Page 1 Nov 15_Normal Pages 11/14/2025 9:25 PM Page 1

6 WORLD

● Russia's massive attack on Kyiv kills 4, injures 27
● Bangladeshi jurists call ordinance on referendum 'unconstitutional'

8 NATION

● NOTA's share up from 2020 but much lower than 2015 Bihar assembly polls
● Bihar results people's stamp of approval on NDA govt's service: Shah

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### *BJP-led alliance crosses majority mark of 122 seats in 243-member Assembly*

# NDA tsunami destroys Mahagathbandhan in Bihar

**PATNA, Nov 14:** The NDA is set to sweep the Bihar assembly polls, surging ahead in over 200 of 243 seats on Friday with the BJP emerging as single largest party with about 90 per cent strike rate, reaffirming the popularity and campaign clout of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who was the face of the ruling alliance through the poll battle in the highly sensitive political state.

At the time of going to the press, the ruling NDA crossed the majority mark of 122 seats in the 243-member Bihar Assembly.

The NDA won 125 seats. The BJP emerged as the largest party, winning 64 seats and leading in 26 other constituencies.

Its ally JD(U) won 47 seats and was ahead in 37, while LJP(RV) bagged 11 and was ahead in eight.

The Rashtriya Lok Morcha won one seat and was leading in three, according to the latest results available on the Election Commission website.

Deputy Chief Minister Samrat Choudhary, and state ministers Prem Kumar, Maheshwar Hazari and Sanjay Saraogi were among prominent winners from the NDA camp.

The Mahagathbandhan, which includes the RJD, the Congress and three Left parties, is facing a crushing defeat, notwithstanding surveys and opinion polls showing its chief ministerial candidate Tejashwi Yadav as the most preferred leader for the top post.

The Opposition alliance was barely poised to cross the 35-seat mark.

BJP's victory, a performance that would further cement its position as the numero uno political force in the country, will also offset whatever setback that might have been caused by last year's Lok Sabha polls when the party

had to rely on allies to remain in power in the Centre.

A high turnout of women, who outnumbered male voters by nearly 10 percentage points, seems to have clinched the deal in favour of the BJP-led coalition, as various studies have suggested that females, especially in Bihar, are more inclined towards the NDA.

The NDA's tally in Bihar comes in the backdrop of the BJP's back-to-back stupendous performances in Delhi, Maharashtra and Haryana.

Firm backing to Chief Minister Nitish Kumar by Modi and his ministers also appeared to have paid rich dividends for the JD(U), which seems poised to drastically improve its tally since 2020, when it had won only 43 seats.

Among the issues that are understood to have struck a chord with the people are promises of "double engine growth", with NDA in power both in the state as well as the Centre, 125 units of free power every month, hiked social security pensions and Rs 10,000 given to over 1 crore women. The opposition was also unable to counter the BJP's claim that under Tejashwi Yadav's leadership, the RJD was still "jungle raj wearing new clothes".

The victory in the Bihar polls, which were held in two phases amid alleged irregularities in the revision of electoral rolls by the Election Commission, is also significant as many see it as a prelude to assembly elections in West Bengal and Assam, scheduled to be held in the next six months.

Celebrations erupted at the offices of the BJP and JD(U) here, situated across the street from each other, with workers playing drums, bursting firecrackers and chanting slogans in praise of their respective leaders.

In front of the residence of the CM, the JD(U)'s 75-year-old national president, party workers posed for photographs holding aloft posters with the caption "Tiger Abhi Zinda Hai".

State BJP president Dilip Jaiswal remarked, good humouredly, "Of course, the stature of Nitish Kumar is higher than that of a tiger. And we are confident that these trends will be converted into results."

Prominent winners from the BJP included Deputy CM Samrat Choudhary (Tarapur), ministers Prem Kumar (Gaya Town), Sanjay Saraogi and Raju Kumar Singh (Sahebganj). Notable JD(U) winners include minister Maheshwar Hazari (Kalyanpur) and jailed former MLA Anant Kumar Singh (Mokama).

The party has polled close to 21 per cent of the votes counted in 101 seats it contested.

Tejashwi Yadav, who, according to PM Modi, was declared as a chief ministerial candidate after the RJD put a "katta" on the head of its alliance partners, was precariously placed in Raghopur, the RJD stronghold, and was trailing initially, only to gain ground in the later rounds.

Hyderabad MP Asaduddin Owais's AIMIM, which has often been accused of being a "B-team" of the BJP, was ahead in six seats. The party had contested 32 seats.

Prashant Kishor's much hyped Jan Suraaj Party has put up a dismal show, with none of its candidates *(CONTD. ON PAGE 2)*

### *'Akhil Gogoi is a master of disaster'*

## Rahul welcome to campaign in Assam, Himanta on Bihar results

**HT Bureau**

**GUWAHATI, Nov 14** : Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Friday mocked Rahul Gandhi after the poll debacle in Bihar and sarcastically said that the Congress leader is the biggest "star campaigner" of the BJP.

Talking to reporters here, Sarma said, "I mentioned this fact repeatedly during the poll campaign in Bihar that wherever Rahul Gandhi campaigns, the BJP is set to win those seats. This is true and if Rahul Gandhi decides to campaign in Assam, we will welcome him as he would further ensure BJP's win in the upcoming assembly polls."

The chief minister also took a potshot at the recent meeting of the opposition parties to make a united front to put up a strong fight against the BJP in the next election.

He said that the meeting of the opposition parties was convened actually to discuss the marriage of an opposition leader—a barb aimed at the Assam Jatiya Parishad leader Lurinyoti Gogoi whose marriage is reportedly on the cards.

Sarma also aimed at Akhil Gogoi and asserted that the Sivasagar MLA is a master of disaster.

We should not worry about the opposition parties here and more importantly, if Akhil Gogoi is present somewhere, a disaster is ought to happen," he added.

The chief minister also claimed that the opposition parties are not aware about the ground reality and they are cut off from the general public.

He said, "We always remain in touch with the people and that is why we know the reality. The people of Assam will reject the opposition in the upcoming assembly polls." Notably, in a resounding *(CONTD. ON PAGE 2)*

## Adani Group to invest ₹ 63,000 cr in two major power projects in Assam

**NEW DELHI, Nov 14:** The Adani Group will invest about ₹ 63,000 crore in Assam to build major power projects, including the Northeast's largest private coal-fired plant, and new pumped-storage facilities.

In a statement, the conglomerate run by billionaire Gautam Adani said its energy companies have received Letters of Award from the state government for two large power projects in Assam.

Adani Power Ltd will put in roughly ₹ 48,000 crore to build a 3,200 MW greenfield ultra-supercritical thermal plant under the Design, Build, Finance, Own and Operate (DBFOO) model.

The company won the project with a tariff bid of ₹ 6.30 per kWh (per unit) and has secured coal linkage under the Centre's SHAKTI policy.

The plant will be commissioned in phases from December 2030 and is expected to generate

20,000–25,000 jobs during construction and about 3,500 in operations.

Adani Green Energy Ltd, the group's renewable energy company, will invest around ₹ 15,000 crore in two Pumped Storage Projects (PSPs) with a combined capacity of 2,700 MW. It has also received an LoA for 500 MW of storage capacity that will be served through these PSPs.

The group said total employment during the project phase across both investments would be about 30,000. It described the developments as the largest private-sector investment in the Northeast and aligned with chairman Gautam Adani's earlier pledge to invest ₹ 50,000 crore in the region.

Adani said the projects would boost Assam's energy security, industrial growth and grid resilience. The thermal project has approvals from the Assam Electricity Regulatory Commission, and a power supply agreement with APDCL is expected to follow.

"Adani Power Ltd (APL), India's largest private sector power generator, will invest Rs 48,000 crore to set up a 3,200 MW greenfield ultra super critical power plant in Assam. Separately, Adani Green Energy, India's largest renewable energy company, intends to invest ₹ 15,000 crore, to set up two PSP in the state with a combined capacity of 2,700 MW," the statement said.

The 3,200 coal-fired plant, which will be commissioned in a phased manner from December 2030, will enhance Assam's energy infrastructure, supporting its growing industrial and household needs with reliable and efficient power. "This facility is designed to set *(CONTD. ON PAGE 2)*

## Over 2 pc Assam Police personnel found 'obese' in annual BMI test

**GUWAHATI, Nov 14:** Over 2 per cent of Assam Police personnel are in the 'obese' category as per the annual Body Mass Index (BMI) test for the force, conducted for the third year.

Assam Police, sharing the figure in a post on X, maintained that there has been a drop in the BMI over previous years.

BMI is a measurement of a person's weight with respect to his or her height. According to the World Health Organization, a BMI over 25 is considered overweight and over 30 is obese.

"Fitter khaki, stronger force! In this year's Annual BMI *(CONTD. ON PAGE 2)*

## 10 Rohingyas, 6 B'deshis pushed back from Assam

**GUWAHATI, Nov 14:** Sixteen infiltrators, including 10 Rohingyas, were pushed back from Assam early on Friday, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said.

He affirmed his government's commitment to securing the borders.

"Another smooth operation! Six Bangladesh nationals and ten Rohingyas safely sent back through Gate 39 at 00:30 hrs, as clean and precise as a Mission Impossible scene," Sarma said in a post on X, with a reference to the Hollywood movie.

"Assam's borders stay secure, our team stays vigilant, and no multiverse anomaly detected," he added.

Sarma, however, did not mention from which district the infiltrators *(CONTD. ON PAGE 2)*

## Prasanta Phukan says Rahul Gandhi should quit politics, open shop in London

**HT Correspondent**

**DIBRUGARH, Nov 14:** State cabinet minister and Dibrugarh MLA Prasanta Phukan on Friday said Congress leader Rahul Gandhi should "quit politics and open a shop in London".

His remark came after the NDA's decisive victory in the Bihar Assembly elections.

Phukan said the people of Bihar had once again reposed their faith in the NDA under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Bihar leader Nitish Kumar.

He said the mandate demonstrated the strength of the alliance and the trust people have in its governance.

Expressing confidence about Assam's political landscape, he added that the BJP was poised to secure a similar landslide victory in the upcoming Assam Assembly elections under the leadership of Prime Minister Modi and chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma.

Celebrations broke out in BJP offices across Assam following the NDA's victory in Bihar.

In Dibrugarh, minister Phukan joined party workers at the district BJP *(CONTD. ON PAGE 2)*

## Three more arrested for putting up social media posts supporting Delhi blast

**GUWAHATI, Nov 14:** Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Friday said that three more people have been arrested for putting up social media posts supporting the Delhi blast, taking the tally to 20.

Till Thursday, 17 arrests were made, while three more have been apprehended.

Sarma, in an X post, said, "Total of 20 anti-nationals have now been arrested by @assampolice for showing their online support for terrorists behind the #DelhiTerrorAttacks."

"More are being hunted," he added, sharing the list of all 20 persons apprehended so far.

The chief minister had said on Thursday that the state government has *(CONTD. ON PAGE 2)*

***Students of Asom Jatiya Vidalaya taking part in fancy dress competition at their school premises in Guwahati on Friday. HT Photos***

## India should take leadership role in WTO reform process: Ngozi

**VISAKHAPATNAM, Nov 14:** World Trade Organization Chief Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala on Friday said India should take the leadership role in reform process at the WTO amid growing uncertainties at global trade front.

She said that India's economy is growing at a healthy pace and it is a leader in areas such as technology.

She said that there is a need to look at areas in the WTO which are not working and discuss ways to correct that.

"'...and here India can be a leader, India should be a leader in the reform process at the WTO India should be a leader in making sure that we do not stay in a system that becomes more power based instead of rules based," Director-General of the World Trade Organization (WTO) Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala said here at CII's partnership Summit 2025.

She added that India is a fast growing economy and has the scale and credibility to provide leadership not just in this region but globally.

Referring to high tariffs imposed by the US, she said the member nations should pay attention to the concerns flagged by America.

India too has flagged concerns on issues like public stockholding, she said, adding repeating past grievances will not help to build a strong global trading system.

She appealed to all the members of the WTO to work together to strengthen the global trading system.

The US has raised concerns over the way WTO arms are functioning and has called for reforms in the WTO including in its dispute redressal mechanism.

WTO is a 166-member Geneva-based multilateral body that deals with trade *(CONTD. ON PAGE 2)*

### *Event to showcase indigenous crafts, handlooms and traditional cuisines at Bodoland University*

# North East Art & Culture Expo begins on Nov 15

**HT Correspondent**

**KOKRAJHAR, Nov 14:** The cultural diversity of North East India will be in focus at the Exhibition of Indigenous Art & Crafts, Handloom Traditions and Food Culture, scheduled from November 15 to 22 at the Jwhwlao Nileswar Brahma Auditorium of Bodoland University.

The exhibition highlights the region's heritage through traditional artistry, craftsmanship and cuisine.

Organised under the Project Empowering Marginalised Women of the Sixth Scheduled Areas of Assam (EMWSSAA) and funded by the North Eastern Council under the Ministry of DoNER, the event is being held in collaboration with TRIFED. The exhibition forms part of the 150th Janjatiya Gaurav Varsh celebrations commemorating the birth anniversary of Bhagwan Birsa Munda.

The inaugural session will be attended by the Chief of Bodoland Territorial Council, Hagrama Mohilary; BL Ahuja, vice-chancellor, Bodoland University; PS Aleng, general manager, TRIFED-NER; and Dawa

Penjor, general secretary of the Bhutan–India Friendship Association, Gelephu Chapter.

Colonel David L. Khojol, Commanding Officer of the 135 Infantry Battalion (TA), Ecological, Assam, will join as guest of honour.

The programme includes a traditional Dahal Thungri welcome dance, a book release, cultural presentations and the formal opening of the exhibition by the chief guest.

A special inaugural evening will feature a ramp walk by Aronai Entertainment showcasing traditional North Eastern weaves, a musical dialogue on Zubeen Garg by performers P Gogoi, Anshuman Baruah and Pragyashree Phukan, and a live performance by The Family Tree Band.

The week-long exhibition will also host a Tribal Artisan Empanelment Mela by TRIFED on November 17 and a session on oral and written histories covering indigenous arts, weaving, ecological crafts, food traditions and languages under EMWSSAA on November 19.

Visitors will be able to experience an array of authentic handlooms, eco-friendly crafts and traditional cuisines from across the North East, offering an immersive glimpse into the region's cultural and artistic richness.

Page 2 Nov 15_Normal Pages 11/14/2025 9:15 PM Page 1



# India negotiating trade pact with US, EU, others: Goyal

**VISAKHAPATNAM, Nov 14:** Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal on Friday said India is negotiating free trade agreements at present with countries, including the US, European Union, New Zealand, Oman, Peru and Chile.

He also said that the India Trade Promotion Organisation (ITPO) would be happy to join hands with the Andhra Pradesh government to develop a world class convention centre - Andhra Mandapam - here like Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi.

The minister added that lowering trade barriers globally will help promote free flow of goods, services and capital.

India has already implemented free trade agreements with countries such as the UAE, Australia and four-nation European bloc EFTA.

"We are currently negotiating with the EU, US, Oman, New

Zealand, Chile and Peru and many more wanting us to start negotiations," he said here at CII Partnership Summit 2025.

To promote ease of doing business, he said the Centre has removed as many as 42,000 compliance requirements and abolished 1,500 laws.

Later speaking at the event, Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu said that he will provide land for the construction of a world class convention centre.

Further, Goyal suggested steps to expand global cooperation.

He suggested promoting two-way investments by lowering trade barriers and creating an open transparent environment that enables a free flow of goods, services and capital.

The other suggestions include technology cooperation; and building a predictable policy framework to promote long term partnership.

These remarks are important in the wake of growing protectionism globally. Goyal added that India's trust-based diplomacy is reflected in its expanding network of Free Trade Agreements (FTAs).

Meanwhile he laid the foundation stone for Drone City and Space City in Andhra Pradesh through virtual mode on the sidelines of the event along with Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu.

He said that India should be self-reliant in production of high-quality drones and the upcoming Drone City in Kurnool will help in that direction. *(PTI)*

# RIL to set up 1 GW AI Data Centre, 6 GWp solar power project in Andhra: CM Naidu

**VISAKHAPATNAM, Nov 14:** Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) will be setting up a 1 GW Artificial Intelligence Data Centre in the state, a fully modular, future-ready facility designed to host the world's most advanced processors, Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu said on Friday.

In a post on 'X', he said in order to power the proposed AI Data Centre sustainably, Reliance will also develop a 6 GWp solar power project in the state which will double Andhra's current ground-mounted solar capacity, contribute over 30 per cent of the renewable energy, and unlock AP's vast solar potential. "Reliance will set up a 1 GW Artificial Intelligence Data Centre in the state, a fully modular, future-ready facility designed to host the world's most advanced GPUs, TPUs, and AI processors. It will operate as a twin to their gigawatt-scale AI Data Centre in Jamnagar, together forming one of Asia's strongest AI infrastructure networks," Naidu said in the post.

In addition, Reliance will build a Greenfield Integrated Food Park in Rayalaseema, a world-class automated facility which will generate several thousand direct and indirect jobs and create sustained income opportunities for thousands of families, he further said in the post.

"Heartfelt thanks to Shri Mukesh Ambani, Chairman, Reliance Industries Limited, for these landmark announcements, which mark a new milestone in Andhra Pradesh's journey of innovation, clean energy leadership, and inclusive growth," he said.

Naidu met with PMS Prasad, Executive Director & Member of the Board, RIL and other senior officials of the multi-billion dollar conglomerate at the CII summit here. An official said the state government and RIL signed an MoU for the projects in the presence of CM Naidu, Minister for IT & Industries Nara Lokesh, and PMS Prasad.

The company highlighted its mission to democratise access to artificial intelligence, delivering pro-level AI tools to students, farmers, entrepreneurs and families through the MyJio platform.

Prasad said, "Andhra Pradesh is rising with purpose and intent. Reliance is not here just to invest. We are here to build. We are here to empower and to serve. Together, we will create a brighter, cleaner, smarter and more prosperous Andhra Pradesh - not only for this generation, but for many generations to come."

Reliance has already invested over USD 25 billion in the state across oil & gas, digital services and retail. (PTI)

# India's telecom systems unmatched: C P Radhakrishnan

**NEW DELHI, Nov 14:** The journey of India's telecom system has been "uncomparable" and "remarkable", Vice President C P Radhakrishnan said on Friday describing telecommunication as the backbone of digital India, powering everything from framework of governance to education, and finance to innovation.

Speaking at the Diamond Jubilee celebration marking 60 years of Indian Telecommunications Service (ITS), Radhakrishnan emphasised that the next chapter of connectivity must be built on the solid foundations of ethics, ensuring data and networks serve each and every Indian and that no one, however distant or disadvantaged, is left behind.

Be it policy formulation, spectrum management or ensuring safe and robust networks, ITS officers have been the state's most trusted architects of transformation, he said. India's telecommunication growth stands as a reflection of their expert engineering and institutional strength, he further said.

Noting the rapid evolution and growth of the telecommunication system in India, he described the journey as uncomparable, and remarkable.

"Telecommunication is the backbone of digital India, supporting the edifice of governance, education, finance and innovation. If roads and railways powered the industrial era, it is your vision and stewardship that power the India of the future....a nation powered by ideas and information," he said. (PTI)

# PhonePe announces strategic collaboration with OpenAI

**HT Bureau**

**GUWAHATI, Nov 14:** PhonePe has announced a strategic collaboration with OpenAI to broaden access to ChatGPT for users across its digital ecosystem. The partnership aims to accelerate consumer adoption of advanced AI in India by integrating ChatGPT's capabilities into the PhonePe app and the PhonePe for Business platform, along with support from the Indus Appstore. Through this integration, PhonePe users will be able to explore ChatGPT's features directly within the company's platforms, enabling smarter, more intuitive responses to routine needs such as travel planning, shopping assistance and other daily tasks.

The collaboration is positioned to open up new generative AI use cases as adoption rises across the country. Rahul Chari, Founder, Whole-time Director and Chief Technology Officer, PhonePe, said the initiative reflects the company's commitment to delivering digital services at population scale.

"This strategic alliance demonstrates that collaborations between innovative companies in this space can help expand the reach of cutting-edge technology to the broader population. We are excited to partner with OpenAI to begin this journey," he said. Oliver Jay, Head of International at OpenAI, described the partnership as a milestone in the effort to make AI more accessible in India. "India is a global hub for innovation, and PhonePe's deep understanding of the country's fabric and its user base make them the ideal partner. This partnership will demonstrate the immense value of consumer AI across India, helping millions of users enhance their daily lives," he said.

# Sensex, Nifty end in green for 4th straight day amid see-saw trade

**MUMBAI, Nov 14:** Stock market benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty sustained their positive momentum for the fourth consecutive day and settled with modest gains on Friday, aided by a buying rush in FMCG, banking and telecom sector shares.

The 30-share BSE Sensex benchmark began the trade on a negative note by declining 449.35 points, or 0.53 per cent to 84,029.32. The NSE Nifty started the day off lower by 138.35 points or 0.53 per cent to 25,740.80.

However, both the barometers showed some recovery at the fag end before closing with gains for the fourth session in a row.

The BSE Sensex ended 84.11 points, or 0.10 per cent, higher at 84,562.78, while the NSE Nifty went up 30.90 points, or 0.12 per cent, to settle at 25,910.05.

From the Sensex pack, Eternal, Bharat Electronics Ltd, Trent, Axis Bank, State Bank of India, Bajaj Finance, Sun Pharmaceuticals, Asian Paints, Adani Ports, Hindustan Unilever, Reliance Industries, ITC, PowerGrid, Tata Motors Ltd's Commercial Vehicles business, and Bajaj Finserv were the gainers.

Infosys, Tata Motors Passenger Vehicles, Tata Steel, ICICI Bank, Tech Mahindra, Titan, UltraTech Cement, Maruti Suzuki India, and Larsen & Toubro were the laggards.

"...investors shifted focus to upcoming RBI MPC and US Fed FOMC meetings, adding to the wait-and-watch mood," Sudeep Shah, Head - Technical Research and Derivatives at SBI Securities, said.

The BSE Midcap gauge fell 0.03 per cent while smallcap went up 0.06 per cent.

Among the sectoral indices, Telecommunication climbed by 0.62 per cent, FMCG by 0.54 per cent, Consumer Durables by 0.36 per cent, Bankex by 0.31 per cent, Financial Services by 0.26 per cent, Healthcare by 0.22 per cent, Utilities by 0.21 per cent and Capital Goods by 0.16 per cent.

On the other hand, Focused IT, Teck, Commodities, IT, Auto, Metal, Oil & Gas closed lower.

"The market managed to close in the green, supported by banking and FMCG stocks, while the NDA victory in the Bihar state election added impetus to sentiment. A positive turnaround in Q2 FY26 results and benign inflation are making H2 FY26 earnings outlook brighter. Investors are looking for additional catalysts for a decisive move from current levels. The upcoming RBI policy meeting and any cues on US trade deal are expected to keep market sentiment bullish," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Investments Limited.

A total of 2,270 stocks declined while 1,900 advanced and 149 remain unchanged on the BSE.

"Nifty50 recovered more than 150 points from day's low in the last 30 minutes after the ruling National Democratic Alliance (NDA) received a massive mandate in the Bihar State Election 2025.

"Meanwhile, global weakness and fading hopes of a US Fed rate cut weighed on market sentiment. The US markets fell on Thursday amid a sharp sell-off in high-valuation tech and AI stocks," Siddhartha Khemka - Head of Research, Wealth Management, Motilal Oswal Financial Services Ltd, said.

Khemka, further stated that hawkish commentary from the Federal Reserve dampened expectations for an interest rate cut in the upcoming December policy meet.

"IT stocks tumbled after the overnight sell-off on the US Nasdaq index. With the retail inflation easing and the corporate earnings season concluding on a positive note, the backdrop remains supportive for Indian equities. We expect markets to stay firm, with a potential India-US trade deal announcement offering scope for a sharper up-move," he said.

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

Broader markets in Europe were trading largely lower. The US markets ended largely lower in overnight deals on Thursday.

Meanwhile, foreign institutional investors remained net sellers for the fifth day in a row and offloaded equities worth ₹ 4,968.22 crore on Friday. Domestic institutional investors sustained their buying spree and picked up stocks worth ₹ 8,461.47 crore, according to exchange data.

Brent Crude, global oil benchmark, rose 1.51 per cent to USD 63.93 per barrel.

On Thursday, the 30-share BSE Sensex ended with a gain of 12.16 points at 84,478.67. The broader NSE Nifty closed the session in green with just 3.35 points, at 25,879.15.

During the week, BSE Sensex climbed 1,346.5 points, or 1.61 per cent while NSE Nifty advanced 417.75 points or 1.64 per cent. (PTI)

# WPI inflation falls to 27-month low of (-) 1.21 pc in Oct on GST cut, favourable base

**NEW DELHI, Nov 14:** Wholesale Price Inflation (WPI) fell to a 27-month low of (-) 1.21 per cent in October, led by a sharp deflation in food items like pulses and vegetables, and lower prices of fuel and manufactured items, government data showed on Friday.

WPI-based inflation was 0.13 per cent in September and 2.75 per cent in October last year. "The negative rate of inflation in October 2025 is primarily due to decrease in prices of food articles, crude petroleum & natural gas, electricity, mineral oils and manufacture of basic metals etc," the industry ministry said in a statement.

According to WPI data, deflation in food articles was 8.31 per cent in October, compared to 5.22 per cent in September, with onion, potato, vegetables and pulses seeing a decline in prices.

In vegetables, deflation was 34.97 per cent in October, against 24.41 per cent in September. In pulses, deflation was at 16.50 per cent in October, while in potato and onion it was 39.88 per cent and 65.43 per cent, respectively.

In the case of manufactured products, inflation eased to 1.54 per cent, from 2.33 per cent in September. Fuel and power witnessed a negative inflation or deflation of 2.55 per cent, against 2.58 per cent in September, thus recording a decline for seven consecutive months.

"Looking ahead, a favourable base effect in the rest of FY26 is expected to keep the wholesale index into deflation. Consequently, Ind-Ra anticipates wholesale deflation in November 2025 to be under 1 per cent," said Paras Jasrai, Associate Director at India Ratings and Research.

The fall in WPI inflation is on expected lines after the rates of Goods and Services Tax (GST) were slashed effective September 22. GST rates on daily use mass consumption items were cut as part of the tax rate rationalisation under which the four-tier tax structure was brought down to just 2 slabs of 5 and 18 per cent.

The tax cuts which lowered prices of goods, plus a favourable inflation base of last year, has pulled down both wholesale and retail inflation.

Data released last week showed, retail inflation was at an all-time low of 0.25 per cent in October, driven down by GST rate cuts and a high base of last year. In September retail or consumer price index inflation was 1.44 per cent. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI), which takes into account retail inflation, had kept benchmark policy rates unchanged at 5.5 per cent last month.

The decline in both retail and WPI inflation would put pressure on the RBI to cut benchmark interest rates in the next monetary policy review meeting scheduled on December 3-5.

Jasrai , however, said based on the trend of India's economic growth, the rationale for monetary easing is not very strong. FY26 retail inflation is now expected to be going down to around 2.5 per cent.

"However, to prevent the economy going deep in sluggish and weak economic growth, the RBI may go for a 25-50 bp cut in repo rate in its December 2025 monetary policy," he added. PHDCCI, CEO & Secretary General, Ranjeet Mehta said the chamber expects WPI inflation to remain range-bound due to benign international crude oil prices, comfortable buffer stocks of food-grains and healthy kharif harvest. (PTI)

# Gargya Toyota unveils new grand showroom in Nagaon

**HT Bureau**

**GUWAHATI, Nov 14:** Gargya Toyota has inaugurated its new grand showroom at Khutikatia, Nagaon, marking a key milestone in its efforts to strengthen its footprint in Assam and the wider Northeast region. The facility has been developed to enhance dealership visibility, improve accessibility and offer an upgraded customer experience.

The inauguration was attended by Arun G. Nair, Vice President and chief representative – East Region (Sales, Service and Used Car), Toyota Kirloskar Motor, along with Rahul Dev Sharma, dealer principal, Gargya Toyota, reaffirming Toyota's commitment to deepening customer trust across emerging markets.

Spread across 4,473 sq. ft., the new 1S (Sales) showroom caters to customers in Nagaon and neighbouring areas. The facility features improved highway access, modern design elements and an expanded frontage, enabling greater customer engagement and supporting Toyota's growing presence in the region.

The new facility complements Gargya Toyota's existing operations in Nagaon and reflects the dealership's continued efforts to expand convenience, upgrade infrastructure and create a more immersive brand experience.

It also incorporates Toyota U-Trust, offering certified pre-owned vehicle services, including buying, selling and exchange options.The showroom displays Toyota's full product range, including the Innova Hycross, Fortuner, Hilux, Urban Cruiser Hyryder, and premium models such as the Camry Hybrid and Vellfire.

Speaking at the launch, Dealer Principal Rahul Dev Sharma said the new showroom underlines the dealership's focus on enhancing customer experience in Nagaon. He said the upgraded location would offer better visibility, easier access and a more contemporary environment for customers exploring Toyota vehicles.

Arun G Nair, Vice President, Toyota Kirloskar Motor, said Northeast India continues to be a region with growing potential and rising customer aspirations.

He said the expanded presence of Gargya Toyota in Nagaon strengthens the brand's reach and reinforces its commitment to trust, transparency and convenience. The new showroom is located at Gargya Autocity Pvt. Ltd., NH Road, Khutikatia, Nagaon, Assam – 782002.

*Contd. from Page 1...*

# NDA tsunami destroys

leading in their respective seats. Significantly, Bihar is among the few states in the country where the BJP has not been able to manage to form a government yet on its own. (PTI)

# Rahul welcome to

poll verdict that cements the National Democratic Alliance's iron grip on Bihar, the ruling coalition stormed to a landslide, obliterating the majority mark of 122.

Led by chief minister Nitish Kumar's Janata Dal (United), the NDA's tally was bolstered by the Bharatiya Janata Party's massive win.

Voter turnout rose to 67.14 per cent, up nearly 10 percentage points from 2020, signalling robust participation amid high-stakes campaigning.

In stark contrast, the Opposition Mahagathbandhan, comprising the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD), Congress, and Left parties, was decimated.

# Adani Group to

new benchmarks in environmental stewardship, leveraging modern technology to minimise emissions and maximise operational efficiency," the statement said.

APL has received the requisite approvals from the Assam Electricity Regulatory Commission and the Power Supply Agreement (PSA) with APDCL (Assam Power Distribution Company Ltd) is expected to be executed in due course.

The firm is implementing India's largest private sector capex programme to secure the nation's growing base load demand. It has a current operating capacity of 18.15 GW from 12 thermal power plants and one solar plant and is aiming to achieve an overall generation capacity of 42 GW by 2031-32.

The pump-storage project will introduce cutting-edge solutions for energy storage, grid stability and managing electricity demand during peak times, thus ensuring a sustainable and resilient supply of electricity. It will play a crucial role in integrating renewable energy sources, supporting Assam's journey toward a greener future, the statement said.

"The North-East is emerging as a vital frontier in India's growth story," said Gautam Adani, Chairman of the Adani Group, "and we are proud to contribute to its transformation. Our 3,200 MW thermal power project and 2,700 MW PSP projects in Assam collectively represent not only the largest private sector investment in the region but also firm steps toward energy security, industrial development and job creation.

"These projects will not only energize Assam but also catalyse progress across the entire northeastern corridor." (PTI)

# Over 2 pc Assam

Drive, out of 73,317 personnel screened, only 2.06 per cent fell in the obese category, a steady drop from previous phases," the post said.

"The force is getting leaner, quicker, and mission ready. Assam Police keeps raising the scale," it added.

The BMI test was introduced in 2023 to ensure a fitter a police force. (PTI)

# 10 Rohingyas, 6 B'deshis

were pushed back. The state government has been cracking the whip on illegal immigrants from Bangladesh, pushing them back from the Assam border with the neighbouring country. (PTI)

# Prasanta Phukan says

office, where he burst firecrackers and took part in festivities. Fireworks echoed through the area as workers and supporters exchanged sweets and congratulated one another.

More than 200 BJP workers and supporters attended the celebration, including district BJP president Dulal Bora.

Extending his congratulations to Prime Minister Modi and Nitish Kumar, Phukan said the mandate in Bihar reflected the people's trust in the NDA.

He said the sweeping victory had significantly boosted the morale of BJP workers and supporters in Assam, particularly in Dibrugarh.

# Three more arrested

adopted a zero-tolerance approach against anyone showing support to the attack. A high-intensity explosion ripped through a slow-moving car at a traffic signal near the Red Fort metro station on Monday evening, killing 12 people and injuring several others. (PTI)

# India should take

related issues. India has been a member since 1995. The WTO also said that a country may need bilateral trade agreements to push their growth but "you also need a multi-lateral system to move forward.

"That is why the WTO is important," she said, adding the world is witnessing huge disruptions in global trade at present.

"My message to you is that despite that, the global trading system remains resilient," Ngozi said, adding that 72 per cent of world trade is still happening under WTO rules, which proves stability and predictability.

She added that there is a need to work together on reforms, "and that work needs a great deal of reforms of the multilateral trading system and the WTO".

Further she said that the unilateral tariff rise by the US is dramatic, but "we must listen to what they say" about tariff barriers, non-tariff issues, lack of transparency in the system and unfair trading practices by certain countries.

"I think we need to pay attention to their complaints, (otherwise) we will miss the opportunity to take care of them," she said.

Besides the US, developing countries like India too have flagged concerns on the multilateral trading system, the WTO chief said.

She added that the current global uncertainties provide opportunities as well.

"I feel uneasy and concerned about it (the global disruptions)...but the global trading system is still working on WTO rules," she said, adding countries should diversify from their overdependence on the US or China.

She said, India is a big beneficiary in this diversification of global supply chains.

On e-commerce moratorium, she expressed hope that it can be further extended in the 14th ministerial conference, scheduled in March next year.

On free trade agreements, she said: "We don't have a problem with free trade agreements."

Even though it is between two members or two groups, the rules are very much WTO based, she said, adding, "we do not see them as a threat, and actually we are okay with them, because we think members need to diversify their trade." (PTI)

Page 3 Nov 15_Normal Pages 14-11-2025 20:20 Page 1



*Over 32,000 SHG members receive first instalment under Mukhya Mantri Mahila Udyamita Abhiyan*

# CM distributes ₹ 10,000 cheques to women in Dhemaji

**HT Bureau**

**GUWAHATI, Nov 14:** In a major step to empower women and strengthen Assam's economy, Chief Minister Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma distributed the first instalments of ₹ 10,000 each to 32,860 self-help group (SHG) members under the Mukhya Mantri Mahila Udyamita Abhiyan (MMUA) at Sissiborgaon in Dhemaji. Of the beneficiaries, 31,556 women are from rural areas, while 1,304 are from urban areas.

Addressing the gathering, Dr Sarma said the MMUA scheme aims to help women in Assam become 'lakhpati' by providing them with seed capital to start or expand businesses. The initial instalment of ₹ 10,000 enables women in SHGs to create a pooled fund, forming a capital base of ₹ 1 lakh. Productive use of this amount can lead to subsequent instalments of ₹ 25,000 and ₹ 50,000, helping them achieve financial independence.

Highlighting success stories from Sissiborgaon, the Chief Minister mentioned Nayanti Gogoi of Jonaki SHG, who now earns ₹ 70,000 per month through 'Gogoi Handloom' and Dipamoni Bhuyan of Dipshikha SHG, earning ₹s 15,000 monthly via broiler farming. "If they can succeed, other women can also become 'lakhpati' in their respective areas of interest," he said.

CM Sarma also emphasised the government's broader vision to build self-reliant families, provide quality education, support youth entrepreneurship and ensure merit-based government jobs. He outlined other initiatives like the Orunodoi Scheme, Nijut Moina Scheme and Mission Basundhara 3.0, which aim to improve the lives of women and communities in Sissiborgaon.

Notable dignitaries present included Education Minister Dr Ranoj Pegu, Power Minister Prasanta Phukan, MP Pradan Baruah, MLAs Bhuban Pegu and Amiya Kumar Bhuyan, CEM Deuri Autonomous Council Bhaibav Deuri, CEM Sonowal Kachari Autonomous Council Tankeswar Sonowal, and Mission Director ASRLM Kuntal Moni Sarma Bordoloi.

The Chief Minister also highlighted infrastructural developments in the region, including the four-lane national highway, school improvements and extensive coverage under the Orunodoi and PM Kisan schemes, reinforcing the government's commitment to inclusive growth and women's empowerment.

# Free diabetes screening on World Diabetes Day

*Over 100 patients checked as Lions Club and Gohain Nursing Home raise awareness*

**HT Correspondent**

**NAGAON, Nov 14:** In observance of World Diabetes Day, a free diabetes screening camp was organised at the Nagaon Lions Club on Friday. The event was a collaborative effort between the Nagaon Lions Club and Dr Naba Krishna Gohain, proprietor of Gohain Nursing Home.

A team of specialist doctors, including Dr Hemanta Phukan, Dr Parthajyoti Saikia and Dr Mukut Debanath, along with their assistants, conducted comprehensive health check-ups for attendees. The camp offered diabetes screening and blood pressure checks, benefiting over 100 patients.

The initiative aimed to raise awareness about diabetes, its prevention and management, while also providing essential medical support to the community. Lions Club officials, including president Jiten Agarwal, secretary Maharsi Vishal Bordoloi, treasurer Madan Saha and members Biswajit Mahanta, Rupalim Sarma, Inamul Majid and Bakul Bora, actively participated in the event.

The camp emphasised the importance of regular health screenings and encouraged the public to adopt proactive measures in managing their health, particularly regarding diabetes.

# CPI protests for ST status

**HT Correspondent**

**NAGAON, Nov 14:** The District Unit of the Communist Party of India (CPI) staged a protest in Nagaon on Friday, demanding Scheduled Tribe (ST) status for six indigenous communities in Assam. The protest also called for a thorough judicial investigation into the unnatural death of popular singer Zubeen Garg, seeking swift action from authorities to assure public confidence.

During the protest, party leaders and activists raised slogans supporting their demands, creating a charged atmosphere. In addition to the ST status issue, the CPI also submitted a memorandum to the District Commissioner, outlining their concerns and demands.

The protest included a separate memorandum urging the government to issue land pattas for the Raity farmers of Mikir Bamuni village in the district. The event saw participation from CPI leaders such as Ratul Bora, Jitu Kumar Nath, Rajen Timung and Lakshmi Mardi, among others.

# 'Pakshi Mitra' Bal Bahadur Chetri passes away

**HT Correspondent**

**TEZPUR, Nov 14:** Bal Bahadur Chetri, a noted bird lover and retired teacher from Tezpur has passed away in Bengaluru after a prolonged battle with cancer. Affectionately known as "Pakshi Mitra" (Friend of Birds), Chetri was widely admired for his lifelong dedication to the conservation of house sparrows and his deep commitment to environmental protection.

Chetri, a retired science teacher from Tezpur Gandhi Memorial ME School, gained widespread recognition for his efforts to nurture sparrows at a time when their population was dwindling. He created special nesting spaces for the birds at his home and cared for them like family. His passionate work in avian conservation earned him local and regional acclaim, including honours from the Sonitpur district administration on Independence Day in 2015 and the title of "Pakshi Mitra" from Assam Agricultural University in 2018.

Throughout his career, Chetri was known for his gentle nature and scientific approach, both in his role as an educator and as a passionate environmentalist. He began his teaching career in 1982 and retired in 2016. Beyond his work with sparrows, Chetri was an avid reader and a long-time member of the Tezpur District Library. He was also active in publishing his poetry and participated in numerous interviews on wildlife conservation aired by All India Radio.

In his later years, Chetri focused on planting trees in Tezpur, further demonstrating his love for nature. Even as he battled illness, he remained concerned about the well-being of the sparrows and saplings he had nurtured.

Born in 1954 in Nabil village, near the Gabharu river in Sonitpur, Chetri is survived by his wife, Shashikala Devi, son Shravan Kumar Kaushik, daughter-in-law Aarti Devi, grandson Shreyan Kaushik and numerous relatives and admirers. His death has left a void in the community, with many remembering him for his compassion, dignity and unshakable commitment to preserving the natural world.

# Indigenous families threatened by land grabbers

**HT Correspondent**

**NAGAON, Nov 14:** A grave situation has emerged at Dhing in Nagaon district, where indigenous Assamese families are facing threats and intimidation from alleged land grabbers. These families, who were forced to flee their homes during the Assam movement are now being denied their rightful claim to their ancestral land.

The land grabbers, identified as Esad Ali, Shahidul Islam, Miraj Akbar and Abdul Hamid, have reportedly been threatening the families with violence, including physical harm and even death, if they attempt to reclaim their land. Despite repeated complaints to local authorities, no concrete action has been taken to address the issue.

The indigenous families, who were displaced due to violence and intimidation during the Assam movement, now find themselves unable to secure their land from these alleged land grabbers, who are reportedly backed by local musclemen. The situation has created an atmosphere of fear with the families living in constant threat of further harm.

The affected families have appealed to the local authorities for immediate intervention and protection, seeking the restoration of their land rights. They have also called upon Chief Minister Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma to intervene, given his vocal stance on safeguarding the rights of indigenous people in the state.

This incident has raised serious concerns about the safety and security of indigenous families in the region, highlighting the urgent need for effective action to protect their rights and bring the perpetrators to justice. The authorities are under increasing pressure to address this issue and ensure that such intimidation does not go unpunished.

# Mega health fair series concludes with Guijan Camp

**HT Correspondent**

**TINSUKIA, Nov 14:** The constituency-based mega health fair series in Tinsukia district concluded on Friday with a health camp at Guijan, providing check-ups for 2,254 children under 18. The initiative, part of Chief Minister Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma's district-wide health program, aimed to improve healthcare access for young residents.

Since September, similar camps were held across Doomdooma, Digboi, Margherita, Sadiya, Tinsukia and Chabua constituencies, screening approximately 15,139 children. Of these, 1,776 were referred to tertiary hospitals including Guwahati Medical College, Assam Medical College and Tinsukia Medical College for advanced treatment.

The Guijan camp was inaugurated by Chabua MLA Punakan Baruah, who highlighted the presence of specialist doctors covering 50 different diseases and emphasised that patients needing advanced care would receive treatment at government expense. Assam Housing Board Chairman Pulak Gohain and Moran Autonomous Council Chief Executive Arunjyoti Moran also spoke at the event.

Makum Co-District Commissioner Pankaj Chamua noted that the camp primarily targeted children aged 0–18 years, though other patients received treatment as needed. Anganwadi centers, ASHA workers and schools had identified 1,714 children for the camp, adding to earlier referrals from previous camps.

Tinsukia MLA Sanjay Kisan and District Commissioner Swapneel Paul inspected the camp, encouraging doctors and health workers. In addition to medical check-ups, doctors provided advice on health maintenance and preventive care.

The successful conclusion of the mega health fair series marks a significant step in expanding healthcare access for children and the general public across Tinsukia district.

# 11 JNV students injured in ragging incident

**HT Correspondent**

**MORIGAON, Nov 14:** A major ragging-related assault at Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya (JNV) Morigaon left 11 junior students seriously injured last week, prompting swift action from the district administration and school authorities.

According to reports, a group of senior students allegedly attacked the juniors after they refused to hand over essential commodities. The injured students were forced to undergo medical examinations following police intervention.

Taking serious note of the incident, the Morigaon district administration and the JNV authorities have initiated strict disciplinary measures. One teacher has been placed under suspension and the senior students involved have been shifted to other JNV schools.

The assault, which took place on November 5, 2025, was described by the victims and parents as a case of ragging. Based on their complaint, Deputy Commissioner Anamika Tewari immediately constituted an inquiry committee comprising an executive magistrate, police officer and two representatives from the Shillong regional office.

The committee collected statements from the victims, teachers and parents before submitting a detailed report. Following this, the district administration forwarded the report to the Shillong regional office and pressed for strict disciplinary action. Acting on the findings, JNV authorities relocated nine accused senior students to other Navodaya schools in Assam. Their parents were instructed to submit pledge letters stating that their children would not engage in any such misconduct in the future.

Chemistry teacher Biswajit Chaudhary was placed under suspension for alleged negligence of duty, while Vice Principal Dhrubajyoti Sarma was transferred to PM SHRI School JNV, Mukakseleng, Nagaland. All teachers have also been issued a warning to perform 'house master' duties responsibly, with a caution that departmental action will follow in case of further negligence.

# Three-day craft workshop at LGB Girls' College

**HT Correspondent**

**TEZPUR, Nov 14:** A three-day craft demonstration cum awareness programme commenced on Thursday at LGB Girls' College, Mission Chariali, Tezpur to commemorate the 150th birth anniversary of Adivasi freedom fighter Birsha Munda. The event is organised by the Handicrafts Service Centre, Jorhat under the Ministry of Textiles, Government of India.

The inaugural session was marked by a vibrant ceremony attended by dignitaries including Dr Bhupen Saikia chairman of the college governing body and noted litterateur, Dr Tapan Kumar Kalita principal of the college, senior journalist Shambhu Boro, Dr Pallab Bhattacharya, national award-winning artist Sabina Teronpi and Diphu artisan Mitali Kro. The event began with Sabina Teronpi lighting the ceremonial lamp before a portrait of Birsha Munda.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr Bhupen Saikia highlighted the historic contributions of Birsha Munda in protecting tribal identity. Shambhu Boro emphasised the cultural and social significance of artisanship, stating that every craft carries the heritage and stories of generations. He encouraged artisans to view their skills as both cultural legacy and a path toward personal and professional growth. Sabina Teronpi highlighted how art, handicrafts and traditional crafts can provide viable career opportunities for young people.

Shasikant Gupta, Assistant Director (Handicrafts), outlined the objectives of the programme, noting that the Development Commissioner (Handicrafts) actively promotes the welfare of artisans through awareness initiatives, skill development workshops, marketing events, entrepreneurship programmes, issuance of Pehchan Cards (Artisan Cards) and financial support to master craftspersons.

The event also featured an exhibition of traditional tribal attire and crafts from across the Northeast region. A Bodo traditional dance performed by college students added a cultural touch to the celebrations.

During the three-day workshop, master trainers including Dengmir Ronghangpi and Basanti Teronpi from Diphu along with Sulumoni Mahalia, Pradip Gaonkhwa and Mukesh Saikia from Nagaon, will provide hands-on training in crafts such as water hyacinth products, bamboo work, embroidery and jewelry-making.

The programme aims to preserve tribal art forms, promote cultural awareness and provide practical training to aspiring artisans and students, bridging heritage with modern skill development.

# Two arrested for sexual assault in Jorhat

**HT Correspondent**

**JORHAT, Nov 14:** Police in Jorhat arrested two men on charges of sexually assaulting a woman at an abandoned house near Naoholia under Rowriah police outpost on Thursday. The accused, identified as Anwar Ali an auto rickshaw driver and Ratan Basfor, a Safai worker were remanded to judicial custody by a court on Friday.

According to police sources, the assault was witnessed by three youths who saw the duo abusing the woman. They immediately sought help from local residents and managed to apprehend the suspects before handing them over to the authorities. The woman was found in an unconscious state at the scene.

The accused have been booked under sections 64 and 3(5) of the BNS in case number 594/2025 at Jorhat Police Station.

This incident follows a recent case of a murdered college student in Titabor, a co-district of Jorhat. The student, reportedly seven months pregnant was found dead in a septic tank with Jagat Singh and three others arrested in connection with the case. The incident led to protests, prompting the intervention of Jorhat DC and SP. In response, the officer-in-charge of Titabor police station, Lakshman Kumar Das was removed from his post.

# Bardwi Shikla Ladies Club distributes warm sweaters

**HT Correspondent**

**KOKRAJHAR, Nov 14:** As part of its welfare efforts, NTPC Bongaigaon, through the Bardwi Shikla Ladies Club distributed warm sweaters and school shoes to 88 students of Bhumki LP School in Kokrajhar just ahead of the winter season.

The distribution was led by Kasturi Maitra, president of the Bardwi Shikla Ladies Club, along with club members, HR officials and the CSR team of NTPC Bongaigaon.

Maitra emphasised the club's commitment to supporting children's education and ensuring they have the basic necessities to continue their studies with confidence. The initiative was warmly appreciated by the teachers who noted that such efforts help create a positive learning environment, particularly in rural areas.

This initiative is part of NTPC Bongaigaon's ongoing community development efforts aimed at improving educational opportunities for children in the region.

# Four shops gutted in fire

**HT Correspondent**

**SIVASAGAR, Nov 14:** A devastating fire broke out late Thursday night near the Sivasagar Police Station, engulfing four shops and causing significant financial losses to the affected wholesale traders. The blaze which reportedly began around midnight destroyed the shops that dealt with essential commodities, leaving the owners with immense losses. Firefighters responded promptly and managed to control the flames after nearly two hours of effort. However, the damage was already done, with the goods and infrastructure of the affected shops completely gutted.

*Assam leads regional effort to empower Panchayats for a TB-free India*

# Northeast states attend workshop on TB Mukt Panchayat

**HT Bureau**

**GUWAHATI, Nov 14:** In line with the Prime Minister's vision of a TB Mukt Bharat, a two-day Regional Workshop on TB Mukt Panchayat was held at Grand Bhabendra Aalay, Guwahati, on November 13–14. The workshop brought together representatives from the Health and Panchayat & Rural Development (P&RD) departments of Northeastern states, as well as Bihar, West Bengal and Odisha, aiming to strengthen interdepartmental coordination and empower local governance institutions to take active roles in community-level tuberculosis (TB) control.

The workshop was inaugurated by Dr Lakshmanan S, IAS, Mission Director, NHM Assam. Distinguished dignitaries in attendance included Dr Vinay Garg Deputy Commissioner (TB), Central TB Division, New Delhi, Prof (Dr) Achyut Baishya Principal-cum-Chief Superintendent, Gauhati Medical College & Hospital, Dr Umesh Phangcho Director of Health Services,

Assam, Dr Purabi Nath Deputy Director, SIRD, Assam, and Lakhimi Dutta ACS, Officer on Special Duty, NHM Assam.

During the inaugural session, the speakers emphasised the importance of close collaboration between the Health & Family Welfare and P&RD departments to ensure effective implementation of TB Mukt Panchayat initiatives. They highlighted TB as a social disease requiring not only medical intervention but also coordinated efforts to address stigma, raise awareness and provide nutritional, psychosocial, vocational and livelihood support to affected individuals and their families.

The workshop featured interactive sessions, experience-sharing and discussions on best practices from different states. Participants deliberated on strategies to integrate TB Mukt Panchayat activities into the Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP), ensuring that TB control efforts are embedded within local governance and community development initiatives.

Assam has set an ambitious goal to certify at least 50% of its Gaon Panchayats as TB-free by 2025. The State TB Cell in collaboration with the P&RD Department is actively working to achieve this target through a combination of community engagement, awareness campaigns and capacity-building measures for local Panchayat representatives.

The workshop concluded with a renewed commitment from all participating states to strengthen interdepartmental cooperation, leverage local governance structures and mobilize communities in the fight against TB, marking a significant step towards a TB-free India.

Page 4 November 15_Normal Pages 14-11-2025 20:54 Page 1



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**QUOTE OF THE DAY**

***Too much of a good thing can be taxing.***
***-Mae West***

## Trump's 'fair trade deal' with India

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.

## Talking Points

# From Awareness to Bliss

*Rebirth rarely makes noise. Transformation begins quietly, when the fire of confusion turns into the light of clarity, and a new self begins to rise from within; from ashes to awareness, and finally to bliss*

**By: Narvijay Yadav**

Rebirth rarely makes noise. It does not arrive with thunder or dramatic music. It begins quietly, in the middle of an ordinary day, when something inside us whispers that it is time to rise. For centuries, poets and philosophers have written about the Phoenix, that mythical bird that burns in its own fire and rises again from the ashes. In most legends, the Phoenix is seen as a symbol of immortality. But in a more practical sense, it represents the art of inner renewal. The Phoenix does not fear its fire. It understands that destruction is not the end, but a passage. Each burn is an invitation to rebuild with awareness.

The same principle applies to human life. Every time we shed old patterns, emotions, or cluttered thoughts, we rise lighter, more focused, more alive. The Lotus, on the other hand, has always stood for purity and calm. It grows from the mud yet remains untouched by it. It stays rooted in stillness even while reaching upward to the sun. When the Phoenix and the Lotus come together, they form a rare symbol of conscious transformation; courage with serenity, motion with meaning.

Over the past few months, I have felt this transformation deeply. The 5AM Bliss practice has changed the rhythm of my life. Mornings now begin in silence, with meditation, a few deep breaths, and gentle stretches. These simple rituals create a steady flow of energy that lasts through the day. Clarity has become my first victory of the morning. Focus follows naturally. When the day starts early and the mind starts clear, work feels lighter, creative ideas come faster, and distractions lose their grip.

Even short pauses during the day like standing up from the chair, stretching the spine, or taking a few conscious breaths, reset the mind. They act as checkpoints between tasks. These micro-moments of awareness, inspired by the offline workshops I attended recently, keep my energy balanced and attention sharp. The idea behind the 5AM Bliss Movement is to help others discover the same balance; to connect discipline with delight. Meditation is not an escape from work; it is a way to work better. Awareness does not slow progress; it removes the friction that tires us. There is a visible shift happening within the 5AM Bliss community too. People who once woke up tired now greet the sunrise with gratitude. Those who struggled to focus now report deeper calm and clearer thinking. This collective awakening makes the 5AM Bliss journey so special. It is a quiet revolution of consciousness.

The real transformation, however, begins when we stop chasing external change and start observing our inner landscape. Decluttering, for instance, is not only about cleaning a room; it is about clearing the mental space that holds unnecessary weight. Actually, every object, every file, and every memory carries energy. When we let go of what no longer serves us, we create space for what truly matters.

This process is not always easy, but it is always rewarding. It requires courage to let go of old habits, outdated identities, or even success patterns that have outlived their purpose. But just like the Phoenix, we rise clearer and brighter each time.

Transformation is not a one-time event. It is a rhythm - fall, reflect, rise, repeat. Each cycle makes us more aware, more refined, and more peaceful. The journey from ashes to awareness is the phase where we learn to look inward with honesty. The next phase, awareness to bliss, is where life begins to flow effortlessly. We stop reacting to the world and start responding from balance. When awareness deepens, even chaos begins to serve purpose. The same fire that once burned becomes the light that guides. That is the meaning of the motto: From Ashes to Awareness; From Awareness to Bliss. It is not just a line under a logo. It is a way of living.

# Nitish Kumar's Two-decade Bihar dominance

**DEGREE OF THOUGHT**
**By: Dipak Kurmi**

In the labyrinthine landscape of Indian regional politics, where alliances shift like quicksand and chief ministerial tenures are frequently abbreviated by electoral volatility, one figure has demonstrated an almost preternatural capacity for political survival and reinvention. Nitish Kumar, born in 1951 in the Kalyan Bigha village of Nalanda district, has navigated Bihar's treacherous political terrain for over two decades, emerging not merely as a survivor but as the state's longest-serving chief minister since Independence. His journey from being Lalu Prasad Yadav's trusted "younger brother" to becoming his fiercest rival, and subsequently his coalition partner, before returning to the BJP fold, illustrates a pragmatic flexibility that has become his defining political characteristic. As counting trends in the 2025 Assembly elections indicate his return to power, Nitish's story offers profound insights into how political longevity is achieved through strategic caste mobilization, administrative reputation-building, and an almost chameleonic ability to forge and dissolve alliances based on power calculus rather than ideological consistency.

Nitish Kumar's political genesis traces back to the tumultuous anti-Congress fervor that swept India in 1977, a moment when the Janata Party wave provided entry points for a generation of non-Congress politicians. His family credentials established a foundation for political involvement; his father had participated in the Independence movement, exposing young Nitish to nationalist discourse and political engagement from an early age. The writings of socialist leaders, particularly Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia, shaped his ideological orientation during his formative years, even as he pursued an engineering degree that would later distinguish him from many contemporaries in Bihar's political class.

However, Nitish's entry into electoral politics was marked not by triumph but by repeated humiliation. His first two electoral attempts from the Harnaut constituency as a Janata Party candidate ended in defeat at the hands of independent candidates, failures that nearly extinguished his political ambitions entirely. He seriously contemplated abandoning politics altogether, a decision that would have dramatically altered Bihar's subsequent political trajectory. The breakthrough arrived in 1985 when, after consolidating adequate campaign resources, he finally won Harnaut on a Lok Dal ticket. This victory demonstrated an early lesson that would inform his entire career: in Bihar's competitive political marketplace, organizational capacity and resource mobilization matter as much as ideological positioning.

His elevation to national politics came swiftly thereafter. Elected to the Lok Sabha from Barh in 1989, Nitish served as Union Minister of State for Agriculture in the V.P. Singh government, gaining valuable administrative experience and national visibility. He retained Barh in 1991 on a Janata Dal ticket, but it was during this period that his relationship with Lalu Prasad Yadav, who had become Chief Minister in 1990, began its gradual deterioration. Lalu's seven-year tenure represented something unprecedented in Bihar's political history: sustained rule by a backward caste leader whose government, whatever its shortcomings, demonstrated remarkable political stability. When corruption allegations in the fodder scam forced Lalu from office, his installation of his wife Rabri Devi as successor was widely perceived as a constitutional workaround designed to maintain family control over state power.

Both Nitish and Lalu had risen under the mentorship of Karpoori Thakur, the socialist icon who had implemented Other Backward Classes reservations during the Janata Party government in the late 1970s. However, their political trajectories diverged fundamentally in their approach to OBC politics. While Lalu consolidated his base primarily among Yadavs, establishing what critics termed a "MY" (Muslim-Yadav) coalition, Nitish quietly constructed an alternative OBC-EBC (Extremely Backward Castes) alliance centered on his own Kurmi community. This strategic differentiation would prove decisive in breaking Yadav dominance in Bihar's backward caste politics, a hegemony previously cemented by Chief Ministers B.P. Mandal and Daroga Prasad Rai before Lalu's ascendancy.

The Kurmi community that Nitish mobilized possesses distinctive characteristics crucial to understanding his political success. Described in K.S. Singh's authoritative People of India book series as "progressive farmers" who maximized developmental scheme benefits, Kurmis are a landowning farming community with varying social status across regions. They adopt diverse surnames including Patel, Verma, Sachan, Gangwar, Katiyar, Baiswar, Mahto, Prasad, Sinha, Singh, and Shinde, reflecting their geographical spread and social integration. Their political significance extends beyond Bihar to Uttar Pradesh, Odisha, Maharashtra, and Chhattisgarh. Historically, the pre-independence Triveni Sangh—a coalition uniting a Yadav (Jagdev Prasad Yadav), a Kurmi (Shiv Pujan Singh), and a Koeri (Yadunandan Prasad Mehta)—successfully contested the 1937 elections, demonstrating the community's longstanding political consciousness.

Nitish's formal break with Lalu came in 1994 when he split the party to form the Samata Party alongside veteran socialist George Fernandes, later renamed Janata Dal (United) or JD(U). This organizational independence provided the platform for his eventual challenge to Lalu's dominance. His first chief ministerial stint in March 2000 lasted merely a week; he was sworn in but resigned due to lack of majority support, allowing Rabri Devi's continuation. This brief, abortive tenure foreshadowed the alliance arithmetic complexities that would characterize Bihar politics for the next quarter-century.

The watershed moment arrived with the twin elections of 2005, conducted after Jharkhand's November 2000 separation reduced Bihar's legislative strength to 243 seats. The February 2005 polls produced a hung assembly: Lalu's Rashtriya Janata Dal emerged largest with 75 seats, followed by Nitish's JD(U) with 55 and the BJP with 37. No coalition secured a majority, necessitating President's Rule. However, the October 2005 re-election proved catastrophic for the RJD. JD(U) surged to 88 seats, the BJP secured 55, while RJD plummeted to third place with 54 seats. Nitish was sworn in as Chief Minister, immediately resigned from the Lok Sabha, entered the Bihar Legislative Council, and has remained there ever since—a strategic decision insulating him from the uncertainties of direct electoral contests.

What distinguished Nitish's governance from his predecessors was his cultivation of the "Sushashan Babu" (Good Governance Man) image, deliberately contrasted with allegations of "jungle raj" or anarchy under the RJD. His early governmental years earned genuine praise for addressing Bihar's infrastructural deficits: road construction accelerated, industrial promotion received attention, and girls' education became a priority focus in a state often characterized as India's most backward. These achievements, whether fully realized or partially rhetorical, created a governance narrative that transcended caste calculations, allowing Nitish to consolidate support beyond his core OBC-EBC base by attracting upper-caste voters through the BJP alliance, despite his earlier opposition to Hindutva politics.

The 2010 elections validated this strategy spectacularly. JD(U)'s tally reached 115 seats while the BJP won 81 and the RJD collapsed to 22 seats. This overwhelming mandate represented Nitish's political zenith. However, his relationship with the BJP faced its severest test when Narendra Modi was declared head of the BJP's campaign committee in June 2013, widely presumed to be the prime ministerial candidate. Nitish, seeking to position himself as a Modi challenger, dramatically severed the alliance on June 16, 2013, a decision driven more by personal ambition and ideological discomfort with Modi's Hindutva orientation than by coalition management considerations.

The political cost proved severe. His party won merely two Lok Sabha seats in the 2014 Modi wave. Taking responsibility, Nitish resigned as Chief Minister, installing Jitan Ram Manjhi as his successor—a move that proved temporary. He then executed a stunning reversal, realigning with his erstwhile rival Lalu to form the Mahagathbandhan or Grand Alliance. Their "Bihari DNA" campaign brilliantly tapped regional pride sentiments, producing a strong showing: RJD won 80 seats and JD(U) 71, relegating the BJP to 53. Nitish was sworn in on February 22, 2015, with Lalu's son Tejashwi Yadav, now the Opposition's chief ministerial face, serving as Deputy Chief Minister.

This alliance too proved ephemeral. Nitish eventually returned to the BJP fold, demonstrating once again that his political calculations prioritize power retention over ideological consistency or alliance loyalty. His ability to justify these reversals to his core electorate while maintaining his governance reputation has been crucial to his sustained dominance. During his tenure under various coalition configurations, he has handled significant Union ministerial portfolios including railways, agriculture, and others under the Atal Bihari Vajpayee government, maintaining national visibility even while focusing primarily on state politics.

As the 2025 election counting trends indicate his likely return, extending his run as Bihar's longest-serving chief minister, Nitish Kumar's political biography offers instructive lessons about regional leadership in India's federal democracy. His success derives not from charismatic mass appeal or ideological rigidity but from shrewd caste coalition engineering, cultivated administrative reputation, strategic alliance flexibility, and an almost intuitive understanding of when to break partnerships and when to forge new ones. In Bihar's complex social mosaic, where caste identities intersect with developmental aspirations and governance expectations, Nitish has proven himself the supreme political architect—building, dismantling, and rebuilding coalition structures with a pragmatism that has kept him indispensable to Bihar's power equation for over two decades. Whether this endurance translates into transformative developmental legacy remains debatable, but his political craftsmanship in navigating Bihar's tumultuous waters is beyond dispute. ***(the writer can be reached at dipakkurmiglpltd@gmail.com)***

# Delhi Blast: Unity over terror

**By: Satyabrat Borah**

It was just another ordinary evening in Delhi on November 10, 2025, when suddenly the heart of the city was torn apart by a devastating explosion near the Red Fort. A car packed with explosives detonated near the Lal Quila Metro Station, ripping through the evening crowd and claiming 13 lives while leaving over 20 others wounded. The blast, which happened just before 7 pm, sent shockwaves through the heart of India's capital, shattering windows, igniting nearby vehicles, and filling the air with smoke and cries for help. Eyewitnesses described a deafening roar that echoed for blocks, followed by chaos as people ran in panic from the historic site, a place usually alive with tourists snapping photos and vendors hawking street food. Firefighters rushed in with seven tenders to douse the flames, while ambulances ferried the injured to hospitals like Lok Nayak, where doctors fought to save lives amid the grim reality of burns and shrapnel wounds.

This was no ordinary accident. Delhi Police quickly invoked the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act, or UAPA, along with the Explosives Act, signaling that they view this as a deliberate act of terror. The National Investigation Agency, or NIA, has taken the lead, combing the site for clues and tracing the vehicle's path through CCTV footage. The car, a Hyundai i20 with registration DL 10 CK 0458, had been spotted parking near the Sunehri Masjid hours earlier, only to move again moments before the explosion. Investigators believe it was loaded with ammonium nitrate, a common ingredient in improvised bombs, turning the vehicle into a deadly weapon. The suspect behind the wheel has been identified as Dr. Umar Mohammad, a 35 year old doctor from Pulwama in Jammu and Kashmir. Tragically, he perished in the blast, his body charred beyond recognition, but not before unleashing devastation on innocent bystanders, including families out for an evening stroll and workers heading home.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, speaking from Bhutan where he was on a state visit, expressed his deep sorrow and vowed that the perpetrators would face the full force of justice. "This horrific incident has saddened us all," he said in a post on X, formerly Twitter, promising a thorough probe. Home Minister Amit Shah echoed those words, visiting the injured in hospital and assuring the nation that no stone would be left unturned. He emphasized that security agencies are working round the clock, with alerts issued across major cities like Mumbai, Chennai, and even airports in Hyderabad and Thiruvananthapuram. The opposition, led by figures from the Congress party, has demanded answers too, questioning how such a plot could unfold in the national capital despite heightened vigilance. They called for a white paper on security lapses, urging the government to explain why warnings from intelligence about possible strikes on sensitive dates, like the anniversary of the Babri Masjid demolition, were not acted upon more swiftly.

As details trickle out, a darker picture emerges. Sources close to the investigation suggest Dr. Umar was not acting alone. Raids in Faridabad, just outside Delhi, uncovered 350 kilograms of explosives, assault rifles, handguns, and timing devices hidden in a house rented by someone linked to the same hospital where Umar worked. Nine suspects have been detained in Kanpur, and police are probing connections to a wider network plotting attacks across states. One angle points to a foiled chemical terror plot, with arrests yielding arms and hazardous materials that could have caused even greater harm. The timing feels eerily deliberate, coinciding with elections in Bihar and heightening fears of politically motivated violence. Yet, at this early stage, much remains shrouded in uncertainty. The NIA urges the public to avoid speculation, as rumors on social media have already sparked tensions, with some wrongly blaming entire communities.

India has endured its share of such scars. From the 2008 Mumbai attacks that killed 166 to the 2016 Pathankot airbase assault, terrorism has tested the nation's resolve time and again. But in recent years, major incidents in urban heartlands like Delhi have been rare, confined mostly to border areas in Kashmir or the northeast. This blast shatters that fragile calm, reminding us how one lapse can undo years of progress. The Red Fort, a symbol of Mughal grandeur and India's independence struggle, now stands as a grim backdrop to this tragedy. Tourists from abroad, like those from the US and Egypt whose embassies issued alerts, have been caught in the crossfire, prompting international condolences from leaders in Japan and Bangladesh. The US Embassy warned its citizens to steer clear of crowds, underscoring how such events ripple globally.

Counterterrorism in India often stirs heated debates, dividing opinions along political lines. Since the Bharatiya Janata Party came to power in 2014, the narrative of a "soft state" fostering terror has gained traction. Critics argue it justifies a hardline approach, but supporters point to results: fewer unnoticed strikes, thanks to beefed up laws and surveillance. The UAPA, once a colonial era relic, has been amended to make bail nearly impossible for the accused, empowering probes but raising human rights concerns. Coupled with operations by central forces like the NSG and state police, these measures have kept the peace, at least on the surface. A single car bomb, however, exposes the limits. Even the best intelligence cannot predict every move in a game where terrorists thrive on surprise.

Think about it from the ground level. For families of the victims, like Nazish Malik whose brother in law, an e-rickshaw driver named Mohsin, vanished in the smoke, this is not an abstract policy. It's a personal loss, a void that no investigation can fill. Mohsin was just trying to earn a living, ferrying passengers through Delhi's chaotic traffic, when the world exploded around him. Stories like his humanize the statistics, turning numbers into names and grief. The injured, many with life altering burns, face months of recovery, their dreams deferred by shrapnel and fire. In the aftermath, communities rally, with neighbors donating blood and strangers offering solace, but beneath it simmers fear. Will this spark reprisals? Will whispers of blame fracture the social fabric that holds India together?

Terrorism's true aim goes beyond body count. It sows chaos, erodes trust in institutions, and pits neighbor against neighbor. Groups behind such acts bank on division, hoping to radicalize the disillusioned and undermine the state's authority. In India, with its mosaic of religions, languages, and histories, this is especially potent. A blast near a site tied to Hindu Muslim tensions could ignite old wounds if not handled with care. That's why promoting social harmony must sit at the core of any counterterrorism strategy. It's not just about catching culprits; it's about rebuilding bridges before they burn.

Policing is vital, no doubt. The swift arrests in this case, including the car's previous owner named Salman, show agencies are on the ball. But security alone is a band aid. A comprehensive approach demands political will to address root causes: poverty in places like Pulwama that breeds vulnerability, youth unemployment that extremists exploit, and narratives of alienation that turn professionals like Dr. Umar into unwitting pawns. Transparency in investigations builds faith; hiding details breeds suspicion. The government should share updates without compromising the probe, reassuring citizens that justice is blind, not biased.

The opposition has a role too, beyond finger pointing. By focusing on unity rather than scoring points, they can amplify calls for calm. Rahul Gandhi's plea for a united front against terror, echoing Modi's vows, sets the right tone. The media, often the megaphone in crises, must report facts, not fuel frenzy. Sensational headlines and unverified claims on WhatsApp groups can escalate tensions faster than any bomb. Instead, stories of resilience, like the Delhiites who queued to give blood despite their own fears, deserve the spotlight. Schools and community centers could host dialogues, reminding everyone that India's strength lies in its diversity, not despite it.

This incident calls for proactive steps. Enhance community policing in vulnerable areas, invest in deradicalization programs that offer hope over hate, and foster economic ties between regions to dilute grievances. International cooperation, already strong via forums like the Quad, can share intel on cross border threats. And let's not forget mental health support for survivors, a quiet casualty often overlooked.

Acts of evil like this Delhi blast test our humanity. They force us to choose: retreat into fear or rise in solidarity. India has done the latter before, emerging stronger from ashes. As the NIA peels back layers of this plot, let us commit to peace, not panic. For the 13 souls lost, and the wounded who endure, we owe that much. In a city that never sleeps, this wound will heal, but only if we nurture it with harmony. The Red Fort has witnessed empires rise and fall; it will stand witness to our resolve too. Together, we can ensure that one evening's darkness does not eclipse a nation's light.

Page 5 November 15_Normal Pages 14-11-2025 20:27 Page 1



# The Consulting Value Chain Is Exploding—And That's a Good Thing

**By: Helene Laffitte**

The consulting industry has never been more diverse or dynamic. AI and automation, the rise of small firms and platforms, and the collision of consulting with professional services have completely changed the landscape. On top of that, procurement has stepped in, no longer leaving consulting as the private playground of the C-suite. What used to be a category managed by a handful of senior executives is now getting structured attention and investment, opening the door for businesses to achieve better results at more manageable costs.

This shift can feel overwhelming at times. After all, more options mean more complexity. But for those who understand how to leverage this evolving ecosystem, it's an opportunity to do more with consulting, not less. The key is to take control of your consulting strategy and build a flexible, structured approach that balances innovation, expertise, and cost-efficiency.

**The Benefits of Procurement's Role in Consulting**

For years, consulting engagements operated largely outside the reach of procurement. Senior executives would select their preferred firms based on relationships, reputation, and urgency, with little transparency around costs or value delivered. This led to inefficiencies, with many companies paying inflated fees without clear performance metrics.

But that's no longer the case. Procurement has invested in the consulting category, and while the transition has been rocky in some places, it's ultimately a positive development. Here's why:

Increased Accountability: Procurement brings much-needed rigor and transparency to consulting engagements. By implementing competitive tendering and supplier management strategies, companies can make better-informed decisions and hold consulting partners accountable for results.

Better Cost Control Without Compromising Value: With the right procurement strategies (think tiered supplier panels and specification optimization), companies can optimize consulting spend without defaulting to the lowest bidder. This allows businesses to invest in high-value projects while cutting unnecessary costs.

Empowering Stakeholders: When procurement works in collaboration with business units, it enhances decision-making rather than limiting it. Teams gain access to a diverse pool of providers, ranging from small niche firms to large global players, giving them the flexibility to tailor consulting engagements to their specific needs.

Ultimately, procurement's involvement isn't about squeezing costs—it's about ensuring that companies get the most value out of their consulting investments.

**Leveraging the Trends: Building a Winning Consulting Strategy**

With the consulting value chain exploding, it's essential to approach supplier selection and engagement strategically. Here's how companies can connect the dots between today's trends:

Use AI and Automation to Boost Efficiency

Leverage automation tools and data platforms to streamline lower-value tasks. This applies not only to your consultants but also to internal processes. For example, procurement teams can use data analytics to track project performance, monitor spending, and assess supplier quality over time.

**Maintain Supplier Flexibility**

The era of a one-size-fits-all global panel is over. Companies need tiered supplier models that combine large firms for complex projects, niche consultancies for specialized needs, and platforms for on-demand expertise. This allows stakeholders to adapt their consulting approach to fit each project's scope and objectives.

Integrate Strategy and Services Thoughtfully

As more professional services firms and tech providers move into consulting, clients must evaluate service models carefully. Sometimes, partnering with an integrated provider makes sense—particularly for projects that span multiple disciplines. In other cases, it's better to work with separate experts to avoid potential conflicts of interest or diluted focus.

**Enhance Procurement's Capabilities**

Investing in professional procurement talent is a game-changer. Companies that train their procurement teams to understand consulting can optimize tendering processes, write better RFPs, and support stakeholders more effectively. This is crucial for balancing quality and cost across engagements.

**Realigning Consulting Engagements for Maximum Impact**

So, what's the endgame? It's not about cutting consulting spend to the bone or chasing the lowest price. Instead, businesses should aim to:

Maximize ROI by selecting partners who can deliver measurable outcomes.

Focus on collaboration between procurement and stakeholders, ensuring alignment on project goals.

Continuously evaluate consulting needs and supplier performance, adapting your strategy as new opportunities arise.

With the consulting ecosystem growing more diverse, clients have never had more control. By taking a structured yet flexible approach, companies can achieve more ambitious results without breaking their budgets.

**The Bigger Picture: Consulting as a Strategic Lever**

In this new era, consulting is no longer just a cost center—it's a strategic lever that can drive innovation, transformation, and growth. Businesses that master the art of supplier management, value-based procurement, and stakeholder collaboration will unlock new levels of efficiency and impact.

The consulting value chain may be exploding, but that's not something to fear—it's something to embrace. With the right approach, you can harness this dynamic landscape to build stronger partnerships, smarter strategies, and

better business outcomes than ever before.

Consulting is evolving faster than ever, driven by technological change, new market entrants, and increased procurement oversight. The companies that will thrive in this landscape aren't the ones clinging to outdated models—they're the ones adapting. Whether it's through AI-enabled tools, agile niche providers, or integrated service partnerships, the future of consulting is all about flexibility, accountability, and innovation.

**Embracing the New Consulting Landscape**

The consulting industry has changed dramatically—and it's not slowing down anytime soon. AI, automation, niche players, and cross-functional services have reshaped what clients can expect from consulting engagements. At the same time, procurement's growing influence has brought transparency and structure to what was once a C-suite-controlled category. The days of blindly following brand reputation are over. Now, companies have the tools, knowledge, and options to get more value from consulting than ever before.

But here's the challenge: choice comes with complexity. With so many options—boutique firms, large global players, consulting platforms, and hybrid models—it's easy to feel overwhelmed. That's why businesses need to be strategic. It's about finding the right balance between control and flexibility, expertise and scale, and cost and quality.

The good news? You don't have to do it all alone. By investing in your procurement and consulting strategy, empowering your stakeholders, and focusing on clear goals and alignment, you can turn this new landscape into a powerful opportunity. The consulting value chain isn't breaking apart—it's expanding to offer you more ways to innovate, transform, and grow. Whether you're embarking on a major transformation or seeking expert advice for a targeted problem, the key is to stay adaptable. Evaluate your needs carefully, select partners who align with your objectives, and continuously improve your engagement strategy. This isn't about doing less with consulting—it's about doing better.

# DEE Assam Recruitment 2025 – 10673 LP & UP Teacher Posts, Online Apply

Last Date: 30/11/2025.

Directorate of Elementary Education (DEE), Assam has released an employment notification for the recruitment of 10673 Lower Primary and Upper Primary Teacher Posts under the Directorate of Elementary Education, Assam. Eligible candidates may apply online here.
Name of posts: Lower Primary and Upper Primary Teacher
No of posts: 10673 posts
Category-wise vacancy:
# Lower Primary (LP) Teacher: To be updated
# Upper Primary (UP) Teacher: To be updated
Pay scale: Pay Band – 2 (PB-2) @ Rs. 14,000/- to Rs. 70,000/- plus plus Grade Pay and other allowances as admissible as per "The Assam Service (Revision of Pay) (Amendment) Rules, 2019
Name of organization: Directorate of Elementary Education, Assam
Age Limit: The required academic and professional qualifications for eligibility will be as per NCTE norms as well as existing Govt. rules and conditions.
Educational Qualification: The required academic and professional qualifications for eligibility will be as per NCTE norms as well as existing Govt. rules and conditions.
Current Employment Status: The candidate, as on 30th September, 2025, must be working as Contractual and State Pool Teachers under Samagra Shiksha Assam (SSA) .
Teaching Experience: The candidate must complete minimum 3 years of continuous service as on 30th September, 2025 as Contractual and State Pool teachers under SSA.
Interested and eligible candidates may apply online for these vacancy by visiting Official DEE Assam Recruitment Portal. Candidates may follow below mentioned steps to apply.
# Scroll down, go to Important Web-Links section .
# Click on the "Online Application Form" and complete the registration process by clicking "Click Here to Register".
# In the next stage, fill your all personal and educational details and upload necessary documents.
# At the end, submit the form.
# After submitting the online application, the candidates will get a Unique Number against the submitted application and will keep the printout of the unique Number for all future references.
# Starting date of submission of online application: 14th November 2025
# Last date of submission of online application: 30th November 2025

# KVS & NVS Recruitment 2025 – 9126 Non-Teaching & Teaching Posts, Online Apply

CBSE on behalf of Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (KVS) & Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti (NVS) have released an employment notification for the recruitment of approximately 9126 non-teaching and teaching positions. Interested and eligible candidates may apply here .
1. Principal
No of posts: 134 (KVS)+ 93 (NVS)
2. Vice Principal
No of posts: 58 (KVS)
3. Assistant Commissioner
No of posts: 8 (KVS) + 9 (NVS)
4. Post Graduate Teacher (PGT)
No of posts: 1465 (KVS )+ 1513 (NVS)+ 18 [PGT(MIL) in NVS]
5. Trained Graduate Teacher (TGT)
No of posts: 2794 (KVS)+ 2978 (NVS) + 443 NVS(3rd language)
6. Librarian
No of posts: 147 (KVS)
7. Primary Teacher (PRTs)
No of posts: 3365 (KVS)
8. Non-Teaching Posts
No of posts: 1155 (KVS)+ NVS (787)
Interested and eligible candidates may apply online for these posts by visiting the official portal of KVS & NVS. They may follow below mentioned steps .
# Scroll down, go to Important Web-Links section .
# Click on Online Application Form link .
# A new webpage will be opened .
# Enter all your personal and educational details as required .
# Upload your passport sized photograph and signature and other required documents.
# Pay the examination fee as per your category and at the end click on submit button .
# Don't forget to take a print of submitted application form .
# Starting date of submission of online application: 14th November 2025 (10.00AM)
# Last date of submission of online application: 04th December 2025 (11.50PM)

# GMCH Guwahati Recruitment 2025 – 9 Posts

Last Date: 30/11/2025.

Gauhati Medical College & Hospital (GMCH) Guwahati has released an advertisement for the recruitment of 9 contractual posts under Gates Foundation Funded Project titled "PMU support for heath systems strengthening in Assam" at Gauhati Medical College & Hospital under Govt. of Assam, Guwahati . Interested and eligible candidates may apply here.
1. Operation Head
No of posts: 01 post
Remuneration: Rs. 225000- 258824/- per month.
Educational Qualification & Experience: Post Graduate in Public Administration/ General Administration with minimum 20 years' experience in Public Health Projects Management.
Age Limit: Maximum age is 60 Years.
2. Technical Head (Public Health)
No of posts: 01 post
Remuneration: Rs. 200000- 232941/- per month.
Educational Qualification & Experience: MBBS with MD (Community Medicine)/MPH/DPH with minimum 15 years' experience in Public Health Projects.
Age Limit: Maximum age is 60 Years.
3. Monitoring & Evaluation Specialist
No of posts: 02 posts
Remuneration: Rs. 125000-155294/- per month.
Educational Qualification & Experience: Master in Public Health with minimum 8 years' experience in Public Health Projects.
Age Limit: Maximum age is 50 Years.
4. Knowledge Management Lead
No of posts: 01 post
Remuneration: Rs. 100000- 129412/- per month.
Educational Qualification & Experience: Masters in Public Health/Health Policy or relevant subjects minimum 5 years' experience in Public Health Projects.
Age Limit: Maximum age is 50 Years.
5. Administrative cum Officer Manager
No of posts: 01 post
Remuneration: Rs. 60000-77647/- per month.
Educational Qualification & Experience: MBA/MCom/relevant subjects with minimum 5 years' experience in Public Health Projects.
Age Limit: Maximum age is 50 Years.
6. Finance Officer
No of posts: 01 post
Remuneration: Rs. 125000-155294/- per month.
Educational Qualification & Experience: Masters in Finance/ Accounting/Business administration with minimum 20 years' experience in Government Public Health Projects.
Age Limit: Maximum age is 50 Years.
7. Partnership Coordinator
No of posts: 01 post
Remuneration: Rs. 60000- 62118/- per month.
Educational Qualification & Experience: MBA with minimum 3 years' experience in Public Health Projects.
Age Limit: Maximum age is 50 Years.
8. Data Analyst (posted at NHM, Assam)
No of posts: 01 post
Remuneration: Rs. 125000- 155294/- per month.
Educational Qualification & Experience: Masters in Computers/ Data Science/Health Information or any other relevant subjects minimum 5 years' experience in Public Health Projects.
Age Limit: Maximum age is 50 Years.

Email your CV (mentioning the Post applied for and contact number) at npugmch@gmail.com on or before 30th November, 2025. Preliminary short-listed candidate list for in person interview along with dates will be notified at the official website of Gauhati Medical College https://gmch.assam.gov.in .

# Cabinet Secretariat Recruitment 2025 – 250 Deputy Field Officer Posts

Last Date: 14/12/2025.

Cabinet Secretariat, Govt. of India has released an employment notification for the recruitment of 250 Deputy Field Officer (Technical) Posts in Cabinet Secretariat, Govt. of India. Interested and eligible candidates may apply here .
Name of post: Deputy Field Officer (Technical)
No of posts: 250 posts
Subject-wise vacancy:
# Computer Science / Information Technology: 124
# Data Science / Artificial Intelligence: 10
# Electronics and/or Communication / Telecommunication: 95
# Civil Engineering: 02
# Mechanical Engineering: 02
# Physics: 06
# Chemistry: 04
# Mathematics: 02
# Statistics: 02
# Geology: 03
Pay: Level 7 Group 'B', Non-Gazetted as per 7th CPC.
Age Limit: Candidate age should not exceed 30 years. Age limit is relaxable for identified categories viz. SC/ ST/ OBC/ Central Govt Employees/ Ex-servicemen, as per Central Government Orders in force.
Educational Qualification: Bachelor's Degree in Engineering or Technology or Master's Degree in Science in the above mentioned subjects from a recognized University/ Institution.
GATE Score: The Candidate should have a valid GATE Score (GATE 2023 or GATE 2024 or GATE 2025).
# Eligible candidates apply in prescribed application format (A-4 Size Paper), should be filled in English Capital (Block) letter using Black or Blue Ink Only.
# Completed application along with self attested required documents should be sent through Ordinary Post addressed to the following post bag.
# The last date for receipt of application is 14/12/2025.

# ONGC Apprentice Recruitment 2025 – 2623 Apprentice Posts, Online Apply

Last Date: 17/11/2025.

Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) has released an employment notification for the recruitment of 2623 Apprentice vacancy in various trade/ disciplines from its operational areas at its location across 25 work centres. Interested and eligible candidates may apply online here .

Name of post: Apprentice
No of posts: 2623 posts
Duration: Duration of training is 12 months for all trades mentioned above.
Max. Allowed Location: A candidate is to choose and can apply for one trade at one work centre/ Location only.
Stipend:
# Graduate Apprentice: Rs. 12,300/-
# Trade Apprentice Rs. 8,200/- to Rs. 10,560/-
# Diploma Apprentice: Rs. 10,900/-
Sector-wise vacancy:

| | |
|---|---|
| Northern Sector | 165 |
| Mumbai Sector | 569 |
| Eastern Sector | 458 |
| Southern Sector | 322 |
| Western Sector | 856 |
| Central Sector | 253 |

Vacancy in Assam:

| Work Centre | No of seats |
|---|---|
| Jorhat | 15 |
| Silchar | 73 |
| Nazira & Sivasagar | 370 |
| Total | 458 |

Age Limit: Candidates age must be minimum 18 years and maximum 24 years as on 06.11.2025, i.e, the Date of Birth of the Candidate/ Applicant should be between 06.11.2001 and 06.11.2007.
Age Relaxation: The category-wise age relaxation is as mentioned below.
# SC/ST: 5 years
# OBC-NCL: 3 years
# PwBD: 10 years
# PwBD (OBC/NCL): 13 years
# PwBD (SC/ST): 15 years
Educational Qualification:

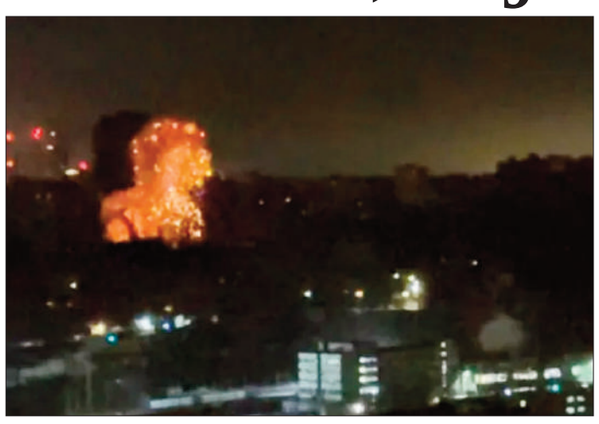
| Trade/Discipline | Qualification |
|---|---|
| Library Assistant | Passed 10th class examination |
| Mechanic Auto Electronics | ITI in the trade of Mechanic Auto Electronics |
| Computer Operator and Programming Assistant (COPA) | ITI in COPA Trade |
| Draughtsman (Civil) | ITI in Draughtsman (Civil) Trade |
| Electrician | ITI in Electrician trade |
| Electronics Mechanic | ITI in Electronics |
| Fitter | ITI in Fitter |
| Instrument Mechanic | ITI in Instrument Mechanic |
| Fire Safety Technician (Oil & Gas) | ITI in relevant Trade |
| Machinist | ITI in Machinist Trade |
| Mechanic Repair & Maintenance of Vehicles | ITI in Mechanic Motor Vehicle Trade |
| Mechanic Diesel | ITI in Diesel Mechanic Trade |
| Medical laboratory Technician (Cardiology) | ITI In Medical Laboratory Technician (Cardiology) |
| Medical laboratory Technician (Pathology) | ITI In Medical Laboratory Technician (Pathology) |
| Medical Laboratory Technician (Radiology) | ITI in Medical |
| Mechanic Refrigeration and Air Conditioning | Trade Certificate in Mechanic Refrigeration and Air Conditioning |
| Stenographer (English) | ITI in Stenography (English) |
| Trade | Surveyor |
| ITI in the Surveyor Trade | Welder (Gas & Electric) |
| ITI | Executive Finance (Oil & Gas) |
| B. Com | |
| Lab Chemist/Analyst- Petroleum Products | B.Sc. (Chemistry) |
| Executive HR – Oil & Gas | B.B.A degree |
| Secretarial Office Assistant – Oil & Gas | Graduate |
| Fire Safety Supervisor (Oil & Gas) | Diploma |
| Computer Science Executive (Diploma) | Three years Diploma in the respective disciplines of Electronics & Telecommunication Executive (Diploma) |
| Electrical Executive (Diploma) | Civil Executive (Diploma) |
| Electronics Executive (Diploma) | Instrumentation Executive (Diploma) |
| Mechanical Executive (Diploma) | |
| Accounts Executive | Bachelor's degree (Graduation) in Commerce |
| Store Keeper (Petroleum Products) | Graduate |
| Computer Science Executive (Graduate) | Degree in the respective discipline of Engineering |
| Electrical Executive (Graduate) | |
| Civil Executive (Graduate) | |
| Electronics Executive (Graduate) | |

Page 6 Nov 15_Normal Pages 14-11-2025 18:38 Page 1



*'Fifteen people were hospitalised, including one man in critical condition and a pregnant woman'*

# Russia's massive attack on Kyiv kills 4, injures 27



**KYIV, Nov 14:** Four people were killed after Russia unleashed a massive combined attack on Kyiv early Friday, sparking fires and scattering debris across many districts of the capital, Ukrainian authorities said.

At least 27 people were injured as emergency crews responded to multiple strikes, said Tymur Tkachenko, head of Kyiv's military administration. At least 430 drones and 18 missiles were used in the attack across the country, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said.

He said the attack, which struck other regions of the country, was targeting Kyiv. "A specially calculated attack to cause as much harm as possible to people and civilians," Zelenskyy said in a post on Telegram.

He added the Azerbaijan Embassy was damaged by fragments of an Iskander missile.

Fifteen people were hospitalised, including one man in critical condition and a pregnant woman, after a series of powerful explosions sounded in the city and airs defences were activated.

City authorities warned that power and water outages are possible.

In the Darnytskyi district, debris landed in the yard of a residential building and on the grounds of an educational facility. A car caught fire after being hit by falling fragments.

In the Dniprovskyi district, debris damaged three apartment buildings, a private household and caused a fire in an open area.

In the Podilskyi district, five residential buildings and a nonresidential structure were damaged.

In the Shevchenkivskyi district, falling debris sparked a fire in an open area near a medical facility and inside a nonresidential building.

In the Holosiivskyi district, debris ignited a fire at a medical facility and damaged another nonresidential building.

In the Desnianskyi district, fires were recorded in two residential buildings.

In the Solomianskyi district, a fire broke out on the roof of a residential building.

In the Sviatoshynskyi district, debris caused a fire in a private home.

In the Kyiv region, Russian strikes damaged critical infrastructure and private homes, injuring at least one civilian, regional head Mykola Kalashnyk said. A 55-year-old man in Bila Tserkva suffered thermal burns and was hospitalised, he said. Fires broke out in private houses in the capital's suburbs.

The strike came as European Union officials warned this week that Ukraine must continue to crack down on corruption following a major graft scandal that has put top nuclear energy officials under scrutiny. But they also offered assurances that aid will continue to flow as Kyiv strains to hold back Russia's invasion. *(AP)*

# Bangladeshi jurists call ordinance on referendum 'unconstitutional'

**DHAKA, Nov 14:** Bangladesh overnight issued an ordinance in line with interim government chief Professor Muhammad Yunus proposed referendum on a political charter, drawing immediate rebuttal from jurists who called it "unconstitutional".

President Muhammad Shahabuddin on late Thursday signed into ordinance the "July Charter Implementation Order" while the document was drafted by Yunus-headed National Consensus Commission after protracted consultations with several political parties excluding deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina's now disbanded Awami League.

In a nationwide televised address Chief Adviser Yunus on Thursday said plebiscite would be staged simultaneously with the planned national election in February next year to elicit peoples mandate for the charter.

"Most of the decisions taken in the July Charter, including those in the gazette, are contrary to the current Constitution. Since the Constitution is still in force, the President cannot legally sign this gazette," leading constitutional expert and former law professor Shahdeen Malik said in a newspaper interview.

Bangladesh Constitution kept no provision for referendum or plebiscite while its Article 93 of says no ordinance could be promulgated "for altering or repealing any provision of this Constitution".

The charter contained over 80 proposals including issues requiring amendments to the Constitution but Yunus said the proposals were synopsized in four issues while the voters would just need to say "yes" or "no" in a question covering the four issues.

Malik told Bangladesh's the Business Standard newspaper that the referendum "would have been acceptable if the Constitution had been annulled or suspended under martial law (but) since neither has happened, everything should proceed according to the existing Constitution".

He feared the voters would be unable to make an informed decision on the referendum issues and will "leave their ballots blank" on the referendum and vote for their chosen MP candidates alone.

"The public first needs to understand the issues they are voting 'Yes' or 'No' on"," he said.

The ordinance stipulated the next parliament must complete constitutional reform, as outlined in the charter and by the referendum's result, within 180 working days from the date of its first sitting.

Malik called the directive "absurd" adding "there is no benefit in fixing these dates if the Parliament does not take them seriously".

Senior Supreme Court (SC) lawyer Mohammad Ruhul Quddus questioned since the current Constitution contained no provision for referendums, "under what legal authority could one now be held".

Another SC lawyer Rashna Imam said, the issue of the July Charter ordinance to be followed by a referendum raised "serious constitutional and procedural concerns". *(PTI)*

# Chinese astronauts stranded after debris hit spacecraft return to earth safely

**BEIJING, Nov 14:** Three Chinese astronauts, who aborted their departure home after their spacecraft was hit by debris, returned to earth safely on Friday.

The return capsule of the Shenzhou-21 spaceship, carrying the astronauts Chen Dong, Chen Zhongrui and Wang Jie, touched down at the Dongfeng landing site in north China's Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, the China Manned Space Agency (CMSA) said.

They were scheduled to return on November 5, but their journey was postponed at the last minute after "small" space debris hit the station, according to CMSA.

Official media earlier reported that the crew was unable to return on their own spacecraft after tiny cracks were found in the porthole of the Shenzhou-20's return capsule – damage that was likely caused by the debris impact.

The incident, the first since the space station was launched in 2011, sparked concerns here as the station was built to accommodate three astronauts.

China rotates the crew at the station every six months.

The Shenzhou-21 spaceship undocked from the space station combination and the return capsule touched down at 4:40 p m Beijing time at the Dongfeng landing site in north China's Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, CMSA said.

The astronauts are all in good health. They had spent 204 days in orbit, setting a new record for the longest in-orbit stay among Chinese astronauts, the CMSA added.

China built its space station after it was reportedly excluded from the International Space Station (ISS) over concerns that China's space programme is manned by its military, the People's Liberation Army (PLA). *(PTI)*

# Poland's new president nods to the far right in his first 100 days

**WARSAW(POLAND), Nov 14:** In his first 100 days in office, Poland's new President Karol Nawrocki has positioned himself as the defender of the Polish nation and someone whose office might be sympathetic to the country's growing far right. With his athletic physique and impeccable suit, Nawrocki projected an old-school image of a protector as he kissed the hands of retired older women during an event this month at a library in Sochaczew, one of the small towns he has made a point of visiting.

That appeal to Poland's more conservative voters helped the 42-year-old Nawrocki win the presidency in June. His fans say he stands for traditionalist values.

He has declared himself against LGBTQ+ "privileges" and "aggressive left-wing radicalism." He has pledged to resist NATO membership for neighbouring Ukraine and has not visited that country since taking office.

Now, experts say, he appears to be positioning himself to have more say in the daily running of Poland — putting him on a collision course with the centrist prime minister.

**An underdog with a Trump endorsement**

With a background as a historian, Nawrocki was hardly known to the public when the leader of Poland's largest opposition party, the conservative Law and Justice, chose him to be its presidential candidate. He was heading the Institute for National Remembrance, a state research body, at the time.

Up until the first round election results became clear, most pundits expected liberal Warsaw mayor Rafal Trzaskowski, running for the centrist governing alliance led by Donald Tusk, to win by a comfortable margin.

But Nawrocki's underdog profile, despite media revelations that included alleged past links to criminal figures and his participation in a street brawl among football fans, helped to make him relatable to voters. He denied the criminal links but not the brawl, saying he had taken part in many "noble, masculine" combats in his life.

"Many people shrugged at his past in the end," said Helena Chmielewska-Szlajfer, a sociologist from Warsaw's Kozminski University. "Maybe we don't love this, but this man is a bloke from the hood, he came from a modest background and yet made an impressive career against the odds."

Contributing to Nawrocki's success was understanding the popularity of right-leaning alternative media channels, which have been growing in Poland in opposition to mainstream media long thought of as liberal, said Michal Szuldrzynski, editor-in-chief of conservative daily Rzeczpospolita. Nawrocki gave hours-long interviews to YouTube channel Kanal Zero and to the channel of Slawomir Mentzen, the leader of far-right party Confederation.

An endorsement from US President Donald Trump also helped Nawrocki in the election.

The relationship between the two presidents makes sense in the context of the "process of MAGA-ization of the Polish right," Szuldrzynski said.

Nawrocki has already visited the White House as Poland's president. As they sat side by side, Trump declared he does not intend to pull US troops out of Poland, another sign of support for the new president and his aims. "We'll put more there if they want," Trump said.

In late October, when the US announced it was reducing the number of its troops on NATO's eastern flank, which had been deployed in response to Russia's growing military aggression, the presence in Poland was left unaffected.

The early foreign policy success further cemented Nawrocki's reputation.

**Rejecting liberal elite' proposals**

In his first month in office, Nawrocki vetoed seven draft laws favoured by the Tusk government, quickly wielding one of the powers of his office against his political rival.

By comparison, previous president Andrzej Duda, an ally of the Law and Justice party that backed Nawrocki for president, vetoed eight such draft laws in 20 months, according to Szymon Holownia, the speaker of the lower house of parliament.

The draft laws Nawrocki vetoed included one on support for Ukrainian refugees and another allowing windmills to be built closer to homes.*(AP)*

# Bodies of 15 Palestinians returned by Israel, health officials in Gaza say

**KHAN YOUNIS, Nov 14:** Israel returned the bodies of 15 Palestinians to Gaza on Friday, officials at Nasser hospital in Khan Younis said, in the latest step to fulfilling the terms of the fragile US-brokered ceasefire agreement.

The bodies were returned after militants late Thursday handed over the body of one of the last four remaining Israeli hostages taken during the October 7, 2023, attack that launched the war in Gaza.

Israel identified the returned body as that of Meny Godard, who was abducted from Kibbutz Be'eri in southern Israel. His wife, Ayelet, was killed during the attack.

The armed wings of Hamas and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad said Godard's body was recovered in southern Gaza.

The remains of 25 hostages have been returned to Israel since the ceasefire between Israel and Hamas began on October 10. There are still three more in Gaza that need to be recovered and handed over. Hamas returned 20 living hostages to Israel on October 13.

For each hostage returned, Israel has released the remains of 15 Palestinians, an exchange central to the ceasefire's first phase. Overall, the number of bodies of Palestinians received so far is 330, of which only 95 have been formally identified, according to Gaza Health Ministry officials.

Health officials in Gaza have said identifying the remains handed over by Israel is complicated by a lack of DNA testing kits.

The exchanges have gone ahead even as Israel and Hamas have accused each other of violating other terms of the deal. Israel has accused Hamas handing over partial remains in some instances and staging the discovery of bodies in others, while Hamas has accused Israel of opening fire at civilians and restricting the flow of humanitarian aid into the territory.

The next parts of the 20-point plan call for creating an international stabilization force, forming a technocratic Palestinian government and disarming Hamas.

The fragile agreement aims to wind down the war that was triggered by the Hamas-led attack on southern Israel that killed about 1,200 people and saw 251 taken hostage. *(AP)*

# US lawmaker to introduce bill to completely eliminate H-1B visa programme

**NEW YORK/WASHINGTON, Nov 14:** An American lawmaker will be introducing a bill to "completely eliminate" the H-1B visa programme and take away the pathway to citizenship that it offers, "forcing" individuals to "return home" when their visa expires.

"My dear fellow Americans, I'm introducing a bill to completely eliminate the H-1B visa programme, which has been riddled with fraud and abuse and has been displacing American workers for decades," Congresswoman from Gerogia, Marjorie Taylor Greene said in a video posted on X on Thursday.

She said that there will only be one exemption in her bill, which will allow for a 10,000 per year cap on visas issued to medical professionals like doctors and nurses who provide life-saving care to Americans. Greene however noted that even this 10,000 per year cap will be "phased out" over 10 years to "allow us time to build our own pipeline of American doctors and physicians."

Greene added that her bill will also "take away the pathway to citizenship, forcing visa holders to return home when their visa expires."

She further said that the intention of her bill is to restore the "original intent" of the H-1B visa, which was "for it to be temporary.

"These visas were intended to fulfill a specialty occupational need at a given time. People should not be allowed to come and live here forever. We thank them for their expertise, but we also wish them well so they may return to their home country," she said.

"Now this will completely end the H-1B visa programme and all other sectors in the job force and in the workforce. This is America first. It's time to put American citizens first instead of foreigners first, and this has been an abuse for far too long. Americans deserve a future. They deserve a chance. And I believe Americans are the most talented people in the world, the most creative, and I want them to have their American dream," she said.

In order to build the country's pipeline of American doctors and medical professionals, Greene said that her bill will prohibit Medicare-funded residency programmes from admitting non-citizen medical students into their programmes. *(PTI)*

# Landslides in Indonesia's Java island leaves 2 dead, 21 missing

**JAKARTA(INDONESIA), Nov 14:** Landslides triggered by torrential rains in Indonesia's Java island killed two people and left 21 others missing, officials said Friday. Rescuers are still searching for the 21 reported missing.

Several days of heavy rainfall in the region caused the landslides that hit dozens of houses in three villages in Indonesia's Central Java province on Thursday evening, officials said in a statement.

"The unstable ground conditions posed a challenge for the search and rescue team in searching for victims during the golden hour. Nevertheless, the joint team continued their search and rescue efforts on Friday morning," said National Disaster Management Agency spokesperson Abdul Muhari in the statement. *(AP)*

# Syria reopens embassy in London after more than a decade

**BEIRUT, Nov 14:** Syria's foreign minister officially reopened the country's embassy in London on Thursday after more than a decade-long closure, the latest step in Syria's reintegration into the international community after the ouster of former President Bashar Assad.

The visit by Foreign Minister Asaad al-Shibani to the United Kingdom came after a historic visit to Washington by interim President Ahmad al-Sharaa, the first by a president from Syria since the country's independence in 1946.

Al-Shibani, speaking at an event held by the London-based Chatham House international affairs think tank, said that his meeting with his British counterpart, Foreign Secretary Yvette Cooper, was "successful."

"Relations between Syria and Britain are advanced relations and we are not talking about opening a new page — we are talking about deepening these relations," he said.

Following Assad's fall, while some countries were initially wary of al-Sharaa's past as an Islamist militant, he said that "the United Kingdom had a progressive position compared to other countries."

"It removed sanctions early and opened relations with the new Syrian government quickly," he said. "It supported us in the (U.N.) Security Council and also supported us in several thorny issues." *(AP)*

# China's Xi, Thai King Vajiralongkorn pledge closer ties during landmark visit

**BEIJING, Nov 14:** China's leader Xi Jinping and Thai King Maha Vajiralongkorn pledged closer ties on Friday during the first-ever visit to China by a reigning Thai monarch.

Xi and his wife, Peng Liyuan, greeted Vajiralongkorn and his wife, Queen Suthida, at Beijing's vast Great Hall of the People. The visit was intended to mark the 50th anniversary of the countries establishing diplomatic ties.

Xi described China and Thailand as "truly good relatives, good friends and good partners," according to the state-run Xinhua news agency.

Beijing was looking forward to boosting agricultural imports from Thailand and advancing cooperation in fields such as railway development, artificial intelligence and aerospace, Xi said.

Vajiralongkorn described his country's relationship with China as "brotherly cooperation" and expressed his desire to deepen exchanges in various areas.

The Thai royals were scheduled to visit a Buddhist temple and an aerospace development hub in Beijing, as well as attend a state banquet. *(AP)*

# *Republicans promised health care negotiations after shutdown, but Democrats are wary*

**WASHINGTON, Nov 14:** Now that the government shutdown is over, House and Senate Republicans say they will negotiate with Democrats on whether to extend COVID-era tax credits that help tens of millions of Americans afford their health care premiums. But finding bipartisan agreement could be difficult, if not impossible, before the subsidies expire at the end of the year.

The shutdown ended this week after a small group of Democrats made a deal with Republican senators who promised a vote by mid-December on extending the Affordable Care Act subsidies. But there is no guaranteed outcome, and many Republicans have made clear they want the credits to expire.

House Speaker Mike Johnson, R-La., called the subsidies a "boondoggle" immediately after the House voted Wednesday to end the shutdown, and President Donald Trump said the Obama-era health overhaul was a "disaster" as he signed the reopening bill into law.

It is far from the outcome that Democrats had hoped for as they kept the government closed for 43 days, demanding that Republicans negotiate with them on an extension before premiums sharply increase. But they say they will try again as the expiration date approaches.

"It remains to be seen if they are serious," said House Democratic leader Hakeem Jeffries of New York. But he said Democrats "are just getting started."

Republicans have been meeting privately to discuss the issue. Some want to extend the subsidies, with changes, to avoid the widespread increases in premiums. Others, like Johnson and Trump, want to start a new conversation about overhauling "Obamacare" entirely — a redo after a similar effort in 2017 failed.

**Democrats push for extension**

Health care has long been one of the most difficult issues on Capitol Hill, marked by deep ideological and political divides. Partisan disagreement over the 2010 law has persisted for more than a decade, and relationships are already strained from weeks of partisan tensions over the shutdown.

Connecticut Rep. Rosa DeLauro, the top Democrat on the House Appropriations Committee, said that while Republicans have promised negotiations and a Senate vote, Democrats are wary. She noted that Johnson has not committed to anything in the House.

"Do I trust any of them? Hell no," DeLauro said.

If the two sides cannot agree, as many as 24 million people who get their health care from the exchanges created by the law could see their premiums go up Jan. 1. New Hampshire Sen. Jeanne Shaheen, one of the Democrats who struck a deal with Senate Majority Leader John Thune, R-S.D., to reopen the government, said she thinks an agreement on the tax credits is possible.

During the talks that led to the shutdown's end, Shaheen said she and other moderate Democrats sat across from Thune and "looked him eye to eye" as he committed to a serious effort.

"We're going to have a chance to vote on a bill that we will write by mid-December, in a way that gives us a chance to build — hopefully build — bipartisan support to get that through," Shaheen said.

While Democrats would like to see a permanent extension of the tax credits, most realize that is unlikely. Just before the shutdown ended, Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer of New York proposed a one-year extension and a bipartisan committee to address Republican demands for changes to the ACA. But Thune said that was a "nonstarter" as the government remained shut down.

In the House, Democrats have suggested a three-year extension.

**What Republicans want**

While Republicans have long sought to scrap Obamacare, they have had challenges over the years in figuring out what would replace it. That problem plagued the 2017 effort, when then-Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., cast the deciding vote to kill a bill on the Senate floor that was short on detail.

Republican Sen. Bill Cassidy of Louisiana, chairman of the Senate Health Education Labor and Pensions Committee, and Sen. Rick Scott, R-Fla., have proposed overhauling the law to create accounts that would direct the money to individuals instead of insurance companies. Those are ideas that Trump echoed as he signed the funding bill Wednesday evening. *(AP)*

Page 7 November 15_Normal Pages 14-11-2025 19:58 Page 1



# Parnaik calls for stronger Arunachal–Gujarat partnership

## *Guv highlights cultural bonds, development convergence at Bharat Parv*

**ITANAGAR, Nov 14:** Governor Lt Gen K T Parnaik (Retd) has underscored the deep cultural ties, shared heritage and growing developmental convergence between Arunachal Pradesh and Gujarat, calling for stronger cooperation between the two states to advance national unity and collective progress.

Speaking at 'Bharat Parv' at the Statue of Unity at Ekta Nagar in Gujarat on Wednesday, the governor said the relationship rests on centuries-old cultural foundations and continues to inspire youth, civic initiatives and state-led development.

Parnaik highlighted that the bond between the two states is rooted in shared mythology, most notably the story of Lord Krishna and Rukmini, whose divine wedding is celebrated at the Madhavpur Fair in Gujarat, an official statement said here on Thursday. He said this tradition acts as a 'living cultural bridge', especially since Rukmini is believed to have been born in Bismaknagar in Arunachal Pradesh's Lower Dibang Valley district, reinforcing ties that predate modern political structures.

The governor emphasised Gujarat's special place in Arunachal Pradesh's civic and youth programmes, particularly during 'Rashtriya Ekta Diwas', when Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's legacy is honoured across educational institutions. Patel's role in national integration and the decisive actions of Major Bob Khating, which ensured "Tawang became and remains an integral part of India", continue to guide Arunachal Pradesh's strong sense of national identity, he said.

Appreciating the contributions of the Gujarati community in Arunachal Pradesh, Parnaik said they have exemplified the spirit of 'Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat'.

Highlighting the state's development trajectory, the governor noted that the state has constructed over 4,000 km of roads in the last five years despite difficult terrain, significantly improving connectivity, mobility and security.

He said Arunachal Pradesh's immense tourism potential, spanning spiritual, cultural, adventure and eco-tourism is supported by its pristine landscapes and vibrant heritage.

Parnaik also pointed to opportunities for collaboration, stating that Gujarat's achievements in cooperative development, dairy management, horticulture and tourism offer models for Arunachal Pradesh.

"In return, Arunachal contributes its own strengths as India's largest producer of kiwi, a growing centre for mandarin oranges and large cardamom and a state with vast hydropower potential positioned to support the nation's clean energy goals," he said. Calling for deeper cooperation, the governor invited the chief minister, ministers and officials of Gujarat to visit Arunachal Pradesh to explore partnerships that strengthen the national fabric and advance the shared vision of a cohesive, forward-moving India. (PTI)

# *Khandu hails NDA's Bihar victory, emphasises good governance, partnership*

**ITANAGAR, Nov 14:** Chief Minister Pema Khandu on Friday expressed happiness over the NDA's sweeping victory in the Bihar Assembly polls.

"Heartiest congratulations to the people for the remarkable election victory in Bihar!", the chief minister said in a post on X.

He said the result is "a decisive mandate" which reflects the people's unwavering faith in good governance, development and stability under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The chief minister expressed his gratitude to the BJP and NDA workers for the victory."Heartfelt gratitude to all our @BJP4India and NDA karyakartas for their tireless efforts on the ground. Your dedication and commitment have truly made this victory possible," he said. (PTI)


**NOTICE INVITING TENDER**

Tender affixing Court Fee Stamp of Rs. 8.25/- (Rupees eight & twenty five paisa) only under sealed cover are hereby invited from the intending Govt. registered Printing Presses for printing of Photo Electoral Rolls in connection with Special Intensive Revision, 2025-26 and as per terms and conditions laid down below. The Election Officer, Udalguri will receive the tenders on behalf of the undersigned till 3:00 PM up to 26/11/2025 and shall be opened on the same day at 4:00 PM in presence of the intending tenderer or their authorized representative. The undersigned reserves the right to reject any or all tenders without showing any reasons thereof.

Specification:-

1. Printing shall have to be done in good quality A4 size paper of 75 GSM.
2. Printing shall have to be done from the PDF format to be provided from this end.
3. Rate of printing per page on both sides and single sides inclusive of paper, stitching, binding, shorting, tagging, delivery charges etc.

Terms and condition:-

1. The Printing Press must be registered with the Printing and Stationery Department, Govt. of Assam and Photo copy of valid Govt. registration certificate must be submitted along with the quotation. The original and valid registration certificate must be produced at the time of opening of the tender.
2. Photo copy of tax clearance certificate (GST and IT) must be submitted along with the quotation and original certificate must be produced at the time of opening of the tender.
3. Photo copy of trade license must be submitted along with the tender. The original and valid license must be produced at the time of opening of the tender.
4. TIN, PAN and GST number must be indicated in the tender. Also photo copy of PAN card must be enclosed along with the tender.
5. Photo copy of experience (previous work order) of similar printing related works to be submitted along with the tender.
6. Bank Account No. in the name of Printing Press and IFSC Code and Bank Branch name must be indicated with the tender. Photo copy of 1" page of bank passbook or copy of cancelled cheque is to be submitted along with the tender where the IFSC code is mentioned.
7. The per page rate of printing of Photo Electoral Roll should not be above of Rs. 2.80 in case of both sides and Rs. 1.90 in case single side excluding GST.
8. The bidders will have to submit security deposit for an amount of Rs. 20,000.00 (Rupees twenty thousand) only as Demand Draft in favour of the Election Officer, Udalguri. The Security Money will be retained until satisfactory completion of the work and may be forfeited in case of breach of contract or failure to complete the job as per terms.
9. The authority shall not be bound to accept the lowest quoted rates and rates accepted shall not be changed under any circumstances.
10. The quality of printing items should be standard and undersigned shall have the right to reject the printing items supplied by the Printing Press, if not satisfied.
11. Payment shall be made when required fund will be provided by the Election Department, Dispur.

Sd/-
District Commissioner
&
District Election Officer,
Udalguri.

DIPR/C/HLT/214/15-Nov-25


# Mount Mission English Academy celebrates Children's Day

**HT Correspondent**

**YACHULI, Nov 14:** Mount Mission English Academy in Yachuli marked Children's Day 2025 with a vibrant celebration that also served as the school's Annual Sports Prize Distribution Ceremony. The event, held at the 3D Hotel, brought together students, parents, educators and community leaders in a spirit of unity and achievement.

Toko Teki, Chief Advisor of the Arunachal Pradesh Wushu Martial Arts Association was the Chief Guest at the event. In his address, Teki emphasised the importance of discipline, teamwork and integrity, noting these qualities as essential for young learners. He encouraged students to balance academic excellence with physical fitness, highlighting how sports contribute significantly to character development.

S Thanglianmang, Commandant of the 60th ITBP, Ziro, graced the occasion as the Special Guest. He praised the school's integrated approach to education, emphasising the role of sports in fostering resilience, leadership and self-confidence—skills that are crucial in today's fast-paced world.

The event featured cultural performances by students, followed by motivational speeches and the much-anticipated prize distribution ceremony. Students who excelled in various sports and co-curricular activities throughout the academic year were recognised for their achievements. In a gesture of goodwill, Toko Teki donated a water storage filter to the school to help alleviate recurring water shortages. He also distributed sports equipment to the students and encouraged them to remain disciplined and focused on achieving their goals.

The Principal of Mount Mission English Academy expressed gratitude to the dignitaries for their support and acknowledged the cooperation of parents and the local community.

# Stronger drug control and pharmacy regulation urged at NCORD meeting

**HT Correspondent**

**YUPIA, Nov 14:** The district-level NCORD meeting was held on Friday at the DC Conference Hall, Yupia, chaired by ADC Headquarters, Tama Yajum. The session focused on reviewing the progress of previous directives aimed at strengthening drug control and regulating pharmacies in the district.

Key points discussed included regular surprise inspections of pharmacies suspected of selling drugs like methadone and visiting rehabilitation centres across Papum Pare district. The meeting also called for increased awareness programs to help identify and destroy cannabis plants, particularly in areas like Sakyang–Pinta village under Sagalee Sub-Division. Additionally, there were calls for improving intelligence gathering, enhanced railway track patrols, regular vehicle checks at entry points and monthly inspections of shops near school premises.

Deputy SP Hibu Obing provided an update on the implementation of these measures. He reported that 16 NDPS cases have been registered since the formation of the NCORD Committee with 188kgs of cannabis and 314 grams of heroin seized and 23 drug-related arrests made. He also highlighted ongoing challenges in identifying pharmacies illegally selling methadone and other controlled drugs. Several pharmacies continue to dispense psychotropic substances without valid prescriptions which complicates detoxification efforts at rehabilitation centres. Obing stressed the need for greater coordination between the Medical Department the Drug Controller and the Police to address this issue.

DMO Dr Reena Ronya presented the findings of inspections conducted on 83 pharmacies in rural areas of Papum Pare. While no Schedule X drugs were found, she emphasised that all pharmacies must adhere to proper record-keeping and prescription regulations. She proposed that non-compliant pharmacies be prosecuted under relevant legal provisions and notices be issued to ensure mandatory prescription entries in pharmacy registers.

Representing ADC Sagalee, Assistant Commissioner Chukhu Taba provided a report on cannabis destruction activities in Sakyang and Pinte villages. While no large-scale cannabis cultivation was discovered, small patches of cannabis plants were found intercropped with cardamom fields and have been destroyed. The area under such cultivation is still being assessed and further reports will be provided once the analysis is complete.

# APSCPCR probes student death at Sainik School, Niglok

**HT Correspondent**

**EAST SIANG, Nov 14:** The Arunachal Pradesh State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (APSCPCR) conducted an inquiry at Sainik School, Niglok Village, East Siang District, following the untimely death of Class VII student Late Tadu Haro on Thursday.

The inquiry team was led by Chairperson Ratan Anya, accompanied by members Niri Chongrowju, Honluk Lukham, Member Secretary Yakar Dawe, Legal Advisor Bini Nyaruce and supporting staff. During the visit, the team interacted with school authorities, staff, students and other stakeholders, inspected the site of the incident and reviewed the school and hostel premises. Preliminary documents were examined and clarifications were sought regarding the circumstances surrounding the tragic incident. The case has been handed over to the State Investigation Team (SIT) for further action.

On the second day, the Commission, along with Member Secretary, DCPU East Siang cum DD ICDS TN Padung and LPO, visited the Juvenile Observation Home. They interacted with staff, caretakers and juveniles, emphasising the need for a safe and child-friendly environment. The Commission expressed concern over the lack of adequate juvenile observation facilities in the state, noting that only the Pasighat home is operational, while the upcoming facility in Yupia is yet to function.

APSCPCR expressed deep sorrow over the demise of Tadu Haro and extended condolences to the bereaved family. The Commission reiterated its commitment to a transparent and thorough inquiry, with findings to be submitted to the competent authorities as per the Child Rights Act, 2005.

The Commission also urged all educational institutions to strictly follow child safety protocols, maintain a nurturing environment and respond promptly to situations compromising student safety. A directive has been issued to all DDSEs in the state for immediate and strict implementation of anti-bullying and anti-ragging guidelines issued by the Education Department.

The APSCPCR will continue close coordination with the family and investigating agencies to ensure justice and safety for children across the state.


**GOVT OF ASSAM**
**KARBI ANGLONG AUTONOMOUS COUNCIL**
**OFFICE OF THE ADDITIONAL DIRECTOR OF SERICULTURE,**
**DIPHU ::: KARBI ANGLONG.**

No.Addl.DSDE.213/2023-2024/58, Dated Diphu the 13th of November 2025.

**NOTIFICATION**

It is hereby informed to all the eligible candidates applied for the post of Sericulture Demonstrator (Grade-III) and Chowkidar (Grade-IV), that the office of the Additional Director of Sericulture, Diphu, Karbi Anglong will hold the Viva-Voce as per programme given below:

| Name of the Post | Grade | Date of Viva-Voce | Time | Venue |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Sericulture Demonstrator | III | 25-11-2025 | 10:00 AM Onwards | New Secretariat Building, KAAC. |
| Chowkidar | IV | 26-11-2025 | 10:00 AM Onwards | New Secretariat Building, KAAC. |

**Note:**

1. The Candidates are requested to collect the Admit Card from the office of the Additional Director of Sericulture, Diphu, Karbi Anglong (RESHOM BHAWAN) from 18/11/2025 to 24/11/2025 during office hour. They are requested to bring their Admit Card along with original documents for the Interview without fail.
2. No TA/DA will be provided by the Department.

Sd/-
i/c Additional Director of Sericulture.
Diphu, Karbi Anglong.
Memo No. No.Addl.DSDE.213/2023-2024/58-(A), Dated Diphu the 13/11/2025.


# *Arunachal launches clean energy initiative with DHPD 2.0*

## *Dy CM Mein unveils rebranded hydropower department to accelerate sustainable energy development*

**ITANAGAR, Nov 14:** Signalling a renewed push toward clean energy transformation, Deputy Chief Minister Chowna Mein on Thursday launched a rebranded and future-ready identity for the state's hydropower department, marking what he described as the beginning of "DHPD 2.0", a unified effort to accelerate hydropower development while safeguarding the state's ecological wealth.

The initiative came as the government convened its first-ever annual review meeting of the department here, officials said. Unveiling the department's new logo and the tagline "Powering Progress, Naturally," Mein said the redesigned identity reflects Arunachal's belief that development must move in step with nature. The logo, featuring the rising sun, flowing rivers, dams and power lines, captures the state's transition toward a cleaner, more sustainable energy future, they said.

The meeting, attended by hydropower advisor Ninong Ering and senior officials, brought together engineers, policymakers and stakeholders to assess ongoing projects, strengthen inter-departmental coordination and outline long-term strategies for tapping the state's immense hydropower reserves.

During the session, the deputy chief minister felicitated outstanding engineers from the department, acknowledging their dedicated service in improving infrastructure and project execution across districts.

Their work, Mein said, stands as a model for technical excellence and teamwork in the state's energy sector.

The deputy chief minister, who also holds the power and hydropower portfolios, urged officers to carry forward the collective mission of "Powering Progress, Naturally," affirming that hydropower remains central to the state's economic and environmental aspirations. On Wednesday, Mein chaired a series of review meetings on the Subansiri Upper hydro-electric project and the Kamala hydro project, along with Land Management Minister Balo Raja, advisor Ninong Ering, MLAs, chief engineers and NHPC officials.

The deputy chief minister announced that the techno economic clearance and public hearing for environmental clearance for the Kamala project were successfully completed in October last, terming it a major boost for the project's pace. Mein expressed gratitude to the people of Kamle, Kra-Daadi and Kurung Kumey districts for their cooperation and support.

The review also focused on resolving critical issues affecting the progress of the Subansiri Upper project, with the deputy chief minister calling for coordinated efforts to address bottlenecks and ensure timely advancement.

As Arunachal Pradesh accelerates its hydropower agenda under DHPD 2.0, Mein reiterated the state's commitment to balancing rapid energy development with environmental protection and inclusive growth. (PTI)


**GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM**
**DIRECTOR CUM ADDITIONAL CHIEF ENGINEER,**
**P.W.D. (R&B), HILLS, ASSAM,**
**DIPHU.**

No.ACEH/CS/MOS-21/71/2025-26/03 Dated: 13/11/2025

**PRESS NOTICE INVITING BID**

The Director cum Additional Chief Engineer, P.W.D(R&B), Hills, Assam Diphu, on behalf of Governor of Assam invites bids from registered contractors of Class-I (A) Roads category for "Construction of Roads from 5th KM of DLHS Road to Langkaijan (Ch. 0.00 Km to 14.00 Km)" under KAATC Package on EPC Mode-1. Details may be seen at e-procurement portal website www.assamtenders.gov.in. The Bidders must be registered with the E-tendering system (ETS) of the Govt. of Assam.

Sd/-
Director cum Additional Chief Engineer,
P.W.D.(R&B), Hills, Assam, Diphu.
MemoNo. ACEH/CS/MoS-21/71/2025-26/03-(A) Dated 13/11/2025.

Page 8 Nov 15_Normal Pages 14-11-2025 19:03 Page 1



# NOTA's share up from 2020 but much lower than 2015 Bihar assembly polls

**NEW DELHI, Nov 14:** The share of none of the above (NOTA) option went up marginally this time in the Bihar assembly polls as compared to the last elections but is still much lower than 2015, data shared by the Election Commission shows.

After two-phased election held on November 6 and 11, votes are being counted on Friday. The NDA was set to sweep the Bihar assembly polls, surging ahead in close to 200 out of the total 243 seats, with the BJP emerging as the single largest party with nearly 95 per cent strike rate.

The Mahagathbandhan, which includes the RJD, the Congress and three Left parties, was struggling to cross the 35-seat mark.

According to the latest figures, 1.81 per cent or 6,65,870 of the total votes polled went to the NOTA option on electronic voting machines (EVMs) when voting took place for the 243-member House.

Bihar has an electorate of over 7.45 crore. With 66.91 per cent voter turnout, it was the highest since the first Bihar elections in 1951. As many as 3.51 electors turned up at polling stations to cast their vote. Bihar recorded the highest female voter turnout in its history

In 2020, about 7,06,252 people chose the NOTA option in the assembly election, which worked out to 1.68 per cent of the total votes polled.

The number of people who had chosen NOTA in 2015 was 9.4 lakh out of 3.8 crore people who voted, which comes to 2.48 per cent.

The NOTA option had recorded its lowest percentage share in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls.

Introduced in 2013, the NOTA option on EVMs has its own symbol — a ballot paper with a black cross across it. The EC added the NOTA button on EVMs as the last option on the voting panel after a September 2013 Supreme Court order.

Before the apex court's order, those not inclined to vote for any candidate had the option of filling what is popularly called Form 49-O. But filling out the form at the polling station under Rule 49-O of the Conduct of Elections Rules, 1961, compromised the secrecy of the voter.

The Supreme Court had, however, refused to direct the EC to hold fresh polls if the majority of the electorate exercised the NOTA option while voting. *(PTI)*

*The NDA was set to sweep the Bihar assembly polls, surging ahead in close to 200 out of the total 243 seats*

# Bihar results people's stamp of approval on NDA govt's service: Shah

**NEW DELHI, Nov 14:** Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday said the overwhelming mandate for the NDA in Bihar is the people's stamp of approval on its work for development, women's safety, good governance and the welfare of the poor.

In a series of posts on X, Shah said that in the last 11 years, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has worked wholeheartedly for Bihar and Chief Minister Nitish Kumar has worked to pull the state out of the darkness of 'jungle raj'.

The NDA was set to sweep the Bihar assembly polls, surging ahead in close to 200 out of the total 243 seats, with the BJP emerging as the single largest party with nearly 95 per cent strike rate.

The Mahagathbandhan, which includes the RJD, the Congress and three Left parties, was struggling to cross the 35-seat mark.

"A heartfelt salute to the people of 'Bihar Bhumi', the protectors of knowledge, hard work and democracy," Shah said.

He said this overwhelming mandate given to the NDA by the people of Bihar is their stamp of approval on the NDA's resolute service towards development, women's safety, good governance, and the welfare of the poor in Bihar.

"Every single vote cast by the people of Bihar is a symbol of trust in the Modi government's policy against infiltrators who threaten India's security and resources, and against those who support them. The public has given a strong answer to those who protect infiltrators for the sake of vote-bank politics," he said.

The home minister said the people of Bihar have indicated the mood of the entire country that purification of the voter list is essential and there is no room for politics against it.

"This is why the Congress, under the leadership of Rahul Gandhi, has today been relegated to the bottom rung in Bihar," he said.

Terming the poll results as a "victory of every Bihari" who believes in a "developed Bihar", Shah said those who practice 'jungle raj' and politics of appeasement will not get an opportunity to plunder.

He said the people now give their mandate solely on the basis of "politics of performance".

"I congratulate Shri @narendramodi Ji, Shri @NitishKumar Ji, and all the leaders and workers of the NDA. At the same time, I salute all the workers of @BJP4Bihar, from the booth level to the state level, who actualised this result through their tireless efforts," Shah said.

He also assured the people of Bihar, "especially our mothers and sisters", that the NDA government, under the leadership of Modi, will fulfil the mandate given to it. *(PTI)*

## Several ministers among NDA winners in Bihar

**PATNA, Nov 14:** Bihar ministers Prem Kumar, Maheshwar Hazari and Sanjay Saraogi were among prominent winners from the NDA camp which has, so far, won at least 21 seats in the 243-strong assembly.

Kumar, a senior BJP leader who was the agriculture minister in the outgoing Nitish Kumar government, continued his unbroken run in Gaya Town, a seat he has been winning since 1990. He defeated his Congress rival Akhouri Onkar Nath by a staggering margin of over 26,000 votes.

Hazari, a JD(U) leader who held the Information and Public Relations Department portfolio in the Nitish Kumar government, retained his reserved seat of Kalyanpur where he trounced his nearest CPI(ML) Liberation rival Ranjeet Kumar Ram by a margin of more than 38,000 votes. He has won the seat for a fourth consecutive time.

Saraogi, a Marwari who has made a mark for himself in Bihar's caste dominated politics, retained Darbhanga for a fifth consecutive time. The BJP leader, who was the minister for revenue and land reforms, defeated Umesh Sahni of Vikassheel Insaan Party (VIP) by a margin of over 24,500 votes. *(PTI)*

# At Chandni Chowk, tourist guides now narrate tales of Delhi's night of terror

**NEW DELHI, Nov 14:** The routine business around Chandni Chowk gate that once drew tourists, including foreigners eager to gaze at the Red Fort and hear stories of Delhi's Mughal era, has changed since Monday night.

Tourist guides say they have lost half the visitors. The other half is more curious to hear of the deadly blast than that of the monument's heritage.

Many vendors who ran street food stalls or sold trinkets have taken up other means of livelihood as their goods were lost.

On Friday afternoon, a small group of foreign tourists stood near the barricades as Iqbal, a 25-year-old guide, spoke to them about the incident. He has barely discussed anything else since the explosion.

"I used to take at least 10 sets of families or tourists around every day," Iqbal told PTI.

"Now those who visit Delhi are not coming to Red Fort. And those who do come, want to know about the blast. I take them till the barricade and explain what happened. For the last two days, this is what everyone has asked me about," he said as he guided a couple of foreigners.

Sohail, who has worked as a guide in the area for almost 10 years, said that the contents of his tour as well has taken a 360-degree turn.

"Chandni Chowk is the heart of Delhi's tourism. On one side there is the historic market and on the other, there is the Red Fort," he said.

"The first thing we do is bring tourists to this gate so that they can see the face of the monument. Now, instead of talking about Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan and his dynasty, we are explaining the blast and what the police has found so far. We have also lost more than half the tourists," he added.

Sohail recalled the deadly night. "I was having tea with friends before heading home. Suddenly, there was a blast so loud that we could not hear anything for some time. My ears went numb and we ran."

Rakesh Sharma, another guide who had finished his work for the day, said the scene changed within seconds. "I saw a flash and then people began screaming. Everyone ran. When I returned later, the road was covered in smoke and damaged vehicles," he said, "Tourists keep asking if it is safe now. We can only repeat what the police tells us."

The blast has not only changed what people hear about Chandni Chowk but has also displaced lives and forced daily wage workers to choose a different source of income. Devender, 50, who sold toys and trinkets a few metres from the spot, said he thought a transformer had burst.

"The explosion was so fierce that it reached my stall and destroyed many of my goods. People ran in every direction and in the chaos, many of the pieces in my stall were strewn around," he said.

"I lost most of my goods. Now I have taken a rickshaw on rent from a friend. I am running it since yesterday while waiting for them to let us return," Devender added.

Mohammad Tahir, who ran a street food stall, also believed it was a transformer or cylinder blast until he saw people bolting. "I left my stall and ran for my life," he said.

Tahir later returned to collect whatever was left, but there was barely anything. "I have also taken up rickshaw-pulling now to feed my family," he said.

In a nearby lane, Joginder, a local resident and a regular at the area's historic gurdwara, said the shock was felt across the neighbourhood. "The blast was so loud that our entire house shook. When we rushed out, we saw 500 to 700 people running," he said.

"We could not sleep that night. We went to the gurdwara early next morning to calm ourselves. Throughout the day, people kept coming and talking. Many were still shaken and trying to get a grip on what happened," he further shared.

A high-intensity explosion ripped through a slow-moving car near the Red Fort metro station on Monday evening, gutting several vehicles and injuring many. Several of the critically wounded later died, taking the death toll to 13.

Today, guides and vendors around Red Fort are returning to their usual spots, but in a wounded Chandni Chowk. Their stories, which were once about history and heritage, now begin with the events of a single night that has cast a shadow over one of the most visited historical site in Delhi. *(PTI)*

## No party big or small in NDA: Bihar BJP chief

**PATNA, Nov 14:** Bihar BJP president Dilip Jaiswal on Friday said that "no party is big or small in the NDA" as the alliance headed for a massive victory, with the saffron party poised to outperform ally JD(U) for the second consecutive assembly election.

The NDA was heading to sweep the Bihar polls with its constituents leading in 206 of the 243 assembly constituencies in the state.

Jaiswal said the verdict reflected the people's overwhelming endorsement of the development model under Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the chief minister.

"The people liked the development brought by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chief Minister Nitish Kumar. They have given us an enormous victory, an unprecedented success. For this, we bow our heads before them," he told reporters, including PTI Video, amid a swirl of congratulatory handshakes and celebratory drumming outside the BJP office.

Asked whether the BJP's stellar performance, leading in 95 of the 101 seats it contested, and comfortably ahead of the JD(U)'s 84, would upset the internal balance of the alliance, Jaiswal said, "No party is big or small in the NDA."

"Please don't get into that," he repeated, even as the party "pulling ahead again", just as it did in the 2020 assembly polls.

On questions about women voters' support, he remained measured in his reply.

"The people have given us a huge mandate. We must accept it with humility and bow before them. That is all that matters right now," he said. *(PTI)*

## PM to address Birsa Munda birth anniversary event, visit bullet train station in Gujarat on Nov 15

**DEDIAPADA (GUJ), Nov 14:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi will visit Dediapada town in Gujarat's tribal-dominated Narmada district on Saturday to address a gathering to mark the birth anniversary of tribal icon Bhagwan Birsa Munda.

Prior to addressing the gathering, the PM will visit the under-construction bullet train station in Surat at around 10am to review the progress of the Mumbai-Ahmedabad High-Speed Rail Corridor (MAHSR), a PIB release said.

Gujarat Deputy Chief Minister Harsh Sanghavi and state Tribal Development Minister Naresh Patel on Friday reviewed the preparations at the venue in Dediapada.

Before addressing the gathering, the PM will offer prayers at the temple of Pandori Mata, the clan deity of the tribal community, at Devmogra village in Sagbara taluka, 23 kilometres from Dediapada, Sanghavi told reporters.

"The PM will perform pooja and darshan at Devmogra Temple on Saturday afternoon. Thereafter, the PM will visit Dediapada and participate in a programme marking the 150th birth anniversary celebration of Dharti Aaba Bhagwan Birsa Munda," the PIB release said.

"On the occasion, he will inaugurate and lay the foundation stone of various infrastructure and development projects costing more than Rs 9,700 crore, and also address the gathering. The PM will inaugurate and lay the foundation stone of multiple development projects aimed at uplifting tribal communities and improving infrastructure in rural and remote areas of the region," the release added.

Modi will take part in the 'grih pravesh' of 100,000 houses built under Pradhan Mantri Janjati Adivasi Nyaya Maha Abhiyan (PM-JANMAN) and Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan (DA-JAGUA), it said.

"The PM will inaugurate 42 Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS) worth around Rs 1,900 crore dedicated to tribal students; 228 Multi-Purpose Centres to act as hubs for community-led activities; Centre of Competence in Assam Medical College, Dibrugarh, and Tribal Research Institute (TRI) building in Imphal, Manipur for the preservation of tribal culture and heritage," the release said.

In addition, Modi will flag off 250 buses for 14 tribal districts of Gujarat, lay the foundation stone for 748 kilometres of new roads to enhance connectivity in tribal areas and 14 Tribal Multi-Marketing Centres (TMMCs) under DA-JAGUA to serve as community hubs.

He will also lay the foundation stone of 50 new Eklavya Model Residential Schools, worth over Rs 2,320 crore, furthering the government's commitment to providing quality education for tribal children.

Prior to this event, the Prime Minister will visit the under-construction bullet train station in Surat at around 10am to review the progress of the Mumbai-Ahmedabad High-Speed Rail Corridor (MAHSR), the release said. Built with advanced engineering techniques on par with international standards, the project features 465 km (about 85 per cent of the route) of viaducts, ensuring minimal land disturbance and enhanced safety. So far, 326 km of viaduct work has been completed, and 17 out of 25 river bridges have already been constructed.

"Upon completion, the bullet train will reduce travel time between Mumbai and Ahmedabad to nearly two hours, revolutionizing inter-city travel by making it faster, easier, and more comfortable. The project is expected to boost business, tourism, and economic activity along the entire corridor, catalysing regional development," the release said.

The 47-kilometre Surat-Bilimora section is in an advanced stage of completion, with civil works and track-bed laying fully completed. *(PTI)*

## 1996 World Cup: SC rejects Kolkata Municipal Corporation's plea over advertisement tax

**NEW DELHI, Nov 14:** The Supreme Court on Friday dismissed the Kolkata Municipal Corporation's plea challenging an order which quashed the demand notice claiming ₹ 51.18 lakhs from Cricket Association of Bengal on account of advertisement tax for the 1996 Cricket World Cup held at Eden Gardens.

The corporation had issued a demand notice on March 27, 1996, claiming ₹ 51,18,450 from the association on account of advertisement tax for the inaugural ceremony and a semifinal match of the 1996 World Cup held at the Eden Gardens.

The inaugural ceremony of the World Cup was organised by the association on February 11, 1996, while the semifinal match was held on March 13, 1996.

A plea filed by the Kolkata Municipal Corporation challenging an order of June this year by a division bench of the Calcutta High Court came up for hearing on Friday before a bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta.

The high court's division bench had dismissed an appeal filed by the corporation against an April 2015 order of its single judge. The division bench had said Eden Gardens stadium cannot be held to be a "public place". The single judge had allowed a plea filed by the Cricket Association of Bengal challenging the demand notice.

The top court dismissed the corporation's plea against the high court's order.

In its order, the high court's division bench had noted that the Cricket Association of Bengal enjoys a lease of the Eden Gardens in Kolkata and the owner of the property is the Ministry of Defence, Government of India.

It had said that certain advertisements were put up both inside and outside the stadium during the 1996 Cricket World Cup.

The corporation had issued a demand notice on account of advertisement tax for the two days of the World Cup by invoking a provision of the Kolkata Municipal Corporation Act, 1980, which deals with tax on advertisements.

The association had challenged the demand notice before the high court contending that the concerned advertisements were displayed within the Eden Gardens stadium which was not a public place and the same were not visible to the public from a public street or a public place. *(PTI)*

## Bihar people rejected Cong lies on SIR, accept people's verdict, says TN BJP

**CHENNAI, Nov 14:** The people of Bihar have rejected the Congress and the lies it scripted on SIR, and the election trends indicated that people solidly back the BJP-led NDA, the Tamil Nadu BJP said on Friday.

The poll results showed that the "lies scripted by the Congress on EVM/SIR were rejected," the party said reacting to the emerging trends in Bihar election where the NDA has comfortably crossed the majority mark.

"Despite the misinformation campaign against SIR, Bihar registered the highest voter turnout in history at 66.91 per cent. In addition, for the first time, 71.6 per cent of women voters exercised their franchise. Compared to the last 2020 Bihar elections, almost 49,62,013 more women voters voted," the BJP said in a post on 'X.' At least now, the Congress should learn to accept the people's verdict, the party said.

Bihar polls were held over two phases on November 6 and 11.

Terming the Bihar poll results as NDA's "historic victory," Union Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting L Murugan said the results were proof that the people have completely ignored the 'Indi' alliance, which is anti-people. "Further, the people of Bihar have given their full support to the development work being carried out by the Central Government for the last 11 years under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi," Murugan said in a post on 'X.'

National Co-Incharge, BJP Tamil Nadu & Karnataka, Dr Ponguleti Sudhakar Reddy congratulated Bihar for re-electing NDA, and said "the decisive and thumping majority secured by the NDA in the Bihar Assembly elections stands as a powerful endorsement of the visionary leadership of the Prime Minister and the unwavering commitment of the Bharatiya Janata Party in serving the nation." *(PTI)*

# India needs 86.11 million enrolments by 2035 to meet NEP target: Report

**NEW DELHI, Nov 14:** India needs 86.11 million enrolments by 2035, an 85 per cent increase from the current level, requiring a sustained 5.3 per cent compounded annual growth rate in higher education capacity, according to a new report.

The report titled "Continuous improvement journey of Higher Education Institutions: Approaches and Practices Shaping the Future of Learning" was published by Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and Grant Thornton Bharat.

"To achieve the ambitious New National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 target of 50 pc in Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) by 2035, India's higher education system must accommodate approximately 86.11 million students- an 85 pc increase from its current levels. This translates to a sustained annual growth rate of around 5.3 pc over the next decade, a daunting challenge that necessitates a significant expansion in both student seats and faculty capacity," the report said.

"Traditional brick-and-mortar institutions will remain foundational, but they alone cannot meet this scale. Therefore, a differentiated approach is essential - one that includes systemic adoption of technology-enabled, flexible learning pathways such as digital universities, virtual learning ecosystems and credit-based online programmes that extend access beyond physical campuses," it added.

The findings are based on three focused roundtables with over ten universities in the northern region, complemented by secondary research and analysis, reflecting the lived experiences and priorities of higher education leaders navigating transformation on the ground.

"With nearly 40 pc of core job skills expected to evolve by 2030, employability is emerging as a deliberate design principle within higher education. Institutions are embedding micro-credentials, modular credits, and work-integrated learning, while leveraging AI-enabled assessments and industry partnerships," it said.

"As technology, globalisation, and learner expectations reshape the education landscape, HEIs are experimenting with innovatively enhancing academic flexibilities, improving stakeholder experience through participatory governance, policies and process revitalisation and workflow improvements and automation with technology playing an integral role both in academic and non-academic spheres," it said.

The report underlines that the transformation of higher education in India is no longer a policy aspiration—it is an operational imperative.

"As institutions further their journey of continuous improvement, the dialogue now is shifting from access only to also include scale and quality," it added. *(PTI)*

Page 9 November 15_Normal Pages 14-11-2025 19:20 Page 1



# Zoramthanga attributes collective efforts, dedication of party workers for MNF victory in Dampa

**AIZAWL, Nov 14:** Mizoram's main opposition party Mizo National Front (MNF) president Zoramthanga on Friday attributed the collective efforts and dedication of party workers for the MNF winning the by-election to the Dampa assembly seat in Mamit district.

In the Dampa Assembly bypoll, MNF candidate Dr R Lalthangliana defeated his nearest rival, Vanlalsailova of the ruling Zoram People's Movement (ZPM), by a margin of 562 votes, according to the results announced by the Election Commission.

Lalthangliana, who lost his home turf, South Tuipui, to ZPM's debutante and footballer Jeje Lalpekhlua in the 2023 assembly polls, secured 6,981 votes, which is 40.23 per cent of the total votes against Vanlalsailova, who secured 6,419 votes (36.61%) of the total votes polled in the bypoll.

The MNF retained the Dampa seat, which fell vacant after the death of its incumbent legislator, Lalrintluanga Sailo on July 21.

"The Almighty blessed our collective efforts, dedication and robust coordination at a time when the ZPM's wave is still blowing. We are highly indebted to the people for choosing our senior vice president Dr R Lalthangliana to fill the vacuum left by our departed MLA," Zoramthanga said while addressing the victory celebration at the MNF office here.

The former chief minister also exuded hope that his party will retain power in the next assembly to be held in 2028.

He claimed that the divine always guides the MNF and unseat it from power when it becomes too proud, but reinstates the party to power whenever Mizoram faces serious challenges like the famine, fire incident, swine fever outbreak, Covid-19 pandemic and border dispute, among others.

Lalthangliana also attributed his victory to collective efforts by the party, his close association with the Dampa people, and his political experience and seniority.

"There was good coordination among us. I have travelled across the entire constituency at least 6 times during the campaign, which gave me an advantage in establishing close relations with the people. Moreover, people were familiar with me as I have been an MLA and a cabinet minister for several years. This political experience and seniority helped to win the heart of the people," the 69-year-old teacher turned politician told PTI.

Lalthangliana was first elected to the state assembly in 1989 on the MNF ticket, and this is going to be his seventh time as a legislator.

He is currently the senior vice president of the MNF and was a cabinet minister in the last MNF dispensation headed by Zoramthanga during 2018-2023, holding health, commerce and industries and higher and technical education portfolios.

A total of 83.07 per cent of 20,888 voters exercised their franchise in the Dampa bypoll held on Tuesday.

According to results announced by the Election Commission on Friday, Congress nominee John Rotluangalian secured third place with 2,39 votes, while BJP candidate Lalhmingthanga bagged fourth place, securing 1,541 votes.

People's Conference party candidate K. Zahmingthanga secured 50 votes.

With the MNF winning the Dampa seat, its strength in the Mizoram Assembly again rose to 10, while the ruling ZPM has 27 MLAs, BJP two legislators and Congress has one member. (PTI)

# Tripura PCC Chief accuses ruling forces of attempting to distort India's freedom history

**HT Correspondent**

**AGARTALA, Nov 14:** Tripura Congress President Asish Kumar Saha on Friday alleged that attempts are being made to distort India's freedom history and diminish the contributions of key figures who played vital roles in the country's independence movement.

The Tripura Pradesh Congress Committee, along with the rest of the nation, observed the 136th birth anniversary of Bharat Ratna Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru—India's first Prime Minister—with a commemorative programme at the Congress Bhavan in Agartala.

Senior party leaders, including PCC President Asish Kumar Saha, former Minister and MLA Sudip Roy Barman, MLA Gopal Chandra Roy, and several other Congress functionaries, attended the event.

Speaking to reporters after the programme, Saha said the party paid tribute to Nehru, whose birth anniversary is celebrated as Children's Day across the country.

"Pandit Nehru had immense affection for children and worked relentlessly for their welfare, believing that they represent the nation's future. His contributions remain relevant and are increasingly recognized today," Saha said.

He described Nehru as the architect of modern India, noting that the introduction of the Five-Year Plans under his leadership laid the groundwork for large-scale development and established India's global presence.

Saha further added, "On this day, we must pledge to protect the country's history. There are clear indications that those in power are attempting to erase the contributions of our freedom fighters. Nehru himself was a freedom fighter who endured imprisonment during the independence struggle. Today, however, there is a deliberate attempt to undermine this legacy and even dilute the sanctity of the Constitution drafted by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar."

In a veiled reference to the RSS-BJP, Saha alleged that efforts are being made to rewrite or suppress the sacrifices of freedom fighters. "The Congress is working to unite ordinary people so they can raise their voices against any attempt to distort history. Our aim is to uphold the vision of our great leaders and counter efforts to create divisions in society," he said.

# Tripura CM expresses joy as BJP leads in Bihar , predicts BJP's win in Bengal

**HT Correspondent**

**AGARTALA, Nov 14:** Tripura Chief Minister Pro. Dr Manik Saha on Friday expressed his happiness over the BJP's good performance in the Bihar Assembly elections.

He also thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi for this result and expressed his opinion that the face of India will change in the future with the victory in West Bengal.

The Chief Minister had participated in the campaign for three constituencies in West Champaran for three BJP candidates in the Bagaha Assembly constituency, Ramnagar (SC) Assembly constituency, and Narkatiaganj Assembly constituency, in connection with the Bihar Assembly elections.

Today, expressing his happiness, Dr Saha said, "I was in Champaran of Bihar for campaigning in three Assembly seats where all three seats BJP is leading. This is just the tip of the iceberg. Everyone knows what will happen. I want to thank Prime Minister Narendra Modi, BJP National President JP Nadda, Home Minister Amit Shah, and Nitish Kumar for the way the entire team has worked tirelessly."

He said that the way Lalu Prasad has worked makes it impossible for him to return to power.

"This is totally impossible. Everyone knows what happened during Lalu Prasad's tenure. People don't want them. Now next is West Bengal, and BJP will also come to Bengal. And the face of India will change," he said.

# Meghalaya Cabinet clears land acquisition for New Shillong corridor, amends 'Group D' hiring rules

**SHILLONG, Nov 14:** The Meghalaya Cabinet on Friday approved a series of key measures, including the acquisition of additional land in the New Shillong Township, amendments to service rules governing Group D recruitment, and revision of the state's fiscal deficit limit.

Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma said the cabinet has cleared a proposal to acquire 35 acres of land at Tynring to create a corridor linking the Administrative City and the Knowledge City within the New Shillong Township. The land will also support the proposed relocation of the Central Jail from its current location.

"This is an important step as we continue to build and expand New Shillong. The additional land is required to ensure smooth connectivity between the Administrative and Knowledge City zones," Sangma said. The Cabinet also approved an amendment to Rule 6(D) of the Meghalaya Ministerial District Establishment Service Rules, 2017, to clarify recruitment norms for Group D posts.

For years, two conflicting office memorandums (OM) – one issued in 1996 and another in 2017 – had created uncertainty over whether 50 per cent of Group D vacancies should be filled through Regular Casual Workers (RCWs) or via direct recruitment.

"Today, the cabinet has resolved this long-pending ambiguity. We have decided to follow the 1996 OM. As a result, 50 per cent of Group D vacancies will now

be filled from among Regular Casual Workers," the chief minister said.

In another decision, the cabinet approved amendments to the Meghalaya Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management (FRBM) Act, 2006. The revision raises the state's fiscal deficit ceiling from 3 per cent to 3.5 per cent of GSDP.

"This will give the state additional borrowing space and support developmental activities," Sangma said.

The cabinet further approved the reappointment of Justice Shivaji Pandey as President of the Meghalaya State Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission.

Additionally, the cabinet approved the Service Rules for the Commission, enabling it to establish its own recruitment board. (PTI)

# Assam Cong MP's son fined for misusing flasher light on vehicle in Meghalaya's Ri-Bhoi

**UMLING (MEGHALAYA), Nov 14:** Police in Meghalaya's Ri-Bhoi district fined Tanzil Hussain, son of Assam Congress MP Rakibul Hussain, for misusing flasher light on his vehicle, an official said on Friday. Police said the vehicle registered in the name of Tanzil Hussain was stopped during a routine checking drive at Umling on Thursday night.

Officers spotted flasher light fixed on the car, prompting a detailed inspection.

Upon verification, police found that the flasher light was being used without any authorisation, in violation of government protocol.

The flasher light was dismantled and an on-the-spot fine was imposed, the official said.

Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) VS Rathore, who led the operation, said misuse of official symbols would not be tolerated.

"Is the MP sitting inside the vehicle? If the MP is there, it's a different case, but he is not. You are misusing the privilege. Has the entire family of the MP become MPs now?" Rathore remarked as officers removed the beacon.

The SSP said flasher lights are strictly meant for the officeholder and cannot be used by family members or associates.

Officials added that the action formed part of an ongoing crackdown on unauthorised use of flasher lights on vehicles in Meghalaya. (PTI)

# Saha visits violence hit area during bandh, declares relief for affected traders

**HT Correspondent**

**AGARTALA, Nov 14:** Tripura Chief Minister Dr Manik Saha on Thursday visited the Shantirbazar Market in Dhalai district to assess the situation and meet traders affected by the recent violence that erupted during the state-wide bandh on October 23.

He said that people do not want unrest in the state and that both Jaati and Janajati communities wish to stay united.

After visiting Shantirbazar, Dr Saha said, "I have come here with several leaders and officials. On October 23, the Tripura Civil Society called for a strike, and an unfortunate incident occurred at Shantirbazar in Dhalai district. It was a conspiracy. Earlier, similar incidents had taken place at Gandatwisa and other parts as well. Common people never want such things. When the incident occurred, I monitored the situation throughout the night and sent police officials to the spot. On October 23, Section 163 BNS was imposed, and it was withdrawn on October 31. In Tripura, Jaati and Janajati must stay together. We must remain cautious. The government will not spare anyone involved in such incidents, whoever they may be."

He added that as many as seven persons had been arrested.

"Law will take its own course of action. I have met those who were injured at the hospital, and all possible help has been extended through the government helpline. Many people have requested the establishment of police stations and outposts. I will speak with the DGP and other officials regarding this. A delegation of ministers arrived to collect the report, which has been submitted to me as well. This is a very unfortunate incident. Many shops were vandalized, and some people were also attacked. I have spoken with the District Magistrate and the Chief Secretary about how we can help the victims. We have also taken certain decisions. We must stay united—people do not want unrest. I believe such incidents will not be repeated," said Dr. Saha.

The Chief Minister directed the District Magistrate to take prompt measures for the rehabilitation of those who suffered losses in the incident. Announcing a relief package, Dr. Saha said the government would provide ₹ 3 lakh each for fully damaged houses and shops, ₹ 1.5 lakh for severely damaged ones, and ₹ 15,000 for properties that sustained partial damage.

He further assured that necessary financial and medical support would also be extended to individuals injured during the violence.

# 4 held in Wokha for sexual assault of minor

**HT Correspondent**

**DIMAPUR, Nov 14:** Four persons have been arrested in connection with the alleged sexual assault of a 15-year-old girl in Wokha.

Wokha SP T Relo Aye on Friday said the arrests were made following a written complaint received on November 10. The four arrested have been identified as Chumlanthung Y Humtsoe (26), Zurenthung R Odyuo (19), Zuchanbemo Felix (29), and Khyothungo Yanthan (21). The SP said during investigation, another person, Myinthungo Humtsoe, was identified as being involved in the case, and he is currently absconding. He added that efforts are on to arrest him. As per the complaint, the incident occurred on Nov 4, when accused Zurenthung R Odyuo allegedly sexually assaulted the minor along with two of his accomplices.

# Defeating BJP impossible under Modi–Shah leadership: Tripura Minister

**HT Correspondent**

**AGARTALA, Nov 14:** As long as Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah continue to lead, defeating the BJP is impossible, said Power Minister Ratan Lal Nath on Friday.

This was said by Power Minister Ratan Lal Nath on Friday. He said this after leading a massive bike rally in Mohanpur to celebrate the BJP's victory in Bihar.

Today, under the leadership of the Power Minister, over 1000 bikes participated in the victory rally.

Later, the Power Minister said that the common public, women, and youths have cast their vote for development, good governance, and Swadeshi.

"People want development. Without development nothing is possible. In every house free ration, roads, national highways, education, health, drinking water, and power have reached everywhere. During Lalu Prasad Yadav's time people had seen Jungle Raaj, which the people of Tripura also witnessed during the Left regime. In Tripura, people have cast their vote against corruption and misrule and brought change in 2018," he said.

The Minister informed that as long as Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah are there, defeating the BJP is impossible.

"People have seen under PM Modi how India has become a strong country and made significant progress in the economy, which was proved in the Bihar election. CPIM is double zero, Congress is about to vanish. If regional parties are with PM Modi, they will also benefit from development. In Tripura also, CPIM won't be able to return as people will not accept them. Defeating BJP and PM Modi is impossible. In West Bengal also, BJP will win with massive votes," he said.


## NOTICE

Allemby Ceramics, Guwahati, Assam has been granted Environmental Clearance on 11/11/2025 against proposal no SIA/AS/MIN/550897/2025 dated 09/09/2025. EC identification no. Is EC25B0108AS510894N. Detailed EC along with terms and conditions available on Parivesh portal.

Partner
Allemby Ceramics

## AUCTION NOTICE

All individuals or groups possessing valid Government certificates for the safe disposal and recycling of unused / old / broken / damaged / irreparable / e-waste items under various departments / accounting heads of the school are hereby informed that an auction of such materials will be conducted.Interested and eligible persons may inspect and assess the materials available for auction on 21.11.2025 (Friday) between 11:30 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. at the school premises.After inspection, participants may call for auction on the spot as is where is basis . To see Item list and base price of the item kindly visit our Vidyalaya website, i.e. https://diphu.kvs.ac.in.

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**POSSESSION NOTICE (FOR IMMOVABLE PROPERTY)**

**(As per Appendix IV read with rule 8(1) of the Security Interest Enforcement Rules, 2002)**

Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorized Officer of **Bajaj Finance Limited (BFL).** under the provisions of the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financials Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act,2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under Sec.13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued demand **by registered post ("Notice")** calling upon the Borrowers/Co-borrowers mentioned hereunder to repay the amount mentioned in the notice U/s.13(2) of the said Act within a period of 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

The Borrowers/Mortgagors/Guarantors named below having failed to repay the said amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrowers/ Mortgagors/ Guarantors and public in general that the undersigned has taken **Possession** of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on me under Sec.13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

The borrowers in particular and public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the said property and any dealing with this property will be subject to the charge of the **Bajaj Finance Limited.** for the amount mentioned herein below along with interest thereon at contracted rate. The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

| Loan Account No./Name of the Borrower(s)Mortgagor(s)Guarantor(s) | Description of Secured Immovable Property | Date of Notice U/s.13(2) and U/s.13(2) Notice Amount and Date of Possession |
|---|---|---|
| **LAN : PBQ1PBL9310166**<br>**1. Saraighat Electronics thr. Its Prop. Tarikul Choudhury** R/o. Vill Bhomolamati, P.S BaihataSub Divn- Rangia, Kamrup Kamrup Metropolitian, Guwahati Assam 781121 Contact: 9864188272 Email id: tarikulchoudhury@gmail.com **Also at:** R/o. Dag No. 801 of Patta No. 13 (O) / 1157 (N) Rev village: Gog, Rev circle North Guwahati (Kamalpur) Mouza: Bar Bangshar Dist: Kamrup, Assam 781121<br>**2. Mostakin Choudhury S/o Mahbub Choudhury** R/o. Bhomolahati, P.S-Baihata Chariali Sub-Divn-Rangia, Dist-Kamrup Guwahati Assam781121 Contact: 9864188272 Email id: tarikulchoudary@gmail.com<br>**3. Tarikul Choudhury S/o Mostakin Choudhury** R/o. Bhomolahati Kamrup Assam 781121 Contact: 9864188272 Email id: tarikulchoudhury@gmail.com | **Schedule of property:** All the piece and parcel ofDag No. 801 of Patta No. 13 (O) / 1157 (N) Rev village: Gog, Rev circle: North Guwahati (Kamalpur) Mouza: Bar Bangshar Dist: Kamrup, Assam 781121 along with proportionate share in common areas (Area adm. 1 Katha 10 Lechas)<br>**Boundaries:-**<br>East: Mahabbat Choudhury;<br>West: Hamid Choudhury;<br>North: Road; South: Astaf Choudhury | **20.08.2025**<br>**Rs.20,44,537/-** (Rupees Twenty Lakhs Forty Four Thousand Five Hundred Thirty Seven Only)<br>**Possession Date 12.11.2025** |

**Place : Assam, Date : 13-11-2025** **Sd/-Authorised Officer - M/s Bajaj Finance Limited**


# *Sitharaman reviews central schemes in Kiphire aspirational dist*

**HT Correspondent**

**DIMAPUR, Nov 14:** Union finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Friday reviewed implementation of central schemes, ongoing development projects and welfare initiatives sanctioned to the aspirational district of Kiphire.

Sitharaman, who arrived in Nagaland on Thursday, is on a three-day visit to the state.

During the day, she visited the Anganwadi Centre 'A' at Kiphire and held a brief interaction with the local Anganwadi workers, helpers and children. She also handed over a cheque provided by the State Bank of India to the centre.

Sitharaman was accompanied by Nagaland tourism and higher education minister Temjen Imna Along, minister for housing & mechanical engineering Bashangmongba Chang, and a host of other dignitaries.

After her arrival in Kiphire district on Thursday afternoon, Sitharaman visited district hospital Kiphire and conducted ceremonial handing over of

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), the initiatives of State Bank of India (SBI), to the hospital.

In her address, she said though it took some time to plan, she was finally able to visit the aspirational district to know the people's aspirations and implementation various CSR projects in the district.

Recalling her interactions with the state government and the lack of resources that Nagaland faces, she said each time she visits Nagaland, she makes sure that substantial CSR is brought to the state.

During the programme, she also handed over medical equipment for blood bank worth ₹ 5.81 lakh, medical equipment for hospital worth Rs 59 lakh and five bike ambulances for primary health centres of Kiphire district to the hospital Kiphire under the SBI CSR project.

She thanked the SBI for volunteering and coming up with meaningful and critical medical equipment contributions to the district hospital Kiphire under CSR project. Sitharaman also flagged off the bike ambulances at the district hospital.

Page 10 Nov 15_Normal Pages 14-11-2025 17:41 Page 1



# 'Neecha Nagar' to 'Laal Singh Chaddha': Yesteryear star Kamini Kaushal dies at 98

Actor Kamini Kaushal, one of Hindi cinema's earliest female stars who began her career with the classic "Neecha Nagar" in 1946 and went on to act in a host of films right till 2022, has died in her Mumbai home, a close family friend said. She was 98.

Amongst the industry's highest paid actress in the late 1940s and early 1950s, Kaushal starred opposite the triumvirate of Dilip Kumar, Dev Anand and Raj Kapoor before moving on to character roles in the 1960s. Her last screen appearance was in Aamir Khan's 2022 film "Laal Singh Chaddha" at the age of 95, making for a remarkable 76 year in the movies.

"She died at her Mumbai home late on Thursday night. She would have turned 99 in February," Sajan Narain, a close friend of the family, told PTI.

Kaushal was born Uma Kashyap on February 24, 1927 in Lahore. Her father, Shiv Ram Kashyap, was widely regarded as the father of Indian botany and taught as a professor at the University of Punjab in pre-partition Lahore.

The youngest of two brothers and three sisters, Kaushal graduated with a degree in English literature from Government College in Lahore.

The movie career happened when family friend and filmmaker Chetan Anand approached her for his 1946 film "Neecha Nagar". The movie, where she acted opposite actor Rafiq Anwar and Anand's wife Uma, won the Grand Prix du Festival International du Film at the inaugural Cannes Film Festival in 1946.

The movie is considered a classic for its portrayal of the gulf between rich and poor. It also marked the debut of the late star Zohra Sehgal and music by renowned sitarist Ravi Shankar.

It was Chetan Anand who rechristened her Kamini Kaushal to avoid confusion between two Umas.

After the success of "Neecha Nagar", Kaushal worked extensively with the triumvirate of Hindi cinema -- Dilip Kumar, Dev Anand and Raj Kapoor -- in films such as "Jail Yatra", "Do Bhai", "Aag", "Shaheed", "Nadiya Ke Par", "Ziddi", "Shabnam" and "Arzoo".

She played the lead role in filmmaker Bimal Roy's acclaimed 1954 movie "Biraj Bahu", which won a National Film Award and earned her a Filmfare award for best actress.

Kaushal also essayed the lead role in the movie adaptation of Premchand's famous novel "Godaan".

With Manoj Kumar's 1967 hit "Upkar", she transitioned to motherly parts on screen. She was just 40 at the time.

Kaushal went on to star in Kumar's other hit films such as "Purab Aur Paschim", "Sanyasi", "Shor", "Roti Kapda Aur Makaan", "Dus Numbari" and "Santosh", playing his mother in each of them.

Kaushal played mother to Rajesh Khanna as well in the 1974 film "Prem Nagar" and in "Maha Chor" in 1976.

She appeared as Aunt Shalini in "The Jewel in the Crown", a popular British television serial, in 1984.

Though selective in her film choices throughout her career, Kaushal worked right till the end. In the twilight of her life, she appeared in Shah Rukh Khan starrer "Chennai Express" and Shahid Kapoor's "Kabir Singh".

She was 95 when she made a cameo as an elderly woman travelling in a train in "Laal Singh Chaddha".

Besides movies, Kaushal also featured in several television shows, including "Chand Sitare" on Doordarshan, "Shanno Ki Shaadi" on StarPlus and "Waqt Ki Raftaar" on DD National.

Kaushal married brother-in-law B S Sood in 1948 after her sister's death in a car accident and became an adoptive mother to two daughters. The couple had three sons -- Rahul, Vidur and Shravan.

As the news of her death came in, many people took to social media to post tributes.

"We pay tribute to the versatile and multifaceted Kamini Kaushal ji whose captivating performances have enthralled millions in a career spanning over seven decades. Condolences to the family," the official X handle of Producers Guild of India. (PTI)

# Meryl Streep-Anne Hathaway return in first teaser of 'The Devil Wears Prada 2'

Hollywood studio 20th Century Studios has unveiled the first teaser of "The Devil Wears Prada 2", the upcoming sequel to the 2006 hit, starrung Oscar winners Meryl Streep and Anne Hathaway. The film will be released in Indian theatres on May 1, 2026, the studio said in a statement.

The teaser, which dropped on social media on Wednesday evening, offers a brief glimpse of the long-awaited reunion, showing Streep's formidable fashion editor Miranda Priestly and Hathaway's Andy Sachs encountering each other in an elevator.

Directed by David Frankel and written by Aline Brosh McKenna, the sequel also brings back actors Emily Blunt as Emily Charlton and Stanley Tucci as Nigel Kipling.

The new movie revisits the world of Runway magazine, now shaped by the fast-changing, high-stakes digital fashion industry. The story brings back Miranda, Andy, Emily and Nigel as they navigate new dynamics of ambition, influence and rivalry in present-day New York.

The film also features an expanded cast, including Kenneth Branagh, Simone Ashley, Justin Theroux, Lucy Liu, Patrick Brammall, Pauline Chalamet, B J Novak and Conrad Ricamora.

Actors Tracie Thoms and Tibor Feldman also reprise their roles from the first film.

The movie is produced by Wendy Finerman with Michael Bederman, Karen Rosenfelt and McKenna serving as executive producers. (PTI)

# Jared Padalecki to star in CBS medical drama

"Supernatural" star Jared Padalecki is all set to lead an upcoming CBS medical drama, which has now opened a development writers room.

The untitled project will feature Padalecki in the role of a doctor serving patients in rural Texas. According to reports, Anna Fricke will executive producing via her Pursued By a Bear company. Padalecki and Pursued By a Bear's Laura Terry also executive produce.

Development rooms, as covered under the Writers Guild of America's 2023 contract, have three or more writers (including a showrunner) working on scripts ahead of a series order. The CBS project reunites Padalecki with Fricke, who was the showrunner of "Walker" at The CW where the actor led the drama for four seasons. "A headstrong, devoted doctor (Padalecki) practices his unique style of improvisational medicine alongside his new protege, a young doctor escaping her past, as they operate a mobile clinic and heal the bodies and souls of their underserved community in the medical desert of rural Texas," reads the official logline of the show. Padalecki will be seen in the upcoming film "The Bodyguard" and will reunite with his "Supernatural" co-stars Jensen Ackles and Misha Collins on "The Boys". (AP)

# Kanu Behl says his film Agra isnt getting shows in theatres

Filmmaker Kanu Behl shared a note on his social media on Friday and said his critically-acclaimed feature film "Agra" is being denied shows as "small films don't fit into multiplex chain programming".

Co-written by Behl and Atika Chohan, the film explores sexual dynamics within a family and the fractures in a society grappling with shrinking spaces. It released in theatres on Friday.

Behl called out the system of multiplex chain programming, which favours "big blockbusters" over "small films". He also asked the audience to demand the shows on his X post.

"Update on 'Agra', the film: We're being denied shows because of the so called 'big blockbusters' and because small films 'don't fit into' multiplex chain programming. It's up to you the audience now! Speak up and tag the chains. Say that you want to see the film," he wrote.

"Spread the word. Or this will just go on and on. And the space for anything else other than mindless 'infantilised cinema' will disappear," he added.

The film had its world premiere at the Directors' Fortnight, an independent section at the 2023 Cannes Film Festival, and went on to win multiple honours, including the Special Jury Award at the Jio MAMI Mumbai Film Festival, Best Indie Film and Best Actor at the Indian Film Festival of Melbourne, and Best Film and Best Actor at the 2024 New York Indian Film Festival.

An Indo-French co-production between Saregama India Ltd, UFO Production and O28 Films, "Agra" is Behl's second feature after "Titli" (2015), which also premiered at Cannes. (PTI)

# No ethics, no sense of responsibility: Amitabh Bachchan in new post

"No ethics or sense of responsibility... just an avenue of personal gain," read the latest post on megastar Amitabh Bachchan's official blog.

The megastar shared the cryptic post on Friday but didn't name anyone in particular.

"No ethics .. no sense of responsibility .. just an avenue of personal gain, without any consideration of the moment … Disturbing and disgusting," the 83-year-old actor wrote.

In a separate post on X, he said, "No ethics... koi bhi achar- niti nahi."

Bachchan's post comes amid the relentless media coverage of his "Sholay" co-star Dharmendra's health struggles.

Dharmendra, who was admitted to the Breach Candy Hospital for tests last week, was discharged on Wednesday and moved home for continued treatment.

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

On Thursday, Dharmendra's son, actor Sunny Deol, sharply reprimanded photographers gathered outside his Juhu home. His outburst followed the circulation of a leaked video purportedly showing the Deol family grieving at the bedside of an ailing Dharmendra.

On Tuesday, rumours swirled that the 89-year-old actor had died, leading to condolences from many people. At the time, daughter Esha Deol and wife Hema Malini had condemned "irresponsible" media behaviour and clarified that the actor was stable and responding to treatment.*(PTI)*

# Gavin O'Connor to direct 'Running'

After seeing The Accountant 2 gross over $103M worldwide on its way to becoming Amazon MGM Studios' second most-watched film of all time on streaming, Gavin O'Connor has entered development on Running, a new film he'll direct for Apple Original Films, with Apple Studios, Makeready and Nike producing, sources tell Deadline.

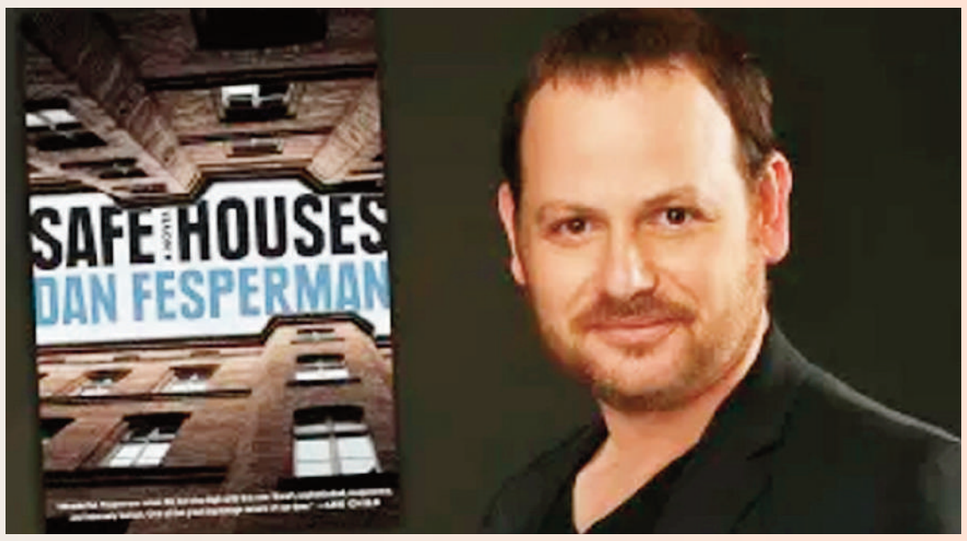
Reps for Apple declined to comment. As it's very early days on this project, little is known about it, though it's described as following a running prodigy on the hunt for greatness who uses his gifts to outrun his past and forge his future. The script is by Bill Dubuque, O'Connor's collaborator on The Accountant films.

O'Connor directed both of those, including the sequel, which hit theaters in April after premiering at SXSW, where it won the Headliner Audience Award. Rated 72% Certified Fresh by critics on Rotten Tomatoes and landing a 92% on the Popcorn Meter, The Accountant 2 was met by an audience of nearly 80 million worldwide viewers in its first 28 days on Prime Video. It also nabbed the No. 1 spot on Nielsen's Movie chart in its debut week on streaming, with 1.384 billion minutes viewed.

In the sequel — an action thriller following up 2016's The Accountant — Ben Affleck reprises his role as Christian Wolff, a CPA with autism and a talent for solving complex problems who leads a double life as a forensic accountant for criminal organizations. When an old acquaintance is murdered, leaving behind a cryptic message to "find the accountant," Wolff is compelled to solve the case. Realizing more extreme measures are necessary, Wolff recruits his estranged and highly lethal brother, Brax (Jon Bernthal), to help. In partnership with U.S. Treasury Deputy Director Marybeth Medina (Cynthia Addai-Robinson), the pair uncover a deadly conspiracy, becoming targets of a ruthless network of killers determined to keep their secrets buried.

Released by Warner Bros. — which sold sequel rights to Affleck and Matt Damon's Artists Equity, leading to the recent Amazon MGM project — the first Accountant grossed $155M worldwide in its 2016 theatrical release before going on to become the most-rented digital film of the subsequent year.

O'Connor also previously worked with Affleck on the inspirational sports drama The Way Back. Additionally, he was a director and EP on The Americans and worked on Netflix's Seven Seconds. He is repped by WME and Yorn, Levine, Barnes. (AP)



Page 11 Nov 14_Normal Pages 11/14/2025 7:04 PM Page 1



# FRANCE QUALIFIES FOR 2026 WORLD CUP

## *Ronaldo sent off as Portugal loses to Ireland*

**DUBLIN, Nov 14:** Kylian Mbappé and France are going to the 2026 World Cup. And Cristiano Ronaldo might be banned from Portugal's first game there if his team finally wins its European qualifying group.

Two goals from star striker Mbappé helped two-time champion France to qualify with a 4-0 home win against Ukraine on Thursday. But Ronaldo was ejected for the first time in his international career and Portugal will have to wait until Sunday to secure a qualifying spot for the seventh straight time after it was stunned 2-0 by Ireland in Dublin.

Midfielder Michael Olise and substitute forward Hugo Ekitiké added the other goals in a dominant second half from France, the World Cup runner-up in 2022.

Mbappé sent the penalty straight down the middle to break the deadlock in the 55th minute before Olise turned inside the penalty area to curl home the second goal in the 76th at Parc des Princes in western Paris. Mbappé poked in France's third goal from close range in the 83rd following a goal-mouth scramble. Mbappé moved onto 55 goals and just two behind Olivier Giroud as France's all-time top scorer.

"The French national team will always be better with him in it," coach Didier Deschamps said about Mbappé. "He makes things easier for us. He performed his role perfectly this evening, as both a player and the captain of the national team."

Mbappé went close to a hat trick moments later but blazed over after going clean through.

France has won Group D with 13 points, Ukraine and Iceland are tied on seven points and will play for second place when they meet on Sunday.

Ronaldo's 1st international red cardPortugal will host last-place Armenia in the final qualifying game on Sunday, when

Hungary hosts Ireland at the same time.

Portugal tops Group F with 10 points, two ahead of Hungary. Ireland is third with seven points.

Ronaldo was sent off for elbowing Ireland defender Dara O'Shea on the hour. The referee issued a yellow card but minutes later upgraded it to red after a video review.

Portugal coach Roberto Martinez said he thought the ejection was "a bit harsh," pointing out that Ronaldo "has never been sent off before in 226 games."

Ronaldo will serve a mandatory one-game ban imposed for any red card when Portugal plays Armenia. FIFA disciplinary rules require its judges to impose a ban of "at least two matches for serious foul play."

Troy Parrott put the hosts ahead with a close-range header following a corner kick in the 17th minute against the run of play with Portugal dominant. Parrott added his second in the final minute before the break, beating Diogo Costa with a low shot from inside the area.

Haaland's doubleErling Haaland scored twice as Norway moved closer to qualifying for the World Cup for the first time since 1998 by beating Estonia 4-1 in Oslo.

The win virtually secures a spot for the high-scoring Norwegians in next year's tournament in the United States, Canada and Mexico.

Italy had to rely on late goals from Gianluca Mancini and substitute Francesco Pio Esposito to win 2-0 at Moldova and is second in Group I, trailing leader Norway by three points.

Italy will likely have to settle for the playoffs where the four-time World Cup champion was eliminated in the past two editions. It hosts Norway on Sunday and would have to win by a nine-goal margin to directly qualify because of Norway's vastly superior goal difference.

Haaland has scored 14 of Norway's European-best 33 goals in seven group-stage games. The Manchester City striker was born two years after Norway last reached the World Cup.

Still perfect EnglandAlready-qualified England continued to cruise.

It beat Serbia 2-0 at Wembley Stadium to keep a perfect record in Group K and is yet to concede a goal.

Bukayo Saka fired England ahead on a rebound with a left-foot volley in the 28th after an initial shot by Nico O'Reilly was blocked. Substitute forward Eberechi Eze added the second in the 90th off a pass from another substitute, Phil Foden.

Albania beat Andorra 1-0 in the same group to secure the runner-up spot. *(AP)*

## Players and fans remember victims of 2015 Paris terror attacks

**PARIS, Nov 14:** Soccer players from France and Ukraine joined supporters in a minute's silence before their match, ending a poignant day of commemorations across the city for victims of the Paris terror attacks 10 years ago.

The attacks on Nov. 13, 2015 began outside Stade de France, the national stadium, where France was playing Germany. They spread across the city in deadly assaults that killed 132 people and injured over 400.

Ten years on, France faced Ukraine in a World Cup qualifier held at Parc des Princes in western Paris.

After fans sang the national anthems — with part of France's "La Marseillaise" passionately sung a cappella — players walked to the center circle and stood by a banner reading "Football for Peace." They linked arms with their teammates and some stood with their heads bowed as the silence was impeccably observed.

Salim Toorabally, the security guard whose vigilance prevented a bomber entering the stadium 10 years ago, was invited to the match as a guest of the French Football Federation. François Hollande, who was French President in 2015, was also there. The stadium announcer at Parc des Princes also called for "solidarity with the Ukrainian people" over the Russian invasion of Ukraine. *(AP)*

# FIDE World Cup: Arjun to take on Aronian; Harikrishna meets Jose Martinez

**PANAJI (GOA), Nov 14:** Grandmaster Arjun Erigaisi will take on an in-form Levon Aronian of Armenia, while P Harikrishna will have to tackle giant-killer Jose Eduardo Martinez Alacantara of Mexico in the pre-quarterfinals of the World Cup here.

Drubbing Peter Leko of Hungary 2-0 in the first set of the tie-break games, Arjun has to meet Aronian, who has displayed great form coming into the round of 16 and it looks like an evenly-poised match on form even though Arjun enjoys a decent rating advantage.

For Harikrishna the biggest challenge so far awaits in form of Jose Martinez who has played impeccably thus far packing off higher ranked players in tandem. Harikrishna conceded that he had never played the Mexican in a Classical game. "I think probably in some blitz games sometime but I don't think I have ever played him before, its time to take some rest and then come back for the next round."

With R Praggnanandhaa also eliminated by Daniil Dubai in the fourth round tiebreaker, it is now upto Harikrishna and Arjun to fight for the honours here.

There are three places reserved for the next Candidates from here for the top three finishers and besides Praggnanandhaa, no other Indian has made it yet to the next Candidates. In the 2023 edition, that was won by reigning world champion Gukesh there were three Indians in all with Praggnanandhaa and Vidit Gujrathi joining Gukesh when the history was created.

With most of the big stars falling out of contention, Arjun and Wei Yi of China are the last two remaining 2750+ rated players left in the fray that gives a feeling that some more surprises might well be in store.

The ouster of Vincent Keymer and Maxime Vachier-Lagrave certainly gave jitters to the fans in the previous round tie-break and it remains to be seen as to who will fall under the axe in the next one.

Wei Yi will meet Samuel Sevian of United States in the next round and again starts as a huge favourite.

In other likely interesting encounters, Gabriel Sargissian will has a younger opponent in Nodirbek Yakubboev of Uzbekistan while another Uzbek star Javokhir SIndarov has to play against Frederic Svane of Germany who had famously beaten Gukesh.

**Pairings round 5:**

Javokhir Sindarov (Uzb) vs Frederic Svane (Ger); Arjun Erigaisi (Ind) vs Levon Aronia (Usa); Sam Shankland (Usa) vs Daniil Dubov (FID); Alexander Donchenko (Ger) vs Liem Le Quang (Vie); Gabriel Sargissian (Arm) vs Nodirbek Yakubboev (Uzb); Andrey Esipenko (Fid) vs Aleksey Grebnev (Fid); Sevian Samuel (Usa) vs Wei Yi (Chn); Jose Eduardo Martinez Alcantara vs P Harikrishna (Ind).

**Complete results round 4:** Arjun Erigaisi beat Peter Leko (Hun) 3-1; P Harikrishna beat Nils Grandelius 2.5-1.5; R Praggnanandhaa lost to Daniil Dubov (Fid) 1.5-2.5; Frederic Svane (Ger) beat Shant Sargysyan (Arm) 2.5-1.5; Matthias Bluebaum (Ger) lost to Alexander Domchenko (Ger) - 0.5-1.5; V Pranav lost to Nodirbek Yakubboev (Uzb) 0.5-1.5; Andrey Esipenko (Fid) beat Vincent Keymer (Ger) 4-2; Wei Yi (Chn) beat Parham Maghsoodloo (Iri) 5-3; Alexey Sarana (Fid) lost to Jose Eduardo Martinez Alacantra (Mex) 0.5-1.5; Samuel Sevian (Usa) beat Lorenzo Lodici (Ita) 5-4; Maxime Vachier-Lagrave (Fra) lost to Aleksey Grebnev (Fid) 1.5-2.5; Awonder Liang (Usa) lost to Gabriel Sargissian (Arm) 1.5-2.5; Le Quang Liem (Vie) beat V Karthik 1.5-0.5; Sam Shankland (Usa) beat Richard Rapport (Hun) 3-1; Levon Aronian (Usa) beat Radoslav Wojtaszek (Pol) 1.5-0.5; Yu Yangyi (Chn) lost to Javokhir Sindarov (Uzb) 1.5-2.5. *(PTI)*

## Tim Southee joins KKR as bowling coach

**KOLKATA, Nov 14:** Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) on Friday announced the appointment of New Zealand cricket legend Tim Southee as the team's bowling coach for the upcoming season of the Indian Premier League (IPL).

Southee represented his country in 107 Test matches, 161 ODIs, and 126 T20 Internationals, taking 776 wickets.

Southee was a part of the Kolkata Knight Riders squad (2021, 2022, 2023) in the IPL during his playing career.

"KKR has always felt like home to me, and it's an honour to return in this new role. The franchise has an incredible culture, passionate fans, and a great group of players. I look forward to working closely with the bowlers and helping the team achieve success in IPL 2026," said the New Zealander.

Venky Mysore, CEO of Kolkata Knight Riders, said, "We are delighted to welcome Tim Southee back to the KKR family, this time in a coaching capacity. Tim's vast experience and technical expertise will be instrumental in shaping our bowling unit. His leadership qualities and calm approach make him an ideal mentor for our young bowlers." (PTI)

# Carlos Alcaraz seals year-ending No 1 ranking with another win at the ATP Finals

**TURIN, Nov 14:** When it came down to it, Carlos Alcaraz needed less than 90 minutes to secure the year-ending No. 1 ranking in men's tennis. Alcaraz needed one more win at the ATP Finals to beat Jannik Sinner to the No. 1 spot and the Spaniard duly got that as he eased to a 6-4, 6-1 victory over Italian Lorenzo Musetti on Thursday to sweep his group at the season-ending event for the top eight players.

"It means the world to me to be honest," Alcaraz said in his on-court interview. "The year No. 1 is always a goal. To be honest at the beginning of the year I saw that the No. 1 (was) really, really far away, with Jannik there, winning almost every tournament he plays.

"From the middle of the season till now I put the goal for the No. 1 because I thought it was there ... and finally I got it. For me, it means everything, the work that we put every day during the whole season, up and downs … so I'm really proud about my team and myself."

It is the second time in his career that the 22-year-old Alcaraz has ended the year at the top of the rankings. The Spaniard became the youngest player to finish a year at No. 1 when he achieved the feat as a 19-year-old in 2022. Alcaraz had to win three of his matches at the season-ending event for the top eight players to finish No. 1, while Sinner had to go undefeated to defend his title to be in with a chance.

Alcaraz — who admitted he was feeling nervous at the beginning of the match — didn't give him that chance as he swept aside Musetti despite a partisan home crowd, sealing the result on his third match point. That was his third win in the Jimmy Connors group and Alcaraz will face the winner of Friday's match between Alexander Zverev and Felix Auger-Aliassime in Saturday's semifinal.

De Minaur advancesThe victory also sent Alex de Minaur through to the semifinals after the Australian earlier claimed a first ATP Finals victory. De Minaur beat Taylor Fritz 7-6 (3), 6-3 for his first victory in six matches at the tournament, following his debut last year. "I finally won here in Torino," said De Minaur, who needed a straight-set win to stay in contention for a semifinal spot. De Minaur never looked back after dominating the tiebreaker and had a chance to seal victory on Fritz's serve when he moved to match point, but the American held. De Minaur kept his nerve on serve to triumph. The seventh-seed will face Sinner in the final four. (AP)

## Shami set to be traded to Lucknow Super Giants

**NEW DELHI, Nov 14:** Sunrisers Hyderabad are set to trade out-of-favour India pacer Mohammed Shami to Lucknow Super Giants ahead of the 2026 Indian Premier League (IPL).

SRH had acquired the services of the 35-year-old pacer for ₹ 10 crore at the auction last year.

"Both franchise have agreed to the trade," a source in the know of things told PTI

Shami endured an underwhelming season last year with SRH. In nine outings he managed just six wickets at an average of 56.16 with an economy rate of 11.23.

Once India's pace spearhead, Shami has also been unable to make the national team due to fitness concerns. He last played for the 'Men in Blue' in the final of the Champions Trophy in March this year.

The deadline to submit the list of players the franchises want to release from their squad is November 15. (PTI)

## PCB turns down invitation from B'desh Board to play tri-series

**KARACHI, Nov 14:** The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has turned down an invitation from the Bangladesh board to take part in a triangular T20 series in December with Sri Lanka.

A PCB official informed that BCB wanted to host a tri-series with Pakistan and Sri Lanka as preparations for early next year's T20 World Cup but the PCB had to say as it wanted to manage the players workload.

"As it is, we have already allowed Babar Azam, Muhammad Rizwan, Shaheen Shah Afridi Haris Rauf, Shadab Khan NOCs for them to take part in the Big Bash league in Australia in December-January while some other players like Fakhar Zaman are appearing in the Emirates International League," he added. *(PTI)*

# Suriname and Curacao move closer to historic WC qualification

**PARAMARIBO (SURINAME), Nov 14:** Richonell Margaret scored twice in two-minute span in the second half as Suriname defeated El Salvador 4-0 in CONCACAF qualifying to move closer to securing a spot in the World Cup for the first time.

Tjaronn Cherry opened the scoring with a penalty kick in the 44th minute and Richonell Margaret scored in the 74th and 76th minutes while Dhoraso Moreo Klass added a goal in the 83rd for Suriname. With the win, Suriname remains undefeated and reached nine points in Group A, three more than Panama that plays later against Guatemala.

Twelve teams, divided into three groups, are vying for three direct spots from regional qualifying for next year's World Cup. The United States, Canada and Mexico have qualified automatically as World Cup co-hosts. Suriname, one of CONCACAF's founding nations in 1961, is playing in the final round of qualifying for the first time since 1978.

El Salvador suffered its fourth straight loss and with three points is eliminated.

Curacao controls destiny Also on Thursday, Jordi Paulina scored twice, and Curacao beat Bermuda 7-0 and will play against Jamaica for a spot in the World Cup.

Paulina scored in the 48th and 63rd minutes, while Leandro Vacuna (7), Juninho Vacuna (32), Sontje Hansen (59), Ar' Jany Martha (82), and Roshon van Eijma (90) added goals for Curacao, which is coached by Dick Advocaat. Advocaat was at the helm of the Netherlands national team for three stints and managed South Korea, Belgium and Russia before taking the job with Curacao, which has never qualified for a World Cup.

With the convincing win, Curacao has 11 points and leads Group B over Jamaica, which had a 1-1 draw against Trinidad and Tobago. Jamaica, which has only ever qualified for the 1998 World Cup in France, is coached by former England's national team mentor Steve McLaren. The Reggae Boys will host Curacao in Kingston's National Stadium next Tuesday.

Curacao needs a win or a draw to qualify while Jamaica requires a win. *(AP)*

# Rohit to lead 18-member Indian junior men's team at World Cup

**NEW DELHI, Nov 14:** Dragflicker Rohit was named captain as Hockey India on Friday announced an 18-member Indian junior men's hockey team for the FIH World Cup to be held in Tamil Nadu from November 28 to December 10.

The Indian team, coached by the legendary PR Sreejesh, is grouped in Pool B along with Chile, Switzerland and Oman, who have come in as replacement for Pakistan.

"We have selected a tried-and-tested team with most of the players having a fair knowledge on what's required to play in a tournament of this magnitude," coach Sreejesh said in a release.

"While their physical capabilities, skill and team-play was among the criteria for selection, one of the key aspects we have looked into is their mental ability to perform under pressure."

The India colts will be led by defender Rohit, who had a good show in the recent Sultan of Johor Cup in Malaysia where the team won a silver medal, while Bikramjit Singh and Princedeep Singh are the goalkeepers picked in the squad.

India's defence will have captain Rohit, Amir Ali, who was part of the previous edition of the Junior World Cup, along with Anmol Ekka, Ravneet Singh, Talem Priyo Barta, Sunil Palakshappa Bennur and Shardanand Tiwari, who also comes with solid experience in the backline.

India's midfield will feature Ankit Pal, Rohit Kullu, Adrohit Ekka, Thounaojam Ingalemba Luwang, Manmeet Singh and Rosan Kujur, while the forwardline will see Sourabh Anand Kushwaha, Arshdeep Singh, Ajeet Yadav, Dilraj Singh and Gurjot -- who made his senior India debut at the Asian Champions Trophy last year in China.

Unfortunately, India colts will miss the experience of Araijeet Singh Hundal, who is nursing a shoulder injury and will miss the Junior World Cup.

"While we have had good international match exposure in the build-up to the Junior World Cup, we have also played a lot of matches with the Senior India team as we are housed in the same campus here in SAI, Bengaluru," said Sreejesh.

"This was a big part of our preparations and when the players do well against their senior compatriots, they automatically gain confidence. Overall, we are an upbeat side and looking to a good outing in front of home crowd."

**Indian Junior Men's Team:**

**Goalkeepers:** Bikramjit Singh, Princedeep Singh

**Defenders:** Rohit, Amir Ali, Anmol Ekka, Talem Priyobarta, Sunil Palakshappa Bennur, Shardanand Tiwari.

**Midfielders:** Ankit Pal, Adrohit Ekka, Thounaojam Ingalemba Luwang, Manmeet Singh, Rosan Kujur, Gurjot Singh.

**Forwards:** Sourabh Anand Kushwaha, Arshdeep Singh, Ajeet Yadav, Dilraj Singh. *(PTI)*

# *Nagal gets Chinese visa for Grand Slam tennis qualifier*

**NEW DELHI, Nov 14:** India's top-ranked male tennis player Sumit Nagal has finally received his visa to travel to China for the Australian Open Playoff, scheduled to begin on November 24 in Chengdu.

"A big thank you to @Media_SAI, @MEAIndia, @China_Amb_India and @ChinaSpox_India for their prompt help in helping me secure the visa in time," he posted on 'X' late on Thursday night.

The 27-year-old from Jhajjar, Haryana had on Tuesday sought urgent intervention from the Chinese Embassy after his visa application was rejected without any explanation.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Lin Jian later said that China issues visas to athletes from all countries, including India, in accordance with laws and regulations.

He expressed hope that the "individual concerned" would submit all required documentation to the Chinese Embassy in a timely manner.

The Playoff event offers regional players a pathway into the main draw of the 2026 Australian Open.

Nagal, currently ranked 275 in the latest ATP standings, is India's highest-ranked singles player.

Having slipped out of the top 100, he can no longer gain direct entry into Grand Slam events and must rely on wild cards or qualifying rounds.

He played in the Australian Open main draw last year, losing in the opening round, and fell in the qualifiers at both Roland Garros and Wimbledon.

Nagal was also instrumental in India's Davis Cup win over Switzerland earlier this year, securing victories in both his singles matches against lower-ranked opponents. (PTI)

# *Heath, O'Reilly, Sanneh, Wondolowski, Seitz and Crow elected to US Soccer Hall of Fame*

**FRISCO (US), Nov 14:** Women's World Cup champions and Olympic gold medalists Tobin Heath and Heather O'Reilly were elected to the U.S. National Soccer Hall of Fame along with men's players Tony Sanneh and Chris Wondolowski.

Referee Kari Seitz also was elected along with Kevin Crow, known primarily for his time in indoor soccer.

They will be inducted on May 1 at the hall in Frisco, Texas.

O'Reilly, 40, was a forward and winger who scored 47 goals in 231 international appearances, helping the U.S. win the 2015 World Cup and Olympic gold medals in 2004, 2008 and 2012. She won league titles with Sky Blue in 2009 in Women's Professional Soccer and with Kansas City in 2015 and North Carolina in 2019 in the National Women's Soccer League.

Heath, 37, was a midfielder and forward who had 36 goals in 181 appearances, winning World Cup titles with the U.S. in 2015 and 2019 and Olympic gold medals in

2008 and 2012.

Wondolowski, 42, is Major League Soccer's career scoring leader with 171 regular-season goals and two in the playoffs, playing for San Jose (2005, 2009-21) and Houston (2006-09). He scored 11 goals in 35 international appearances, playing in two games at the 2014 World Cup.

Sanneh, 54, was a defender who scored three goals in 43 international appearances, starting all five games for the U.S. at the 2002 World Cup as the Americans reached the quarterfinals in their farthest advancement since 1930. He played for D.C. (1996-98), Columbus (2004), Chicago (2005-06), Colorado (2007) and the LA Galaxy (2009) along with stints at Hertha Berlin (1991-2001) and Nuremberg (2001-04) and won MLS titles in 1996 and 1997.

O'Reilly, Heath and Wondolowski were picked from the player ballot. The top two are elected if they each receive at least 50% and a third is elected if receiving at least 75%.

O'Reilly got 47 of 48 votes for 97.9%, followed by Heath (45, 93.8%), Wondolowski (37, 77.1%), Keith Johnson (33, 68.8%), Samantha Mewis (32, 66.7%), Dwayne DeRosario (29, 60.4%), Amy Rodriguez (28, 58.3%), Kyle Beckerman (27, 56.3%), Robbie Keane (20, 41.7%), Oguchi Onyewu (19, 39.6%), Jermaine Jones (17, 35.4%), Maurice Edu (16, 33.3%), Diego Valeri (13, 27.1%), Michael Archer (12, 25%), Stephanie Lopez Cox (12, 25%), Chad Marshall (11, 22.9%), Mike Lawson (10, 20.8%), Carlos Ruiz (7, 14.6%), Matt Besler (6, 12.5%) and Geoff Cameron (5, 10.4%).

Sanneh and Crow were chosen from the veteran ballot, in which the top vote-getter is elected if receiving at least 50% and a second if receiving at least 75%. Sanneh was on 21 of 24 ballots (87.55%) and was followed by Crow (19, 79.2%), Tatu (17, 70.8%), Tiffany Roberts (16, 66.7%), David Beckham (11, 45.8%), Clint Mathis (10, 41.7%), Lorrie Fair (6, 25%), Chico Borja (5, 20.8%), Aly Wagner (5, 20.8%) and Francis Farberoff (1, 4.2%).

Seitz, 55, referred refereed nine games at the Women's World Cup in 1999, 2003, 2007 and 2011 and six at the Olympics in 2004, 2008 and 2012. She became the U.S. Soccer Federation's vice president of referees in 2024.

Seitz was on the builder ballot, which this year included only referees. The top voter-getter is picked if receiving at least 50%.

For the Builder Ballot, the 2026 rotation considered candidates from the referee category only. Election procedures call for the Builder named to the most ballots (and on at least 50% of the ballots) to be elected. Seitz got 19 of 24 votes (79.2%) and was followed by Gino D'Ippolito (10, 41.7%), Brian Hall (6, 25%) and Mark Geiger (4, 16.7%). *(AP)*

Page 12 Nov 15_Normal Pages 14-11-2025 18:11 Page 1



# Bumrah fifer blows away South Africa as India dominate day one

**KOLKATA, Nov 14:** Jasprit Bumrah turned a rare four-spinner gamble into his personal stage, producing a mesmerising exhibition of seam, swing and control as India skittled out South Africa for 159 on the opening day of the first Test, here Friday.

On a surface that drew pre-match scrutiny for its dry look, prompting India to field four spinners for the first time since 2012, it was India's pace star who made the ball talk the loudest, returning a superb 14-2-27-5, his 16 five-wicket hauls in 96 innings.

Bumrah produced a masterclass across little over two sessions, as South Africa crashed from a commanding 57 for no loss in 10 overs to lose all 10 wickets for just 102 runs in next 45 overs, with their innings lasting just four hours and 13 minutes after opting to bat.

It's South Africa's second-lowest total after a fifty-plus opening stand in men's Tests since their readmission. The lowest is 130 in their second innings in the 2018 Cape Town Test, also against India after a 52-run opening stand.

India ended the day at 37 for one in 20 overs, with a resolute KL Rahul (13 batting from 59 balls) and Washington Sundar (six batting; 38 balls) steady at the crease after Yashasvi Jaiswal (12) dragged Marco Jansen onto his stumps while playing close to his body.

The duo looked in no hurry on a pitch offering spice and variable bounce as they cut the deficit to 122 runs in front of a sizeable Eden crowd of 36,000-plus.

As light faded, South Africa crowded the

bat with close-in fielders, hoping for a late breakthrough and used five bowlers. But Rahul and Sundar stayed calm and assured, seeing out the final overs without further damage.

South Africa, missing their lead pacer Kagiso Rabada due to a rib injury, had looked primed for a big score after Aiden Markram (31 from 48 balls; 5x4, 1x6) and Ryan Rickelton's (23 off 22b; 4x4) brisk opening stand.

Markram, after 23 dot balls, opened up with a straight drive and a flowing cover drive, later twice punishing Axar Patel and unfurling a deft late cut past backward point.

He also launched Axar for a wristy six over midwicket as the run-rate surged above five an over. At the other end, Rickelton's hit-and-miss 22 off 23 (4x4) added to India's frustration.

But just before the drinks break in the opening session, Bumrah from the Clubhouse end turned the morning on its head with two wickets in five balls across successive overs in his first spell that read 7-4-9-2.

A 140 kmph length ball straightened late to uproot Rickelton's off stump, and minutes later a short-of-length delivery leapt spitefully to take Markram's glove -- the contrast in bounce summing up the pitch's variable nature.

He returned after lunch to trap Tony de Zorzi (24) in front with one that skidded through, before closing out the second session with reverse swing that split open the tail.

Simon Harmer's stumps were sent cartwheeling, and three balls later Keshav Maharaj was pinned plumb in front.

**Siraj, Kuldeep tighten noose**

Having leaked 34 runs from six overs in the first session, Mohammed Siraj (2/47) delivered a sharp twin strike in the second session, removing Kyle Verreynne and Marco Jansen in four balls in his 10th over.

Verreynne (16) burned South Africa's last review after being struck pad-then-bat, while Jansen was breached by a reversing length ball that darted in.

Kuldeep Yadav (2/29) chipped in with the key wicket of skipper Temba Bavuma, snared smartly at leg slip by Dhruv Jurel, and later removed a compact-looking Wiaan Mulder (24).

After the early losses of Bavuma and the openers, Mulder and Tony de Zorzi tried to steady the innings with circumspect batting.

Mulder applied himself for more than 50 balls, looked compact against India's four-pronged spin attack, but lost focus 15 minutes into the second session.

Attempting to break free with a reverse sweep against Kuldeep, he missed it completely and was trapped lbw, a key dismissal that opened the floodgates with Bumrah and then Siraj's twin strike adding to South Africa's woes.

Axar Patel (1/21) got rid of Corbin Bosch at tea as India maintained relentless pressure. *(PTI)*

# Ghazanfar hopes to be retained by MI

## *Encouraged by captain Hardik after injury setback*

**NEW DELHI, Nov 13:** Having made rapid strides in international cricket over the past 12 months, Afghanistan mystery spinner AM Ghazanfar is hoping to be retained by Mumbai Indians for the 2026 IPL and irrespective of what future holds for him with the storied franchise, words of encouragement from Hardik Pandya will stay with him for a long time.

Ghazanfar was supposed to make his IPL debut with the Mumbai Indians last season but a back injury ruled him out of the tournament. With the retention deadline on Saturday, he is keeping his fingers crossed.

"Despite the injury, Hardik bhai remained in touch with me and motivated me a lot. Even with Tilak I had long chats about the game. I hope this year too Hardik bhai is my captain," Ghazanar, who would be representing Afghanistan in Rising Stars Asia Cup in Doha, told PTI.

Having made debut across formats in the last 18 months, the 19-year-old is featuring in the tournament for the second year in a row.

He rose to prominence with his mystery spin in the local T20 league back home and in no time found himself representing the country, an indication of the rich spin talent available in Afghanistan.

It is a busy year for Ghazanfar who literally lived out of a suitcase playing franchise cricket around the world. Last December, he got a call to make his Test debut against Zimbabwe, which also happened to be his maiden first class game.

His body could not take the load of Test cricket as he sent down more than 30 overs on a placid pitch.

"I played lot of a cricket back to back last season. It was one tournament to another and seven to eight tournaments in total. When the Test match came my body was not ready for the extra load. I have fully recovered now and a lot wiser."

As a mystery spinner, Ghazanfar relies a lot on backspin, googly and carrom ball for wickets. On purpose, he hardly bowls offspin and he has his reasons for that.

"I don't look at myself as an off-spinner as I don't bowl off spin a lot. T20 is a batter's game now, spinners don't get a lot of help on pitches. Perfect example is IPL where you don't get a lot of spin tracks.

"Off break easily comes to bat. Leg break can be tricky and with mystery, the balls skids and you can vary your pace. Mystery is better," he said.

Any specific reason why Afghanistan keep unearthing mystery spinners?

"If you look, some countries have good fast bowlers, some have good batters, similarly we have a lot of spinners in domestic cricket. That is why we are strong at the international level," Ghazanfar reasoned.

Growing up, he learned a lot by watching videos of Sunil Narine and R Ashwin. He was fortunate to meet Ashwin during a stint with KKR in the IPL.

"He is a very experienced bowler. He shared his rich experience with me. Thankful him for that. IPL taught me to perform under extreme pressure even though I did not get to play."

Having made an accidental Test debut, Ghazanfar wants to play more red ball cricket but he doesn't hide his love for the shortest format.

"I like Tests but I want to play T20s more," he added.

(Watch DP World Asia Cup Rising Stars 2025 - Sri Lanka A vs. Afghanistan A on 15th November 2025 from 5 PM IST live on Sony Sports Ten 1 SD & HD). *(PTI)*

# B'desh beats Ireland by an innings and 47 runs in the first cricket Test

**SYLHET (BANGLADESH), Nov 14:** Opener Mahmudul Hasan Joy and captain Najmul Hossain Shanto scored centuries as Bangladesh defeated Ireland by an innings and 47 runs in the first cricket Test on Friday. Joy's career-best 171 and Shanto's 100 guided Bangladesh to 587-8 (declared) before Ireland was bowled out for 286 in its first innings.

Needing 301 runs to force Bangladesh to bat a second time, Ireland was dismissed for 254 in the second session on Day 4.

Electing to bat first in the opener of a two-test series, Ireland got half-centuries from Paul Striling and Cade Carmichael, who added 96 runs after the departure of captain Andy Balbirnie for a duck.

Stirling survived twice before being dismissed by 60 runs and Carmichael added 59.

Offspinner Mehidy Hasan Miraz, who claimed 3-50, ripped through the Irish middle order before Curtis Campher and Lorcan Tucker shared 53 runs to steady the innings.

Debutant Hasan Murad removed both of them to finished with 2-47 and effectively ruined Ireland's prospect to get past 300. *(AP)*

# Asian Archery C'ship: Ankita, Dhiraj win gold in recurve events

**DHAKA, Nov 14:** Ankita Bhakat capped a sensational day, stunning Paris Olympics silver-medallist Nam Suhyeon of South Korea 7-3 while Dhiraj Bommadevara also won his final as India clinched gold medals in both men's and women's event at the Asian Archery Championship here on Friday.

Dhiraj defeated compatriot Rahul 6-2 in the final to make it a 1-2 for India.

Ankita had earlier knocked out her longtime senior teammate, former world No. 1 Deepika, in the semifinals. Locked at 5-5, both archers shot a nine in the shoot-off, but Ankita's arrow was closer to the centre, sending her into the title clash.

Ankita began the final in commanding fashion, firing two 10s to take the opening set 29-27. The second set ended in a scrappy 27-27 draw as both archers faltered. Ankita slipped to an 8 while Nam dropped to a 7.

Nam levelled the match by claiming the third set 28-26, with Ankita unable to find a single 10. But the Indian hit back brilliantly in the fourth, nailing two 10s in a superb 29-28 effort to lead 5-3.

Showing steely composure in the decider, Ankita once again delivered two 10s to clinch the gold, completing a breakthrough triumph against one of Asia's most consistent performers.

India also secured the women's recurve bronze after Sangeeta edged out veteran five-time Olympian Deepika Kumari 6-5 in a dramatic shoot-off.

Indian contingent ended its campaign with 10 medals --- six gold, three silver and one bronze medal to top the standings. *(PTI)*

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