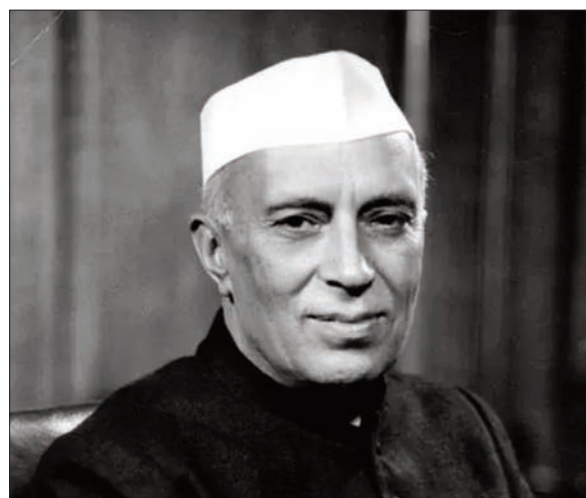
By: Dipak Kurmi

Children's Day, celebrated every year on November 14, fills India with a festive spirit as the nation pays tribute to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, its first Prime Minister and a devoted champion of children's welfare. Fondly remembered as Chacha Nehru for his affection toward young minds, he firmly believed that children were the true architects of India's destiny. His timeless words—"The children of today will make the India of tomorrow. The way we bring them up will determine the future of the country"—continue to inspire generations. Yet, as India observes Children's Day 2025 under the theme "For Every Child, Every Right," a sobering truth lingers: the gulf between the day's lofty ideals and the everyday realities of millions of Indian children remains deeply troubling.

Children's Day, also known as Bal Diwas, transforms schools across India into vibrant centers of joy and creativity. Cultural programs featuring singing, dancing, and dramatic performances fill auditoriums with laughter and applause. Drawing competitions, poster-making contests, and essay-writing exercises encourage children to express their vision for the future and their understanding of rights. Teachers distribute sweets and gifts, creating memories that children cherish long after the day concludes. Public lectures and awareness programs highlight the significance of children's education and welfare, keeping alive the spirit of compassion and responsibility that Nehru embodied throughout his life. Beyond his words, Nehru's legacy includes the establishment of the Children's Film Society of India, an institution designed to foster creative instincts and provide cultural enrichment for young audiences. His policies aimed at eliminating child labor and ensuring equal educational opportunities laid foundations that continue to inspire contemporary child welfare initiatives.

The theme for 2025, "For Every Child, Every Right," carries profound significance in a nation where approximately 480 million children constitute a substantial portion of the population. This theme emphasizes the imperative of protecting children's rights and ensuring their development within healthy, nurturing environments. It acknowledges that every child, regardless of socioeconomic background, possesses inherent rights related to survival, identity, development, protection, and participation. These rights must be upheld universally—in urban centers, rural villages, and tribal communities alike. However, despite India's implementation of numerous policies and legislative measures designed to safeguard children, the execution of these protections remains tragically insufficient. The reality confronting millions of Indian children is marked by deprivation, abuse, neglect, and exploitation, revealing that symbolic celebrations alone cannot address systemic failures.

Child survival constitutes one of the most pressing challenges facing contemporary India. The statistics are stark and deeply troubling. According to the National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5) conducted during 2019-20, a staggering 38.4% of children under five years suffer from stunting, while 19.3% are wasted and 7.7% are severely wasted. Additionally, 32.1% of children are underweight, and an alarming 67.1% suffer from anemia. These figures expose the extent of malnutrition and poor health conditions affecting India's youngest citizens. High infant and neonatal mortality rates persist, compounded by gender inequality and the horrific practice of female foeticide, which



prevents girl children from even experiencing birth. Girls face systemic discrimination and are frequently denied their fundamental right to life and well-being. Addressing these critical issues demands significant governmental investment in comprehensive child survival strategies, including access to quality healthcare services, adequate nutrition, education, and universal immunization programs against preventable diseases. Strengthening public health infrastructure to provide safe drinking water, proper sanitation, and environmental protection remains essential. Combating hunger and malnutrition requires ensuring food and nutritional security not only for children but for their entire families.

The right to identity begins with birth registration, representing a child's first civil right. Although India recognized international standards defining children as individuals up to the age of eighteen back in 1992, many children still lack access to services supporting early childhood care and development. Ensuring that every child has adequate housing and shelter is fundamental to their overall development and protection. Education represents another critical domain where India's performance falls dramatically short of its constitutional promises. Despite the 86th Constitutional Amendment guaranteeing free and compulsory education for children aged six to fourteen, this right remains unprotected for significant numbers of children who continue to remain outside the formal education system. Children with disabilities or special needs face particularly severe challenges, with only five percent receiving any form of assistance and merely two percent accessing schooling opportunities. The state must prioritize providing quality education, healthcare, nutrition, and security for underserved children, particularly those from socially marginalized and economically backward communities.

Children living in urban slums, working children, and those from construction worker families encounter formidable barriers to development. Instead of attending school and enjoying their childhood, these children face exposure to hazardous working conditions and substance abuse. They work in tea stalls, garages, buses, and various industries, often earning minimal wages while enduring physical and emotional mistreatment. Child labor, fundamentally a form of abuse, deprives children of their childhood, education, and developmental opportunities. While poverty serves as a root cause of child labor, protective measures

must be implemented to shield children from exploitation and ensure they receive education and healthcare. Legislative measures combating child abuse in all its forms—physical, emotional, sexual abuse, and neglect—must be strengthened significantly. The World Health Organization defines child abuse as any form of maltreatment that harms a child's health, survival, or development. While physical abuse leaves visible scars, emotional and sexual abuse inflict deep, lasting psychological damage. Ignoring a child's needs or exposing them to unsupervised danger constitutes serious neglect.

In developed nations, physicians are legally mandated to report cases of child abuse. Implementing similar legislation in India, requiring physicians and other professionals to report suspected abuse, would represent a crucial step forward in protecting vulnerable children. Budget allocations for child welfare must be substantially increased, with particular focus on primary education. Improvements in educational quality, curriculum reforms, and innovative teaching methods are vital for creating meaningful learning experiences. Children also face threats beyond domestic and economic exploitation. During communal violence and insurgency, children often become orphans, losing parents and family members. These children suffer from neglect, discrimination, and lack of basic services due to absent family support. Children from tribal and indigenous communities prove particularly vulnerable to alienation and are disproportionately affected by armed conflict and social violence. They require special protection against trafficking, communal and political violence, and displacement caused by migration.

Emergency support services remain crucial for children in distress. The toll-free emergency helpline, Child Line 1098, should be expanded and promoted to ensure that children needing help can access assistance promptly. Shelter homes and orphanages are essential for children without families, and adoption procedures must always prioritize the child's best interests. In rural areas, where a significant portion of India's population resides, child protection services must be robust and effective. Panchayat officials should bear responsibility for ensuring that children in their communities access basic education, healthcare, and nutrition while remaining protected from being drawn into agricultural or other forms of exploitative labor.

Both government agencies and non-governmental organizations play essential roles in reaching neglected and abused children, addressing their comprehensive needs for education, healthcare, and rehabilitation. Celebrating Children's Day on November 14 carries symbolic importance, but it must serve as more than mere celebration—it should function as a powerful reminder and urgent call to action for all citizens to commit genuinely to protecting children's rights. Only through substantial legislative support, enhanced budget allocations, and effective implementation of child protection schemes can India ensure that children's rights are truly upheld and their futures secured. As the nation honors Nehru's vision this Children's Day, it must recognize that investing in children represents the most profound investment in the nation's promise and prosperity. Let this day inspire collective action to create an environment where every child can thrive, free from abuse, neglect, and exploitation—making the promise of "For Every Child, Every Right" not merely a theme, but a lived reality. (the writer can be reached at dipakkurmipld@gmail.com)

## World Diabetes Day – November 14, 2025

# Conquer diabetes not just with medicine, but with a balanced life

*Effective diabetes management goes beyond medication and diet. It includes mental health support, stress management, lifestyle education, and community engagement. The goal is to empower individuals to live healthy and fulfilling lives despite the challenges of the disease. The focus must shift from merely treating the illness to nurturing the person. This year's campaign urges doctors, policymakers, and communities to look beyond blood sugar levels, and address the overall well-being—physical, emotional, and social—of those living with diabetes*

By: Lalit Garg

The growing threat of diabetes across the world is deeply alarming—every third urban adult is battling this silent yet devastating disease. Diabetes not only weakens the body but also fuels several other health disorders. The main culprits behind its spread are irregular eating habits and a sedentary lifestyle. World Diabetes Day is observed every year on November 14, commemorating the birth anniversary of Sir Frederick Banting, who, along with Charles Best, discovered insulin in 1922—an innovation that gave humanity a lifeline against diabetes. The International Diabetes Federation (IDF) and the World Health Organization (WHO) initiated this observance in 1991. This year's theme—“Diabetes and Overall Well-being”—emphasizes that diabetes management is not merely about taking medicines, but about living a life rooted in balance, discipline, and awareness.

Today, diabetes has become a global health challenge. Changing lifestyles, erratic diets, stress, obesity, and physical inactivity are the key factors driving its growth. It is a silent invader that gradually weakens vital organs like the heart, kidneys, eyes, and nerves. Managing diabetes is not just a medical concern—it is an art of living. What is required most is balance: balanced diet, balanced sleep, balanced thoughts, and balanced conduct. This equilibrium is the true mantra of health. When life

moves in harmony and discipline, diseases naturally retreat. Diabetes, therefore, is not merely a disease—it is a test of one's commitment to mindful living.

Effective diabetes management goes beyond medication and diet. It includes mental health support, stress management, lifestyle education, and community engagement. The goal is to empower individuals to live healthy and fulfilling lives despite the challenges of the disease. The focus must shift from merely treating the illness to nurturing the person. This year's campaign urges doctors, policymakers, and communities to look beyond blood sugar levels, and address the overall well-being—physical, emotional, and social—of those living with diabetes. To combat diabetes, one must avoid myths and misconceptions. What is needed is not a big heart, but a wise heart. Moderate, mindful eating is perhaps the simplest and most effective medicine. Diabetes is spreading rapidly in India and across the world—affecting both young and old alike. Once considered a disease of middle age, it is now gripping children and youth as well. In India alone, nearly 100 million people are living with diabetes, while 440 million are affected worldwide. India's prevalence rate has reached 11.5%, with 15.3% of the population at a pre-diabetic stage—meaning one in every ten Indians is at risk. Globally, it is estimated that by 2050, more than 850 million people will be living with diabetes.

To prevent and manage diabetes, regular physical activity is the key. Morning walks, light exercise, jogging, or cycling keep the body active and help stabilize blood glucose levels. Additionally, yoga and meditation have proven to be extremely beneficial in diabetes control. Yoga not only strengthens the body but calms the mind and reduces stress. Practices like pranayama, anulom-vilom, kapalbhati, and bhramari help regulate insulin secretion and bring mental stability. Stress and depression are hidden enemies of diabetes. When the mind is under pressure, cortisol and other stress hormones rise, increasing blood sugar levels. Thus, maintaining mental calmness and happiness is as crucial as physical health.

Diet plays an equally vital role. Purity and moderation in food are essential. Today's fast-paced lifestyle, dominated by junk food, processed meals, fried and sugary snacks, is wrecking our health. The best medicine is simple, fresh, and wholesome food—whole grains, pulses, green vegetables, salads, fruits, sprouts, and plenty of water. Avoid excessive sweets, fried food, salt, and caffeinated drinks. Eating on time and avoiding overeating are simple yet powerful habits. Indeed, “As is the food, so is the mind” holds especially true in the context of diabetes. Balanced living is not only about diet and exercise—it's also about cultivating positive thinking and disciplined routine. Those who dedicate even a short time daily to yoga, meditation, and self-reflection remain health-



ier—both physically and mentally. Negative emotions like anger, jealousy, and dissatisfaction create chemical imbalances in the body, paving the way for disease. Learning to let go, to stay cheerful and light-hearted, is equally important. Spending time in spiritual practices, satsang, music, literature, nature, and with family—these nourish both body and soul. Laughter and joy are as therapeutic as medicine.

Diabetic individuals should regularly monitor their blood sugar levels and strictly follow medical advice. Along with prescribed treatment, self-awareness and continuous lifestyle improvement form the foundation of lasting health. To sum up, keep the body active, the mind calm, and the diet restrained—these are the three divine principles of diabetes control.

The message of this year's World Diabetes Day is clear: medicine alone is not enough; we must transform the way we live. The most effective cure for diabetes is “a balanced life.” When the mind, body, and soul are in harmony, health naturally blossoms. Let us pledge this November 14 to lead a disciplined, positive, and health-centered life—to practice regular yoga and meditation, eat mindfully, reduce stress, and treat our body with love and respect. A healthy body is the greatest wealth of all. Diabetes has not come to frighten us—it has come to awaken us. It teaches us the art of balance, discipline, and conscious living. Once we understand this message, even diabetes becomes a teacher of harmony and self-awareness in our journey toward wellness.

## Humans Began by the Sea

By: Satyabrata Borah

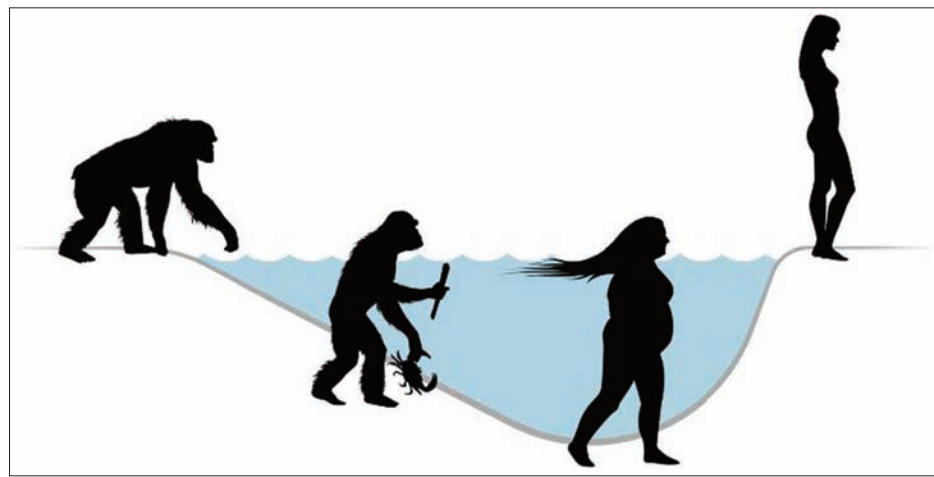
The idea that modern humans first stepped onto the world stage along the rugged shores of southern Africa feels almost poetic. Imagine a small band of people, perhaps no more than a few families, standing on a windswept beach seventy thousand years ago. The Indian Ocean stretches before them, its waves crashing against rocks stained red with iron-rich soil. Behind them lie the rolling hills of the Cape, dotted with shellfish middens and the faint traces of fires long extinguished. These were not wanderers lost in the wilderness but skilled foragers who knew every tide pool and every edible root. They were, according to a growing chorus of scientists, the ancestors of every person reading these words today.

For decades, the story of human origins centered on eastern Africa. The Great Rift Valley, with its dramatic escarpments and fossil-rich sediments, seemed the obvious cradle. Olduvai Gorge, Lake Turkana, the Afar Triangle—these places produced the bones and tools that shaped the narrative. Textbooks spoke of a single exodus around sixty thousand years ago, a determined march out of the Horn of Africa into Arabia and then the world. Yet cracks began to appear in this tidy picture. Geneticists noticed odd patterns in the DNA of living populations. Archaeologists uncovered strange anomalies along the southern coast. Oceanographers pointed to shifting sea levels that once exposed vast coastal plains. Slowly, a different story emerged, one rooted not in savannas but in the interplay of land and sea.

The southern Cape coast offers a landscape unlike any other in Africa. Here, the Atlantic and Indian Oceans meet in a restless dance, their currents carrying nutrients that support an astonishing abundance of marine life. Kelp forests sway like underwater meadows, sheltering fish, seals, and shellfish in quantities that would make any inland hunter envious. Seventy thousand years ago, the shoreline lay dozens of kilometers farther out than it does today, revealing a broad shelf of fertile ground. Early humans who ventured onto this exposed plain found a banquet laid out for the taking. Mussels clung to rocks in dense clusters. Limpets and periwinkles carpeted the intertidal zone. Seals hauled out on sandy beaches to breed. Even the plants told a story of plenty—wild figs, geophytes with starchy tubers, and the honey-rich flowers that attracted birds and bees.

Archaeologists have spent years piecing together the lives of these coastal dwellers. At sites like Pinnacle Point, Klasies River, and Blombos Cave, they have unearthed layers of occupation stretching back hundreds of thousands of years. But the period around seventy thousand years ago stands out. The middens grow thicker, the tools more sophisticated. Tiny bladelets made from heat-treated silcrete appear, their edges sharp enough to slice through seal blubber. Ochre, ground into powder and mixed with fat, suggests the first hints of symbolic behavior—perhaps body paint, perhaps the marking of possessions. Most telling of all are the shellfish remains. The species change over time, reflecting not random foraging but deliberate selection. People chose the largest mussels, the fattest limpets, the oysters with the thickest meat. They knew the tides, the seasons, the places where the water ran clearest.

Genetics paints a complementary picture. When scientists sequence the DNA of modern humans, they find the deepest branches leading back to southern Africa. The Khoisan peoples, who still speak languages filled with clicks and



pops, carry some of the oldest lineages on Earth. Their genomes contain variations that predate the out-of-Africa migration by tens of thousands of years. Mitochondrial DNA, passed down through mothers, tells a similar tale. The L0 haplogroup, the most ancient of all, reaches its highest diversity along the Cape coast. These are not minor details. They suggest that the population living by the sea seventy thousand years ago was not a sideshow but the main event—a reservoir of genetic diversity from which the rest of humanity would eventually spring.

Climate played a crucial role in this story. Around seventy thousand years ago, the world was locked in the grip of a glacial period. Sea levels dropped by as much as one hundred twenty meters, exposing the coastal shelf and creating a highway of sorts along the southern edge of the continent. Rainfall patterns shifted, turning inland areas into arid corridors difficult to cross. The coast, however, remained a green ribbon of plenty. Rivers flowing from the Cape Fold Mountains carried fresh water to the shore. Fog rolling in from the cold Benguela Current nourished drought-resistant plants. For a population adapted to marine resources, this was paradise. They could move eastward along the shoreline, following the kelp forests and seal colonies, without ever straying far from food and water.

The evidence for this coastal migration comes from multiple lines of inquiry. Archaeologists have found similar toolkits at sites stretching from the Cape to the Horn of Africa, suggesting a shared technological tradition. Beads made from ostrich eggshell appear in layers dated to fifty thousand years ago, first in the south and later in the east. Genetic studies of ancient DNA, though still limited, show early mixing between southern and eastern populations. Even the parasites tell a tale—tapeworms carried by seals infected coastal humans long before they reached inland groups. Taken together, these clues point to a gradual expansion along the Indian Ocean rim, a journey measured in generations rather than a single dramatic exodus.

By fifty thousand years ago, some of these coastal people had reached the eastern tip of Africa. From there, the path to Arabia lay open. Sea levels were still low, and the Bab-el-Mandeb Strait narrowed to a mere twenty kilometers. A raft made from bundled reeds could cross in a day. The Arabian Peninsula, at that time, was wetter than today, its wadis filled with grass and game. From there, the migration accelerated. Some groups turned north into the Levant, others east along the coast toward India. Within ten thousand years, humans had reached Australia, crossing water gaps that required boats and planning. The descendants of those

Cape beachcombers were now everywhere.

This new narrative does not erase the importance of eastern Africa. The Rift Valley remains a treasure trove of fossils, and many key innovations—fire, language, art—likely emerged there. But the coast offers something the interior could not: a stable, predictable food supply that allowed populations to grow and experiment. The constant availability of omega-3 fatty acids from seafood may have fueled brain development. The need to predict tides and track seal migrations sharpened cognitive skills. The sheer density of resources supported larger groups, fostering social complexity. In short, the sea did not just feed these people; it shaped them.

The implications ripple far beyond archaeology. If the southern coast was the launchpad for global migration, then the story of human dispersal becomes less a tale of heroic treks across deserts and more a saga of adaptation to a changing shoreline. It explains why the earliest evidence of seafaring appears in Southeast Asia rather than the Mediterranean. It accounts for the rapid spread of certain tool types across vast distances. It even sheds light on the persistence of coastal populations today—fishermen in Oman, pearl divers in the Persian Gulf, surfers in California—all carrying echoes of those ancient beachcombers.

Of course, the picture remains incomplete. Many sites along the ancient coastline now lie underwater, swallowed by rising seas at the end of the Ice Age. New discoveries, perhaps from underwater archaeology or improved dating techniques, could refine the timeline. Climate models continue to evolve, offering fresh insights into past rainfall and sea level. Geneticists are only beginning to tap the potential of ancient DNA from African contexts. Yet the weight of evidence grows heavier with each passing year. The southern Cape, once a footnote, now stands at the center of the human story.

Standing on the beach at Pinnacle Point today, it is easy to feel the weight of seventy thousand years. The same waves crash against the same rocks. The same gulls wheel overhead, scavenging scraps from fishermen's nets. The middens are gone, eroded by time and tide, but the caves remain, their walls blackened by ancient fires. In the silence between waves, one can almost hear the voices of those first coastal dwellers—children laughing as they pry mussels from the rocks, elders telling stories of the great seal hunts, young couples planning the next move along the endless shore. They did not know they were changing the world. They only knew the tide would return, the shellfish would be there, and the path eastward lay open. From such small beginnings, everything we are today began.

## Bihar Election 2025: Social Biasness of National Parties

By: Er Prabhat Kishore

The Indian constitution provides its citizens the fundamental rights to equality in all respect. Equality before the law prohibits discrimination. But in terms of leadership & candidature, this does not apply to the so-called national political parties. Generally, the manifestos of all parties, deals with equal opportunities to the people, irrespective of their caste or class. The slogan like “Samajik Nyay”, “Sabka Sath Sabka Vikas” or “Nyay Ke Sath Vikas” etc. of political parties present a daydream scenario. But when elections are held, these dreamy slogans find their place on just colourful papers and actual ground reality reflects havoc pictures. Since independence, national parties particularly Congress, Bharatiya Janata Party (or erstwhile Jansangh) and Communist Party (all factions) have brush the social balance in candidature selection under the carpet. A handful of castes or groups dominate candidature lists and leadership issue remains a dream for majority of socially depressed population.

After 1931, caste wise survey has been conducted in Bihar in 2022-23. Although many families have been left out, but the report presents a nearby current figure. As per report, the caste composition in Bihar is as – Upper Castes – 15.52%, Backward Castes-27.12%, Extremely Backward Castes-36.01%, SC-19.65% and ST- 1.68%. The religion wise composition is as –Hindu-81.99%, Muslim-17.7%, Sikh-0.01%, Buddhist-0.08%, Jain-0.06% and others—0.06%. Among Muslim communities, nearly three-fourth of its population falls under the BC/EBC ambit.

The battle for Bihar Vidhan Sabha election 2025 is in its final stage. The social background of the candidates reveals a grim scenario in terms of proportionate social representation. Except the JDU of CM Nitish Kumar, who is termed as social engineer, all the parties have once again proved their prejudice in providing tickets to various depressed communities as per their share. In ticket allotment, JDU has tried its best in providing proper representation to various social groups. Out of its share of 101, JDU has allotted 41 seats to Backward Castes (Yadav-8, Kurmi-12, Koeri-13, Vaisya-8), 17 seats to Extremely Backward Castes (including 8 to Dhanuk, a sub-caste of Kurmi), 22 seats to upper castes (Bhumihar-9, Brahmin-2, Rajput-10, Kayasth-1), its share of 17 reserved seats to SC/ST, and 4 seats to Muslims. RJD of Tejaswi Prasad, ex-Deputy CM, has also allotted tickets to backward classes as per its overall quota, but has shown preconception towards non-Yadav backward, particularly Kurmi-Koeri. Out of its share of 144 seats, RJD has provided 50% seats to its “MY” equation, particularly 52 tickets to its core voter Yadav and 18 to Muslims. Both the national parties BJP and Congress have once again proved, in their ticket distribution, that socially backward masses are still irrelevant for leadership. BJP list of 101 candidates consists of 49 upper castes (Bhumihar-16, Brahmin-11, Rajput-21, Kayasth-1), 35 backward castes (Yadav-6, Kurmi-2, Koeri-7, Vaisya-15), 10 EBC, and 12 reserved seats to SC/ST. Congress list of 60 candidates are also on the similar pattern of BJP.

Denial of tickets to Muslims in BJP is not surprising, as they are believed not to vote for the party en masse; but apathy towards Kurmi-Koeri, who aggressively vote for BJOP due to Nitish Kumar's face, shows their biasness to Nitish's Core voters. The pattern of previous Parliament as well as Vidhan Sabha elections after 2005 reveals that JDU is always contrived by its alliance partners. In many constituencies, where JDU's backward class candidates struggle, a bunch of BJP's upper caste voters prefer to move towards Congress or other parties or even independent candidates of their own social

group. Knowing this trend, RJD provides nominal tickets to upper castes except Rajputs. Moreover, in seat sharing, JDU always lags behind its ally and has to contest seats in the stronghold of opposition party, whereas BJP fights on seats where either its own or ally's core voters dominate.

In the 2010 Vidhan Sabha election, when JDU-BJP were allies, JDU's strike rate (115 won/141 contested, i.e. 81.56%) was below BJP (91/102 i.e. 89.21%), clearly revealing that BJP's core votes did not transferred to JDU in some areas, especially to its backward candidates; whereas JDU's core voters aggressively rallied behind BJP. Same was the scenario in 2015 Vidhan Sabha election, when JDU-RJD alliance was in fray. JDU's strike rate (71/101, i.e. 70.29%) was lower than RJD's (80/101, i.e. 79.20%), as a sizeable bunch of RJD's core voters preferred non-JDU homogenate candidates in place of official JDU candidates in some constituencies. In Vidhan Sabha election 2020, when JDU-BJP alliance was in position, JDU's strike rate (43/115, i.e. 37.39%) was significantly lower than that of BJP (74/110, i.e. 67.27%), as the BJP's core voter were completely against the JDU and heavyweight leaders of BJP contested on LJP tickets on seats of JDU.

In 2010, RJD's strike rate was only 22/168, i.e. 13.09% and in 2015 that of BJP was 53/157 i.e. 33.75%, when JDU was in rival camp. In alliance with JDU-RJD, the faltering Congress also gets lifeline when its strike rate jumped from 4/243 i.e. 1.64% in 2010 to 27/41, i.e. 65.85% in 2015. Strike rate of Ram Vilas Paswan's LJP remains nearly constant at merely 4% in 2010 & 4.76% in 2015. The 2020 election scenario was completely different, as the JDU was facing off not only against the Mahagathbandhan but also against the Chirag Paswan-led LJP (supported by local BJP units).

In the 2010 election, the vote percentage of major parties was as :- JDU (contested seat-141)- 22.58%, BJP (102)- 16.49%, RJD (168)- 18.84%, LJP (75)- 6.74%, and Congress (243)- 8.37%; in the 2015 election it was as :- JDU (contested seat-101)- 16.83%, RJD (101)- 18.35%, Congress (41)- 6.68%, BJP (157)- 24.24%, LJP (42)- 4.83%, RLSJP (23)- 2.56%, and in the 2020 election it was as :- JDU (contested seat-115)- 15.39%, RJD (144)- 23.11%, Congress (41)- 9.48%, BJP (110)- 19.46%, LJP (148)- 5.66%, BSP - 1.49% MIM-1.24%. Although, the poll percentage also depends on number of seats contested.

The pattern of previous election results reveals that whenever socialist groups unitedly fight against the BJP or the Congress, backward classes get relatively higher representation in the House and when they split, upper caste lobby of Congress-BJP-Communists dominates. The result of 1990Lok Sabha election shows that when socialist's groups were united as Janata Dal, 53 of the 54 seats in united Bihar were won by Backward-Dalit candidates. In year 2005 & 2010 Vidhan Sabha elections, when the JDU & RJD were in opposite alliances, the overall seats of backward classes were lowered, whereas in 2015, when JDU-RJD join hands under political compulsion, seats of socially deprived groups, particularly Yadav, was increased in the House.

In Vidhan Sabha election 2025, the two regional parties JDU and RJD are again in rival camps and their allies national Parties, BJP and Congress respectively, have not only grabbed much more seats than in previous elections; but has allotted nearly half of their quota to upper caste candidates. There is no doubt that the representation of Backward classes, especially small artisan & landless castes, in Vidhan Sabha will once again lower down, which will be an alarming situation for the socially deprived masses, who even after 78 years of independence have not reached the proportionate figure in Vidhan Sabha as per their population share.

## Bangladesh's special tribunal to deliver verdict against Hasina on Nov 17

**DHAKA, Nov 13:** A special tribunal in Bangladesh on Thursday said it will deliver judgement on November 17 in a case against deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina over alleged crimes against humanity committed during the July Uprising.

Hasina, 78, faces multiple cases in Bangladesh after being ousted in August last year following the mass student-led agitation. According to a UN rights office report, up to 1,400 people were killed between July 15 and August 15 last year (dubbed as July Uprising) as Hasina's government ordered a security crackdown on protesters.

"Justice Golam Mortuza Mozumder, chairman of a three-member panel of the International Crimes Tribunal (ICT-BD), set November 17 for delivering the verdict," a lawyer, attending the tightly secured special court in the capital, told PTI.

Hasina, her home minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal and then inspector general of police (IGP) Chowdhury Abdullah Al-Mamun were tried in the tribunal. The ex-premier and Kamal were tried in absentia, with the court declaring them fugitives.

Chief prosecutor Mohammad Tajul Islam has demanded the death penalty for Hasina, alleging that she was the "mastermind and principal architect" behind the crimes against



humanity committed during the mass protests last year.

Hasina's supporters say the charges against her are politically motivated.

Mamun faced the trial in person but emerged as an approver or state witness.

The former police chief appeared on the dock as the ICT-BD chair Justice Majumder fixed the date.

The tribunal on October 23 concluded the hearing on the case after over 28 working days, when 54 witnesses testified before the court describing how efforts were made to tame last year's student-led movement called July Uprising that toppled Hasina's now disbanded

Awami League government on August 5, 2024.

Hasina fled Bangladesh on August 5 last year amid escalating unrest and is currently residing in India. Kamal reportedly also took refuge in the neighbouring country. The interim government led by Muhammad Yunus has sought Hasina's extradition, but India has yet to respond to the request.

Security in the capital was heightened over the "Dhaka lockdown" call by the Awami League, coinciding with the tribunal's announcement of the verdict date.

Authorities called up army troops, paramilitary Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) and police in

riot gear to spread a security blanket in and around the International Crimes Tribunal (ICT-BD) complex at central Dhaka.

Witnesses and reports said Dhaka streets looked unusually empty, though many commuters stepped out of their homes and cautiously headed for workplaces and schools.

However, many private institutions, including private universities, preferred to operate online, fearing the outbreak of violence.

Transport operators said passenger numbers on long-haul buses leaving Dhaka dropped sharply, while the capital's major Gabtoli bus terminal remained largely empty with fewer trips and delayed departures.

Hasina and the two others were accused of committing crimes under five counts, with the first one alleging the defendants of murder, attempted murder, torture, and other inhumane acts.

The second count accused Hasina of ordering the "extermination" of protesters. Under the third count, she was accused of making inflammatory remarks and ordering the use of deadly weapons against protesting students.

Under the rest of the counts, the defendants were charged with the shooting and murder of six unarmed protesters, including students in Dhaka and its suburbs. (PTI)

## Ukraine's army chief visits besieged city as Zelenskyy confronts graft scandal



**KYIV, Nov 13:** Ukraine's top military commander said on Thursday he visited troops holding the front line in a key eastern city besieged by Russian forces, while Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy grappled with the fallout from a corruption scandal that has engulfed his administration.

After Zelenskyy's justice and energy ministers quit on Wednesday amid the investigation into alleged energy sector graft, the government fired the vice president of Energoatom, the state-owned nuclear power company believed by investigators to be at the centre of the kickback scheme.

The heads of Energoatom's finance, legal and procurement departments and a consultant to Energoatom's president were also dismissed in the clear-out. Prime Minister Yulia Svyrydenko said late on Wednesday. A Kyiv court has begun hearing evidence from anti-corruption watchdogs whose 15-month investigation, including 1,000 hours of wiretaps, has brought the detention of five people and implicated another seven in the scheme that allegedly earned about USD 100 million.

Tymur Mindich, a co-owner of Zelenskyy's Kwartal

95 media production company, is the conspiracy's suspected mastermind. His whereabouts are unknown.

The investigation has prompted questions about what the country's highest officials knew of the scheme. It has also awakened memories of Zelenskyy's attempt last summer to curtail Ukraine's anti-corruption watchdogs. He backtracked after widespread street protests in Ukraine and pressure from the European Union, which has pushed the country to address entrenched corruption.

While Ukrainians expressed anger and disbelief at the unfolding scandal, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said the EU would disburse on Thursday a 6 billion euros (USD 7 billion) loan to Ukraine and promised more money for Kyiv.

"We will cover the financial needs of Ukraine for the next two years," she said in a speech to the European Parliament.

The EU and other foreign partners have poured money into Ukraine's energy sector. Russia has relentlessly bombarded the power grid, which requires repeated repairs.

The EU is looking into how it can come up with more money for Ukraine, either by seizing frozen Russian assets, raising funds on capital markets, or having some of the 27 EU nations raise the money themselves. Russian President Vladimir Putin "thinks he can outlast us" in the battle over Ukraine's future, nearly four years after Russia's all-out invasion of its neighbour, von der Leyen said.

"And this is a clear miscalculation," she said. "Now is therefore the moment to come, with a new impetus, to unlock Putin's cynical attempt to buy time and bring him to the negotiation table."

Meanwhile, Gen. Oleksandr Syrskiy, Ukraine's top military commander, visited units fighting to hold Pokrovsk in the eastern Donetsk region and coordinate operations in person, he said on the messaging app Telegram. (AP)

## Over 325 Indian fishermen arrested by Sri Lankan navy so far in 2025



**COLOMBO, Nov 13:** At least 328 Indian fishermen have been arrested and 41 trawlers seized so far this year for allegedly fishing in Sri Lankan waters, a minister said here Thursday.

Deputy minister of fisheries Rathna Gamage said Sri Lanka has intensified the operations to stop "illegal fishing" by Indian trawlers in the international maritime border.

Pointing out that there has been an increase in arrests of Indian fishermen for poaching this year, Gamage told reporters that so far 328 Indian fishermen have been arrested and their 41 trawlers have been seized by the Sri Lankan Navy.

Such operations are jointly carried out by the Fisheries Ministry, the Navy, and the Police.

Destructive fishing methods deployed by foreign fishermen who poach in the Lankan waters poses a threat to local fishermen and also causes marine environmental hazards, the minister said.

In the latest such arrest, on November 10, Sri Lankan Navy said it arrested 14 Indian fishermen and seized their fishing boat a day earlier for allegedly fishing in the island nation's waters off the Analtivu Island, Jaffna.

The Palk Strait, a narrow strip of water separating Tamil Nadu from Sri Lanka, is a rich fishing ground for fishermen from both countries.

The fishermen issue is a contentious one in the ties between India and Sri Lanka, with the Sri Lankan Navy personnel sometimes even firing at Indian fishermen in the Palk Strait and seizing their boats for illegally entering Sri Lanka's territorial waters. (PTI)

## Pak claims Islamabad suicide bomber was Afghan national

**ISLAMABAD, Nov 13:** Pakistan's Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Thursday said that the suicide bomber involved in the deadly Islamabad bombing was an Afghan national.

At least 12 people were killed on Tuesday when a suicide bomber detonated his explosives near the entrance of a court in the G-11 area of the capital.

After visiting the attack site, Naqvi had announced to identify the bomber before pointing fingers in any direction.

Addressing the Senate on Thursday, Naqvi said that authorities have identified the attackers as well as those involved in the Islamabad bombing. "We have traced the attacker. The suicide bomber is an Afghan national," he said.

The minister also said that the suicide bombers involved in the Wana Cadet College attack in South Waziristan district this week were also from Afghanistan.

He also announced that action would be taken at an appropriate level.

Six people were injured on Monday after a suicide bomber detonated explosives at the main gate of the Wana Cadet College in South Waziristan, bordering Afghanistan.

Replying to a question outside the parliament, Naqvi rejected the idea of talks with militants. "How can we talk to them when they are throwing bombs on us? It is not possible," he said.



Separately, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar said that terrorism increased after the Taliban came to power.

"There is total goodwill from Pakistan, but every week we have to shoulder the dead bodies of our soldiers and people," Dar told the Senate.

He also targeted the previous government of Imran Khan for allegedly allowing the Taliban to come back from Afghanistan, where they had fled after operations in the border regions. He also claimed the jailed Taliban militants were released during Khan's tenure.

"More than 100 hardened criminals were set free by the previous regime," he said. Meanwhile, security agencies have arrested two key suspects, a handler and a facilitator, in connection with the suicide bombing in Islamabad, reported Geo News. (PTI)

## Cambodia evacuates village on disputed border with Thailand as tensions rise

**PHNOM PENH (CAMBODIA), Nov 13:** Cambodia on Thursday evacuated hundreds of people from a village along its disputed border with Thailand, a day after one of its residents was reported killed when shooting between the two nations broke out there.

Wednesday's shooting occurred two days after a Thai soldier lost a foot to a land mine while patrolling another area of the border. Thailand blamed Cambodia for the blast and announced it was suspending honouring the terms of a ceasefire partly brokered by US President Donald Trump.

Territorial disputes over exactly where the border lies between the Southeast Asian neighbours led to five days of armed conflict in late July that killed dozens of soldiers and civilians. But tensions remained high. Many terms of a more detailed truce agreement signed last

month have not yet been implemented.

A Cambodian man identified as Dy Nai was reportedly killed in a shooting on Wednesday, while three other people were wounded.

About 250 families from Prey Chan village in Cambodia's northwestern province of Banteay Meanchey, where the shooting took place, were evacuated to a Buddhist temple about 30 kilometres (18 miles) from the border, said Ly Sovannarith, the provincial vice governor.

The same village was the site of a violent but not lethal confrontation in September between Thai security personnel and Cambodian villagers.

The Cambodian Defence Ministry on Thursday led members of a team assigned to monitor the ceasefire at the border. The observer team included officials from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Manet on Wednesday called for an independent investigation into the incident to bring justice to those affected by the shooting.

The ceasefire appeared to be breaking down after the landmine explosion earlier this week. Thailand accused Cambodia of laying new mines in violation of the truce, which Cambodia denied. Thailand said it would pause implementation of the agreement indefinitely. It also demanded that Cambodia apologise, conduct a thorough investigation and prevent such incidents in the future.

Hun Manet said the shooting occurred after Thai forces engaged in "numerous provocative actions for many days with the objective of instigating confrontations." He added that Cambodia would still honour the ceasefire terms. (AP)

## Turkey temporarily grounds C-130 planes after crash kills 20 military personnel

**ANKARA (TURKEY), Nov 13:** Turkey has temporarily grounded its C-130 military cargo planes as a precaution, the Defence Ministry announced Thursday, following a crash in Georgia that claimed the lives of all 20 military personnel on board. The cargo plane was flying from Ganja, Azerbaijan to Turkey when it crashed in Georgia's Signaghi municipality, close to the Azerbaijani border, on Tuesday. The cause of the crash is being investigated.

The military personnel were part of a unit responsible for the maintenance and repair of Turkish F-16 jets that had flown to Azerbaijan to participate in that country's Victory Day celebrations. The event marked Azerbaijan's 2020 military success over Armenia for control of the Karabakh region, known internationally as Nagorno-Karabakh, a conflict that had lasted nearly four decades.

The National Defence Ministry said C-130 flights were temporarily

suspended to allow the aircraft to undergo detailed technical inspections. Only those who successfully pass the checks would be allowed to resume flying, the ministry said in a statement.

C-130 military cargo planes are widely used by Turkey's armed forces for transporting personnel and handling logistical operations.

Turkey dispatched an accident investigation team to determine the cause of the crash. The ministry said the plane's flight data recorder and cockpit voice data recorder were sent to Turkey and were under examination in Ankara.

The aircraft was purchased from Saudi Arabia in 2012 and was added to Turkey's Air Force inventory in 2014 after undergoing maintenance procedures. It later underwent modernisation and had been in use since 2022. Its most recent scheduled maintenance was completed on October 12, the ministry said. (AP)

## UK growth slows down to crawl in Q3 ahead of crucial budget

**LONDON, Nov 13:** UK economic growth slowed down to a near standstill in the third quarter of the year after a cyberattack halted production at the country's biggest automaker, official figures showed Thursday.

The slowdown represents a blow to the British government, less than two weeks ahead of a crucial budget that is expected to see taxes rise again.

The Office for National Statistics said that the economy grew by 0.1 per cent between July and September from the previous three-month period. That was down on the previous quarter's 0.3 per cent increase and below market expectations for a 0.2 per cent rise.

The cyberattack on Jaguar Land Rover was a key reason why growth came in lower than expected. The attack, which saw workers sent home on Aug. 31, halted production in the company's factories as well as suppliers. Operations restarted in October. (AP)

## UK ministers express condolences after Delhi terrorist attack



**LONDON, Nov 13:** Britain's Deputy Prime Minister, David Lammy, and British Indian minister for the Indo-Pacific Seema Malhotra have expressed their condolences to all those impacted by the terrorist attack in Delhi, which claimed 12 lives after a car explosion near Red Fort Metro station.

At a special event in honour of the bilateral partnership hosted by the UK's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development (FCDO) in London on Wednesday evening, Lammy described India as one of the UK's most important partners and an emerging superpower of the 21st century with the fastest growth in the G20.

He said the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) clinched during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's UK visit in July marked a new chapter for the partnership, "not just economically, but in securing a safer, more prosperous future for both our countries".

"I would like to start by adding to what my friend, Minister Malhotra, has said about the terrorist attack in Delhi on Monday night and share my condolences to everyone who has been affected," Lammy said at Lancaster House, a historic 19th century mansion near Buckingham Palace.

"Our joint story is so very far from over; and what we have achieved so far is only the start of what we can do together. Our trade agreement will deepen our historic ties and strengthen our economic partnership. Not least, thanks to

our common interests in the green transition, in harnessing new technologies and in strengthening economic and global security.

"From Bengaluru to Birmingham, we are unlocking potential and delivering growth. And both our countries have already started to reap the benefits of this agreement," he said.

Highlighting the visit of Prime Minister Keir Starmer to Mumbai last month, his deputy in the UK Cabinet extended the government's gratitude for the warm welcome extended to the largest trade delegation led by his boss.

"The Prime Minister's most recent visit resulted in 1.3 billion pounds of investment into the UK and 3.6 billion pounds into India, while unlocking 10,600 new jobs. It's a clear win-win, and a demonstration of the strength and promise of our partnership," he said.

Lammy, who is also Secretary of State for Justice, went on to reference a judicial delegation led by Sir Geoffrey Vos, one of the UK's most senior judges, last week to the Standing International Forum of Commercial Courts in Delhi. He welcomed the meeting paving the way for further collaboration under a memorandum of understanding (MoU) between the justice ministries of both countries.

"Trade between us is already worth more than 40 billion pounds. We are already collaborating on the defining technologies of this decade through our Technology Security Initiative (TSI). (PTI)

## House passes bill to end historic government shutdown, sending measure to Trump

**WASHINGTON, Nov 13:** The House passed a bill Wednesday to end the nation's longest government shutdown, sending the measure to President Donald Trump for his signature after a historic 43-day funding lapse that saw federal workers go without multiple paychecks, travelers stranded at airports and people lining up at food banks to get a meal for their families. House lawmakers made their long-awaited return to the nation's capital this week after nearly eight weeks away. Republicans used their slight majority to get the bill over the finish line with a mostly party-line vote of 222-209. The Senate has already passed the measure.

Democrats wanted to extend an enhanced tax credit expiring at the end of the year that lowers the cost of health coverage obtained through Affordable Care Act marketplaces. They refused to go along with a short-term spending bill that did not include that priority. But Republicans said that was a separate policy fight to be held at another time.

"We told you 43 days ago from bitter experience that government shutdowns don't work," said Rep. Tom Cole, the Republican chairman of the House Appropriations Committee. "They never achieve the objective that you announce. And guess what? You haven't achieved that objective yet, and you're not going to." The shutdown magnified the stark



partisan divisions within Congress, and that split screen was reflected when lawmakers debated the spending measure on the House floor. Republicans said Democrats sought to use the pain generated by the shutdown to prevail in a policy dispute.

"They knew it would cause pain and they did it anyway," House Speaker Mike Johnson said. Democrats said Republicans raced to pass tax breaks earlier this year that they say mostly will benefit the wealthy. But the bill before the House Wednesday "leaves families twisting in the wind with zero guarantee there will ever, ever be a vote to extend tax credits

to help everyday people pay for their health care," said Rep. Jim McGovern, D-Mass.

Democratic leader Hakeem Jeffries said Democrats would not give up on the subsidy extension even if the vote did not go their way. "This fight is not over," Jeffries said. "We're just getting started."

The House had not been in legislative session since Sept. 19, when it passed a short-term measure to keep the government open when the new budget year began in October. Johnson sent lawmakers home after that vote and put the onus on the Senate to act, saying House Republicans had done their job.

# Guv participates in Bharat Parv 2025 at Statue of Unity

*Calls for Arunachal Pradesh-Gujarat partnership to strengthen development and national unity*

**HT Correspondent**

ITANAGAR, Nov 13: Governor Lt General KT Parnaik, PVSM, UYSM, YSM (Retd), participated in the Bharat Parv 2025 at the iconic Statue of Unity, Ekta Nagar, Gujarat on Wednesday. This edition holds special significance as the fortnight celebration which started on 1st November 2025, commemorates the 150th birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, whose vision of unity laid the foundation for an integrated nation.

Speaking on the occasion, the Governor said that the relationship between Arunachal Pradesh and Gujarat rests on cultural foundations that date back centuries. This bond is beautifully expressed in shared mythology, particularly in the story of Lord Krishna and Rukmini. He said that the Madhavpur Fair in Gujarat which celebrates their divine wedding, serves as a living cultural bridge between the two States, especially as Rukmini is believed to have been born in Bismaknagar, Arunachal Pradesh.

The Governor said that Gujarat, the land of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel holds a special place in Arunachal Pradesh's civic and youth initiatives. During occasions like Rashtriya Ekta Diwas, Patel's life and legacy are highlighted across schools and public platforms to remind the youth of his



pivotal role in unifying the nation. His foresight and the decisive steps taken by Major Bob Khating ensured that Tawang remains an integral part of India, a legacy that continues to guide Arunachal Pradesh's sense of belonging and national pride.

The Governor, while appreciating the contributions of the vibrant Gujarati community in Arunachal Pradesh said that they have truly embodied the spirit of Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat. This partnership

was reflected in the Raj Bhavan's celebration of Gujarat Foundation Day, where local schoolchildren, including children with special needs were invited as Special Guests to experience the colours, traditions and stories of Gujarat. Such exchanges, he said are shaping a generation of Arunachali youth who are confident, curious and connected to India's cultural diversity.

Highlighting the State's progress, the Governor said that Arunachal

Pradesh is moving ahead on a confident development path shaped by clear vision and committed leadership. He said that in the last five years, over 4,000 km of roads have been constructed across challenging terrain, improving mobility, strengthening security and connecting remote communities. He said that the State has immense potential in tourism, spiritual, cultural, adventure, nature and eco-tourism, supported by its pristine landscapes and rich heritage.

The Governor said that Gujarat's success in cooperative development, dairy management, horticulture and tourism offers valuable models for Arunachal Pradesh. At the same time, Arunachal brings its own strengths to this partnership. It is India's largest producer of kiwi, its mandarin oranges and large cardamom are gaining national prominence and its vast hydropower potential positions it as a future contributor to the nation's clean energy needs. He called for a joint partnership of the two States for mutual benefits and common commitment to nation-building.

Extending an invitation to the Chief Minister, ministers and officials of Vibrant Gujarat to visit Arunachal Pradesh, the Governor called for deeper cooperation to strengthen the national fabric and contribute to a more cohesive and forward-looking India.

# APIYO reaffirms drive against illegal immigrants, madrasas and panjakhana



**HT Correspondent**

ITANAGAR, Nov 13: The Arunachal Pradesh Indigenous Youth Organisation (APIYO) on Tuesday reaffirmed its commitment to continue the movement against illegal mosques, madrasas and panjakhana in the state until the government takes appropriate action. The statement came in response to the press conference held by the Arunachalee Muslim community at the Arunachal Press Club (APC) on Tuesday.

Addressing media persons at APC, APIYO president Taro Sonam Liyak expressed serious concern over certain resolutions and statements made during the Muslim community's press conference. He said that unchecked influx of outsiders without proper verification or Inner Line Permit (ILP) could pose a threat to the state's indigenous identity, cultural integrity and demographic balance.

"I have come to know that someone has been threatening me from outside Arunachal Pradesh and trying to intimidate me. I have lodged an FIR at the police station," Liyak said.

Clarifying that APIYO's stand is not against any religion, he asserted, "We are fighting against illegal immigrants in Arunachal Pradesh. Some persons have threatened to

eliminate me if I visit Assam, but I know that particular person may not be from Assam, as the people of Assam are our big brothers. The seven states of the North East are united on the issue of illegal immigrants."

Liyak further said that people in Arunachal Pradesh follow various faiths such as Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism, Donyi Poloisim and Islam, questioning why one individual was claiming that the organisation's movement was against Muslims.

Reacting strongly against illegal madrasas, he said, "We are against the illegal functioning of madrasas and panjakhana in the state. We want them to be closed down if they are operating without authorisation. If the property is public or government-owned, it should be used for genuine educational purposes, not for activities in the name of education."

Reiterating that the movement against illegal immigrants will continue, he claimed that several people were found living in the state without valid ILPs and that even some who hold ILPs are unable to identify their employers or caretakers. "Such acts are dangerous in case of any law and order issue," he said, urging the government to check the influx of illegal immigrants on a priority basis.

Liyak also voiced concern over weekly markets, alleging that large numbers of outsiders visit and affect local traders and produce. He further claimed that some individuals have been illegally collecting donations using slips and that such activities must be stopped.

He concluded by saying that APIYO has lodged complaints with the police and will continue its movement against illegal immigrants, panjakhana and unauthorised madrasas operating in the state.

## Guv extends Children's Day greetings

**HT Correspondent**

ITANAGAR, Nov 13: Governor Lt General K T Parnaik, PVSM, UYSM, YSM (Retd), has extended his warm greetings to the people of the State, particularly the children on the occasion of Children's Day, which commemorates the birth anniversary of the first Prime Minister of India, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.

In his message, the Governor said that Children's Day reminds all of our collective responsibility to empower every child to progress with knowledge, dignity, confidence and kindness. Children with their tenderness, fragility and innocence, rely entirely on their parents, guardians and the larger society for care, protection and guidance. It is the duty of every adult to ensure that every child grows in a safe, nurturing and joyful environment. When we invest in our children's well-being, we build a stronger and brighter future for our State. We must therefore give them every opportunity to explore their abilities, develop strong values and grow into responsible and compassionate citizens, he said.

On this special day, the Governor urged all parents and guardians to renew their commitment to creating a harmonious and caring society that supports the healthy development of every child, while exhorting all to give their best today for their children's tomorrow.

## APLA@50 Outreach Connect began eastern zone journey

**HT Correspondent**

DEOMALI, Nov 13: The APLA@50 Outreach Connect, a flagship student engagement initiative marking the Golden Jubilee of the Arunachal Pradesh Legislative Assembly (1975-2025), began its Eastern Zone leg at Wangcha Rajkumar Government College, Deomali. The event, themed on constitutional literacy and civic awareness was organised in collaboration with Rajiv Gandhi University's Centre for Distance and Online Education (CDOE).

A debate competition on "Integrating tribal customary laws into Arunachal Pradesh's formal legal framework preserves cultural heritage and enhances legal pluralism" highlighted the programme with students presenting insightful perspectives on the topic.

The event opened with a welcome address by Dr Watsen Bangsia, Principal of the host college, followed by an introduction to the APLA@50 initiative by Dr Saurav Mitra of RGU.

Delivering the keynote address, Prof

Chandan Kumar Sarma of Dibrugarh University traced the democratic evolution of India and Arunachal Pradesh, emphasising that India's democratic values are deeply rooted in indigenous traditions. He urged students to uphold both rights and duties, noting that "unity in diversity is a living reality in India."

Minister Wangki Lowang, in his Chair's Address, lauded the initiative and called upon students to uphold civic responsibility and reject the growing money culture in politics.

The programme concluded with prize distribution for the best debate speakers and a vote of thanks by Khangshung Jugli, joint secretary of the Arunachal Pradesh Legislative Assembly.

The APLA@50 Outreach Connect will next visit Rang Frah Government College, Changlang, before culminating in a Mega Debate and Constitution Day celebration at Rajiv Gandhi University and the State Assembly, Itanagar later this month.

## SEC reviews preparedness for panchayat, municipal polls

**HT Correspondent**

ITANAGAR, Nov 13: The State Election Commission (SEC) of Arunachal Pradesh on Thursday reviewed the district-level preparations for the panchayat and municipal elections due in December, directing officials to ensure a smooth, transparent and timely conduct of the polls.

The SEC also urged all district authorities to maintain the state's long-standing record of peaceful and successful elections.

At a review meeting held here, the SEC chaired a conference attended by all district election officers (DEOs), district municipal election officers (DMEOs), nodal officers and deputy commissioners (DEOs), an official statement said. (PTI)

## ANYA demands arrest, fund recovery in Lada-Sarli land compensation case

**HT Correspondent**

ITANAGAR, Nov 13: The All Nyishi Youth Association (ANYA) East Kameng district unit has demanded the arrest of all individuals allegedly involved in the embezzlement and mismanagement of land compensation funds related to the Lada-Sarli Frontier Highway project in Arunachal Pradesh.

Addressing a press conference at the Arunachal Press Club (APC) on Wednesday, ANYA East Kameng District president Ramesh Taku expressed gratitude to the Pema Khandu-led government for suspending four senior dis-

trict officers, including the Deputy Commissioner, whose name has been forwarded to the Ministry of Home Affairs for legal action.

However, Taku termed the suspensions an "eyewash," asserting that the people of Arunachal Pradesh demand concrete action. "Suspending officers is only the first step. There may be many more involved. Everyone responsible must be booked under relevant laws and the siphoned-off money must be recovered," he said.

He further emphasised that the most crucial step now is the reverification of

the entire compensation process. "We demand that the state government immediately order reverification so that genuine landowners who were deprived can receive their due and those who received excess compensation must return the extra amount," Taku said.

The ANYA leader pointed out that the association's seven-day ultimatum, which expired on November 11, has gone unheeded. "If the suspension is not an eyewash, then why is the government delaying the order for reverification? The victims deserve justice," he questioned.

## Cycling and plantation drive promotes fitness, environmental awareness

### 'Pedal to Plant' expedition amplifies call for climate action, national unity



ITANAGAR, Nov 13: The nationwide 'Pedal to Plant' expedition, centred on the theme 'change before the climate change' has successfully concluded its Arunachal Pradesh and Assam leg, marking a significant push for climate awareness, physical fitness and national unity.

The cycling-and-plantation drive has been drawing strong public engagement across the Northeast with thousands participating in awareness sessions and community activities, an official statement said here on Thursday.

Led by noted para-cyclist and Everest Nisha Kumari the expedition set off on October 31 last, coinciding with Na-

tional Unity Day from the historic Pangsau Pass along the Indo-Myanmar border in Changlang district of Arunachal Pradesh.

Supported by the Fit India Movement, the initiative was formally flagged off by Nampong MLA Laisam Simai and Commander of HQ 25 Sector of Assam Rifles, Brigadier Sarabjeet Singh.

Covering diverse terrains and communities, participants of the expedition are travelling from Arunachal Pradesh to Gujarat as a tribute to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, reflecting his vision of a united, strong and environmentally conscious India.

Throughout their journey in Arunachal

Pradesh and Assam, Kumari and her team engaged with students, athletes, teachers, NCC cadets, local youth groups and community members at schools, colleges and Khelo India Centres.

The interactions focused on adopting healthier lifestyles, understanding the urgency of climate change and recognising the role of individual action in environmental protection. At every halt, the team led plantation drives, encouraging institutions and communities to contribute to a greener ecosystem and to make plantation a regular habit.

Speaking during one of the sessions, Kumari emphasised the urgency behind the campaign.

"Pedal to Plant is a mission to inspire every citizen to work towards a fitter, healthier and greener India. We must act now before the climate acts against us," she said, urging young people in particular to champion sustainability.

The Guwahati regional centre of Sports Authority of India played a key role by providing logistical, networking and administrative support during the northeastern stretch.

SAI officials said they were proud to back an initiative that seamlessly blends fitness promotion with environmental stewardship and national integration. They added that the expedition stands as a timely tribute to Sardar Patel's legacy of unity and resilience.

With the successful completion of the Arunachal-Assam segment, the expedition is now set to continue its westward journey across the country, carrying forward its message of climate responsibility, community participation and the power of collective action. (PTI)

No. BTC/LR-32/2025/153, Dated Kokrajhar, the 12<sup>th</sup> November, 2025.

**NOTICE INVITING TENDER**

Sealed quotation affixing a court fee stamp of Rs.8.25 (Rupees eight and paise twenty five only) is hereby invited from the intending registered farms/ submit Quotations for "Supply of Machinery items, Furnitures and Stationeries under Gossaigaon Revenue Circle, Gossaigaon, Dist.-Kokrajhar and Sidli Revenue Circle, Sidli, Dist.-Chirang" with the following terms and conditions.

The quotation will be received from 13.11.2025 to 04.12.2025 (11:00 AM till 3:00 PM) and will be opened on 05.12.2025 at 3:30 PM in presence of Quotationers or their representatives. In case of any unusual occurrence like Strike/ Govt. holiday etc. the receiving & opening of quotation will be on the next working day at the same time.

For details contact CALA, BTC Secretariat during office hours.

Sd/-Secretary, CALA,  
Bodoland Territorial Council,  
Kokrajhar

**IPR(BTC)/C/2025-26/3084**

No. BTC/LR-1618/2025/20, Dated Kokrajhar, the 13<sup>th</sup> November, 2025.

**NOTICE INVITING TENDER**

Sealed quotation affixing a court fee stamp of Rs.8.25 (Rupees eight and paise twenty five only) is hereby invited from the intending registered farms/ submit Quotations for "Procurement of essential items/ tools for Jalah Revenue Circle, Jalahat and Barama Revenue Circle, Barama, Dist.-Baksa" with the following terms and conditions.

The quotation will be received from 14.11.2025 to 05.12.2025 (11:00 AM till 3:00 PM) and will be opened on 05.12.2025 at 3:30 PM in presence of Quotationers or their representatives. In case of any unusual occurrence like Strike/ Govt. holiday etc. the receiving & opening of quotation will be on the next working day at the same time.

For details contact CALA, BTC Secretariat during office hours.

Sd/-Secretary, CALA,  
Bodoland Territorial Council, Kokrajhar

**IPR(BTC)/C/2025-26/3127**

No. BTC/LR-1618/2025/21, Dated Kokrajhar, the 13<sup>th</sup> November, 2025.

**NOTICE INVITING TENDER**

Sealed quotation affixing a court fee stamp of Rs.8.25 (Rupees eight and paise twenty five only) is hereby invited from the intending registered farms/ submit Quotations for "Procurement of essential items/ tools for Baska Revenue Circle, Mushalpur and Baganpara Revenue Circle, Baganpara, Dist.-Baksa" with the following terms and conditions.

The quotation will be received from 14.11.2025 to 05.12.2025 (11:00 AM till 3:00 PM) and will be opened on 05.12.2025 at 3:30 PM in presence of Quotationers or their representatives. In case of any unusual occurrence like Strike/ Govt. holiday etc. the receiving & opening of quotation will be on the next working day at the same time.

For details contact CALA, BTC Secretariat during office hours.

Sd/-Secretary, CALA,  
Bodoland Territorial Council, Kokrajhar

**IPR(BTC)/C/2025-26/3130**

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

No. KA/Esstt/H&FW/Post/Advt./2025-26/ Dated 13<sup>th</sup> November' 2025

**WRITTEN EXAMINATION NOTICE**

In reference to the Advertisement No. KA/Esstt/H&FW/Advt./2025-2026/1590, Dated Diphu the 30th Oct 2025, it is hereby informed to all concerned that the date of written examination for categories of post under Joint Director of Health Services, Karbi Anglong, Diphu will be held as per schedule date, time and venue as mentioned below:-

Sl. No.	Name of the post (s)	Date of Examination	Timing	Examination Venue
1	Health Educator	23-11-2025	09 A.M.-12 P.M	GNM Nursing School, Diphu
2	Pharmacist	23-11-2025	09 A.M.-12 P.M	GNM Nursing School, Diphu
3	ANM	23-11-2025	09 A.M.-12 P.M	GNM Nursing School, Diphu
4	Dresser	23-11-2025	09 A.M.-12 P.M	GNM Nursing School, Diphu
5	Surveillance Worker	23-11-2025	01 P.M. 4 P.M.	GNM Nursing School, Diphu
6	Vaccinator	23-11-2025	09 A.M.-12 P.M	GNM Nursing School, Diphu

The candidate who have applied for the above mentioned category of posts shall have to appear for the written examination as per schedule date, time and venue. No separate calling letter will be sent to the candidate.

Sd/-  
Jt. Director of Health Services,  
Karbi Anglong District, Diphu.

Memo No. KA/Esstt/H&FW/Post/Advt./2025-26/1667-A Dated 13th November' 2025

# India's CO2 emissions see slower increase in 2025: Report

**NEW DELHI, Nov 13:** India's carbon dioxide emissions were projected to rise by 1.4 per cent in 2025, marking a slower increase than in previous years, according to a report published on Thursday by a global network of more than 130 climate scientists and research institutions.

The slowdown is attributed to an early monsoon that reduced cooling demand and to rapid growth in renewable energy, which kept coal use almost flat, the Global Carbon Budget 2025 report, released at COP30 in Belem, Brazil, said.

Despite this moderation, the report warned that India's emissions continue to grow overall.

Globally, fossil-fuel carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions were expected to reach

a record 38.1 billion tonnes in 2025, up about 1.1 per cent from 2024.

China's emissions were projected to rise by about 3 per cent in 2025, driven mainly by continued industrial activity and growth in coal consumption despite record renewable additions.

The United States, the world's second-largest emitter, is expected to see its emissions fall by around 2.2 per cent due to declining coal use and slower oil demand. The European Union's emissions were projected to drop by 4.2 per cent.

Together, these four top emitters account for nearly 60 per cent of global fossil CO2 emissions.

The study said the remaining carbon budget consistent with limiting warming

to 1.5 degrees Celsius has fallen to roughly 170 billion tonnes of CO2, barely four years of emissions at current levels. Atmospheric CO2 concentrations are projected to climb to 425.7 parts per million next year, around 52 per cent above pre-industrial (1850-1900) levels.

The report said the planet's ability to absorb CO2 through land and ocean sinks is weakening.

The scientists estimated that about 8 per cent of the increase in atmospheric CO2 since 1960 is due to climate change reducing the effectiveness of these natural sinks.

The land sink dropped sharply during the 2023-24 El Niño and is only partly recovering as higher temperatures cut plant

productivity and raise respiration.

The ocean sink, which absorbed about 29 per cent of emissions over the past decade, has shown little growth since 2016 because warmer water holds less CO2. Global emissions from land-use change, such as deforestation, were projected to decline to around 4.1 billion tonnes of CO2 in 2025 as the El Niño event subsides, the report said.

Lead author Pierre Friedlingstein said that with CO2 emissions still increasing, keeping global warming below 1.5 degrees Celsius is "no longer plausible". The report noted that 35 countries succeeded in lowering emissions while expanding their economies between 2015 and 2024, twice as many as a decade ago. (PTI)



*'The Ministry of Civil Aviation has issued a press note saying that blame was not attributable to anyone'*

## Deceased pilot of Ahmedabad plane crash not being blamed: Centre to SC

**NEW DELHI, Nov 13:** The deceased pilot, Captain Sumeet Sabharwal of Air India, has not been blamed in the AAIB's preliminary report into the June 12 plane crash that claimed 260 lives, the Centre told the Supreme Court on Thursday.

Air India's Boeing 787-8 flight AI171 en route to London's Gatwick airport was operated by pilot-in-command Captain Sabharwal and co-pilot Captain Clive Kunder, who lost their lives in the crash after taking off from Ahmedabad. The horrific incident killed 260 people, including 241 passengers and crew on board.

The top court had issued notice to the Centre and the Director General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) on a plea of Pushkaraj Sabharwal, the father of deceased pilot Captain Sumeet Sabharwal.

Pushkaraj Sabharwal and the Federation of Indian Pilots moved the Supreme Court for a court-monitored inquiry headed by a former apex court judge into the crash of Air India flight AI171 in Ahmedabad. A bench of Justices Surya Kant and Joydip Bagchi was told by Solicitor General Tushar Mehta that the Aircraft Accident Investigation Board (AAIB) probe team into the plane crash was formed under the international regime and there was a statutory provision for it.

"There is an international convention. There's an international civil aviation organisation. They have prepared mandatory steps to be taken in case of an investigation into air crashes. There is a regime in place.

"Some foreigners are also victims. Those countries also send



their representatives in the investigation. I understand the feelings of the father but there is no blame attributed to anyone in the interim report," Mehta said.

He added that blame has not been attributed to anyone in the preliminary report of AAIB and stated there was some misconception about the pilot's error after the release of an interim report.

"The Ministry of Civil Aviation has issued a press note saying that blame was not attributable to anyone. There is no question of blaming anyone in the report," he submitted.

Justice Bagchi said, "The AAIB inquiry is not for apportioning blame on anyone. It is only to clarify the cause so that the same does not happen again."

The top court was hearing three petitions filed by an NGO, a law student and the father of the deceased pilot seeking an independent, court-monitored investigation into the crash of Air India Flight near Ahmedabad.

Among the 241 dead were 169

Indians, 52 Britons, seven Portuguese nationals, one Canadian and 12 crew members.

The lone survivor of the crash was Vishwashankar Ramesh, a British national.

On November 7, the top court said no one blamed the chief pilot of the Air India Dreamliner for the June 12 crash, which claimed 260 lives, and asked his 91-year-old father not to carry any emotional burden.

"There is no insinuation against him even in the preliminary report," the top court had said while emphasising that if necessary, the court will clarify that the pilot is not to be blamed for the "unfortunate" plane crash.

During the hearing, advocate Prashant Bhushan, appearing for an NGO 'Safety Matters Foundation', said that a parallel inquiry should be done like a court of inquiry into the accident of such a major scale. Bhushan submitted that serious accidents require a court of enquiry and not just an investigation by AAIB.

"It is very alarming. There have

been many system failures in these 787s. Everybody flying in these aircraft is at risk. The pilots' association has said that these aircraft need to be grounded immediately," he said.

He said that a pilot federation has stated that these aeroplanes cannot be trusted and there is a huge risk to people flying in their aircraft.

Justice Kant said these proceedings should not become a fight between one airline and another, and asked Mehta to file the response to the plea filed by the father of the deceased.

Senior advocate Gopal Sankaranarayanan, appearing for the deceased pilot's father, said that rules for a fair probe were not being followed.

"The regime that Mr. Mehta has mentioned has not been followed. That's the problem. It has not been properly followed," Sankaranarayanan submitted and urged the court to ask the Centre to file their replies to the petition of the deceased pilot's 91-year-old father.

The bench adjourned the matter for further hearing after two weeks as it clarified that it was not interested in hearing a plea of the law graduate on the issue.

The plea of deceased pilot Captain Sumeet Sabharwal's father seeks directions for the constitution of an independent committee, also comprising aviation and technical experts, to probe the crash.

The approach of the investigation has failed to adequately examine, or rule out, other more plausible technical and procedural factors relating to Boeing that could have contributed to the tragic incident, the plea said. (PTI)

## Fadnavis lays foundation stone of projects costing ₹ 6k crore Nashik-Trimbakeshwar Simhastha Kumbh

**NASHIK, Nov 13:** Development works costing more than ₹20,000 crore have been sanctioned for the upcoming Simhastha Kumbh Mela, which will establish Nashik as a major tourism and pilgrimage centre, Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis said on Thursday.

All these works will be conducted in a transparent manner, he said after performing 'bhoomipujan' for several projects, adding there would be no shortage of funds for the "parva" that comes once in 12 years.

"We have planned that all these works should sustain for at least 25 years and will change the face of Nashik and Trimbakeshwar. It will make Nashik a major tourism and pilgrimage centre. The state government will good compensation for land that will be acquired for these works," the CM said at a rally after the 'bhoomipujan' event.

"This Kumbh is special as it comes during 'Trikhand Yog' after 75 years. Therefore, it will continue for 28 months. It will begin on October 31, 2026 and continue till July 24, 2028. People from across the world visited Prayagraj Kumbh. Nashik Kumbh is also a part of this tradition. However, the difference is that Prayagraj Kumbh takes place on 15,000 hectares of land on the banks of Ganga, while we have only 500 acres of land in Nashik and Trimbakeshwar," he pointed out.

The Union and state governments have sanctioned works costing ₹ 20,000 crore, and 'bhoomipujan' for works entailing expenditure of ₹ 5757 crore were done during the day, the CM informed. These include proposed works costing ₹ 2,270 crore by the Public Works Department and ₹ 3,338 crore works by Nashik Mu-



nicipal Corporation (NMC).

The biggest Zilla Parishad building in the state has also been inaugurated here, Fadnavis said in the presence of Deputy CM Eknath Shinde and Girish Mahajan, who is state minister in charge for Kumbh Mela, as well as senior officials.

Fadnavis also announced a 'Digital Kumbh' initiative to promote the Mela through online platforms. Information will be made available digitally, while artificial intelligence (AI) will be used for crowd management and maintaining law and order, he said.

During his visit, the CM also visited Ramkund area in Panchavati and took information about the proposed ₹ 99.14 crore Ramkal Path, which includes renovation and conservation of various structures and improvement in basic amenities for the tourists.

The project will help in taking the religious, cultural and historical importance of Ramkund, Seeta Gumph (cave), Lord Kalaram temple, Ram Laxman Gumph and other historical temples in the area to people, officials said.

Speaking on the occasion, Shinde said Simhastha Kumbh Mela will not just be a religious celebration but will place India firmly on the global spiritual map.

The state government is committed to ensuring systematic and high-quality preparations for this grand event, he added.

Both long-term and short-term development plans have been drawn up, with focus on roads, water supply, drainage, sanitation, transport, safety, and accommodation facilities for sadhus and devotees. "Kumbh Mela presents a major opportunity to change the face of Nashik. These development works will make the city clean, beautiful and modern. Special focus will be on cleanliness and water purification in the Ramkund and Godavari river areas," he added. A vast 'Sadhugram' will be established over 1,400 acres to accommodate sadhus and seers from across the country with all necessary amenities, the Deputy CM informed.

"The Kumbh Mela is a matter of Maharashtra's prestige. Every department and officer must treat this as their own responsibility." (PTI)

## Red Fort blast: Air ticket from Srinagar to Delhi found from house

**SAHARANPUR (UP), Nov 13:** A flight ticket has been recovered from near Dr Adil Ahmad's house in Saharanpur, showing he had travelled from Srinagar to Delhi on October 31, just days before the November 10 car explosion near Red Fort that killed 13 people and injured over 20.

A Jammu and Kashmir native, Adil was arrested from Saharanpur last week.

According to officials, the air ticket bearing Adil's name and travel date was recovered from a garbage pile outside his rented house in Aman Vihar Colony, Manakma, along Ambala Road in Saharanpur on Wednesday.

The house, now sealed and under police guard, was searched after multiple intelligence and anti-terror teams reached the city earlier this week, they said.

Police sources said the ticket has been seized and sent for forensic examination. The finding has raised further questions about Adil's movements and possible links to the Delhi blast, as investigators try to determine how long he stayed in the capital and whom he met during that period.

Adil was arrested from Saharanpur on November 6. His travel records now suggest that he flew from Srinagar to Delhi on October 31, barely 10 days before the Red Fort blast, according to officials.

Adil, a doctor holding MBBS and MD degrees, had been working at Famous Hospital on Ambala Road in Saharanpur, where he was described by colleagues as "quiet, polite and professional".

Despite his professional credentials, investigators allege that Adil maintained links with terror outfits, including Jaish-e-Mohammed, and may have facilitated logistics for their operations.

Earlier, the Jammu and Kashmir Police had taken Adil on remand to Srinagar, while the central and state agencies also expanded their probe into his activities and network. Security agencies from Jammu and Kashmir, Uttar



Pradesh and central intelligence units are currently camping in Saharanpur to trace Adil's local contacts and verify his communications and bank records.

Adil had been living in a rented house in Babu Vihar Colony on Ambala Road. Locals described him as a quiet tenant who kept to himself but frequently received late-night visitors, with several vehicles often seen parked outside.

The Jammu and Kashmir Police filed a case in Srinagar on October 28 after posters supporting the proscribed outfit Jaish-e-Mohammed appeared in several areas. CCTV footage allegedly showed Adil putting up the posters, leading investigators to trace him to Saharanpur. He was taken into custody from Famous Hospital and handed over to the Srinagar Police on transit remand.

Meanwhile, Dr. Babar, a colleague at Famous Hospital, told PTI that Adil had joined the facility in March and was "highly competent" in his field. "It is painful that such an educated person could be involved in shameful acts," he said on Wednesday.

Investigators are now probing whether Adil's Delhi visit on October 31 had any operational link to the November 10 Red Fort blast, or if he was acting independently as part of a broader network.

Adil's arrest is seen as part of a wider counterterrorism operation launched after the Delhi blast and the earlier busting of a "white-collar terror module" in Faridabad and Haryana, where several suspects, including doctors associated with Al Falah University, were arrested and large quantities of explosives were recovered. (PTI)

## Delhi blast: Cong demands all-party meeting, advancing Parliament's Winter Session

**NEW DELHI, Nov 13:** The Congress on Thursday demanded that Prime Minister Narendra Modi should immediately chair an all-party meeting in the aftermath of the Delhi blast and asked whether the "new normal doctrine" defined by the government following the Pahalgam attack of treating any future terror strike as an "act of war" stands. The opposition party also demanded that the Winter Session of Parliament, scheduled to start on December 1, be advanced so that there could be a debate on the incident.

On Monday, a high-intensity blast ripped through a car near Red Fort in Delhi, killing 13 people and injuring several others, hours after the busting of a "white collar terror module" and the arrest of eight people, including three doctors. The arrested doctors were linked to the Al Falah University.

Congress' media and publicity department head Pawan Khara

called for fixing of accountability, asking whether Home Minister Amit Shah take responsibility, given that several major terror attacks have occurred. He recalled that the then home minister Shivraj Patil had resigned following the Mumbai terror attack under the UPA.

"The surprising thing is that after 48 hours, it was the Cabinet that announced that this was a terror attack," Khara said at a press conference here. Despite intelligence agencies being there and National Security Advisor Ajit Doval keeping a close watch, how did 2,900 kg of explosive reach Faridabad, he asked. "In a car, there was so much explosive near the Red Fort... Who is taking responsibility for this and is accountability being fixed," Khara further asked.

"We always stood with the government when a terror attack happened and will do so in future. But it is our duty to ask questions as to

whose failure it is and who will take responsibility for it," he said.

The Congress demands that an all-party meeting under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister be called immediately, he said. "We also demand that Parliament session be advanced as this is a serious challenge and must be discussed in Parliament," Khara said. After Pahalgam and during Operation Sindoor, the government had come up with a new normal doctrine that any terror attack will be considered an act of war, he said and asked if that stands.

"This act of terror draws its sustenance, support and inspiration from external forces. Therefore, we want to know from the prime minister whether the so-called normal doctrine that was touted during Operation Sindoor and after Pahalgam by the PM, the BJP government, still stand," Khara said. (PTI)

## Abbott launches new and advanced 'Ensure Diabetes Care', a clinically proven formula to help manage blood sugar

**MUMBAI, Nov 13:** Abbott, a global healthcare company, on Thursday announced the launch of a new and advanced formulation of 'Ensure Diabetes Care' in India. Building on over 30 years of pioneering scientific nutrition and supported by more than 60 clinical trials, the innovation empowers people with diabetes to live a better life, it said in a statement.

The new design features a triple care system with vital nutrients, including four times higher myo-inositol compared to the previous formulation, a low glycaemic index carbohydrate blend, which is designed to help minimise blood sugar spikes. Combined with high protein and high fibre, the nutrients work together to support blood sugar control, help reduce cholesterol, and aid in weight management, the US-based healthcare company said.

The formulation also helps preserve lean muscle during weight loss, while significantly reducing overall body fat, including visceral fat -- stored deep in the belly around organs like the liver and pancreas -- which is linked to conditions such as heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and high blood pressure, Abbott said.

Globally, diabetes is one of the fastest-growing health challenges today with 589 million adults living with the con-



dition, and this number is predicted to rise to 853 million by 2050. India, with 101 million people living with the condition, ranks second worldwide in diabetes prevalence. Focusing on proven solutions -- including nutrition's essential role in diabetes management -- can help decrease this burden, it said. Nutrition and glycaemic control are important factors that may be a challenge to manage. Glycaemic control refers to how well a person is able to maintain their blood glucose levels within a healthy range. Three out of four people living with diabetes have poor glycaemic control due to a variety

of factors that include nutritional habits, genetic predisposition and lifestyle. Agnes Siew Ling Tey, PhD, senior lead, clinical science and nutrition in Abbott's Asia-Pacific nutrition R&D centre, said, "Diabetes-specific nutritional formula is a cornerstone of diabetes management. Clinical evidence shows that it can significantly improve glycaemic control, reduce cardiometabolic risk, and support weight management. When integrated into lifestyle interventions, it offers a powerful tool to enhance long-term health outcomes for people living with diabetes."

She added, "Finding the right nutritional plan for diabetes management is a critical part of optimising quality of life, but it's not easy. Ensure Diabetes Care's new and advanced formulation is a science-backed and convenient solution to help those living with diabetes adjust their lifestyles and take control of their health."

The new Ensure Diabetes Care formulation features an advanced blend of ingredients designed to help support diabetes management -- advanced slow-digested carbohydrate with four times higher inositol (compared to previous formulation) that helps manage blood sugar and a dual blend of soluble and insoluble fibres (oat fibre) that help promote digestive tract health. (PTI)

# Nirmala Sitharaman arrives in Nagaland on 3-day official visit

**KOHIMA, Nov 13:** Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman arrived in Nagaland on Thursday on a three-day official visit.

Nagaland Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio, Deputy CM T R Zeliang and other cabinet ministers received Sitharaman at the Dimapur airport.

Welcoming the Union Finance minister to Nagaland, Rio said, "We look forward to her valuable insights and guidance in further strengthening our developmental initiatives and economic growth. I wish her a pleasant stay in Nagaland." Sitharaman will visit Dimapur, Kiphire, and Kohima as part of her developmental outreach and review of key central initiatives in the state.

According to the Ministry of Finance, the Union minister's visit aims to assess the progress of central schemes, particularly in Nagaland's Aspirational district of Kiphire, and to strengthen cooperation between the Centre and the state on various development fronts. From Dimapur, Sitharaman proceeded to Kiphire, where she is scheduled to review ongoing developmental projects, welfare initiatives, and meet with local stakeholders.

Her engagements include a visit to Kiphire District Hospital, inter-



action with tribal leaders and 'Lakpati Didis' under the National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM), followed by a review meeting on the Aspirational District Programme with district heads of departments.

On Friday, the Union Finance minister will continue her engagements in Kiphire, interacting with Anganwadi workers, and participating in the Atmanirbhar Bharat Sankalp Abhiyan at Hopongkyu Memorial Hall.

She will also inaugurate the government Industrial Training Institute (ITI), Kiphire, interact with students, and launch NSRLM stalls and a Credit Outreach Programme at the Government High School Ground.

Later in the day, Sitharaman will travel to Kohima, where she will witness the exchange of an MoU between the Telangana State Network (T-SAT) and the National Institute of Electronics and Information Technology (NIELIT).

She is also scheduled to launch the 'SAMARTH' and Digital Hardware initiatives and interact with students at NIELIT Kohima.

On Saturday, the Union Finance minister will inaugurate the AI Centre of Excellence for Skillings at the Nagaland Tool Room & Training Centre (NTTC), Dimapur, and review the Scheme for Special Assistance to States for Capital Investment (SASCI) Project at Niathu Resort, before departing for New Delhi later in the day. (PTI)

# NCB DG calls for strong inter-agency coordination to combat drug trafficking in NE

**DIMAPUR, Nov 13:** Director General of the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) Anurag Garg has termed drug trafficking and abuse as one of the country's "emerging security challenges", warning that illicit drug money is increasingly being channelled into organised crimes, including terrorism financing, arms trafficking, and money laundering.

Speaking at the inaugural session of the two-day Regional Anti-Narcotics Task Force (ANTF) Conference for Northeastern States, including Sikkim and West Bengal, in Dimapur, Garg said the issue has grave implications for public health, family well-being, and national security.

He cautioned that easy availability of drugs not only fuels addiction but also contributes to domestic violence, social instability, and growing healthcare burdens on the state.

"The youth, who should be the driving force of the economy, become a burden," he said, citing a 2019 survey by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, which found that drug consumption rates in several northeastern states are significantly higher than the national average.

Emphasising the need for "excellent coordination and collabo-

ration" among enforcement, intelligence, and security agencies, Garg said the NCB, as the nodal national agency, is working to strengthen such cooperation through the NCORD mechanism and capacity building of state-level ANTFs.

He said that ANTFs have now been established in all states and union territories, functioning as the first line of defence against drugs at the state level.

Referring to the national ANTF conference held in New Delhi in September, inaugurated by the Union Home Minister, Garg said the Northeast requires "special attention" due to its proximity to the Golden Triangle and the porous India-Myanmar border, which facilitates the inflow of narcotics into India.

"After the Taliban takeover in Afghanistan, Myanmar has become the world's largest producer of heroin and methamphetamine. These operations are run by organised crime groups, ethnic militias, and insurgent outfits involved in arms supply, extortion, and money laundering," he said.

As a result, he added, several northeastern states have become major entry points for heroin and meth trafficked into India and Bangladesh.

Thanking the Nagaland Police and the state government for co-hosting the regional meet, Garg said the conference aims to develop a roadmap for an integrated regional response.

Key agenda items include targeting drug syndicates instead of small couriers, tracing money trails, destroying illicit cultivation, ensuring real-time intelligence sharing, and expanding de-addiction facilities, he said.

He also called for greater use of technological platforms such as NATGRID, NIDAAN, and other databases for intelligence gathering, and urged for effective use of Joint Coordination Committees (JCC) and NCORD mechanisms at state and district levels.

Expressing optimism, Garg said, "This conference will help us strengthen inter-agency trust, identify forward and backward linkages, and build a unified strategy to realise the vision of a Drug-Free India by 2047."

The technical sessions of the two-day conference will take up discussions on the topics "Challenges of cross-border trafficking: Bangladesh & Myanmar", "Identification and destruction of illicit crop", "Drug trafficking scenario in the North East". (PTI)

## Meghalaya steps up drive to reduce dropouts

**SHILLONG, Nov 13:** Meghalaya Education Minister Lakhmen Rymbui recently announced that the state government is intensifying efforts to curb the high dropout rate in higher education and improve academic quality across Meghalaya.

Addressing media persons after chairing a meeting of the State Higher Education Council (SHEC), Rymbui said the council, established through a 2018 Assembly Act, is being revived to advise the government and oversee implementation of key reforms.

"The issue of high dropout rate in higher education is a real concern," Rymbui said, noting that the MDA government has already enhanced accessibility by opening people's colleges in remote locations such as Shanguing, Khliehriat, Nongtalang, Mawphlang, Mawsynram, Rongjeng, Patharkmah, Umsing, Dalu and Chokpot, and by establishing the Captain Williamson Sangma State University and an engineering college.

He added that financial constraints also contribute to attrition, prompting the state to increase scholarships. (NNN)

## 3 held for death of man in Dimapur

**HT Correspondent**

**DIMAPUR, Nov 13:** Dimapur police arrested three persons in connection with the death of a man on Wednesday.

Dimapur DCP (crime), in a release, on Thursday said information was received that one person, identified as Mhathung Lotha of Yimpang village under Wokha district, succumbed to injuries at civil hospital Dimapur on Wednesday.

The East PS personnel who rushed to the hospital to ascertain the details of the incident established that some individuals brutally beat up the victim and his accomplice following an altercation at Naga Colony area, Burma Camp, here on November 9.

The release said they were again forced to come to the residence of the accused persons on November 10 on the pretext of resolving the issue, where they were again beaten up.

Thought the victim was taken to district hospital Dimapur, he succumbed to his injuries at around 7 pm on Wednesday, while his accomplice is still admitted in the hospital. A case has been registered for further investigation.

## Waterborne disease outbreak claims 5 lives in Mizoram's Lawngtlai

**AIZAWL, Nov 13:** At least five people, including four from Myanmar, have died due to suspected waterborne disease outbreak in a border village in south Mizoram's Lawngtlai district this month, an official said on Thursday.

Lawngtlai Deputy Commissioner Donny Lalruatsanga said that the outbreak was reported at Kakichuah village, which shares a border with Myanmar.

The outbreak has so far claimed five lives, while 27 people aged between 5 and 63 years, are currently infected with the disease, which is believed to be originated from the neighbouring country.

Of the five deceased, four were from Myanmar, he said.

Lalruatsanga expressed deep concern over the fatalities, emphasising the urgency of identifying the cause and curbing further spread.

"An investigation has been launched to ascertain the outbreak. All preventive and control measures are being strictly implemented," he said, expressing confidence that the situation could be stabilised soon.

Lawngtlai district administration has also on Wednesday declared Kakichuah village as a contain-



ment zone for two months, restricting movement of people to and from the village except for medical, election and emergency cases.

Lawngtlai Senior Chief Medical Officer Dr Lalmanawma Jongte said that cases have been reported since November 4 and a medical team was dispatched to Kakichuah on November 11 to investigate the outbreak.

A Rapid Response Team (RRT) has been deployed, and local health workers are maintaining close surveillance, he said.

According to Jongte, water samples collected from the area have been sent to Zoram Medical College & Hospital at Falkawn near Aizawl for testing.

Preliminary evidence points to the contamination originating from Salachhuah village in Myanmar, he said. (PTI)

## Nagaland DGP warns of 'public health emergency' from drug menace

**DIMAPUR, Nov 13:** Nagaland Director General of Police (DGP) Rupin Sharma on Thursday described drug trafficking in the Northeast as both a "public health emergency" and a "national security threat", urging for a unified and technology-driven response among law enforcement agencies in the region.

Delivering the keynote address at the inaugural session of the two-day Conference of Anti-Narcotics Task Forces (ANTF) for the Northeast Region, including Sikkim and West Bengal, co-hosted by Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) and Nagaland Police in Chumoukima, the DGP said the North East has become the "pivot" of India's fight against drugs due to its proximity to the Golden Triangle and porous border with Myanmar.

"The India-Myanmar border, largely unfenced and under the Free Movement Regime, allows traffickers to blend with ethnic kin and cross unchecked. Drug trafficking and abuse are no longer just law-and-order issues — they are direct threats to internal security and the future of our youth," Sharma warned.

He said, according to estimates, Nagaland alone has around 1.2 lakh drug users, with heroin locally known as "Shaanflower" being the most commonly abused.

"Even if half of them consume half a gram daily, it translates to over 10,000 kilogramme of heroin per year for Nagaland alone — and roughly one lakh kilogramme for the entire Northeast," he said.

The DGP highlighted that illicit drug trade in the region fuels organised crime, insurgency, and narco-terrorism, noting that several insurgent cadres are individually involved in trafficking. "Dismantling drug cartels is synonymous

with enhancing national security," he asserted.

Sharma outlined a three-pronged operational framework for the region — coordination, enforcement, and accountability.

He stressed that coordination remains the Achilles heel of India's anti-drug fight, as traffickers exploit jurisdictional gaps.

"We must move from a 'need to share' to a 'duty to share' mindset," he said, proposing joint interrogations through video conferencing within 24 hours of arrests across states. He called for modern investigative tools — communication surveillance, darknet analysis, cryptocurrency tracking, and digital forensics — to replace traditional intelligence.

Full compliance with the NIDAAN portal and real-time information sharing was also emphasised.

Sharma urged all Northeastern states to use NCORD and ANTF meetings for pre-emptive intelligence sharing, especially on traffickers, financiers, couriers, and mule couriers.

He flagged the rise of synthetic drugs like Methamphetamine and WY tablets, calling for the use of drones and satellite mapping to destroy poppy cultivation and locate hidden labs. On financial investigation, he demanded tighter cooperation with banks and the financial intelligence unit (FIU), saying, "While banking is now 24x7, law enforcement's interface still functions 9 am to 6 pm. This must change," the DGP said.

He warned that weak prosecution remains a critical gap. "Our efforts are fruitless if legal processes fail," Sharma said, urging better documentation of conspiracy, preparation, and attempt in NDPS cases, and building shared criminal databases with biometrics

and photographs accessible to all law enforcement agencies.

Among policy-level recommendations, the DGP proposed a comprehensive amendment to the NDPS Act, 1985, to reflect modern challenges and introduce graded sentencing.

He also proposed the creation of a Northeast Anti-Drug Trafficking Agency to coordinate regional operations and the establishment of dedicated Narcotics Forensic Labs in every state and deployment of mobile forensic units.

Launch of a "Nasha Mukh Bharat Helpline & Reward System" for public reporting of drug-related activities and uniform guidelines for preventive detention under PITNDPS to avoid misuse or underuse were also suggested.

The DGP also shared Nagaland Police's tech-driven initiatives — including AI-assisted lawful intercept transcription with NIT Mizoram, ANPR cameras on trafficking routes, and facial recognition systems to monitor suspect vehicles and individuals.

Calling rehabilitation "a defeat for the cartel", Sharma underscored the importance of NGO, church, and civil society engagement to address addiction. "We must integrate law enforcement with public health — a recovered addict is a success story for the community," he said. The DGP said the conference must go beyond sharing achievements and instead focus on "sharing problems, solutions, and unresolved issues for national escalation."

"The battle against drugs is a prolonged war fought on challenging frontiers. Let us target the kingpins, strengthen inter-agency trust, and secure the future of the Northeast for a truly Drug-Free India," Sharma said. (PTI)

## Counting of votes for Dampa bypoll to start at 8 am under tight security arrangements today

**AIZAWL, Nov 13:** The counting of votes for the Dampa bypoll will begin at 8 am on November 14 under tight security arrangements, an official said on Thursday.

Mamit Election Officer Lalnunfela Chawngthu said postal ballots will be counted first, followed by votes cast in EVMs, and there will be five rounds of counting. The counting will take place at the Mamit deputy commissioner complex under tight security.

There is only one counting hall and nine counting tables, including one for postal ballots, and each counting table will be supervised and monitored by a counting supervisor and two counting assistants, he said.

The officer said that the counting centre will also be monitored by central observers appointed by the Election Commission.

According to the official, all EVMs were brought to the counting centre on Wednesday, and they were securely placed in a strong room under strict surveillance.

"All necessary arrangements have been made, and we are fully prepared to undertake the counting of votes. Adequate security arrangements have also been made by the Mamit Superintendent of Police," Chawngthu told PTI.

The bypoll was necessitated following the death of incumbent MNF legislator Lalrinluanga Sailo in July.

Polling for the Dampa assembly seat was held peacefully on Tuesday with 83.07 per cent of the 20,888 eligible voters exercising their franchise in the bypoll.

Five candidates — ruling Zoram People's Movement (ZPM), main opposition Mizo National Front (MNF), Congress, BJP and People's Conference (PC) party had contested the bypoll. For the ZPM, the result is likely to influence the upcoming Lal Autonomous District Council (LADC) elections on December 3 and the Aizawl Municipal Corporation (AMC) poll, which is likely to be held early next year.

If the ZPM wins the polls, it would boost the party's morale amid mounting criticism from opposition parties. For the MNF, the bypoll holds special significance, as a defeat would further reduce its strength in the 40-member assembly and jeopardise its claim to the post of leader of opposition.

A party requires at least 10 MLAs for the position, and the MNF currently has nine following Sailo's death. The BJP, which is striving to expand its base in the Christian-majority state, sees the contest as an opportunity to strengthen its foothold. The party currently has two legislators in the assembly. (PTI)

E-AUCTION FOR 16 NOS ASSETS CATERING STALL ASSETS OVER LUMDING DIVISION		
Seq No.	Lot No./Category	Description
AA/1	Catg-LMG-SHTT-GMU-171-25-1 (Catering - General Minor Unit)	Provision of catering stall (GMU) Tea stall (SHTTTS-1) at platform-1 of Shighat Railway station.
AA/2	Catg-LMG-BXP-GMU-103-23-1 (Catering - General Minor Unit)	Provision of catering service on General Minor Unit (GMU) tea stall No. BXPTS-3 at Platform-1 of Barpathar Railway station.
AA/3	Catg-LMG-BHRB-GMU-119-23-1 (Catering - General Minor Unit)	Provision of catering service on General Minor Unit (GMU) tea stall No. BHRBTS-1 at platform-1 of Bhairabi Railway station.
AA/4	Catg-LMG-DSR-GMU-122-25-1 (Catering - General Minor Unit)	Provision of catering service on General Minor Unit (GMU) tea stall No. DSRTS-2 at Platform-1 of Dhansiri Railway station.
AA/5	Catg-LMG-UDPU-GMU-154-25-1 (Catering - General Minor Unit)	Provision of catering service on General Minor Unit (GMU) tea stall No. UDUPTS-1 at Platform-1 of Udaipur Railway station.
AA/6	Catg-LMG-JRNA-GMU-58-23-1 (Catering - General Minor Unit)	Provision of catering service on General Minor Unit (GMU) tea stall No. JRNATS-1 at platform-1 of Jirania Railway station.
AA/7	Catg-LMG-BRGM-GMU-50-25-1 (Catering - General Minor Unit)	Provision of catering service on General Minor Unit (GMU) tea stall No. BRGMTS-2 at platform-1 of Baraigram Railway station.
AA/8	Catg-LMG-MBO-GMU-169-25-1 (Catering - General Minor Unit)	Provision of catering service on General Minor Units (GMU), Tea stall (MBOTS-1), at platform-1 of Mairabari Railway station.
AB/1	Catg-LMG-LLBR-SMU-179-25-1 (Catering - Special Minor Unit)	Provision of catering services on Special Minor Units (SMU), Tea stall (LLBRTS-1) at platform-1 of Lalabazar Railway station.
AB/2	Catg-LMG-GHY-SMU-125-23-1 (Catering - Special Minor Unit)	Provision of catering stall (Tea stall) (GHYTS-15) at PF 2/3 between pillars No 7 & 8 at Guwahati Railway station.
AB/3	Catg-LMG-KWM-SMU-62-25-1 (Catering - Special Minor Unit)	Provision of catering service on Special Minor Unit (SMU) tea stall No. KWMTS-1 at platform-1 of Kamrup Railway station.
AB/4	Catg-LMG-LKA-SMU-59-23-1 (Catering - Special Minor Unit)	Provision of catering service on Special Minor Unit (SMU) tea stall No. LKATS-3 at Other Platform of Lanka Railway station.
AB/5	Catg-LMG-MBG-SMU-32-23-1 (Catering - Special Minor Unit)	Provision of catering services on Special Minor Units (SMU), Tea Stall (MBGTS-1), of Maibang Railway Station at PF-1.
AB/6	Catg-LMG-CPK-SMU-65-25-1 (Catering - Special Minor Unit)	Provision of catering service on Special Minor Unit (SMU) tea stall No. CPKTS-6 at Old Platform-1 of Chaparmukh Railway station, sketch plan attached.
AB/7	Catg-LMG-RUP-SMU-170-25-1 (Catering - Special Minor Unit)	Provision of catering services on Special Minor Units (SMU), Tea Stall (RUPTS-1), at PF-1 of Rupahigaon Railway Station.
AB/8	Catg-LMG-JMK-SMU-131-23-1 (Catering - Special Minor Unit)	Provision of catering service (SMU) tea stall No. JMKTS-1) at PF-1 of Jamunamukh Railway Station.

Closing date & time : At 13:30 hrs. on 27-11-2025. Initial Cooling off period is 30 minutes. Successive lots closing interval 10 minutes. Note : Prospective bidder are requested to visit e-Auction leasing module on IREPS website [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in) for more details.

Sr. DCM, Lumding

**NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY**  
Serving Customers With A Smile

No. BTC/LR-32/2025/152, Dated Kokrajhar, the 12<sup>th</sup> November, 2025.

**NOTICE INVITING TENDER**

Sealed quotation affixing a court fee stamp of Rs.8.25 (Rupees eight and paise twenty five only) is hereby invited from the intending registered farms/ submit Quotations for "Supply of Machinery items, Furnitures and Stationeries under Bhawraguri Revenue Circle, Bhawraguri and Dotma Revenue Circle, Dotma, Dist.-Kokrajhar" with the following terms and conditions.

The quotation will be received from 13.11.2025 to 04.12.2025 (11:00 AM till 3:00 PM) and will be opened on 05.12.2025 at 3:30 PM in presence of Quotationers or their representatives. In case of any unusual occurrence like Strike/ Govt. holiday etc. the receiving & opening of quotation will be on the next working day at the same time.

For details contact CALA, BTC Secretariat during office hours.

Sd/-Secretary, CALA,  
Bodoland Territorial Council,  
Kokrajhar

**IPR(BTC)/C/2025-26/3081**

No. BTC/LR-32/2025/151, Dated Kokrajhar, the 12<sup>th</sup> November, 2025.

**NOTICE INVITING TENDER**

Sealed quotation affixing a court fee stamp of Rs.8.25 (Rupees eight and paise twenty five only) is hereby invited from the intending registered farms/ submit Quotations for "Supply of Machinery items, Furnitures and Stationeries under Kokrajhar Revenue Circle, Kokrajhar and Bagribari Revenue Circle, Bagribari, Dist.-Kokrajhar" with the following terms and conditions.

The quotation will be received from 13.11.2025 to 04.12.2025 (11:00 AM till 3:00 PM) and will be opened on 05.12.2025 at 3:30 PM in presence of Quotationers or their representatives. In case of any unusual occurrence like Strike/ Govt. holiday etc. the receiving & opening of quotation will be on the next working day at the same time.

For details contact CALA, BTC Secretariat during office hours.

Sd/-Secretary, CALA,  
Bodoland Territorial Council,  
Kokrajhar

**IPR(BTC)/C/2025-26/3078**

No. BTC/LR-32/2025/150, Dated Kokrajhar, the 12<sup>th</sup> November, 2025.

**NOTICE INVITING TENDER**

Sealed quotation affixing a court fee stamp of Rs.8.25 (Rupees eight and paise twenty five only) is hereby invited from the intending registered farms/ submit Quotations for "Supply of Machinery items, Furnitures and Stationeries under Udalguri Revenue Circle, Udalguri, Dist.-Udalguri" with the following terms and conditions.

The quotation will be received from 13.11.2025 to 04.12.2025 (11:00 AM till 3:00 PM) and will be opened on 05.12.2025 at 3:30 PM in presence of Quotationers or their representatives. In case of any unusual occurrence like Strike/ Govt. holiday etc. the receiving & opening of quotation will be on the next working day at the same time.

For details contact CALA, BTC Secretariat during office hours.

Sd/-Secretary, CALA,  
Bodoland Territorial Council, Kokrajhar

**IPR(BTC)/C/2025-26/3075**

# Farhan Akhtar shares pics as '120 Bahadur' makers launch 'My Stamp' based on the Rezang La War Memorial

**MUMBAI Nov 12:** The makers of 120 Bahadur, the upcoming war epic based on the legendary Battle of Rezang La, recently launched a 'My Stamp' to honour the extraordinary bravery of the soldiers of the 13th Battalion, Kumaon Regiment of the Indian Army.

Millennial media consulting Actor Farhan Akhtar, who is an important part of the movie, took to his social media account in sharing the good news and also shared a few pictures of the same. Announcing the news with pride, Farhan wrote, "What better way to honour the bravery and sacrifice of our martyred soldiers? Today, the Indian Postal Service commemorated the Battle of Rezang La by issuing a new stamp in its memory. Thank you to the Hon. Defence Minister, Shri Rajnath Singh ji, for making time to do the inauguration. We are extremely grateful," with a folded hands emoticon.

In the picture shared by Farhan, Honourable Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh unveiled the stamp in New Delhi. Also present were Shri Jitendra Gupta, Director General of Postal Services; Director Razeesh 'Razy' Ghai; Farhan Akhtar; Ritesh Sidhwani; Amit Chandra; and Arhan Bagati, who together released the customised 'My Stamp' on the Rezang La War Memorial issued by the Department of Posts. The initiative celebrates



the unmatched courage, sacrifice, and spirit of the soldiers who laid down their lives at Rezang La, ahead of the 63rd anniversary of this historic battle.

For the uninitiated, the revered Rezang La War Memorial stands as a solemn tribute to the extraordinary bravery of the soldiers of the 13th Battalion, Kumaon Regiment of the Indian Army. Situated in Chushul, Ladakh, the memorial honours the unmatched courage, sacrifice, and indomitable spirit of the men who laid down their lives during the Battle of Rezang La in the 1962

India-China war.

The memorial serves as a lasting reminder of their valour, ensuring that the heroism and sacrifice of these soldiers are remembered by generations to come. The stamp celebrates this

legacy and the supreme sacrifice these soldiers made for the nation. Talking about 120 Bahadur, the movie narrates this extraordinary story of courage, led by Major Shaitan Singh Bhati, PVC, portrayed by Farhan Akhtar, who, along with his men, stood firm in one of the most defining moments in Indian military history.

Directed by Razeesh 'Razy' Ghai and produced by Ritesh Sidhwani, Farhan Akhtar (Excel Entertainment), and Amit Chandra (Trigger Happy Studios), the film releases in cinemas on 21st November 2025. (PTI)

## LINKIN PARK EXPANDS INDIA DEBUT WITH STANDALONE BENGALURU CONCERT ON JAN 23



**NEW DELHI, Nov 13:** Rock band Linkin Park on Thursday announced a special standalone concert in Bengaluru on January 23, 2026, expanding their long-awaited India debut with Lollapalooza India 2026.

Linkin Park, known for genre-defining hits such as "In the End", "Numb" and "Crawling", will be headlining Lollapalooza India in Mumbai on January 24 and 25, marking the band's first-ever performance in the country.

The Bengaluru show is part of the group's From Zero World Tour and will be held at Brigade Innovation Gardens, the band said in a statement.

"This past year on the From Zero World Tour has been incredible. When we announced Lollapalooza India, the warmth and excitement from fans was overwhelming, and we decided that one show just wasn't enough. We're thrilled to bring the tour to both Bengaluru and Mumbai on our first-ever trip to India," band member Mike Shinoda said.

Linkin Park, which paused live shows following the death of frontman Chester Bennington in 2017, made its comeback in 2024 with a new lead vocalist, putting to rest years of speculation about the band's future.

The group, which now includes -- Shinoda, Emily Armstrong, Brad Delson, Joe Hahn, Dave Farrell and Colin Brittain, introduced its new album "From Zero", led by singles "Lost" and "Friendly Fire".

The setlist for Indian concerts will feature new tracks such as "The Emptiness Machine" and "Heavy Is the Crown", as well as classic anthems from their early catalogue.

Homegrown metal band Bloodywood will open the Bengaluru concert.

General ticket sales for Bengaluru concert will go live on November 15 at 12 pm exclusively on BookMyShow. The tour is produced and promoted by BookMyShow Live, the live entertainment experiential division of BookMyShow. (PTI)



**PORT BLAIR, Nov 13:** To promote eco-adventure tourism, the Andaman and Nicobar Islands government is going to organise 'Island Trekking Festival' at Mount Harriet (now known as Mount Manipur), which is the third-highest peak in the archipelago, on November 15, an official said.

The Tourism department is organising the festival with the assistance of the Environment and Forests department and MY Bharat (an online youth leadership and social engagement platform).

"The event aims to promote eco-adventure tourism, encourage local youth participation

in highlighting the islands' natural beauty and historical heritage. It also seeks to inspire local youth to take up eco-guiding and adventure guiding as a means of self-employment, in line with the administration's vision for sustainable tourism development," he said.

Participation will be limited to 50 persons (first batch), including local youth, trekking enthusiasts, tour operators, and tourists. The first 50 registered participants will be selected for the trek, and a participation certificate will be issued by the tourism department to all selected participants.

Mount Manipur is one of the most scenic

and historically significant trekking routes in South Andaman. During the Anglo-Manipur war in 1891, Maharaja Kulachandra Singh, along with 22 freedom fighters, were exiled to the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

"In 2021, Union Home Minister Amit Shah, during his visit to the archipelago, renamed Mount Harriet as Mount Manipur to honour the brave freedom fighters of Manipur and their connection with the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. Therefore, due to its historic value, we have decided to organise this festival here," the senior tourism department official said. (PTI)

## KARAN JOHAR CONDEMNS 'MEDIA CIRCUS' AROUND AILING DHARMENDRA, URGES PRIVACY FOR DEOL FAMILY

**MUMBAI, Nov 13:** Filmmaker Karan Johar on Thursday criticised the "paparazzi and media circus" around an ailing Dharmendra, urging them to leave the Deol family alone as they cope with an emotionally difficult time.

Johar shared a note on his Instagram Stories and said the relentless media coverage of a "living legend who has contributed so massively to our cinema" was "heartbreaking".

"When basic courtesy and sensitivity leaves our hearts and our actions, we know we are a doomed race... PLEASE leave a family alone!!!! They are already emotionally combatting so much..."

"It's heartbreaking to see a paparazzi and media circus for a living legend who has contributed so massively to our cinema... This is not coverage, it's disrespect!" he said.

Dharmendra, 89, was discharged from the Breach Candy Hospital and moved home for continued treatment.

Over the past two days, media crews had camped outside both the hospital and the Deol residence, prompting pleas of privacy from the family.

Earlier on Thursday, actor Sunny Deol sharply reprimanded photographers gathered outside his Juhu home.

His remarks followed the circulation of a leaked video purportedly showing the Deol family grieving at the bedside of an ailing Dharmendra. On Tuesday, as rumours swirled that he had died and condolences started pouring in, daughter Esha Deol and wife Hema Malini condemned "irresponsible" media behaviour and clarified that the actor was stable and responding to treatment. (PTI)



## RUDRAJIT ROY'S DIRECTORIAL MAKES WAVES AT INTERNATIONAL FESTIVALS BEFORE KIFF PREMIERE



**MUMBAI Nov 12:** In Pinjar, freedom does not arrive with fanfare. It flickers quietly, like the wingbeat of a bird brushing past the bars of a cage. Director Rudrajit Roy and writer Rahul Roye bring together five distinct lives, tracing their struggles across Bengal's rural heartlands and the restless cityscape, bound by one shared longing to break free. Actor Satakshi Nandy, who plays Paromita, calls the film "a delicate interplay of lives and spaces, where every character is caged in some way by circumstance, desire or society itself."

Paromita, a widowed schoolteacher in a small village, lives a life of discipline and quiet dignity until she develops a tender bond with Tarak, played by Sagnik Mukherjee, a bird catcher who connects the rural and urban worlds through his trade. "Tarak is, in a sense, the film's bridge," Satakshi explains. "He lives in the village but his birds are sold in the city. The metaphor of birds, cages and freedom runs through every frame of the story." The film's duality lies not only in its characters but in its geography, which moves between the rustic serenity of the countryside and the chaos of the city. "Each space has its own rhythm," Satakshi reflects. "The rural setting moves at a slower, grounded pace, while the city

breathes in short, impatient bursts. The two keep colliding, and that is where the story finds its soul." Paromita's world is defined by her inner conflict between what society expects of her and what her heart quietly desires. "She is a woman who has made peace with her life," Satakshi says. "Then love comes again, uninvited and inconvenient but deeply human. She does not know whether she should allow herself to feel it. That hesitation, that pull between duty and desire, fascinated me."

The film's ensemble cast adds to its layered storytelling. Mallika Banerjee Roy plays Shefali, while Joy Sengupta appears as Shefali's husband. Both Shefali and her husband bring to screen the nuances of urban life, each dealing with their own struggles. Swastidipa portrays Jhimli, Tarak's daughter. Ishan Mazumdar takes on the role of Iqbal, while Samiul Alam, Tathagata Mukherjee and Mamata Shankar play crucial characters who bring emotional depth and generational weight to the narrative. Cinematographer Manas Bhatnagar captures Bengal's textures with sensitivity, shifting between sunlit fields and narrow urban lanes with poetic ease. The film's rhythm is shaped by editors Sayantan Nag and Anindita Ghosh, whose cuts mirror the ebb and flow of its characters' inner lives.

The haunting score by Ratul Shankar and the immersive sound design by Aneesh Basu further underline the theme of entrapment and release. For Rudrajit, the focus was always on the characters and their stories rather than the stars themselves, ensuring that the emotional core of the film remained at the visual centre.

Pinjar premiered at the Chicago South Asian Film Festival, followed by screenings at the Indian Film Festival of Sydney. It went on to become the Centrepiece Film at the Indian International Film Festival Toronto, where it received a standing ovation for its emotional resonance. The film is now set to have its Indian premiere at the Kolkata International Film Festival in the Bengali Panorama section, marking a proud homecoming for the team. For director Rudrajit, Pinjar's international journey feels both humbling and affirming. "As a practising doctor and a writer in my spare time, I have always been inspired by world cinema and the storytelling traditions that shape it," he says. "With Pinjar, my intention was to create a film where the story and characters drive the narrative in their most organic form. The fact that my debut feature is being appreciated and loved across international film festivals is truly special to me. Its upcoming screening at KIFF marks its first public showing in

India, and I believe it is ultimately the Indian audience who will give the film its final meaning." Roy confirms that Pinjar will also reach theatres once its festival run concludes. "Yes, following its journey through a few more prestigious film festivals, we plan to release Pinjar theatrically. It is a film meant for the big screen. Its emotional

depth, visual texture and soundscape are best experienced in a cinema hall. To truly feel Pinjar, one must watch it on the big screen." For Satakshi, the shoot itself was transformative, both emotionally and physically. Filmed deep within Bengal's interiors, the schedule demanded immersion in a slower, quieter way of life. "For those few weeks, I forgot the city's humdrum," she recalls. "I was just Paromita, teaching children, living a routine life, finding unexpected joy in stolen glances. It was liberating in the simplest sense of the word." As Pinjar continues its journey across continents and now returns home to Bengal, it stands as a meditation on confinement, desire and redemption. "It is a story that belongs here," Satakshi says. "Because even though it travels the world, its soul is unmistakably Bengali." In Pinjar, cages are not always visible, but the longing to open them is universal. (PTI)

# GILL'S BIGGEST CHALLENGE WILL BE ADJUSTING TO DIFFERENT FORMATS: PUJARA

**NEW DELHI, Nov 13:** Shubman Gill's biggest challenge in his nascent journey as an all-format player will be the need to switch between three versions of the sport quickly, felt former India batter Cheteshwar Pujara but expressed confidence that the skipper has the required maturity to live up to the task.

Gill was in Australia recently leading the ODI side, and he was deputy to Suryakumar Yadav in the T20s before travelling back to India for the two-match Test series against South Africa, starting at Kolkata on Friday. "Someone like Shubman, who is still a young player, doesn't really have a heavy physical workload. But mentally, it can be challenging," JioStar expert Pujara said during the Media Day ahead of the first Test against the Proteas.

"He was recently in Australia leading the Indian one-day squad, then he played T20s, and now he suddenly has to shift from white-ball to red-ball cricket, not in Australia, but in India, where the conditions are completely different."

"His biggest challenge will be adjusting to different formats as quickly as possible. In Test cricket, you need temperament, patience and you also

need to change your game plan according to the format and to do that very quickly is always challenging for any top class player."

Pujara, however, backed Gill to handle the demands of captaincy and the format change, citing India's recent performances in England and against the West Indies at home.

"But someone like him, who is young, maturing quickly, and already leading the team well, I'm sure will respond positively. The Indian Test team's recent form will also help him; they did exceptionally well in the West Indies and before that in England."

"Shubman, as captain, will gain confidence from that. And they're playing South Africa, who recently won the World Test Championship and remain a top side. It will be a competitive series, and I'm sure Shubman is looking forward to the challenge," he added.

**"Jurel will strengthen Indian batting lineup"**

Riding on his twin tons for India A in the recent four-day series against South Africa A, wicketkeeper batter Dhruv Jurel is set to play the first Test in Kolkata despite the presence of Rishabh Pant, who is coming back



after suffering an injury in England in July.

Pujara backed Jurel's inclusion to beef up the batting line-up.

"Well, firstly the kind of form he is in, Dhruv Jurel definitely deserves a spot in the playing 11. I believe that he will bat at number 6. The Indian top order will remain the same as what we saw in England...but number 6 spot is up for grabs where Karun was batting in England," Pujara said.

"So, I believe that Dhruv will take

that spot and bat at number 6. And then, depending on the pitch, but most likely it will be three spinners and two seamers.

"That's how I look at the team combination and that's how Dhruv will pitch into this playing 11. But I definitely believe the kind of form he is in, the way he is batting, it will strengthen the Indian batting lineup."

**Crucial for Sudharsan**  
Pujara said it will be a crucial series for No.3 batter Sai Sudharsan.

"Sai is a young player who is maturing very quickly. He has shown that he has the potential. It is just about converting his starts. Once he gets that first 100, I think he will be a lot more confident."

"It's not just about the number 3 spot, it is also about him proving that he can be part of this playing 11. Doesn't matter whether he continues batting at number 3 or depending on the team's requirement if the batting position changes."

"As of now, yes, he is the one who will continue batting at number 3 but Jurel is someone who has also shown a lot of potential. So if Jurel starts scoring runs, you never know, he might be batting at a different position."

The Proteas have three good spinners in Simon Harmer, Senuran Muthusamy and Keshav Maharaj and Pujara felt that the presence of quality spinners and allrounders make the visitors a tough team to beat.

"The pitch will play a major role because if you are playing on a slightly better pitch which will also allow the batters to score some runs. I still feel that there will be enough assistance for the spinners but it won't be a ranked turn," he said.

"Definitely the South African team has very good spinners and at the same time they have got good all-rounders as well which will make them a very competitive team to beat." Pujara said runs from the top-order batters were mandatory for South Africa to stretch India.

"South Africa have some good all-rounders, but the key for them will be their batting. They also have quality spinners -- Harmar and Maharaj have played a lot of cricket and bring strong first-class experience. Their spinners will bowl well, I have no doubt about that."

"But for them to win a Test match, their batters must put enough runs on the board. If the South African batters can post somewhere around 350 to 400 on a good surface, they will give themselves a real chance. Their all-rounders and spinners will do their part, but the batting will be crucial."

Pujara reckoned Axar Patel might just miss the Test, considering the riches in India's squad.

"It's unfortunate because he is a quality player. But that's the kind of talent India have at the moment... If Axar were playing for another country, he probably wouldn't be left out of the XI," he signed off. (PTI)

## Mangaldai gears up for 23rd zonal U-18 Kho-Kho C'ship

**HT Correspondent**

**MANGALDAI, Nov 13:** The 23rd All Assam Under-18 Junior Boys and Girls North Assam Zone Kho-Kho Competition is set to kick off on November 15 and 16, under the supervision of the Assam Kho-Kho Association and organised by the Mangaldai Sports Association.

The preparations have been completed by the host organisation.

The boys' matches will be held at Raja Dharmnarayan Stadium in Sonalipam, Mangaldai, while the girls' fixtures will unfold at the Mangaldai Sports Association Stadium.

Approximately 200 players and officials from district teams including Mangaldai, Tezpur, Udalguri, Lakhimpur, Nagaon, Morigaon, and Sonapur are expected to participate in the event.

## KAMSFC enters semi-finals of Tashen Borah Memorial Cup on goal difference

**HT Bureau**

**DIPHU, Nov 13:** Karbi Anglong Morning Star FC (KAMSFC) has advanced to the semi-finals of the 1st Tashen Borah Memorial Cup, an All Assam Inter-Club Invitational Football Tournament organised by the Naharkatia Sports Association (NSA).

KAMSFC qualified on an aggregate score of 8-6, winning on goal difference against OIL FC.

KAMSFC will face United Chirang Duar FC in the semi-final on Friday.

In the first quarter-final played on November 10 at the NSA Stadium, Naharkatia, KAMSFC defeated Kakopathar Football Coaching Centre 6-0. In their second quarter-final match against OIL FC, the game ended in a 2-2 draw.

OIL FC had earlier beaten Kakopathar FC 6-0 in their first quarter-final match.

With a total of eight goals scored across two matches, compared to OIL FC's six, KAMSFC advanced to the semi-finals on goal difference.

The team is led by manager Waisong Bey and coach Bewel Bey.

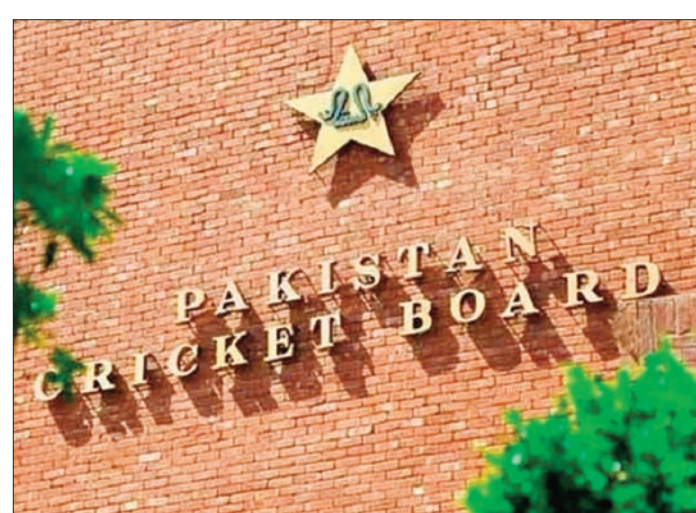
## PCB reworks schedule of tri-series against Zim, SL amid security concerns

**RAWALPINDI, Nov 13:** The Pakistan Cricket Board has rescheduled the opening of a T20I tri-series against Sri Lanka and Zimbabwe from November 17 to November 18 besides making Rawalpindi the sole venue for the tournament amid security concerns in the wake of a suicide attack in Islamabad.

The second game of the seven-match rubber has also been postponed by a day to November 20. Earlier, Lahore was scheduled to host five games of the event, including the final on November 29 but the three boards have agreed to hold the proceedings exclusively in Rawalpindi now.

"The decision to revise the schedule was made in consultation with Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) and Zimbabwe Cricket (ZC), following mutual discussions to accommodate operational and match requirements," the PCB said in a statement after a night of hectic negotiations to ensure that the Lankan players do not leave an ongoing ODI series midway.

The Zimbabwe cricket team reached Islamabad early Thursday morning amid tight security for what is being described as an "im-



portant preparatory platform ahead of the 2026 ICC T20 World Cup", by the PCB.

Each team will feature in four matches, with the top two sides qualifying for the final.

The Sri Lankan cricket team will also continue with its bilateral tour of Pakistan and no player or official is planning to return home, according to its team manager, Mahinda Halangoda.

Eight players had expressed con-

cerns about continuing the tour after the terror attack in Islamabad, which left 12 dead and several injured. But after SLC spoke to them and gave them assurances, they have decided to stay for the assignment. Halangoda said that no player would be returning to Sri Lanka.

"I can confirm that," he asserted. A reliable source aware of the developments said it had taken massive behind the scenes efforts to convince the players that they

would be safe in Pakistan and should continue playing the series.

"The Sri Lanka board President Shammi Silva and the Sri Lankan High Commissioner in Pakistan got involved and things are settled for now," he said. PCB Chairman and Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi said he was grateful to the Sri Lankan team for the decision to continue the Pakistan tour.

The PCB later announced a slight change in the schedule of the remaining two one-day games. The PCB announced that the two matches will now be played on Friday and Sunday in Rawalpindi, instead of the originally planned dates of November 13 and 15.

**Series schedule:**  
**18 November** – Pakistan v Zimbabwe

**20 November** – Sri Lanka v Zimbabwe

**22 November** – Pakistan v Sri Lanka

**23 November** – Pakistan v Zimbabwe

**25 November** – Sri Lanka v Zimbabwe

**27 November** – Pakistan v Sri Lanka

**29 November** – Final. (PTI)

## Jyothi leads India's golden charge at Asian Archery C'ships

**DHAKA, Nov 13:** Seasoned campaigner Jyothi Surekha Vennam led from the front as Indian compound archers enjoyed a stellar outing, clinching three golds and a silver on a productive day at the Asian Championships here on Thursday.

Jyothi secured the women's individual and team titles to cap a perfect day for the 29-year-old.

She first teamed up with Deepshikha, and Prithika Pradeep to registered a thrilling 236-234 victory over Korea in the compound women's team final.

The trio delivered near-flawless shooting, producing ends of 59 (10, 10, 10, 10, 9, 10) and 58 (10, 10, 10, 9, 10, 9) to outclass the Korean combination of Park Yerin, Oh Yoohyun, and Jungyoon Park.

The Asian Games champion then claimed the compound women's individual crown with a hard-fought 147-145 win over 17-year-old Prithika in an all-India final.

Jyothi had dropped just one point in her semifinal, comfortably

defeating Chinese Taipei's Si-Yu Chen 149-143.

While Prithika, one of the season's brightest prospects, has edged out home favourite Most Kulsum Akhter Mone by a single point (146-145) in a tense semifinal.

In the compound mixed team final, Abhishek Verma and Deepshikha combined superbly to defeat Bangladesh 153-151, to secure another gold for India.

The pair displayed consistency under pressure, shooting identical 38-point ends (10, 9, 10, 9 and 9, 10, 9, 10) to seal the title.

However, in the compound men's team final, India fell agonisingly short against Kazakhstan, going down 229-230 to settle for the silver medal.

The Indian trio of Abhishek Verma, Sahil Rajesh Jadhav, and Prathamesh Bhalchandra Fuge was edged out by the Kazakh side of Dilukhamet Mussa, Bunyod Mirzametov, and Andrey Tyutyun, who held their nerve in the closing arrows. (PTI)



## Nagal should apply for visa with required materials: Chinese Foreign Ministry

**BEIJING, Nov 13:** The Chinese Foreign Ministry on Thursday said India's top-ranked tennis player Sumit Nagal, who was denied visa to travel to the country for a tournament, should submit his application to their Embassy with all required documents.

Nagal was scheduled to travel to Chengdu to compete in the Australian Open Playoff event, which will give the regional players a main-draw entry into the 2026 Australian Open.

On Tuesday, Nagal wrote on X that his visa was rejected without reason and he sought help of Chinese Ambassador to India.

Asked for a response, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Lin Jian said China issues visas to athletes from all countries, including India, in accordance with laws and regulations.

He expressed hope that the individual concerned will submit application materials in line with the requirements of the Chinese Embassy in India in a timely manner.

The 27-year-old from Hajar, Haryana, is currently India's highest-ranked singles player, placed 275 in the latest ATP standings.

After losing his place in top-100, Nagal cannot enter the top events like Grand Slams as direct entrant and would depend on wild card entries or Qualifiers.

Last year, he competed in Australian Open main draw, losing in the opening round and fell in the qualifying for Roland Garros and Wimbledon.

He played a crucial role in India's Davis Cup win over Switzerland, winning both his singles against lower-ranked players. (PTI)

## Shubhankar gets back Tour card

**TARRAGONA (SPAIN), Nov 13:** Shubhankar Sharma made amends for a disappointing season by earning the playing rights for the 2026 season with a tied second place finish at the DP World Qualifying school's Final stage.

After making his way through the second stage, where he finished Tied-eighth, Sharma completed a great week in the third and final stage with a final round of 66 that saw him finish tied second.

Sharma had six birdies against one bogey in his final round of 5-under 66 to total 24 under par. He had rounds of 70-69-66-67-66-66. He was 13 shots behind the leader and winner, Zander Lombard of South Africa.

The tied second place will put Sharma in Category 18 and ensure a lot of starts over the season and some good results in the first half could help his re-rank. Sharma, who turned pro in 2013



at the age of 17, has been on the DP World Tour since 2018. He won the Joburg Open in December 2017 and the Maybank Malaysian Open in February 2018.

Sharma has managed to keep his card all the years and finished inside Top-70 each time except in the Covid-hit season of 2020.

This year he lost his card after failing to make cut in 21 out of 28

Tour DP Tour events he played in 2025.

The 2025 season was one of the toughest Sharma had endured in his professional career. Equipment changes impacted his game and he struggled to find the correct combination.

Lombard finished first in the Q School after shooting 37 under par over six rounds. His round were

64-69-67-64-64-63 and his best round of 8-under 63 being saved for the final day.

Lombard lost his card after having to undergo ACL reconstruction due to an injury sustained while playing padel in June 2024. The surgery to fix his ruptured ligament saw him being sidelined from the sport for seven months resulting in a delayed start to the 2025 season.

The 20 players who made it through the Q-school this week were Zander Lombard, Shubhankar Sharma, Aaron Cockerill, Connor McKinney, Daniel Rodrigues, Nathan Kinsey, Quentin Debove, Davis Bryant, Benjamin Follett-Smith, Mathew Baldwin, Gregorio De Leo, Andreas Halvorsen, Adri Arnaus, Eddie Pepperell, Jack Yule, Andreas German Gallegos, Sadom Kaewkanjana, Frederico Biondi Figueiredo, Hunter Logan and Mike Toorop. (PTI)

## Manoj S storms into the lead at Trident Open

**CHANDIGARH, Nov 13:** Teenager Manoj S fired a five-under 67 to take a one-shot lead after round three of the inaugural Trident Open golf tournament here on Thursday.

At the age of 17 years, seven months and 26 days, Manoj, who is currently nine-under 207, is now in line to become the youngest player to win as a professional on the PGTI. The record is currently held by Shubhankar Sharma who achieved the feat (PGTI Cochin Masters 2014) at the age of 17 years, eight months and 22 days.

Karandeep Kochhar holds the overall record for the youngest player to win on the tour as he registered his maiden win (PGTI Players Championship at Tollygunge Club 2016) while still an amateur at the age of 17 years and five months.

Former PGTI Order of Merit champion Manu Gander (66-73-69) carded a 69 to close the third

round in second place at eight-under 208.

Yuvraj Sandhu (70) and Akshay Sharma (72), as well as Shubham Jaglan (71), Shaurya Bhattacharya and Mohd Azhar are bunched in third place, three shots behind at five-under 211.

Manoj, lying one off the lead in tied third place after round two, quickly made his way up the leaderboard with four birdies and a bogey on the front-nine.

Manoj, who has recorded five top-10s in his last six starts on the PGTI, collected four more birdies in exchange for two bogeys on the back-nine to move into pole position.

On a day when conditions seemed to ease up a bit with lower scores being posted, Manoj rolled in three 10-footers, capped the round with a 25-foot conversion on the 18th and also missed a hole-in-one on the Par-3 14th where his tee shot hit the flag. (PTI)

## Indian women's tennis team looks to bag historic Billie Jean King Cup qualifiers berth

**BENGALURU, Nov 13:** The Indian women's tennis team will be eager to script its own defining moment when it chases its first ever Billie Jean King Cup qualifiers berth, hoping to tame formidable playoff opponents in the Netherlands and Slovenia on home turf beginning Friday.

The whole nation is still riding high on the Indian women's cricket team's maiden World Cup triumph recently, and it will be a further filip if tennis stars can progress to the 2026 qualifiers.

India are in Group G along with Netherlands and Slovenia, and their campaign will be led by Sahaja Yamalappalli, Shrivalli Bhamidipaty, Ankita Raina, Riya Bhatia, and Prarthana Thombare.

The Netherlands and Slovenia will open the proceedings on Friday. India's first clash will be against Slovenia on Saturday followed by the match-up against the seventh-seeded Dutch team on Sunday.

This is the first time India is host-

ing the prestigious competition and the three teams will face each other in round-robin matches.

The group winner will progress to the 2026 Qualifiers, while the remaining two teams will return to the Regional Group I events.

India previously reached the Billie Jean King Cup play-offs, formerly known as the Federation Cup, only once in 2021, when they lost 1-3 to Latvia in an away tie.

India's hopes of rewriting history rely on the impressive Sahaja.

The India No. 1 and world No. 309, had beaten 2017 US Open champion Sloane Stephens in a WTA 125 event in Mexico, and she will be hoping for similar success against Netherland's world No. 87 Suzan Lamens.

Sahaja also had a good run at last month's WTA 250 Chennai Open, reaching the singles quarterfinals and the title round in doubles section.

Apart from Lamens, the Dutch have other capable players in Arantxa Rus and doubles-specialist



Demi Schuurs.

Slovenia has in its ranks Tamara Zidansek, a former French Open semifinalist, but the Indians will fancy their chances against her on the hard courts of the SM Krishna Tennis Stadium here.

In that context, Shrivalli, a world No. 381, will hope that her booming serve and precise ground shots can keep the rivals under the pump.

Her efforts were crucial to India's spirited performance against higher-ranked opponents Hong Kong and

Korea in the Asia-Oceania Group I event in Pune earlier this year, which eventually earned them a play-off spot.

The home side has also been camping in the city from November 4, and non-playing captain Vishal Uppal hoped that the 10-day preparatory camp sharpened his wards.

"The biggest values we focus on are passion, discipline and teamwork. That's exactly what we showed in Pune, where we upset higher-ranked opponents to qualify for the Play-offs."

"The girls have been competing well on tour and keeping sharp. Our goal now is to focus on our process and be mentally prepared to make life tough for our higher-ranked opponents," said Uppal, an Asian Games bronze-medallist.

If they can achieve it warding off the mental fatigue after a long season, then Indian women's tennis, still looking for a lead figure after the retirement of Sania Mirza, can cut open a new path. (PTI)

# India wary of South Africa's spin threat in opening Test



**KOLKATA, Nov 13:** India's awe-inspiring batting depth will face a stern test against South Africa's quality spin attack when the reasonably well-matched sides clash in an eagerly-anticipated two-match Test series beginning here on Friday.

India would be haunted by the ghosts of last year's home debacle against New Zealand when their home record was shattered by Kiwi spinners Ajaz Patel, Mitchell Santner and Glenn Phillips, who shared 36 wickets across three Tests, fashioning an unprecedented 0-3 whitewash.

Given South Africa's heavy reliance on tweakers right now, that collapse against sustained spin pressure will linger in the collective memory of the home side.

The reigning World Test champions are known for fiery pacers historically but are currently armed with one of the most potent spin groups in world cricket.

The Proteas arrive on the back of a morale-boosting 1-1 draw in Pakistan, achieved without inspirational captain Temba Bavuma.

South Africa's spin trio of Keshav Maharaj, Simon Harmer and Senuran Muthusamy accounted for 35 of the 39 wickets to fall across

the series outperforming Pakistan's own slow-bowling contingent of Noman Ali, Sajid Khan, Asif Afridi and Salman Agha, who managed 27 wickets collectively.

It was little wonder then that India assistant coach Ryan ten Doeschate called the rival bowling line-up a "subcontinent-style attack".

"They have got four spinners at their disposal, and most likely they will play three. It's a little bit like playing against a subcontinent team," he said.

"We've addressed that early on. Hopefully, we've learned from the New Zealand series."

Simon Harmer, now 36 and holder of 1,000 first-class wickets, is no stranger to Indian conditions.

As a 26-year-old on the 2015 tour under Hashim Amla, he featured in two Tests -- in Mohali and Nagpur -- and claimed prized scalps such as Cheteshwar Pujara, Rohit Sharma and Wriddhiman Saha, all known for their spin-playing prowess.

A decade later, Harmer remains as wily. He arrives in Kolkata after an eight-wicket match haul in Rawalpindi last month that spun South Africa to a series-levelling

win over Pakistan.

His control, drift, and subtle changes of pace make him an ideal foil for the left-arm spin of Maharaj, who is arguably one of the most accurate and attacking spinners in the modern game.

The Eden Gardens pitch has therefore become the most-watched element of this contest. While India batting coach Sitanshu Kotak and captain Shubman Gill have made multiple pitch inspections, Cricket Association of Bengal president Sourav Ganguly has assured that it "won't be a rank-turner".

That will please Jasprit Bumrah, who could be India's trump card on a surface that historically gives early movement and late reverse swing. India would look to go with two pacers and it appears that Akash Deep, the local 'boy', will have the edge with his knowledge of the conditions.

Over the last 15 years, pacers have taken 61 per cent (97 of 159 wickets) in Tests here as seam and swing play a major role, especially in the early and closing stages.

While a young Indian side under Shubman Gill's debut captaincy drew 2-2 in England this summer, showing resilience and adaptability

in seaming conditions, it is the New Zealand debacle at home that continues to rankle.

The subsequent 2-0 win against a weak West Indies side in this WTC cycle did little to test India's revival.

For India, the focus will be on application and patience against spin.

With Rishabh Pant fit again and an in-form Dhruv Jurel set to play as a specialist batter, the middle order looks more stable. Washington Sundar, who topped India's spin charts in that New Zealand series with 16 wickets, provides drift and bounce and lends depth with the bat.

Ten Doeschate underlined the mental readiness required after a gruelling multi-format schedule.

"You've got to switch on mentally and be ready for 16-17 days of really tough work. The body will take care of itself -- the mind has to be ready."

Given it's only a two-match series, the margin for error is slim.

Falling behind early could prove fatal especially with unfamiliar conditions set to play their part in the final Test in Guwahati, which will make its debut as a Test venue. For India, batting big and putting the opposition under the scoreboard pressure will be the key to exorcising the ghosts of last year's collapse.

**Teams :**

**India:** Shubman Gill (Capt), KL Rahul, Yashasvi Jaiswal, Sai Sudharsan, Rishabh Pant (WK and VC), Dhruv Jurel, Ravindra Jadeja, Washington Sundar, Jasprit Bumrah, Akash Deep, Mohammed Siraj, Kuldeep Yadav, Axar Patel and Devdutt Padikkal.

**South Africa:** Temba Bavuma (Capt), Aiden Markram, Ryan Rickelton, Tristan Stubbs, Kyle Verreynne, Dewald Brevis, Zubayr Hamza, Tony de Zorzi, Corbin Bosch, Wiaan Mulder, Marco Jansen, Keshav Maharaj, Senuran Muthusamy, Kagiso Rabada, Simon Harmer.

Match starts: 9.30am. (PTI)

# India weigh spin balance as Gill admits 'conflict' over final XI

**KOLKATA, Nov 13:** Skipper Shubman Gill on Thursday admitted that India are facing a "conflict" over their bowling combination ahead of the first Test against South Africa with Axar Patel's all-round utility pitted against Kuldeep Yadav's wicket-taking variety. Head coach Gautam Gambhir's preference for batting depth makes Axar a strong contender. Yet, Kuldeep's form and ability to strike in clusters have kept the discussion open till the morning of the match.

"Yeah, this time of the year, there's always that conflict -- whether to go for an extra all-rounder or an extra spinner," Gill said on the eve of the Test at Eden Gardens.

"That's why I said we'll see the wicket in the morning and decide what combination gives us the best chance to win the Test."

Asked specifically what will be team's choice between Axar and Kuldeep, he said, "Let's leave that one for tomorrow. You can find out at the toss."

Both Axar and Kuldeep had extended bowling spells at nets under Gambhir's watchful eyes, followed by long batting stints as the think-tank assessed their match readiness.

While Jasprit Bumrah and Mohammad Siraj are automatic picks, local lad Akash Deep is the third seamer in the squad. India went in with Kuldeep as the third spinner in their last home Test against the West Indies. He was also their top-wicket-taker with 12 wickets at 19.50 average.

Playing for India A in the second unofficial Test against South Africa A in Bengaluru, he returned with just one wicket across both innings on a flat-deck.

But against a stronger South African unit -- fresh from a 1-1 draw in Pakistan -- has prompted a tactical rethink.

Without revealing much, Gill underlined that spinners still remain India's game-changers.

"We've more or less finalised it. Actually, when we came yesterday, the wicket looked a little different. Today, it looks a bit different again. We'll come tomorrow and see how it looks."

"In this part of India, light goes off a little early, so we have to keep that in mind. Generally, fast bowlers get a bit of help in the morning and evening. Once we assess the wicket tomorrow, we'll decide accordingly."

"And yes, whenever we play in India, spinners generally decide the game. The better the quality of your spin attack, the better your chances of winning."

Gill also highlighted the batting cushion offered by India's spin all-rounders.

"We are fortunate to have good batting all-rounders, be it Axar, Washington or Jadeja. Their bowling and batting records are excellent, especially in India. It's going to be an exciting Test, and it's good to have more options," he said.

However, he did not rule out the pacers' influence on a dry Kolkata pitch.

"Reverse swing plays a big part if it's a dry wicket. During the 2024 series against England the pacers



**AXAR OR KULDEEP**

took crucial wickets even as the pitches were spin friendly.

"On wickets like these, especially towards the end of the year, there's early moisture. If you can get the ball to reverse, fast bowlers are always in the game."

There has also been debate around Mohammad Shami's omission, despite his strong domestic showing. Gill acknowledged it wasn't an easy call.

"A bowler of his quality... There aren't many like him. But we also have to consider the bowlers playing right now. They've done a terrific job. You can't ignore the performances of someone like Akash Deep or Prasad. We all know what Siraj and Bumrah have done in Test cricket."

"Sometimes it's difficult for players like Shami Bhai when they have to miss out. But it's important for us to plan ahead -- to see what kind of bowlers give us the best chance, especially when playing in New Zealand or other foreign countries."

Asked if Shami remained in future plans, Gill put the ball in selectors' court.

"I think the selectors would be able to give you a better answer to that." Now leading India in two formats and vice-captaining in T20Is, Gill admitted he is still learning to manage his workload.

"I'm still figuring out how to manage it. Since the Asia Cup, we've been playing back-to-back, travelling and switching formats within days. I'm trying to find what works best to perform across formats."

"The challenge is more mental than physical. Physically, I feel fine apart from a bit of jet lag coming from Australia. Mentally, it can be tough because every format and venue demands something different. But it's a good challenge and a great learning curve for me."

Looking ahead, Gill said defending World Test champions South Africa would test India's resilience.

"These two Tests are going to be very important to qualify for the WTC final. They are the reigning World Test champions and we know that it won't be easy. There will be difficult moments. But as a team, we have shown that whenever there are difficult moments, we have handled them well."

"The way they played the last series and drew in Pakistan was impressive. It's difficult for a foreign team to come to Asia and do well. That's why they are the reigning WTC champions. It's going to be a good series." (PTI)

## Indian Pickleball League from December 1 in Delhi

**NEW DELHI, Nov 13:** The inaugural edition of the Indian Pickleball League (IPBL) will be held in the national capital from December 1 to 7, the organisers announced on Thursday.

The League, will feature teams comprising players from India and abroad. Across a week of round-robin clashes and knockout battles leading to a high-voltage finale, the action promises to be fast-paced. President of the Indian Pickleball Association, Suryaveer Singh Bhullar, said, "The launch of IPBL marks a defining milestone for pickleball in India. This league represents the scale and structure needed to take the sport to the next level." The IPBL, launched by The Times Group, is sanctioned by the IPA and recognized by the Sports Ministry.

Commenting on the occasion, Vineet Jain, Managing Director, The Times Group, said, "We are proud to introduce the Indian Pickleball League, a landmark initiative that marks the next leap in India's sporting evolution."

"As the only league in the country officially sanctioned by the Indian Pickleball Association, our vision is to build a professional, credible, and inclusive platform that unites top talent from across India and showcases our nation's growing prowess in one of the world's fastest-emerging sports." (PTI)

## It's never easy to come back after injury, but glad I have done it: Rishabh Pant



**KOLKATA, Nov 13:** Rishabh Pant will wear his India whites after a four-month hiatus in the first Test against South Africa here on Friday.

and the wicketkeeper batter is understandably delighted to have made a difficult comeback from the latest injury setback.

Pant, who sustained a foot fracture during the fourth Test against England at Manchester in July, made his return to competitive cricket during India A's two unofficial Tests against South Africa A in Bengaluru.

"After an injury, it is never easy to come back. But God has been kind always and he has blessed me always, and this time also, and very happy to be back," said Pant in a video posted by the BCCI.

"See, every time I take the field, one thing I try to be is to be grateful. That's why I always look up and thank God, my parents, my family, everyone has supported me (during the recovery phase)," added the man who recovered from life-threatening injuries from a car accident to return last year.

Pant said his focus was on keeping his mind in a good space during the

rehabilitation period, rather than worrying about external speculation about his future.

"One thing I do is to focus on controllables, luck is one thing that you cannot control. So, I try not to think about that, as there are so many factors that we don't factor in."

"But if you can keep your mind in a place where a lot of things are not affecting you, and you focus only on things that matter to you. You will find happiness if you keep on doing things that make you feel good, especially when you are injured," he said.

The 28-year-old said tough times can immensely educate.

"Just be in a zone where you feel comfortable, work hard, be disciplined, and be in a zone where you are ready to learn but still enjoying that time doing everything," he said.

"Whatever you are doing you need to enjoy that moment, and give your 100 per cent and find joy and happiness in that," he added. (PTI)

## Gujarat Titans names Birla Estates as principal sponsors for IPL 2026

**AHMEDABAD, Nov 13:** Gujarat Titans, on Thursday, named Birla Estates, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Aditya Birla Real Estate Limited (ABREL), as the team's principal sponsor for the 2026 Indian Premier League.



Birla Estates replaced fantasy gaming platform Dream11, which has massively curtailed its operations after a central government act led to a blanket ban on real money gaming in August this year.

KT Jithendran, MD and CEO of Birla Estates, said: "This collaboration allows us to

connect with millions of fans across India and beyond, celebrating shared values of passion, perseverance, and progress. Together, we look forward to building something truly special that resonates both on and off the field."

Colonel Arvinder Singh, COO of Gujarat Titans, added: "Partnering with Birla Estates not only enhances the Gujarat Titans' brand portfolio but also reflects our commitment to collaborating with iconic institutions that elevate our presence across geographies. Together, we look forward to creating unique experiences that strengthen our collective brand value and open new avenues for growth."

The financial aspects of the deal, however, were kept under wraps by both parties.

Captained by India's Test and ODI skipper Shubman Gill, Gujarat Titans had scripted history during the 2022 IPL by clinching the title in their debut season. (PTI)

# Winning in India would be second only to the World Test Championship: Bavuma

**KOLKATA, Nov 13:** The prospect of conquering India in their own backyard carries a special allure for the reigning World Test champion skipper Temba Bavuma who said winning the two-match series is almost on par with South Africa's World Test Championship triumph earlier this year.

South Africa have lost seven successive Tests in India across three tours, their last win coming back in 2010 at Nagpur.

But Bavuma believes this group, unbeaten in full-strength Test series since coach Shukri Conrad took charge in 2023, has the maturity and belief to mount a serious challenge and win their only second series in India after 25 years.

"I think, obviously, winning the World Test Championship... not much to trump that. But second to that, I think will be winning in India," Bavuma said ahead of the first Test at Eden Gardens.

"It's something that I wouldn't even say it's eluded us, but we haven't been able to do for the longest of time. So, I mean, that's definitely up there in terms of ambition."

"We understand the magnitude of the challenge. Some of us in the group, there have been moments of hurt. So we know what it's about," he said.

"We look forward to the challenge. It should be exciting looking at the makeup of both teams -- fantastic players within the Indian team, but a little bit of inexperience. Similarly with our side, the guys want to match up to the best in the world."

**Win the toss: Williamson's advice**  
The Proteas skipper also recalled a lighter moment shared with former New Zealand skipper Kane Williamson and his one tip -- "win the toss".

At an awards ceremony in Mumbai, Bavuma had sought Williamson's advice as New Zealand had stunned India 3-0 in their own conditions last year.

"I met up with Kane at an awards evening in India a couple of months ago. I tried to ask him for some pointers," Bavuma said with a chuckle.

"He wasn't too open about it, but he did say, make sure that you win the toss. So I've been practising it."

Having returned from a long injury lay-off with runs and time at the crease in the second unofficial Test against India A, Bavuma, who scored a second innings fifty after a golden duck in the first innings, said proving his fitness was a key step.

"For me, the biggest thing was getting come off a long lay-off of Test cricket, get-



ting back on the field, proving my fitness to myself and everyone around, spending some time at the crease. I think that was important," he said.

The Proteas skipper, who faced Kuldeep Yadav for the first time in that warm-up, said India's left-arm wrist spinner will be a handful.

"I'd rather face him in the A game than here in Kolkata -- that's if he plays. He's not a massive turner of the ball, but he can obviously deceive you off the wicket," Bavuma said.

"You can see why India have a lot of faith in him. Definitely a guy who's a wicket-taker."

**'Lot more comfortable in my own skin'**

The Eden Gardens Test will also mark an emotional return for Bavuma, two years after South Africa were bowled out for 83 here in the ODI World Cup match -- a low point that triggered questions about his form and leadership.

"It wasn't the greatest of World Cups for me from a batting point of view. So, I can understand why the criticism came," he said.

"From a captaincy point of view, it's always felt like a process of discovery. You're always learning more about yourself."

"I think now I'm a lot more comfortable in my own skin. There's no case of having to prove to myself or to people back home that I'm deserving of the title. The results speak for themselves."

He knows scrutiny will always follow the job.

"The magnifying glass is always going to be on you," he said.

"So, you try to take it day by day and enjoy it. Coming here to India, like I said, big, big challenge. And as a batter, you want to be successful in these types of conditions."

Looking ahead, Bavuma said the absence of South Africa's traditional Boxing Day and New Year's Tests has made this India tour their new marquee event.

"This Test series becomes our festive season," he said.

"It's sad for us as players and fans, but we'll try and make the most of it. We'd love to play more Tests against India, England and Australia -- maybe not just two, maybe three."

As for the so-called "chokers" tag that haunted previous generations, Bavuma believes the current team has moved past it.

"Back home, there's been a major shift in mindset towards the Proteas. I think there's a lot more appreciation now," he said.

"Some of our guys weren't even born when those World Cups happened. For us, it's not something we carry. The World Test Championship win brought relief -- and stronger belief that if you keep going, things are about to happen." (PTI)

## Agra welcomes Deepti Sharma



**AGRA, Nov 13:** Deepti Sharma, who helped India win their maiden Women's World Cup trophy with a stellar all-round performance, on Thursday returned home to a fitting welcome that included a 10-km roaring roadshow.

Thousands of Agra residents lined the streets for the roadshow organised by the District Cricket Association to honour Deepti, who was adjudged the player of the tournament.

School children, cricket enthusiasts, dignitaries, and members of various social and sports organisations joined the event, waving flags and showering flowers along the route.

More than 150 police and traffic personnel were deployed to manage security and traffic during the celebrations. (PTI)