



Amit Shah takes crucial legal step on iconic singer's b'day: Himanta

Centre okays trial against Zubeen death accused

GUWAHATI, Nov 18: Union Home Minister Amit Shah granted sanction under Section 208 of the BNSS to the Assam government to proceed against those linked to the death of Zubeen Garg in Singapore, allowing the police to file charge sheet, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said on Tuesday, the first birthday of the singer post his death.

Section 208 of the BNSS says that if a crime is committed outside India, the case can be taken up by the court only after the central government gives prior sanction, he said.

The CM said that today "marks the 53rd birthday of our beloved Zubeen Garg — a day that reminds us of his music, his voice, and his



irreplaceable place in Assam's heart".
"On this very day, the Hon'ble Union Home Minister Sri @Amit-

Shah Ji has granted the required sanction under Section 208 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) to proceed against the

accused linked to Zubeen's death in Singapore," Sarma said in a post on X.

This sanction is a crucial legal step, allowing the administration to file a charge sheet and move forward firmly and lawfully for trial of the case, Sarma added.

He said that they remain fully committed to file the charge sheet against the accused persons within December 10 this year.

Garg died in Singapore, where he had gone to participate in the North East India Festival (NEIF), on September 19 and after his cremation here, multiple FIRs were filed, with the state government constituting a Special Investigating team (SIT) under the CID to investigate the case. (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

'No problem for existing voters'

New residents, evicted voters can enroll at new address: Assam CEO on SR



GUWAHATI, Nov 18: As the Election Commission rolled out 'Special Revision' (SR) of electoral rolls of Assam from Tuesday, the state's Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Anurag Goel stressed that existing voters will not face any problem under the exercise.

He emphasised that new residents can also enroll themselves, in-

cluding people evicted from encroached government land, by producing their previous voter details, as the state prepares for assembly elections early next year.

Addressing a press conference here, Goel said, "The purpose of the SR is to ensure that all eligible voters are included and ineligible removed from electoral rolls."

The EC had on Monday ordered SR for Assam with January 1, 2026, as the qualifying date to carry out the exercise. The final voter list based on it will be published on February 10. Goel claimed that it is for the first time that SR of electoral rolls is being conducted in any state, and that it was necessitated due to the special provisions of citizenship in Assam.

"There are special provisions for citizenship in Assam. NRC has been updated and only publication is awaited, and the NRC data will be conclusive proof for citizenship. Under the circumstances, the EC has ordered SR for Assam in place of Special Intensive Revision (SIR)," the CEO said.

He said that while special summary revision is a "routine" matter and SIR a thorough procedure, SR comes in between the two to ensure error-free electoral rolls. Under SR, booth-level officers (BLOs) will make home (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Tuliram asks Opp leaders to join saffron party

BJP gears up polls with mass joining prog at Charchim Prisek

HT Correspondent DONGKAMUKAM, Nov 18: Gearing up for the coming assembly election likely to be held in March or April next year, the BJP in West Karbi Anglong has intensified its ground work.

The BJP, West Karbi Anglong District Committee, held a mass joining programme at Charchim Prisek, West Karbi Anglong, 46 km from here.

The Chief Executive Member (CEM) of Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council (KAAC), Tuliram Ronghang, attending the programme as the chief guest, reiterated the BJP's commitment to development in the district.



He called for the opposition leaders to join the ruling party, i.e., the BJP.

Ronghang said the BJP is committed to all-around development of the district. "There is no discrimination in development (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Garima and sister Palmee attend birthday celebrations with tears at Kahilipara residence

Zubeen's 53rd birth anniv celebrated across state

GUWAHATI, Nov 18: The 53rd birth anniversary celebrations of Assam's cultural icon Zubeen Garg, who died on September 19, were being held across the state on Tuesday, with several organisations, including political parties, organising day-long programmes in his honour.

Garg's fans gathered outside his Kahilipara residence at midnight to cut a cake and placed it before his photograph, with his wife Garima Saikia Garg and sister Palmee Borahakur also present on the occasion.

The fans sang the birthday song, and also many of his popular songs to ring in the celebrations, the first after his death. Fans from across the state also gathered at 'Zubeen Kshetra', where he was cremated, to pay their tributes by offering 'gamosas' (traditional scarves) and flowers, lighting lamps and singing



his songs. Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, in his tribute to Garg, said, "Some presence fades from sight but shines brighter in memory."

"Today, we honour the enduring legacy of an artist who was, will and forever be our heartthrob. That of our #BelovedZubeen. (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

'Zero tolerance', 'no whitewashing': EAM

MOSCOW, Nov 18: India on Tuesday said that the world must display "zero tolerance" towards terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, asserting that there can be no justification, no looking away and "no whitewashing".

"As India has demonstrated, we have the right to defend our people against terrorism, and will exercise it," External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said in his address at the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Council of Heads of Government meeting here.

Jaishankar said India believes that the SCO must "adapt to the changing global landscape, develop an expanded agenda, and reform its working methods". "We will contribute positively and fully to these objectives," he said.

The SCO was founded at a summit in Shanghai in 2001 by the presidents of Russia, China, the Kyrgyz Republic, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

India and Pakistan became its permanent members in 2017. In July 2023, Iran became the new permanent member of the SCO at an India-hosted virtual summit of the grouping.

"We must never forget that the SCO was founded to combat the three evils of terrorism, separatism and extremism. These threats have become even more serious in the years that have passed," he said.

"It is imperative that the world displays zero tolerance towards terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. There can be no justification, no looking away and no whitewashing," the EAM said.

Jaishankar also emphasised on the prevailing economic situation globally and the importance of fostering greater cultural ties in the influential bloc. "We assess the global economic situation to be particularly uncertain and volatile currently. Supply side risks have been aggravated by demand side complexities. There is consequently an urgent requirement to de-risk and diversify. This is best done by as many of us, forging the widest possible economic links," he said.

For that to happen, it is essential that this process be "fair, transpar-



ent and equitable," the EAM said. "India's endeavours to conclude free trade agreements with many of us here are relevant," Jaishankar said. And, India's long-standing ties with SCO members makes it particularly pertinent, he added.

"As a civilisational state, India strongly believes that people-to-people exchanges lie at the core of any genuine relationship. Facilitating greater interaction between our intellectuals, artists, sports people, and cultural icons will pave the way for greater understanding across the SCO," the external affairs minister said. He said there is a growing record of collaborative activities with regard to cultural exchanges.

The exposition of sacred Buddhist relics in many of the countries which are SCO members is a "notable example," he said.

India is also willing to extend its considerable experience of heritage conservation in Southeast Asia to Central Asia, Jaishankar said.

The theme of the session covered trade, economic, cultural and humanitarian cooperation.

Emphasising on humanitarian cooperation, the EAM also said this is important in an "era of climate change, pandemics and conflicts".

As SCO continues to evolve, India "strongly supports" its reform-oriented agenda.

"We welcome centres addressing challenges such as organised crime, drug trafficking, and cybersecurity. As the organisation becomes more diverse, the SCO must be more flexible and adaptable," the EAM added. (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

SIR in Assam only after official NRC notification: Himanta

HT Bureau GUWAHATI, Nov 18: Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma stated on Tuesday that a comprehensive Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of the state's electoral rolls is contingent upon the official notification of the National Register of Citizens (NRC), a process he anticipates will be finalized by the middle of next year.

The Chief Minister's remarks clarify the procedural holdup in

undertaking a thorough cleanse of the voter list, a move deemed necessary to address persistent inaccuracies. He explained that the current electoral rolls are plagued by significant discrepancies that undermine their integrity.

Citing specific issues, Sarma pointed to the presence of names belonging to deceased individuals, minors ineligible to vote, and married women whose entries have not been updated to reflect changes in

their surnames or addresses. These errors, he indicated, highlight the urgent need for a systematic revision. "The NRC has not been notified yet," Sarma said, outlining the prerequisite for the SIR. "Once that is done — hopefully by mid-next year — the Special Intensive Revision can finally take place in Assam." In the interim, the Chief Minister confirmed that the Election Commission of India (ECI) has directed. (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Gauhati HC grants bail to doctor accused in minors' assault case

GUWAHATI, Nov 18: The Gauhati High Court on Tuesday granted bail to a doctor, who was arrested along with her doctor-husband more than two years ago for allegedly assaulting two children, including sexual abuse, whom they claimed to be adopted kids.

Justice Anjan Moni Kalita granted bail to Sangeeta Dutta, which came about 20 days after her husband and co-accused Walliul Islam got the same in the case by a co-ordinate bench of the high court.

Islam and his family's domestic help were arrested in Guwahati on May 6, 2023, while his psychiatrist wife, who is frequently seen in local TV channels' talk shows on mental health, was caught the next day while trying to flee the city.

The police had slapped various sections of the IPC along with Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012 (POCSO) against the doctor couple and their maid. (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

BJP will form govt in West Bengal to end Jungle Raaj: Tripura CM

AGARTALA, Nov 18: Chief Minister Prof Dr Manik Saha on Tuesday said that during the UPA government the country had witnessed massive corruption and scams, and stated that the BJP will also form the government in West Bengal, ending the Jungle Raaj. Dr Saha said this after welcoming 135 voters from 42 families in Takarjala.

Dr Saha said that those who have joined the BJP have taken the right decision at the right time and that with this, the BJP will become even stronger.

"Now in every state BJP is forming the government. Earlier it was 20, and now it is increasing. BJP has the highest number of members in the country. We feel proud that we are members of BJP. Prime Minister Narendra Modi is working for the welfare of the country, the state. (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Suicide bomber's brother gives in during quizzing

Red Fort blast: Video glorifying suicide attack found in suicide bomber's phone

NEW DELHI, Nov 18: Jammu and Kashmir Police have recovered a mobile phone of the Red Fort suicide bomber, Dr Umar-un-Nabi, and the extracted data has provided chilling evidence to show that he had prepared a video justifying the suicide attack as a "martyrdom operation".

The critical evidence was unearthed after the detention and subsequent interrogation of Zahoor Illahi, brother of Umar who was driving the explosive-laden car that blasted outside Red Fort on November 10 killing 15 people, officials said on Tuesday.

Illahi was picked up by a special

team formed by Senior Superintendent of Police (Srinagar) G V Sundeep Chakravarthy as the entire white-collar terror module conspiracy began to unravel.

Initially feigning ignorance, Illahi eventually cracked under sustained questioning and told his interrogators that Umar, who was in the Kashmir valley between October 26 and 29, had handed him the mobile phone with explicit instructions to "dump it in water" if any news about him surfaced, the officials said.

Illahi subsequently led the police team to the dumping spot. Though the

handset was damaged, forensic experts managed to extract the vital data, which strongly indicates Umar's deep radicalisation through exposure to violent extremist content that included watching radical videos pertaining to suicide bombings by the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) and Al-Qaeda.

Umar had also made various videos of himself talking about the suicide attack and claimed that such acts were one of the most praised acts in the religion. The videos were shot in April this year with Umar, the 28-year-old doctor from Pulwama in Kashmir, speaking in a heavy (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

SFC Energy AG to purchase methanol from APL at ₹ 90,000 per ton APL of Narum signs landmark German export deal

HT Correspondent DIBRUGARH, Nov 18: In a major boost to Assam's industrial and export credentials, the Namrup-based Assam Petrochemicals Limited (APL) has signed a major export order with German renewable energy firm SFC Energy AG.

The deal involves the sale of 180 tons of methanol to the European company at a premium rate—marking a landmark accomplishment for the state-owned enterprise.

According to company sources, SFC Energy AG agreed to purchase methanol from APL at ₹90,000 per ton, compared to the Indian market price of around ₹ 25,000 per ton. The significant price gap highlights the purity and high-grade production quality of the methanol manufactured in APL's modern Namrup facility.

SFC Energy, which collaborates with India's FC TechNrgy in defense energy infrastructure, specializes in Direct Methanol



Fuel Cell (DMFC) technology. The firm uses methanol as an eco-friendly energy source to power advanced fuel cell systems deployed across defense installations, particularly in remote or border regions.

APL Chairman Bikul Deka described the agreement as a testament to the company's growing global reputation. "This successful

export deal reflects the recognition of Assam's methanol in the international market. The superior quality of our product has attracted global buyers willing to pay premium prices," Deka said.

He credited the achievement to the company's workforce and consistent focus on quality innovation. "Every worker at APL

contributed to this success. It's a proud moment not only for our company but also for Assam's industrial development," Deka added. Christian Bohm, Vice President of SFC Energy AG, praised APL's manufacturing standards, calling it a step forward in joint efforts toward clean energy.

"Our collaboration with Assam Petrochemicals reflects the global move toward sustainable energy solutions. Methanol-based fuel cells will play a vital role in future energy generation, especially in defense and off-grid applications," he said. The partnership, born from a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed last year, supports India's Make in India and Atmanirbhar Bharat missions.

The export deal showcases how Assam's industries are entering the global clean energy supply chain—paving the way for future expansion in renewable energy exports.

Stock markets halt 6-day rally; Nifty ends below 26,000-mark on profit taking

MUMBAI, Nov 18: Snapping the six-day winning streak, benchmark Sensex dropped by nearly 278 points and the Nifty closed below the 26,000-mark due to profit-taking in IT, metal and capital goods shares amid a weak trend in global markets.

The 30-share BSE Sensex declined by 277.93 points or 0.33 per cent to settle at 84,673.02. During the day, it dropped 392.59 points or 0.46 per cent to 84,558.36.

The 50-share NSE Nifty dipped 103.40 points or 0.40 per cent to 25,910.05. Among Sensex firms, Tech Mahindra, Infosys, Bajaj Finance, Bajaj Finserv, Etemal, Adani Ports, Hindustan Unilever and Bharat Electronics were the major laggards.

However, Bharti Airtel, Axis Bank, Asian Paints and Titan were among the gainers.

"The domestic equity market edged lower as investors booked profits after the recent rebound, mirroring weak global sentiment. Expectations of a US Fed rate cut in December have diminished, weighing on sentiment, with IT, metal, and realty stocks declining amid a stronger dollar," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Investments Limited, said.

The BSE smallcap gauge dropped 0.85 per cent and midcap index declined 0.70 per cent.

Among sectoral indices, realty tanked 1.98 per cent, followed by BSE Focused IT (1.16 per cent), IT



(1.15 per cent), metal (1.07 per cent), commodities (0.95 per cent) and industrials (0.93 per cent).

Consumer Durables index emerged as the only gainer.

A total of 2,740 stocks declined while 1,463 advanced and 138 remained unchanged on the BSE.

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

"A sharp sell-off in global equities, driven by concerns over stretched valuations in the technology sector, sparked broad-based profit booking on the domestic bourses as well. However, Indian markets managed to limit their losses, especially when compared with over 3 per cent declines witnessed in Japan's Nikkei and South Korea's Kospi.

"The relatively resilient perform-

You'll hear good news on India-US trade deal once it's fair: Goyal

NEW DELHI, Nov 18: Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal on Tuesday said "you will hear a good news" on the proposed trade pact between India and the US once the deal is fair, equitable and balanced. He said that India will also protect the interests of farmers and fishermen in the agreement.

Negotiation for a trade agreement is a process and India as a nation has to secure the interests of farmers, fishermen and small industry, he said at the Indo-US Economic Summit, organised by Indo-American Chamber of Commerce here.

"...India as a nation has to secure its interests. Have to secure the interests of our stakeholders, businesses and balance it with our sensitivities with the farmers, with the fishermen, with small industries.

When we find the right balance, rest assured we will get outcomes on this...When the deal will become fair, equitable and balanced, you will hear good news," Goyal said.

India and the US have been negotiating the proposed bilateral trade agreement since March. So far six rounds of negotiations have been completed.

Goyal added that there is no reason to be worried about the bilateral relations between the two countries.

"Pariwaar mein kabhee kabhee thodee bohot nok-jhok toh hotee rahatee hai (sometimes there is a bit of bickering in the family also)," he said, adding, "I do not believe there is any hiatus in the relationship." (PTI)

Contd. from Page 1...

Amit Shah takes crucial legal

Subsequently, seven people, including festival organiser Shyamkanu Mahanta, his manager Siddhartha Sharma, his cousin Sandipan Garg, musician Shekhar Jyoti Goswami, singer Amritprabha Mahanta and two Personal Security Officers (PSO), were arrested in this connection. Sarma had said in October that the charge sheet by the SIT will be submitted within the stipulated period of three months and the investigations were proceeding on expected lines. The Assam government is very serious about Zubeen Garg's death and "we will definitely ensure justice to him and nobody will be spared in that context", he said. Usually, three months of time is given to submit a charge sheet and the police will not take more time than that to ensure that, the CM said.

He said that the SIT has assured him that investigations will be completed by the end of November and the chargesheet will be submitted most likely in the first week of December. The Assam cabinet had also recently decided that the state government will request the Gauhati High Court for a fast-track court to decide and deliver justice on Zubeen Garg's death case.

"There is usually a complaint that the courts take a long time to deliver justice and so the state cabinet has decided to approach the Chief Justice of the Gauhati High Court for a fast track hearing into the case after the Special Investigating team submits its chargesheet," Sarma said. The Assam cabinet has also decided to appoint a Special Public Prosecutor on the recommendation of the state Advocate General who will be engaged only for the hearing of the case from the filing of the charge sheet to the delivery of justice. (PTI)

'No problem for existing

visits and the head of the family or a competent member will verify the number and names of eligible voters in that household. In case of death, the voter's name will be deleted, and for inclusion of a new name, forms will be provided by the BLO, which have to be filled up and submitted within the stipulated time.

"Under SR, existing voters do not have to show any documentary evidence. The verification by the head of the family or competent member will suffice. For new voters, the document showing linkage with an existing voter will suffice," Goel said. Asked about voting rights of people evicted during recent anti-encroachment drives in the state, the CEO said they can enroll themselves in the new place of residence. "Wherever a person is currently residing, they can enroll themselves there by producing the previous Electors Photo Identity Card (EPIC). Even a person who may have come to Assam recently and will be staying here for a prolonged period, can enroll themselves through the same process," he said.

Goel added that the onus remains on the voter to get their name struck off from the list where they were previously enrolled. A software is used to detect duplication of voters through checking of names and photographs by the EC within a state, but a margin of error remains, he said. He also highlighted the provision for appealing against wrongful exclusion or inclusion of names from the voter list and urged the people to use it. Goel further said that 29,656 BLOs - one against each existing polling station - have been appointed, while 61,553 booth-level agents (BLAs) of political parties will accompany them for smooth conduct of the exercise.

With rationalisation of polling stations scheduled to be undertaken, another 1,826 polling stations are likely to be added in the state, he said. The CEO also clarified that 'D-voters' (doubtful voters) will not be covered under the SR, with the state currently having 94,277 such names. (PTI)

Tuliram asks Opp leaders to

along caste and religion lines," he said, citing the ongoing construction of Kheroni to Jerikending road in West Karbi Anglong. Branding the opposition as a 'people rejected party', he criticised them for becoming active only when an election is at hand. He asked All Party Hills Leaders Conference president JI Kathar and Congress leader Alice Engtipi to merge with the BJP, as the BJP has no 'boycott' agenda.

MP Amar Sing Tisso and MLA Rupsing Teron were also present at the mass joining programme.

Zubeen's 53rd birth anniv

Forever in our hearts," the chief minister posted on X. The ruling BJP in the state will organise a blood donation camp. The opposition Congress will organise a commemorative programme, 'Kanchanjunga-Sanskriti Houk Maitreyir Mantra' (culture be the mantra of harmony) to honour his memory, celebrate his cultural contributions and reaffirm the party's continued commitment to secure justice for him. Assam Pradesh Congress President Gaurav Gogoi was present on the occasion, which will be an evening of "remembrance, reverence and collective reflection", a party spokesperson said. NDA alliance partner Asom Gana Parishad (AGP) observed the day as 'Jatiya Swabhimann Diwas' (National Self-respect Day) by organising a tribute ceremony at the party headquarters, where a blood donation camp will be held, along with rendition of Garg's popular songs and planting of saplings.

The All Assam Students' Union (AASU) has taken up a three-day programme to commemorate the singer's birthday since Sunday across all district headquarters, organising art camps, cycle rallies and planting of saplings.

The All Assam Zubeen Garg Fan Club also organised programmes across the state to mark his birth anniversary. Members of the Gauhati Press Club (GPC) also paid floral tributes to Garg on the occasion. Garg was born at Tura in Meghalaya on November 18, 1972. He died on September 19 this year in Singapore, where he had gone to participate in the North East India Festival (NEIF), while swimming in the sea during a yacht trip. (PTI)

J Infratech awarded Rs 116 cr

major economic and industrial zones in Upper Assam. Its reconstruction is expected to significantly improve regional connectivity, enhance road safety, and facilitate smoother movement of goods and people.

Abhishek Singla, GM-Business Development, J Infratech, said, "We are confident of completing the project within the stipulated time frame of four months while maintaining the engineering and safety standards." Gurugram-based J Infratech Ltd specialises in designing, building, and maintaining of highways. (PTI)

'Zero tolerance', 'no whitewashing'

To this end, the "long-delayed decision" to make English an official language of the SCO must be prioritised, he stressed. In his address, he underlined that "we all recognise" that SCO must keep up with contemporary changes. That must be reflected in "fresh thinking and new collaborations".

India's initiatives, such as the SCO Special Working Group on Startups and Innovation and the SCO Start-Up Forum, are good examples. They are aimed at promoting innovation and creativity, especially targeting the younger generation, he said. Similarly, the recent SCO Young Authors Forum in New Delhi is a good way of strengthening people-to-people ties, the EAM added. (PTI)

SIR in Assam only after

the state machinery to conduct a Special Summary Revision. This measure is intended as a corrective step to identify and rectify the existing anomalies in the voter list ahead of the more extensive NRC-linked exercise. The announcement underscores the state government's ongoing efforts to ensure the accuracy and reliability of Assam's electoral database.

The Election Commission of India on Monday announced that Assam will undergo a Special Revision of its electoral rolls, an exercise that will culminate in the publication of the final voters' list on February 10, 2026. The decision comes at a time when the state is moving toward the 2026 Assembly elections and the accuracy of the electoral roll remains central to political discourse in Assam. According to officials, the process ordered for Assam is neither a routine annual summary revision nor as exhaustive as the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) conducted recently in several other states. It sits "somewhere in between," with the Election Commission opting for a more targeted and improved verification mechanism. Instead of using blank enumeration forms, booth-level officers will work with pre-filled registers to confirm, correct or update voter details, which the Commission believes will reduce errors and speed up verification.

Gauhati HC grants bail to doctor

The wife's counsel NJ Dutta submitted before the court that various provisions of the law at the time arrest were not followed by the police while taking his client into custody. He also claimed that his client has been incarcerated for a long time and expressed doubt that the trial will progress at a "reasonable speed".

Dutta pointed that the FIR in the case was lodged on May 5, 2023, charge-sheet filed on July 7 the same year, charges framed on June 24, 2024, and till the filing of the bail application, only 15 witnesses out of total 74 had been examined. He cited previous judicial pronouncements which provided for discouraging long incarceration of an accused facing trial. Justice Kalita also took into consideration that Dutta's husband and co-accused has been granted bail by a co-ordinate bench in the same case on October 28.

"...this Court is of the considered opinion that a case has been made out by the accused applicant for her release on bail," the judgment said. "Accordingly, it is directed that the accused applicant, Dr Sangeeta Dutta, shall be released on bail in connection with Sessions (Special) Case No. 112/2023, on furnishing a bail bond of ₹ 1,00,000 only, with two local sureties of the like amount (one of whom shall be a Government Servant residing within the State of Assam), to the satisfaction of the learned Trial Court," it added.

The court also set certain conditions for Dutta's bail, including surrendering her passport, Aadhaar and PAN cards before the trial court, cooperating with the trial process and not misusing her liberty by indulging in any activity that may hamper or tamper with the progress of the case. (PTI)

BJP will form govt in West Bengal

and Janajati people. He has formed the DoNER Ministry for the North East region. We are witnessing a wave of development. Tomorrow I will go to Bihar to attend the oath-taking ceremony. Everyone knows that in Bihar there was Goonda raj and corruption, but after the formation of the NDA government everything changed. People don't want goonda raj, jungle raj, and corruption," said Dr Saha.

He said that people want their basic rights and BJP working to provide all such things. "During the UPA government we had a number of scams, but the BJP government is making the country powerful. PM Modi has ensured the safety and protection of the country and its people. Earlier our soldiers used to come under attack but the then government did not take any steps, and unrest was prevailing before 2014. The same condition was in the North East. But after 2014 everything has changed. In Tripura also some people are being misguided and misused by provoking them. I want to tell them to join BJP, and the door is open," said Dr Saha. He said that BJP is the only party working for Janajati welfare.

"During the CPIM rule there were murders and terror in Tripura. We have seen Congress and CPIM, and we have also seen their presence in Bihar. In the coming days BJP will also form the government in West Bengal to end the Jungle Raj. We want peace," he added.

Suicide bomber's brother gives

accented voice. He described suicide bombings as "martyrdom operations" and asserted that such actions are not only permissible but are regarded as commendable within the context of jihad, they said.

A nearly two-minute-long video of Umar also made rounds on social media. It shows Umar struggling to articulate his thoughts clearly, often faltering throughout the recording, before abruptly concluding it. This video is part of a larger collection in which Umar is apparently rehearsing his statements.

The phone was handed over to the National Investigation Agency (NIA) for further analysis, officials said, adding the NIA will take custody of the brother soon. (PTI)

GOVT. OF ASSAM

OFFICE OF JOINT DIRECTOR OF HEALTH SERVICES,

KARBI ANGLONG DISTRICT

DIPHU-782460

No. KA/Esstt/H&FW/Post/Advt./2025-26/1699

Dated Diphu the 18/11/2025

VIVA-VOCE NOTICE

In reference to the Advertisement No. KA/Esstt/h&fw/Advt./2025-2026/1590, Dated Diphu the 30th October 2025, it is hereby informed to all concerned that the date of Viva-Voce Test of different categories of post under the establishment of Joint Director of Health Services, Karbi Anglong, Diphu will be held as per schedule date, time and venue as mentioned below:-

Sl. No.	Name of the post (s)	Date of Viva-Voce Test	Timing	Venue
1.	Peon	28-11-2025	10:00 am to 4:00 pm	O/o- Jt. Director of Health Services, Karbi Anglong, Diphu
2.	Ward Boy	28-11-2025	10:00 am to 4:00 pm	O/o- Jt. Director of Health Services, Karbi Anglong, Diphu
3.	Chowkidar	28-11-2025	10:00 am to 4:00 pm	O/o- Jt. Director of Health Services, Karbi Anglong, Diphu
4.	Van Cleaner	28-11-2025	10:00 am to 4:00 pm	O/o- Jt. Director of Health Services, Karbi Anglong, Diphu
5.	Grade-IV	28-11-2025	10:00 am to 4:00 pm	O/o- Jt. Director of Health Services, Karbi Anglong, Diphu
6.	Sweeper	28-11-2025	10:00 am to 4:00 pm	O/o- Jt. Director of Health Services, Karbi Anglong, Diphu

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

Sd/-

Jt. Director of Health Services,
Karbi Anglong District, Diphu.

Memo No. KA/Esstt/H&FW/Post/Advt./2025-26/1699-A

Dated Diphu the 18/11/2025

GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER,

P.W.D. (R&B), DIPHU CIRCLE-1, DIPHU

No DPU KAAC (AAP)/2025-26/1605

Dated 13/11/2025

PRESS NOTICE INVITING BID

The Superintending Engineer PWD(R&B), Diphu Circle-1, Diphu invites bid on behalf of Governor of Assam for "Construction of retaining wall, Drain etc at PWD Colony under AAP for the year 2025-26" in Karhi Anglong district amounting to Rs 80,00,000.00 from approved & eligible contractors registered with PWKD, Assam. Details may be seen at website www.assanitenders.gov.in and also in the office of the undersigned during office hours from 18.11.2025 to 08.12.2025. The last Date/Time for receipt of bid will be upto 2.00 PM on 08.12.2025

Sd/-

Superintending Engineer, P.WD(R&B)

Diphu Circle-1, Diphu

Memo No DPU KAAC (AAP)/2025-26/1605 (A)

Dated: 13/11/2025

Blood donation camps, environmental initiatives and cultural events celebrate music icon across the state

Zubeen Garg's birthday marked with charity drives

HT Bureau

DIPHU, Nov 18: The BP Karbi Anglong District Committee observed the 53rd birth anniversary of Assam's cultural icon and singer Zubeen Garg by organising a mega blood donation camp at Diphu Medical College & Hospital (DMC&H) on Tuesday.

The camp was hosted by the Department of Health & Family Welfare, Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council (KAAC), in collaboration with DMC&H and the District Administration. Diphu MLA Bidyasing Englung inaugurated the event in the presence of former MP Horensing Bey, KAAC Executive Member Madhuram Lekthe, Joint Director of Health Services Dr Kaban Teronpi, DMC&H Principal Dr Sumitra Hagjer, Nodal Officer for Blood Services Dr Semsing Singnar, and BJYM-KADC vice president Phairing Maibangsa.

The camp ran from 8 AM to 3 PM, with 74 people registering online. Around 40% of the registrants turned up, resulting in the collection of 30 units of blood. Most donors were youths from BJYM and other local groups.

The initiative was held in memory of Zubeen Garg, celebrating his contribution to Assamese culture while promoting social welfare.

Our Sivasagar Correspondent adds: Youth volunteers of 'Rescue', an NGO formed by fans of singer Zubeen Garg and led by Nilom Kakoty, Rajesh Singh, Prasanta Das, Plabon Bhunia and Ikram Ali, observed the singer's birthday with

a series of humanitarian and environmental activities. The group distributed handmade bird nests, bird feed and other materials to bird lovers, along with carom boards to three Old Age Homes.

The young volunteers had earlier collected materials themselves to craft the nests, dog houses and soft cushions for puppies. Later, Rescue members distributed blankets to beggars near the historic Shivadol, with the blankets donated by noted entrepreneur and philanthropist Bikash Das.

In another tribute, the Indian Patriotic Federation, Socialist (IPFS), Alok Sangha and residents of Sivasagar Amlapatty named the road-cum-embankment along the Dikhow river—from Dikhow Bridge to Durbar Field—as Zubeen Garg Path. The naming was carried out during a commemorative meeting on the singer's 53rd birth anniversary, an initiative led by IPFS secretary Pranjal Rajguru.

Our Kokrajhar Correspondent adds: The 53rd birthday of Assam's music icon Zubeen Garg was celebrated with great fervor in Kokrajhar, featuring a mix of cultural, environmental and civic initiatives.

The Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) government organised the main programme, beginning with a floral tribute (Shradhanjali) and the laying of the foundation stone for the upcoming Zubeen Garg Memorial Park at Chandamari Elasiyhar, near the IT Park on the banks of the Gaurang River. BTC Chief



Executive Member Hagrama Mohilary led the ceremony.

To commemorate Garg's 53rd birthday, 53 Nahor saplings were planted, sending a message of environmental stewardship. The celebrations saw a gathering of over 25,000 people, including artists and community members, who performed the iconic song "Mayabini" in honour of the singer.

The United People's Party Liberal (UPPL) celebrated the occasion across all district offices in the Bodoland region with religious prayers and floral tributes. In Tamulpur, UPPL president and former CEM Pramod Boro offered tributes and planted Nahor saplings, highlighting Garg's contribution as a legendary singer with over 38,000 songs in Assamese,

Bodo, Hindi, Bengali and other languages.

Meanwhile, the All Assam Students' Union (AASU), Kokrajhar district unit, staged a human chain near the AASU Swahid Bedi at Kokrajhar district headquarters. The demonstration called for justice for Zubeen Garg, reflecting the organisation's concern over ongoing issues surrounding the celebrated singer. Students, supporters and AASU members actively participated, marking the day with a call for accountability and action.

Our Jorhat Correspondent adds: On the 53rd birth anniversary of legendary singer, composer and musician Zubeen Garg, Jorhat MLA Hitendra Nath Goswami formally initiated the

process for installing a statue of Zubeen at the Jorhat Institute of Science and Technology (JIST) campus, formerly Science College at Sotai.

A guitar-shaped cake was also cut by Goswami at the site with Jorhat District Commissioner, JIST authorities and local residents joining in singing Zubeen's songs and wishing him a happy birthday.

Addressing the gathering, Goswami said the statue was being installed at the behest of Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, who had urged all legislators in the state to take initiatives to erect Zubeen Garg statues in their constituencies. He thanked the JIST authorities, local residents and the district administration for their cooperation, adding that the statue is expected to be completed within three months.

The MLA also announced plans to develop a small park for recreation near the site and construct a rotary on the four-lane National Highway 715, which would feature displays of Zubeen and connect the approach road to the under-construction Jorhat-Majuli bridge.

Meanwhile, Zubeen Garg's birthday was celebrated across Jorhat by numerous organisations. The Asom Gana Parishad marked the day as Jatiya Swabhimani Divas at an event at the Jorhat Press Club, attended by AGP leaders, workers and personalities from various fields, including singer Prasenjit Lahon.

Our Nagaon Correspondent adds: Various organisations, educational in-

stitutions and cultural bodies across Nagaon celebrated the 53rd birth anniversary of legendary singer and musician Zubeen Garg on Tuesday. The celebrations featured candle lighting ceremonies, tree plantation drives, essay and poem writing competitions, drawing contests and musical performances, reflecting widespread admiration for the iconic artist.

At the State Women and Children's Home, Zubeen Garg's portrait was garlanded and over 53 Nahor saplings were planted in his memory. Local MLA Rupak Sarma attended the function and paid tribute to Garg, highlighting his lasting contributions to Assam's cultural landscape.

The Bharatiya Janata Party's Nagaon district unit organised a blood donation camp in his memory, attended by Sarma and District Commissioner Debashish Sarma. Meanwhile, the Assam Gana Parishad's Nagaon-Batadrawa committee marked the day as one of community pride with senior leader Girindra Kumar Baruah emphasising Garg's enduring inspiration.

Schools including Ramanujan Higher Secondary, Scholar Academy Senior Secondary and cultural organisations like Suryadoy held competitions and performances celebrating Zubeen Garg's music and artistic legacy. The day's events collectively reflected reverence and admiration for the singer, whose work has left an indelible mark on Assam's cultural heritage.

Mother daughter duo commits suicide

HT Correspondent

SIVASAGAR, Nov 18: In a shocking incident, a TET teacher Upasana Borgohain (35) and her mother Rupa Borgohain (60), committed suicide by setting fire to themselves in a closed room in front of Sivasagar ONGC Colony last night. Domestic quarrel is the cause of the tragic incident, the neighbours said. In a suicide note, they reportedly blamed the husband of the TET teacher who was arrested by Sivasagar Police on Tuesday.

ASCPCR holds awareness session on child cyber trafficking

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, Nov 18: The Assam State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (ASCPCR) in collaboration with Delhi Public School, Khanapara organised an awareness session on "Child Cyber Trafficking & Online Safety" on Tuesday. The programme aimed to educate students and teachers about the growing digital risks threatening child safety and equip them with tools to stay protected online.

The event was graced by Dr Shyamal Prasad Saikia IPS (Ret.), Chairperson, ASCPCR, Janki Khaund Member, ASCPCR, Ashish Sarkar State Lead - Educate Girls, Assam, Pranami Hazarika HR & Technical Consultant, ASCPCR and Jaydip Phukan Technical Consultant, ASCPCR. Principal Monmoyee Borkotoky and Vice-Principal Ajanta Chowdhury represented DPS Khanapara. During the session, students were educated about the dangers of cyber trafficking, red flags to watch for responsible digital behaviour and ways to seek help when facing suspicious or harmful online activity. Speakers emphasised that cyber trafficking is a real threat, not just an abstract concept, highlighting the urgent need for awareness in today's digital age.

NFR boosts renewable energy with 11.95 MWp solar installations

Northeast Frontier Railway generates 8.98 lakh units monthly, saving ₹ 66 lakh



HT Bureau
GUWAHATI, Nov 18: Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) is steadily enhancing its renewable energy capacity with a cumulative 11.95 MWp of rooftop solar installations across key stations, offices, workshops and service buildings in its five divisions—Katihar, Alipurduar, Rangiya, Lumding and Tin-

sukia—since 2011. The initiative also covers NFR headquarters at Maligaon and its workshops, forming a key part of Indian Railways' green energy mission.

During the current financial year till October 31, 2025, NFR added 2.80 MWp of solar capacity at multiple locations in the zone. These installations generate an av-

erage of approximately 8.98 lakh units of solar energy per month, translating into estimated monthly savings of ₹ 66 lakh.

To further strengthen its renewable energy footprint, NFR is executing projects to enhance solar generation capacity to 38 MWp across all five divisions, including its headquarters and workshops. Plans are also in final stages for an additional 1.73 MWp of solar plants at NFR headquarters.

NFR continues to expand solar power projects under both CAPEX and RESCO models, aiming to increase clean energy utilisation, reduce carbon emissions and achieve significant cost savings. With strategic planning and continuous monitoring, the railway is progressing toward an energy-efficient and environmentally sustainable network in the North-eastern region.

Vocational training centre abandoned for over 30 years

HT Correspondent

DALGAON, Nov 18: A government-run Vocational Training Centre for Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Sciences in Dalgaon has remained locked and abandoned for more than three decades, residents say, gradually becoming a hotspot for anti-social activities.

The centre was established during the tenure of former Chief Minister Syeda Anowara Taimur to provide skill-based employment opportunities for local youth. While it functioned for a few initial years, it was abruptly closed for reasons never officially explained.

Despite multiple electoral terms and successive MLAs—including Abdul Jabbar, Ilias Ali and the current representative Mazibur Rahman—no visible effort has been made to revive the facility, locals allege. Today, the building is in ruins, overgrown with weeds, filled with debris and reportedly used for gambling, drug use and other illegal activities after sunset.

"This centre could have produced hundreds of skilled veterinary assistants and livestock experts by now. Instead, it has become a den of vice," said a senior resident, requesting anonymity.

Peerless Hospital organises health check-up camp for female students

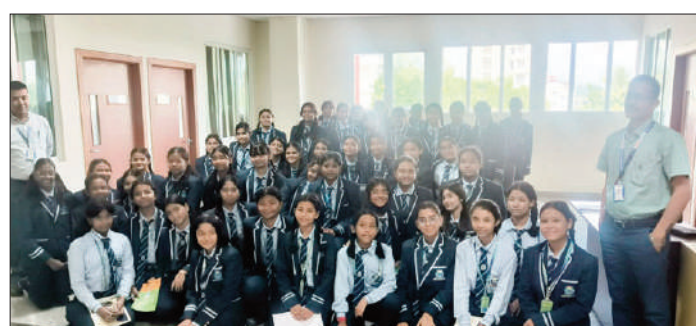
Initiative focuses on hygiene, nutrition and preventive healthcare for adolescent girls

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, Nov 18: Peerless Hospital Guwahati organised a special health check-up camp for the female students of Holy Home School on Tuesday, aiming to promote preventive healthcare and raise awareness about healthy habits among young girls.

Special care was taken to create a friendly and comfortable environment for all participants, who were under 18 years of age. Doctors from the Gynaecology, Medicine and Paediatrics departments conducted examinations and offered guidance on key aspects of adolescent health, including personal hygiene, balanced nutrition and preventive care.

Speaking about the initiative, Dr Gautam Kr Das, CEO of Peerless Hospital Guwahati, said, "Community outreach and awareness are integral parts of our vision for holistic healthcare. By engaging with schools and young students, we are



laying the foundation for a generation that understands the importance of hygiene, nutrition and preventive health from an early age."

Dr Pranab Barua, Medical Superintendent, added, "At Peerless Hospital, we believe that building a healthier society begins with educating and empowering our younger generation. Through such initiatives, we hope to encourage young girls to take charge of their health and make informed choices

early in life."

Peerless Hospital Guwahati, located at Ahom Gaon near ISBT, brings over three decades of clinical excellence from Peerless Hospital Kolkata to Assam. The 250-bed hospital, equipped with state-of-the-art infrastructure and a team of experienced specialists, continues to extend quality healthcare beyond hospital walls through community outreach, reinforcing their vision of advanced, accessible and compassionate care for all.

KA Police seize Morphine worth ₹ 2 Crore

HT Correspondent

BOKAJAN, Nov 18: Police in Karbi Anglong seized morphine worth approximately ₹ 2 crore on Monday morning and arrested one person in connection with the case.

The operation, led by SDPO Bokajan Rustom Raj Brahma, intercepted a car (AS 01 BK 2448) from Dimapur, Nagaland at the Dillai police check post. A thorough search revealed around 2 kg of morphine hidden in the vehicle's chassis and wrapped in black plastic. The driver, Amar Khan a resident of Imphal, Manipur was taken into custody. Preliminary investigation revealed that the narcotics were being transported from Manipur to Guwahati. Police said further investigations are underway to trace the source and intended recipients of the contraband.

44th NEIHA session at Bodoland University

HT Correspondent

KOKRAJHAR, Nov 18: The 44th annual session of the North East India History Association (NEIHA) commenced on Tuesday at Bodoland University, bringing together eminent historians, researchers and academicians from across the region and beyond for the three-day academic event.

The programme opened with a welcome address by Registrar Dr Subung Basumatary, followed by an inaugural speech from Vice-Chancellor Prof BL Ahuja, who praised NEIHA's longstanding contribution to historical scholarship in the Northeast. He urged scholars to adopt interdisciplinary approaches to better understand the region's diverse past.

NEIHA General Secretary Prof Amena N Passah presented the annual report, outlining the association's commitment to promoting rigorous research, documenting local and indigenous histories and fostering academic collaboration to strengthen understanding of Northeast India's cultural and historical landscape.

Assam Legislative Assembly Speaker Sjt Biswajit Daimary, in his special address, stressed the importance of preserving the region's heritage through research and community engagement.

NEIHA president Prof Salam Irene introduced the president-Elect, after which president Prof Sudhir



Kumar Singh delivered his presidential address, laying out plans to enhance NEIHA's academic visibility, expand research networks and support budding scholars.

The session also witnessed the release of the NEIHA Proceedings and several new books, reflecting the association's continuous efforts to enrich historical knowledge of the Northeast.

The inaugural day ended with a Vote of Thanks from Dr Joydip Narzary, Local Secretary. The afternoon featured research paper presentations on themes such as regional historiography, identity, community histories, linguistic traditions and contemporary socio-political developments.

Academic sessions will continue for the next two days, with the 44th NEIHA session scheduled to conclude on 19 November.

LOST

I lost my Higher Secondary original registration certificate bearing regd. No. 14-A-084260 year 2005-2006, while returning home from Diphu market on 10th November, 2025.

If any person (s) finding the same may kindly reach or contact at the address and mobile number mentioned below.

John Lalunung Sang Pasulate,
S/o- Binoy Pasulate,
Rengma Colony,
PO & PS- Diphu
District: Karbi Anglong, Assam
Mobile No. 94350-43418.

AFFIDAVIT

I, Marjina Khatun, wife of Nur Alam, resident of Village Khaikakata, P.O. Chakrabasti, P.S. Dalgaon, Mouza Pub-Dalgaon, District Darrang (Assam), do hereby solemnly affirm that my correct name is Marjina Khatun. In my daughter Noor Amina's birth certificate earlier submitted to 210 Cobra KVS, Dalgaon, my name was wrongly written as Marjina Begum. I have now obtained the corrected birth certificate showing my name as Marjina Khatun. This affidavit is sworn for the purpose of her admission.

Sd/-
Marjina Khatun

Tea tribes demand scheduled tribe status

HT Correspondent

MARGHERITA, Nov 18: Gautam Dhanowar, president of the Margherita branch of the Assam Chah Mazdoor Sangha (ACMS) has accused both the Assam state and BJP-led Union governments of repeatedly denying Scheduled Tribe (ST) status to the Adivasi and Tea Tribes community, calling it a "deeply unfortunate and historic injustice."

Speaking to the media, Dhanowar said the community has lived, worked and contributed to Assam for over 200 years, especially in tea gardens that built the state's economy and enhanced India's global reputation. Despite this, he said, the community remains marginalised, exploited and deprived of basic rights and opportunities.

Dhanowar highlighted that the Adivasi and Tea Tribes are descendants of tribal workers brought from Jharkhand, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh and West Bengal during British rule. While these communities enjoy full ST benefits in neighboring states, including reservations in education, employment and political representation, Assam has consistently denied them similar recognition. He also criticised the Coordina-



tion Committee of the Tribal Organisations of Assam (CTOA) for opposing the demand, accusing certain groups of playing "dirty politics" to keep the community marginalised for electoral gains. Dhanowar recalled that Tea Tribes were denied voting rights in Gaon Panchayat elections until 1992, emphasising that decades of broken promises continue to fuel frustration.

Drawing a comparison with other states, he asked why Assam continues to withhold ST recognition from communities that fulfill all constitutional criteria.

Dhanowar urged both the Union and Assam governments to immediately initiate the process for granting ST status to the six notified Tea and Adivasi communities in the state, warning that further delays would deepen the sense of betrayal among millions of workers.

With assembly elections approaching, the renewed demand for ST status is expected to become a key electoral issue in more than 40 constituencies dominated by tea garden workers, putting fresh pressure on the ruling governments to act on a long-standing promise.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

The tigers of wrath are wiser than the horses of instruction. -William Blake

Bihar poll outcome

When the votes were counted in Bihar's 2025 assembly elections, the result was unambiguous: The Bharatiya Janata Party and Janata Dal (United) alliance had secured 202 of 243 seats, decimating an opposition that just months earlier had harboured hopes of unseating the incumbents. The landslide victory wasn't merely about numbers. It represented a sophisticated recalibration of Indian state politics, where traditional caste calculations gave way to welfare promises, where memories of past chaos outweighed present grievances, and where women voters emerged as kingmakers. At the campaign's center stood an unlikely but effective duo: Narendra Modi, India's prime minister and the BJP's national face, and Nitish Kumar, Bihar's chief minister whose political longevity has survived multiple alliance shifts. Together, they created a narrative of competence that the opposition struggled to counter. Modi brought national gravitas and sharp campaign messaging, linking Kumar's state-level achievements to his government's broader development agenda. The partnership transcended mere political convenience: The BJP and JD(U) contested seats on equal terms, signalling genuine power-sharing rather than a dominant party accommodating a junior partner.

The National Democratic Alliance's success began with meticulous seat-sharing arrangements. Rather than the destructive internal competition that has plagued other coalitions, the NDA parcelled out constituencies based on each party's strengths. The BJP, JD(U), and smaller partners like the Lok Janshakti Party and Hindustani Awam Morcha avoided overlapping candidacies and pooled resources strategically. This discipline created a unified electoral front that contrasted sharply with the opposition's fragmented approach. While the Mahagathbandhan — the grand alliance of opposition parties — bickered over seat allocations and messaging, the NDA projected cohesion and purpose. Perhaps no campaign theme proved more potent than invoking "Jungle Raj" — the lawlessness that characterized Lalu Prasad Yadav's rule in the 1990s and early 2000s. Modi and Kumar repeatedly warned that opposition victory would return Bihar to those chaotic years, when kidnappings, extortion and caste violence were rampant. The irony wasn't lost on observers: This election was among the most peaceful in Bihar's recent history. Yet the narrative resonated with voters old enough to remember that era and young voters whose parents had lived through it. For an electorate craving stability, the NDA positioned itself as the only credible bulwark against a return to disorder.

Sheikh Hasina's Fall, Bangladesh's Future

Bangladesh has rarely been out of the headlines since the summer of 2024, and for good reason. What started as a student protest against job quotas turned into one of the fastest and most dramatic political upheavals in South Asia's recent history. By August 2024, Sheikh Hasina, who had ruled the country for fifteen straight years and a total of twenty years across different terms, was forced to flee to India on a military helicopter. A few months later, in November 2025, a special tribunal in Dhaka sentenced her to death in absentia for crimes against humanity linked to the violent crackdown on those very protests. Her former home minister, Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal, received the same sentence. An entire era seemed to close with the stroke of a judge's pen.

To understand how Bangladesh reached this point, we have to go back a little. Sheikh Hasina is the daughter of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the founding father of the nation who was assassinated in a military coup in 1975 along with most of his family. Hasina and her sister survived only because they were abroad at the time. That tragedy shaped her life and her politics. When she finally returned and entered politics, many saw her as the natural heir to her father's legacy. Her party, the Awami League, won landslide victories in 2008, 2014, 2018, and 2024, though the later elections were heavily criticised for rigging and the exclusion of opposition candidates.

Under her leadership the country changed in visible ways. High-rise buildings rose in Dhaka, new bridges and metro lines were built, garment exports kept growing, and millions were lifted out of extreme poverty. Bangladesh was often praised as an economic miracle, growing faster than many bigger neighbours. Yet the other side of the story grew darker with every passing year. Critics were jailed under the Digital Security Act, journalists disappeared, and oppo-

sition rallies were routinely attacked. By 2024 many young people felt the country was moving forward economically but sliding backward democratically.

The spark came in June and July 2024. Students demanded the reform of a quota system that reserved thirty percent of government jobs for the children and grandchildren of freedom fighters from the 1971 Liberation War. They said the system had become a tool for the ruling party to reward loyalists. At first the protests were peaceful, but when the government responded with tear gas, rubber bullets, and finally live ammunition, everything exploded. Images of bloodied students filled social media. The government cut internet access for days, but the anger only grew. Helicopters and even drones were reportedly used against protesters in some areas. Estimates of the death toll range from three hundred to over a thousand, depending on the source. In the end the army refused to fire on civilians any longer, and on 5 August Hasina left the country.

What followed was both hopeful and chaotic. An interim government was formed under Muhammad Yunus, the Nobel Peace Prize winner famous for microcredit and Grameen Bank. At seventy-four years old, Yunus was an unlikely revolutionary, yet students and much of the public trusted him because he had stayed out of party politics for decades. His job is enormous: hold fair elections, rebuild broken institutions, calm a polarised society, and keep the economy from collapsing.

The death sentence handed to Hasina and her home minister in November 2025 was meant to bring closure to the families of those killed. The tribunal accused them of ordering the lethal force used in July and August 2024. Many Bangladeshis celebrated the verdict as justice finally being

run round the clock have cut shifts because foreign buyers are nervous about instability. Inflation is high, the currency has lost value, and foreign reserves are lower than they have been in years. Remittances from millions of Bangladeshis working abroad are still coming in, but many families are struggling to buy basic food. Yunus has promised reforms: a new voter list, an independent election commission, and changes to the constitution to prevent any future leader from becoming too powerful. He says elections will be held by the end of 2026 at the latest, but first he wants the country calm enough for a credible vote.

Politics is slowly reorganising itself. The Bangladesh Nationalist



Party (BNP), the main opposition for decades, is trying to make a comeback after years of repression. Its leader Khaleda Zia is old and frail, but her son Tarique Rahman, living in London, is active behind the scenes. New student-based parties have also emerged, promising a complete break from the old guard. Islamist groups like Jamaat-e-Islami, banned under Hasina, are registering again and gaining visibility. Whether all these forces can compete peacefully remains the biggest question. For ordinary people the mood swings between hope and fear. A young university student in Dhaka told a foreign reporter, "We removed a dictator, but now we are scared of the vacuum." A garment worker in Chittagong said, "I marched in August because I wanted freedom. Today I just want my factory to reopen so I can feed my children." An elderly man who lived through the 1971 war worries that the country is once again tearing itself apart over revenge instead of building something new.

Muhammad Yunus keeps repeating that this is Bangladesh's "second independence." He asks people to be patient, to forgive but not forget, and to work together. It is a tall order. The scars of 2024 are still fresh, and the death sentence against Hasina has reopened many wounds rather than healing them. Yet there is also a sense of possi-

bility that was missing for years. Young people who coordinated protests through WhatsApp groups and TikTok videos now talk about rewriting the constitution themselves. Women who marched in the streets refused to go back to silence.

Bangladesh today is a country in transition, raw, noisy, and uncertain. It has shown the world that even long-entrenched leaders can be brought down by the courage of ordinary citizens, especially students who decided they had enough. At the same time it is a warning that revolutions are easier to start than to finish. The next twelve to eighteen months will decide whether this dramatic chapter ends in a stronger democracy or in new cycles of anger and authoritarianism.

For now, millions of Bangladeshis are watching, waiting, and trying to believe that the price paid in blood last year will one day be worth it. They hope the country can find a way to punish those responsible for past crimes without becoming trapped in endless revenge. They want elections that everyone accepts, an economy that works for the poor, and a society where no one has to live in fear because of their political beliefs or religion. It is a simple dream, but after everything that has happened, it feels further away than ever, and closer than it has ever been.

Education as a Tool for Breaking Social

By: Himangshu Ranjan Bhuyan

Education stands as one of the most powerful forces capable of transforming societies, reshaping human consciousness, and dismantling the entrenched barriers that divide people along lines of caste, class, gender, religion, or ethnicity. It is more than an academic process or a means to secure employment—it is a social instrument that nurtures equality, dignity, and progress. The strength of a society depends not merely on its economic or technological achievements but on the extent to which it allows its members to access education without discrimination or prejudice. From the dawn of civilization to the modern digital age, education has remained the single most effective medium for empowering individuals and bridging gaps between the privileged and the marginalized.

For centuries, human societies have been structured around hierarchies that perpetuate exclusion and inequality. Whether it was the rigid caste system in India, racial segregation in America, or gender-based restrictions in several patriarchal cultures, access to knowledge was historically monopolized by the few. The denial of education became a means to sustain power, ensuring that certain groups remained subservient and voiceless. However, as enlightenment ideals spread across the world, education emerged as the key to liberation. Philosophers and reformers began to view learning as a human right rather than a privilege. Thinkers like John Dewey emphasized that education should cultivate democratic values and empower individuals to participate actively in society. Similarly, in India, reformers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, Jyotirao Phule, and Dr. B.R. Ambedkar envisioned education as the ultimate weapon to fight oppression and social discrimination.

The transformative potential of education is most evident in its ability to change the mindset of individuals and communities. Ignorance breeds prejudice, while knowledge opens the door to empathy and understanding. When people are educated, they begin to question inherited biases and challenge unjust structures. Education provides the cognitive tools to analyze one's surroundings critically and the moral foundation to act against injustice. A literate woman, for instance, not only changes her own life trajectory but also influences her family and community. Studies across the globe have shown that when women are educated, social indicators such as health, sanitation, and child welfare improve dramatically. Thus, education is not merely about reading and writing; it is about cultivating awareness and agency.

The historical evolution of education in India provides a profound example of its power to disrupt social hierarchies. During the colonial era, education became both a tool of control and an instrument of awakening. The British introduced English education primarily to create clerical workers loyal to the colonial administration. Yet, ironically, it produced a generation of Indian intellectuals who used the very language of the colonizers to question imperialism and advocate for independence. Leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Rabindranath Tagore, and Ambedkar recognized that education could not remain confined to the elite if India was to progress as a nation. They envisioned a system that would reach the rural poor, the untouchables, and the marginalized, creating a more egalitarian social order. Gandhi's concept of "Nai Talim" or basic education emphasized learning through productive work and moral instruction, while Tagore's Santiniketan blended freedom of thought with cultural awareness, laying the foundation for an education system that was deeply humanistic.

Despite constitutional guarantees, access to quality education remains uneven in modern India. Although Article 21A and the Right to Education Act of 2009 mandate free and compulsory education for children aged 6 to 14, disparities persist across regions and social groups. The digital divide has further widened inequalities, with rural and marginalized communities struggling to access online education during the pandemic. Nevertheless, the expansion of literacy and the establishment of inclusive educational policies have had far-reaching impacts. Schemes promoting girl-child education, reservation in higher education for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and Other Backward Classes, and initiatives like mid-day meals have contributed to a gradual breaking down of social barriers. Schools have increasingly become spaces where children from diverse backgrounds learn together, share experiences, and develop a sense of collective identity that transcends caste or class distinctions.

Education also plays a pivotal role in fostering gender equality. Historically, women were denied education on the pretext of traditional norms and patriarchal values. Their exclusion from the learning process perpetuated economic dependence and social subordination. Today, however, education has empowered women to occupy leadership positions across professions and public life. The rising literacy rates among women have resulted in greater participation in politics, entrepreneurship, and community development. Female education has been directly linked to the decline in child marriage, improvement in maternal health, and reduction in domestic violence. When a woman is educated, she becomes not just an individual learner but a catalyst for social transformation. Education thus becomes a silent revolution against centuries of gender oppression. Moreover, education fosters social cohesion by cultivating tolerance and respect for diversity. In a multicultural country like India, where linguistic, religious, and cultural differences coexist, education acts as a unifying thread. Schools and universities are microcosms of society where students from different communities interact and exchange ideas. This interaction helps dismantle stereotypes and encourages inclusive thinking. The values of secularism, democracy, and fraternity enshrined in the Constitution can only flourish when individuals understand and internalize them through education. A truly educated citizen is not merely literate but also socially responsible, rational, and compassionate.

Globally, education has been central to movements for social justice. The civil rights movement in the United States, the anti-apartheid struggle in South Africa, and the fight for women's suffrage across Europe all drew strength from education. Leaders like Nelson Mandela, who famously said, "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world," recognized its power to transform both individuals and institutions. Mandela himself emerged from the oppressive apartheid regime to become a symbol of reconciliation and equality, largely through the liberating influence of education. Similarly, Malala Yousafzai's fight for girls' education in Pakistan underscores that learning is not just a social privilege but a universal right that challenges systems of repression.

However, while education has the potential to break social barriers, its misuse or uneven distribution can reinforce them. When education becomes commodified and accessible only to the affluent, it widens the gap between the privileged and the underprivileged. The commercialization of learning and the rising cost of private education create a parallel hierarchy within society, where opportunity is dictated by wealth rather than merit. The urban-rural divide in educational infrastructure further perpetuates inequality. Thus, the true

challenge lies not merely in providing education but in ensuring that it remains equitable, inclusive, and value-oriented. An education system that focuses solely on marks and employability but neglects moral and social consciousness fails to fulfill its transformative purpose.

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 in India represents a renewed commitment to making education more inclusive, holistic, and multidisciplinary. It emphasizes the importance of critical thinking, creativity, and ethics, aligning education with the broader goal of nation-building. By integrating vocational learning, mother-tongue instruction, and equitable access, the policy attempts to create a system that is both rooted in Indian culture and responsive to global demands. If implemented sincerely, it has the potential to reduce social divides by making education accessible and relevant to every section of society. However, policy reforms must be complemented by societal change. Parents, teachers, and communities must collectively uphold the belief that education is not merely an investment in economic growth but a moral obligation to ensure justice and equality.

The role of teachers in this process cannot be overstated. A teacher is not just a transmitter of knowledge but a social reformer who shapes young minds. When teachers promote inclusivity and compassion in classrooms, they plant the seeds of social harmony. Conversely, if educational institutions reflect existing prejudices, they risk perpetuating the very barriers they are meant to dismantle. Therefore, training educators to embrace diversity and teach with empathy is crucial for achieving education's social mission. The classroom must become a space of freedom where every student, irrespective of background, feels valued and heard.

Technology too has emerged as a double-edged sword in the educational landscape. On one hand, it democratizes knowledge through digital learning platforms, online libraries, and open-access courses, allowing millions to learn without geographical limitations. On the other hand, the lack of digital infrastructure in rural areas and among economically weaker sections creates new forms of exclusion. Bridging this digital divide is essential if education is to remain a genuine tool for breaking social barriers. Public investment in digital literacy, community learning centers, and affordable internet access can ensure that the benefits of technology reach the last mile.

Ultimately, education's greatest contribution lies in fostering empathy and moral awareness. A truly educated person does not merely possess degrees or skills but understands the value of justice, equality, and human dignity. Education must teach individuals to respect differences, to challenge injustice, and to act with compassion. It must awaken the conscience of society. When education succeeds in doing this, it becomes the strongest weapon against ignorance and intolerance. It is through this moral awakening that societies can move toward harmony and collective progress.

The dream of a just and equitable world depends on how effectively education is used as an instrument of social transformation. Every classroom has the potential to be a site of liberation, every book a key to freedom, and every student a future agent of change. The barriers that divide humanity—whether of caste, gender, race, or wealth—are not immutable. They can be dismantled through sustained educational efforts that nurture critical thinking and social responsibility. Education, therefore, must remain a collective commitment, a shared journey toward enlightenment and equality. As long as societies continue to uphold education as a universal right and not a privilege, the light of knowledge will continue to dispel the darkness of discrimination.

'Time for a New Vision: The path to change through our children'

By: Dr Priyanka Saurabh

The most difficult, longest, and most important journey of social change always begins at its core with those tiny seeds we call children. No revolution in the world—be it of ideas, morality, technology, or human values—can be lasting unless it takes root in the life philosophy of future generations. This is why thinkers like Buddha, Vivekananda, Gandhi, Tagore, and Nelson Mandela considered education, values, and the development of children's minds as the most important foundations for any lasting change in human civilization. Today, when society is facing challenges of value crisis, violence, intolerance, consumerism, fanaticism, and social disintegration at many levels, the question becomes even more acute: are we able to give our children the vision they need to build a future better than the present?

Children's perspectives on society are shaped not just by textbooks, but by their families, surroundings, ideas, conversations, examples, and—most importantly—the behavior of adults. A child is, in fact, society's most sensitive mirror. The language, thinking, coexistence, social behavior, sensitivity, and vision they observe around them gradually become imprinted within them like an unwritten book. This is why, if we want to change society, we must first change our own behavior, our family environment, and our social conduct—because a child becomes what they see, not what they hear.

Today, children have two major sources of understanding society—one is their family and the other is the digital world. Unfortunately, neither provides the clear and balanced perspective they need. Family communication has diminished, time has shrunk, and the culture of socializing is almost disappearing. The digital world, meanwhile, provides children with a limitless ocean of information, but lacks the light of wisdom and direction. In this context, children gain a wealth of information, but due to a lack of understanding, this information creates confusion, insecurity, and a chaotic perspective. That's why it's essential to give children a perspective on society that is sensitive, rational, scientific, ethical, and—most of all—humanistic. If a child learns that society is not just a crowd, but a vibrant web of personalities; that every person has their own story of struggle; that every decision has a context; and that empathy is the foundation of any civilization—they will not only become better citizens but also give society a better direction.

This seed of social change can only grow when we teach our children to ask questions. In many countries around the world, including India, children are conditioned to memorize answers rather than ask questions. However, true knowledge, true thinking, and true progress are born only where there is freedom to question. If a child feels, in their home, school, and society, that they can fearlessly question, express their opinions, disagree, and learn from mistakes—creativity and originality develop within them. This creativity is what drives society forward.

Children will gain a new perspective on society only when we teach them to embrace diversity. In today's world, division, polarization, and narrow-mindedness are widen-

ing the divide within society. Children study and play together in schools, but as they grow up, they often internalize the walls society has erected. Therefore, it is crucial that we teach children that diversity is not a weakness of society, but its greatest strength. If they understand that every culture, every language, every tradition, every idea, and every person is part of society's collective identity—they will not only become better citizens but will also be able to break down the walls that create hatred and narrow-mindedness. The education system plays a crucial role in this process of societal transformation. Education cannot simply be a means to pass exams; it must also teach children the art of understanding life and society. They must be taught that success is measured not only by marks, but also by humanity, integrity, cooperation, courage, and sensitivity. They must also be explained that society is not just something to be taken, but also a responsibility to give. Only when a child understands the sense of duty in their lives do they resolve to do something for society.

The first step to giving children a new perspective is to provide them with the right role models. Role models don't just mean great personalities, but also include small examples from everyday life that have a profound impact on their behavior. Examples include feeding the hungry, helping the elderly, protecting nature, keeping public places clean, speaking the truth, recognizing gender equality, eliminating caste discrimination, and respecting the law. When a child sees these examples vividly in their home and society, they develop similar character traits.

To develop this vision in children, the most important thing is to let them think for themselves, experience for themselves, and learn for themselves. Imposing our own thinking on children is not the path to social change, but rather a way to force society into stagnancy. If a child realizes that society has problems and that it is possible to change them, then an understanding of reality and the courage to change are born within them.

Giving children a new perspective doesn't mean letting them live in idealistic fantasies. Rather, it means teaching them that society is complex, that problems are real, but solutions are also possible. It means teaching them to embrace challenges. It means showing them that the path to progress lies through struggle, and that even their small efforts can lead to big changes.

If we can make future generations understand that society is not an external system, but the collective consciousness of all of us—then this journey to transform society can be powerful and successful. Children will create the society we sow within them today. If we sow the seeds of truth, justice, compassion, equality, science, wisdom, and human values within them today, they will reap the harvest of that society tomorrow.

Ultimately, it boils down to the same principle—to transform society, we must first provide our children with a new perspective. This perspective will not only illuminate their future but also elevate the collective consciousness of our society to new horizons. Because a child is not just the hope of a family or the future of a nation—they are the lamp whose light illuminates the path to the future.

Nagas urge Centre, Naga negotiators to deliver early political solution



DIMAPUR, Nov 18: The Naga Common Platform (NCP) on Tuesday passed three resolutions, including an early and comprehensive solution to the long-pending Naga political issue. The NCP passed the three resolutions unanimously at the stakeholders' rally organised by Nagaland Gaon Buras Federation (NGBF) in collaboration with various apex civil society organisations at Agri Expo, Chumoukedima. The Naga Common Platform expressed full support for the land-

mark agreements signed between the Government of India, the NSCN (IM), and the Working Committee of the Naga National Political Groups (WC NNPGs) in 2015 and 2017, respectively. They urged the Centre to deliver a political settlement based on the Framework Agreement and the Agreed Position to ensure lasting peace in Nagaland. The NCP remarked that a century of political struggle and 28 years of negotiation have burdened the people, and called on both the Government of India and Naga ne-

gotiators to heed stakeholders' voices and bring the talks to their logical conclusion. The three-point resolutions were signed by Shikuto Zalipu, Convener of the NCP Organising Committee; secretaries Akhu Naga and Zanbenthung Ezung; along with several other Naga leaders. Despite calls from several tribal apex bodies not to attend, thousands converged at the venue for the rally. The Nagaland Tribal Hohos Coordination Committee (NTHCC) had earlier announced its decision

to abstain from the event, stating that forming a parallel platform could undermine ongoing reconciliation efforts among Naga stakeholders.

The NTHCC, which includes the Angami Public Organisation, Ao Senden, Chakhesang Public Organisation, Lotha Hoho, Pochury Hoho, Rengma Hoho, Sümi Hoho and the Nagaland Zeliang People's Organisation, reaffirmed its commitment to unity and a collective political future for the Naga people.

Meanwhile, addressing the gathering, organising committee member K K Sema underscored the need for a unified, transparent and inclusive platform to resolve the Indo-Naga political issue.

He expressed concern over fragmentation within the Naga movement, the rise of multiple illicit taxations by various groups, and the lack of transparency in negotiations.

Sema appealed to the NSCN (IM) to be forthright with the Naga public, stating that their future cannot be decided in secrecy.

Several other speakers echoed the demand for an early and honourable solution, highlighting the urgency of ending the prolonged political stalemate. (PTI)

Thousands rally in Kohima for justice; submits memo addressed to CM in woman murder case

KOHIMA, Nov 18: Thousands of people from all walks of life on Tuesday converged at Police Headquarters in Nagaland's capital, Kohima, demanding capital punishment or life imprisonment for the accused in the brutal murder of a 22-year-old woman on October 24.

The peaceful protest rally, organised by the Southern Angami Youth Organisation (SAYO)—to which the woman belonged—saw participants wearing traditional tribal attire and holding placards and banners calling for justice.

Leaders representing several organisations addressed the gathering, including Porutso Khel (sector) of Jakhama village, the victim's native village; Jakhama Youth Organisation; Southern Angami Women Organisation; Angami Youth Organisation; Angami Women Organisation; Western Angami Youth Organisation; Northern Angami Youth Organisation; and Chakroma Youth Organisation.

They condemned the heinous crime and supported the call for swift justice and stronger protections for women.

Speakers also mourned the loss of a promising young athlete who had represented both district and state basketball teams, and who was also a brilliant economics topper.

The rallyists marched nearly 3 km from PHQ junction to the Deputy Commissioner's office, where representatives of SAYO and the Southern Angami people submitted a memorandum addressed to Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio through the DC Kohima.

They sought urgent and decisive action in the case, stating that the murder had "shaken the conscience of the entire community" and intensified fear among women and girls.

The memorandum described the murder as "inhuman and unacceptable" and urged the highest level of state for intervention.



SAYO acknowledged the arrest of one accused—Samuel, the victim's adopted uncle—but demanded that all persons connected to the crime, directly or indirectly, be identified, arrested, and interrogated without delay. No perpetrator or accomplice must remain at large, it said.

The organisation sought the "strictest and most deterrent punishment" under the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) 2023, urging an uncompromising prosecution to send a powerful message against crimes targeting women.

Citing the gravity of the crime and the potential threat to witnesses and society, the memorandum asked authorities to oppose bail applications at every stage. It urged that no accused be released on bail until justice is fully delivered and discouraged anyone from attempting to bail out the accused.

The organisation stated it would continue its stand until justice is delivered and concrete safety mechanisms are put in place. It urged the government to prioritise the matter and ensure timely action as the case progresses with the State authorities. (PTI)

Opposition VPP demands audit of funds allotted to MLAs in Meghalaya

SHILLONG, Nov 18: Opposition Voice of the People Party (VPP) president Ardent M Basaiawmoit on Tuesday sought an independent inquiry into the implementation of MLAs' schemes in Meghalaya.

He urged the state government to constitute the probe immediately and begin the investigation from 2008, starting with his constituency in East Khasi Hills district.

In a letter addressed to the chief minister, Basaiawmoit said he was responding to the CM's recent remarks expressing concern over the manner in which MLA schemes are implemented, particularly in constituencies represented by those in the opposition.

Basaiawmoit said he appreciated the chief minister's apprehensions and fully endorsed the view that MLA schemes must be utilised transparently and effectively.

He added that the VPP, a new political party formed by him in 2022 with four MLAs, had already issued instructions to all its legislators to ensure transparent implementation of schemes.

The MLA scheme in Meghalaya involves substantial public funds, including the annual MLA Local Area Development Scheme allocation of over Rs 2 crore each over and above the Discretionary Grant (DG).

Each MLA receives Rs 10 lakh a year under the DG, meant for urgent or welfare-related assistance.

A CAG report had earlier flagged gaps in accountability, noting that utilisation certificates for over Rs 10 crore in DG funds remained unsubmitted over the years in the state.

Drawing from the CM's statement, Basaiawmoit said an independent inquiry was essential to inform the public and restore trust in the system. The investigation, he suggested, should begin with projects sanctioned since 2008 in Nongkrem before covering other constituencies across the state.

He expressed hope that the government would consider the demand seriously in the interest of transparency and public confidence. (PTI)

Meghalaya: 2 women in critical condition after drunken guard rams car into them

SHILLONG, Nov 18: Two students of North Eastern Hill University (NEHU) here were critically injured after a drunken guard of the institution rammed a car into them, an official said on Tuesday.

The incident took place around 7 pm on Monday near gate number 2 of the campus.

The guard was driving a car in an intoxicated condition and he lost control of the vehicle, he said.

The car first hit a parked scooter before veering towards the gate and hitting the two students, identified as Darinteng Pohdukhei and Stephanie Shadap, both from the Chemistry Department.

CCTV footage showed the vehicle speeding towards the students as they were walking along the road moments before the impact, the official said. (PTI)

366 brokers arrested in three years

Infiltration along Tripura's international border sees sharp decline

AGARTALA, Nov 18: Illegal infiltration into Tripura from Bangladesh has dropped significantly since June 2025, according to a statement issued by the Superintendent of Police (Police Control).

Tripura, which shares an 856-km international border with Bangladesh, has witnessed a notable reduction in cross-border movement following intensified surveillance and targeted operations against border brokers and their networks.

Sources said security forces have arrested 366 brokers and accomplices over the last three years under various legal provisions. Authorities have also registered multiple cases against individuals involved in forging documents and facilitating the movement of illegal immigrants.

"The combined efforts of the Police and the Border Security Force (BSF) have been crucial in dismantling the infiltration network. The BSF continues to maintain strict vigilance along the border, while personnel of the Tripura State Rifles (TSR) have been instructed to enhance coordination on the issue," police officials stated.

To strengthen monitoring beyond border areas, plainclothes security personnel have been deployed at Agartala's Maharaja Bir Bikram (MBB) Airport, major railway stations, and key bus terminals.

The Special Branch has also been directed to share intelligence inputs related to infiltration without delay. Acting on such information, authorities have recently arrested several Bangladeshi and Rohingya infiltrators, along with Indian brokers allegedly involved in assisting them.

Officials emphasized that sustained cooperation among the state police, BSF, and intelligence agencies will be essential to maintaining the recent progress in curbing illegal infiltration.

NU trains farmers on innovative agricultural practices

DIMAPUR, Nov 18: The Nagaland University organised a 10-day farmers' training programme on extraction and value addition of non-conventional banana fibre for empowering Naga farmers.

The training, organised by the agricultural engineering department, in collaboration with Science & Technology Intervention in North Eastern Region (STINER), SAS, Nagaland University, Medziphema campus and funded by ICAR-National Institute of Fiber Engineering and Technology (NINFET), Kolkata, from November 13, was aimed at empowering local farmers with innovative agricultural practices, a varsity release said on Monday.

During the inaugural programme, Project-PI, Prof. Khan Chand, provided a brief overview of the project and the benefits of eco-friendly banana fibres. Drawing on his extensive experience in food processing, he elucidated the journey of banana fibre from extraction to marketable product.

A total of 25 local farmers participated in the inaugural session. The importance of adopting sustainable, innovative technologies in agriculture to uplift rural farmers was stressed at the programme.

The interactive session underscored the potential of banana fiber as an eco-friendly alternative for various industries and inspired participants to embrace new skills for economic growth.

During the training, they were given hands-on training designed to teach them the efficient extraction of banana fibre and the sequential processes required to convert this natural resource into marketable products. This initiative aims to enhance value addition and generate alternative livelihoods for the farming community. Such programmes are aimed at bridging the gap between advanced scientific research and its practical application at the grassroots level, thereby fostering community development and entrepreneurship among local farmers.

Nagaland University develops high-yield ginger variety to boost farmers' income

NEW DELHI, Nov 18: Nagaland University researchers have developed a new ginger variety 'SAS-KEVU' that consistently delivers superior yield, dry matter recovery and culinary quality, making it a high-value option for farmers, fresh produce market and spice-processing industry, according to officials.

The SAS-KEVU has been formally notified by the Sub-Committee on Crop Standards, Notification and Release of Varieties (Horticultural Crops), Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare and published in the Gazette of India. Taken up under the All India Co-ordinated Research Project (AICRP) on Spices, located in Nagaland University, SAS-KEVU emerged after nearly a decade of scientific evaluation and extensive multi-location testing across seven AICRP centres in India.

"This landmark achievement is the result of nine years of rigorous, co-ordinated national trials carried out by our dedicated team of scientists in collaboration with partner institutions. 'SAS-KEVU' has been specifically developed to deliver higher yields, improved quality, and greater resilience, offering farmers a reliable

DMC launches digital rate board in Dimapur



In his address, DMC CEO Thungchabemo Tungoe emphasised the municipal council's commitment to modernising public services, saying this small initiative shows that Dimapur is progressing.

"Today, digital rate board installation at three places in Dimapur is a beginning, which will be installed more in other areas," Tungoe said.

He urged other counsellors to initiate such small changes and make their presence felt to take Dimapur town forward.

Tungeo added that the digital system is designed to enhance transparency and reduce confusion.

"With the installation, it will display daily rates, category-wise pricing, and other key service details in a clear and easily readable format," he stated.

He also said the business houses can advertise their products through the digital board chart.

Delivering the keynote address, Neingutolie Kenguruse, convener, Market Review Committee, highlighted the importance of digitalisation in streamlining market operations and ensuring that consumers receive accurate, updated price information.

public. Inaugurating the digital rate board, DMC chairman Hukheto Yephomi said the initiative reflects DMC's broader goal of improving public convenience through technology-driven solutions.

He said this installation of the digital rate board would help people know what to pay for which items and prevent items from being sold at high prices.

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ASSOCIATE S&T WORK IN LUMDING DIVISION

E-Tender No. : SNT-28-LMG-2025-26; Dated: 15-11-2025; E-Tender are invited by the undersigned for the following work: Name of work : Associate S&T work in connection with installation of ATVM of Lumding Division. Tender Value: ₹50,12,227.44/-, Bid Security, ₹1,00,300/-; Date & time of closing of tender at 15:00 hours on 08-12-2025. Complete information alongwith the tender document of above e-tender will be available in the website www.ireps.gov.in

Dr. DEE/TRD & GS/Lumding

NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY
Serving Customers With A Smile

MODIFICATION OF EXISTING OHE ARRANGEMENT

Tender Notice No. TRD/LMG/21 of 2025-26; Dated: 14-11-2025. E-tenders are invited by the undersigned for the following works: Tender No: EL-TRD-NFR-LMG-OHE-MOD-43; Name of work: For Modification of existing OHE arrangement and Provision for protective Screen, Earthing & Bonding, Safety Item/Boards etc. suitable for proposed launching of 01 No. 12 M Wide Steel Girder ROB at Km 1977 (ST-50) Between Lumding-Bar Longfer Section, Lumding Division. Advertised Value: ₹34,29,985.36; Earnest Money: ₹88,600.00. E-tender will be closed at 15:00 hrs. on 08-12-2025. The complete information with the tender document of above e-tender is available on website www.ireps.gov.in

Dr. DEE/TRD & GS/Lumding

NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY
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E-AUCTION FOR 21 NOS MULTIPURPOSE STALL OVER LUMDING DIVISION

E-Auction is invited for 21 Nos. Multipurpose Stall over Lumding Division for a period of 05 years. Auction Catalogue No.: MPS-LMG-05-25; Rate Unit : Annual Licensing Fee. Auction Start Date & Time (All Lots) : At 10:30 hrs. on 01-12-2025. Days: 1826.

Seq No.	Lot No./Category	Description
AA/1	MPS-LMG-HKD-MPS-32-23-1 (MPS - Multi Purpose Stalls)	At PF-1 of Hailakandi Railway Station.
AA/2	MPS-LMG-BPB-MPS-26-23-1 (MPS - Multi Purpose Stalls)	At circulating cum parking area of Badarpur Station.
AA/3	MPS-LMG-NHLG-MPS-116-25-1 (MPS - Multi Purpose Stalls)	At PF-1 of New Haflong station ('D' category)
AA/4	MPS-LMG-JMK-MPS-15-23-1 (MPS - Multi Purpose Stalls)	At PF-1 of Jamunamukh Station. (Sketch plan uploaded).
AA/5	MPS-LMG-KTX-MPS-102-25-1 (MPS - Multi Purpose Stalls)	At Katakhal Railway station. Sketch plan uploaded.
AA/6	MPS-LMG-NHLG-MPS-112-25-1 (MPS - Multi Purpose Stalls)	At PF-2 of New Haflong station. Reserved for ST category.
AA/7	MPS-LMG-MBG-MPS-35-23-1 (MPS - Multi Purpose Stalls)	At PF-1 of Maibang Station. (Sketch plan uploaded).
AA/8	MPS-LMG-JGJN-MPS-21-23-1 (MPS - Multi Purpose Stalls)	At PF-2 of Jugjain Station. (Sketch plan uploaded).
AA/9	MPS-LMG-NGAN-MPS-33-23-1 (MPS - Multi Purpose Stalls)	At PF-1 of Nagaon Station. (Sketch plan uploaded).
AA/10	MPS-LMG-NHLG-MPS-119-25-1 (MPS - Multi Purpose Stalls)	At PF-1 of New Haflong station ('D' category).
AA/11	MPS-LMG-MANU-MPS-40-23-1 (MPS - Multi Purpose Stalls)	At PF-2 of Manu Station. (Sketch plan uploaded).
AA/12	MPS-LMG-NHLG-MPS-110-25-1 (MPS - Multi Purpose Stalls)	At PF-1 of New Haflong station. Reserved for OBC category.
AA/13	MPS-LMG-NHLG-MPS-114-25-1 (MPS - Multi Purpose Stalls)	At PF-1 of New Haflong station. Reserved for SC category.
AA/14	MPS-LMG-KWM-MPS-11-23-1 (MPS - Multi Purpose Stalls)	At PF-1 of Kampur Station. (Sketch plan uploaded).
AA/15	MPS-LMG-LKA-MPS-47-24-1 (MPS - Multi Purpose Stalls)	At platform-1 of Lanka station, sketch plan attached.
AA/16	MPS-LMG-BHRB-MPS-107-25-1 (MPS - Multi Purpose Stalls)	At platform -1 of Bhairabi station (Unreserved category).
AA/17	MPS-LMG-KWM-MPS-108-25-1 (MPS - Multi Purpose Stalls)	At platform -2 of Kampur station (Unreserved category).
AA/18	MPS-LMG-JGJN-MPS-18-23-1 (MPS - Multi Purpose Stalls)	At PF-1 of Jugjain Station. (Sketch plan uploaded).
AA/19	MPS-LMG-ABSA-MPS-28-23-1 (MPS - Multi Purpose Stalls)	At PF-1 of Ambassa Station. (Sketch plan uploaded).
AA/20	MPS-LMG-NHLG-MPS-111-25-1 (MPS - Multi Purpose Stalls)	At PF-2 of New Haflong station ('D' category).
AA/21	MPS-LMG-NHLG-MPS-113-25-1 (MPS - Multi Purpose Stalls)	At PF-2 of New Haflong station ('D' category).

Closing date & time : At 14:20 hrs. on 01-12-2025. Initial Cooling off period is 30 minutes. Successive lots closing interval 10 minutes. Note : Prospective bidder are requested to visit e-Auction leasing module on IREPS website www.ireps.gov.in for more details.

Dr. DCM, Lumding

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ED raids against Al Falah University, linked persons in Red Fort blast case

NEW DELHI, Nov 18: The Enforcement Directorate on Tuesday conducted simultaneous searches in Delhi-NCR against the trustees and promoters of Al Falah University of Faridabad, the varsity central to the Red Fort area car blast case, officials said.

Multiple teams of the federal probe agency raided at least 25 premises of the Al Falah trust and University establishment since 5:15 am, they said.

Teams of the agency raided an office location in Delhi's Okhla area with a security cordon being provided by the police and paramilitary forces.

Fifteen persons have been killed in the blast that took place on November 10 near the iconic monument in Delhi and the role of a number of doctors linked to the University and in Kashmir is under the scanner of the anti-terror probe agencies.

"The operation forms part of an ongoing investigation into financial irregularities, use of shell companies, accommodation entities and money laundering. The role of Al-Falah Trust and related entities is under investigation," an ED official said.



The official said "key" personnel overseeing finance and administration of the trust and the University have also been covered in the raids.

The agency has taken cognisance of the first information reports filed by the NIA and the Delhi Police in the case. Till now, the NIA has arrested two persons, stated to be

the alleged close aides of "suicide bomber" Dr Umar Nabi.

At least nine shell (dummy) companies linked to the group, all registered at a single address, are under the examination of the ED, according to the officials.

Preliminary findings point to multiple "risk" indicators consistent with shell-com-

pany behaviour like no physical presence or meaningful utility consumption at declared places of business and common mobile number and email across various companies and accounts.

The ED investigators have also found absence of EPFO/ESIC filings inconsistent with reported scale of operations and overlapping of directors/signatories and weak KYC trails across entities.

Instances of minimal salary disbursement through banking channels and absence of HR (human resource) records part from synchronised incorporation patterns and common contact coordinates across firms have been detected at the varsity, the officials said.

In addition, prima facie discrepancies have been noted in claims regarding UGC and NAAC recognition which indicate alleged non-compliance to norms established for educational institutions, the officials said.

The Al Falah varsity is located in the Dhauj area of Haryana's Faridabad district, and it is a medical college-cum-hospital. (PTI)

JD(U) would have won less than 25 seats had it not given ₹ 10,000 to women: Kishor



PATNA, Nov 18: Jan Suraj Party leader Prashant Kishor on Tuesday claimed that Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's JD(U) would have been limited to just 25 seats had his government not given ₹ 10,000 to over 60,000 beneficiaries in each constituency just before the assembly elections and promised ₹ 2 lakh to 1.5 crore women across the state under a self-employment scheme.

He accused the NDA government of promising ₹ 40,000 crore of people's money, and rolling out a large chunk of it just ahead of the elections.

Addressing a press conference here, Kishor said that his Jan Suraj Party made an honest effort to make people understand the issues facing them but failed to make a mark in the polls, and that he took full responsibility for the debacle.

"None of our candidates is going to the assembly. People's mandate for us is to go among the people and struggle," he said.

Citing an English phrase, he said, "You are not defeated until you quit."

"We may have made mistakes, but have not committed the crime of doing divisive politics and buying the votes of the innocent people," he added.

Kishor also alleged that 'vote chori' (theft of votes) is a pan-India issue, and urged national opposition parties to hold deliberations on the matter and move the Supreme Court, if needed.

"We received a setback, but we will rectify the mistakes, build ourselves and come back stronger... there is no going back for us," he asserted.

On the question whether he failed to understand Bihar, he said, "Yes, I failed to understand Bihar, unlike Nitish Kumar, BJP leader Samrat Choudhary and others who divided people on caste and religious lines and bought votes of people using money."

"To not get votes is not a crime... at least I have not indulged in corruption or divisive politics," he said.

Kishor said he would "definitely quit" politics if the NDA government fulfils its poll promise and gives ₹ 2 lakh each to 1.5 crore women under self-employment initiatives. The Jan Suraj leader was alluding to his pre-poll claim of quitting politics if JD(U) got more than 25 seats.

"Between Nitish Kumar and his victory, there is only one thing -- buying of 60,000 votes in each assembly constituency at ₹ 10,000. It should be made clear whether it was a vote purchase or part of a self-employment programme," he said.

"People have given the mandate to NDA, now it's on the shoulders of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Nitish Kumar to work on fulfilling their poll promises," he said.

"Self-employment is very important; they must give the ₹ 2 lakh they promised. This will prove that the sum of 10,000 given to women was a welfare initiative. People who don't get the money in six months' time can come to Jan Suraj, we will fight to ensure they get the amount," he said.

He also urged Modi and Kumar to keep the corrupt and criminals out of the government when it is formed.

Notably, before the polls, Kishor had raised the issue of charges of crime and corruption against several NDA leaders, including Samrat Choudhary, Ashok Choudhary, and Mangal Pandey.

Kishor said that as repentance on not being able to make people understand on what issues they should vote, he would hold a fast for a day at Bhitiharwar in West Champaran district on November 20, when the NDA government is likely to take oath. (PTI)

Authorities struggle to manage massive pilgrim flow at Sabarimala

PATHANAMTHITTA (KERALA), Nov 18: As nearly two lakh devotees arrived at the Lord Ayyappa shrine at Sabarimala here on Tuesday within 48 hours of the temple opening for the annual 'mandala-makaravilakku' pilgrimage season, the TDB and the police struggled to manage the massive flow of pilgrims, including children.

Visuals on TV channels showed a massive crowd of devotees packed like sardines in the small area in front of the 18 steps that have to be climbed to reach the main doors of the shrine.

Large crowds of devotees packed the pilgrimage route from Pamba, the foothills of Sabarimala, to the Sannidhanam, with many facing hours-long delays in climbing the path.

Small children carried on top of their parents' shoulders could be seen crying as the huge crowd of devotees jostled with each other to move forward.

Many devotees were seen climbing over the barricades in place for crowd control, with the police failing to prevent such incidents.

There were also reported complaints of pilgrims not receiving water while standing in the long queues for hours.

Earlier, newly appointed Travancore Devaswom Board (TDB) president K Jayakumar said that instructions have been issued to ensure devotees are able to steadily climb the 18 steps for the darshan and that no one cuts the lines to move in front.

He also said that 200 additional personnel have been assigned to go to the people in the queues and provide them with water.

"I have never seen such a massive and dangerous crowd on the temple grounds till now. It appears some people cut the line to jump in front. Even I am scared seeing the large crowd here."

"I have issued directions to ensure steady movement of the pilgrims and ensure no one cuts the line or queue. Such a large crowd should not have collected here," he said.

Jayakumar also said that he has issued directions to restrict the flow of devotees at Nilakkal to reduce the crowd of pilgrims at Pamba and ensure they can complete their pilgrimage quickly without having to wait 3-5 hours in queues.

"People can wait at Nilakkal. There are facilities there for that. Also, will set up seven additional

spot booking counters there so that devotees do not have to come to Pamba for that," he said.

Later, restrictions were put in place and devotees were temporarily prevented from moving forward at Nilakkal and some other waypoints along the pilgrimage route as part of the crowd control measures.

ADGPS Sreejith contended that things were still in control.

He said that last year, the number of pilgrims crossed the one lakh mark on four separate days.

But this time, within two days, around two lakh pilgrims have arrived for the pilgrimage.

There are two problems, and these can be resolved if the people cooperate. Firstly, despite us capping spot booking at 20,000 as per court directions, more people are turning up for it.

"They are demanding immediate darshan through spot booking. So, we had to allow 37,000 people through spot booking as we could not turn them away," he told reporters here.

The second problem was that people arriving through virtual-Q booking were not arriving on the day they had booked.

"They turn up when they feel like it. They should not do that. If people come in a disciplined manner, these problems can be resolved," he said.

Sreejith also said that enough police personnel have been deployed. Furthermore, many people are not coming via queues, which has also resulted in the present situation, he added.

In the morning, the TDB president said that the devotees were not entering the queue complexes set up at Sabarimala, afraid that they might lose their priority in the line.

"But, if they enter the queue complexes, it would be easier for us to provide them with water and biscuits," he said.

He also said that around 200 cleaning personnel were being brought from Tamil Nadu to clean the toilets at Sabarimala.

Later in the afternoon, Jayakumar said that things were not out of control.

He said that entry to Sabarimala will be restricted to one lakh per day.

"This is an unprecedented crowd. There is nothing to be concerned about right now. From tomorrow, spot booking will be restricted to 20,000 per day. Things will be normalised soon," he added. (PTI)

Top naxal commander among six Maoists killed in Andhra Pradesh encounter

MAREDUILLI/RAIPUR, Nov 18: Top naxal commander Madvi Hidma and his wife were among the six Maoists killed in an encounter with security personnel in Andhra Pradesh's Alluri Sitaramaraju district on Tuesday, police said.

The death of Hidma, an alleged mastermind of several attacks, was described by Chhattisgarh police as the "last nail in the coffin" of insurgency.

Alluri Sitaramaraju district superintendent of police (SP) Amit Bardar said the encounter happened between 6.30 am and 7 am in the forested area of Maredumilli mandal.

"Today morning, between 6:30 AM and 7:00 AM, an exchange of fire (EOF) occurred between Maoists and the police party in the Maredumilli Mandal area. During the encounter, six Maoists were neutralised," an official press release said.

Two women and four men were killed in the exchange of fire. Based on reliable sources and field verification, police confirmed that Hidma, his wife Madakam Rajee, Deve, Lakmal (Chaitu), Malla (Mallalu) and Kamlu (Kamlesh) died.

Intelligence inputs over the past few weeks had indicated increased Maoist movement along the Andhra Pradesh-Chhattisgarh-Odisha border, leading to intensified combing operations, police said.

Following the encounter, police seized two AK 47 rifles, one pistol, one revolver and a single bore weapon, a number of electrical



and non-electrical detonators, fuse wire, seven kit bags and others.

"Combing operations are continuing in the surrounding areas to ensure complete sanitisation and prevent further Maoist activity," the press release added.

According to the SP, it was a joint operation carried out by various wings of the police department.

Addressing a press conference, Andhra Pradesh Intelligence ADGP Mahesh Chandra Ladda said Maoists from a few battalions were planning to shift to Andhra Pradesh due to continuous pressure in Chhattisgarh.

Consequently, police kept a close and continuous watch on their movements.

"For the last two days, we had very specific intelligence that a few top Maoist leaders were entering the state and were planning to revive the movement," Ladda said, adding that the bodies of the six Maoists were shifted for post-mortem, and that the necessary action will be taken thereafter.

Further, police monitoring in other districts such as NTR, Krishna, Kakinada and Eluru led to the arrest of 31 more members of the proscribed organisation.

Out of the 31 arrested, nine were security guards of central committee member Devji, while the remaining were from the battalion, Ladda said.

It has also been reported that a few Maoists managed to flee from the encounter site, and combing operations are currently under way, the official added.

Meanwhile, Chhattisgarh Police described Hidma's death as the "last nail in the coffin" of the insurgency. He had masterminded several attacks over the last two decades.

A native of Puvarti village in Sukma district in Chhattisgarh, Hidma's age and appearance remained mysterious until his photograph surfaced earlier this year.

He headed the Maoists' People's Liberation Guerrilla Army (PLGA) Battalion No.1, the strongest military formation of the outfit in Dandakaranya, which spans parts of Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, Telangana, and Maharashtra, apart from Bastar, for several years, officials said. (PTI)

Over 96 per cent of enumeration forms distributed under SIR, says Kerala CEO

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, Nov 18: Kerala Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Rathan Khelkar on Monday said the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls is progressing effectively and appealed to everyone to ensure the successful completion of the exercise as per the scheduled timelines.

Over 96 per cent of the enumeration forms have already been distributed owing to the dedicated and committed efforts of Booth Level Officers (BLOs) across the State, the official noted in a statement. The CEO's office issued the statement on the day the Left government in the state approached the Supreme Court seeking a direction to postpone the SIR.

The statement also assumed significance at a time when Kerala is witnessing an intense row over the suicide of a BLO allegedly due to work strain. (PTI)

EC must immediately demonstrate it's not operating under BJP's shadow: Congress

NEW DELHI, Nov 18: Upping the ante over its 'vote chori' pitch, the Congress on Tuesday said the Election Commission's conduct during the SIR process has been "deeply disappointing" and demanded that the poll body must immediately demonstrate that it is not operating under the BJP's shadow. Congress president Mallikrjun Kharge also alleged that the BJP is attempting to weaponise the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls process for "vote chori", as he chaired a meeting with key office bearers of 12 states and Union territories where the SIR is underway.

Kharge, former party chief Rahul Gandhi and AICC general secretary organisation KC Venugopal participated in a review meeting with state unit chiefs, Congress Legislature Party leaders and secretaries of 12 states and Union

territories where the SIR is underway.

"We held a comprehensive strategy review with AICC general secretaries, AICC in-charges, PCCs, CLPs, and AICC secretaries from the states/UTs where the SIR process is underway. The Congress Party is unequivocally committed to safeguarding the integrity of the electoral rolls," Kharge said on X after he chaired the meeting. At a time when public confidence in democratic institutions is already strained, the Election Commission's conduct during the SIR process has been "deeply disappointing", he said.

"It must immediately demonstrate that it is not operating under the BJP's shadow and it remembers its Constitutional oath and allegiance to the people of India, not to any ruling party," Kharge said. (PTI)

'Didn't sense any disgruntlement'

MUMBAI, Nov 18: While most Shiv Sena ministers on Tuesday skipped the meeting of the Devendra Fadnavis-led Maharashtra cabinet, Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar, who heads the ruling NCP, said he did not sense any disgruntlement during the meeting.

From the Shiv Sena, only Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, who heads the party, attended the cabinet meeting, sources said. The ruling Sena wanted to send a message to ally BJP that it did not approve of the latter weaning away its workers and leaders. The recent defections from the Sena to the BJP in Kalyan-Dombivli seem to be the trigger point, they said. Talking to reporters here, Pawar, however, said he was under the impression that the absence of Sena ministers was due to the scrutiny of nomination papers for the December 2 municipal council polls.

"Makrand Patil from the NCP was absent (for the cabinet meeting). Even our Hasan Mushrif left early. Had I had known about Shiv Sena ministers being upset, I would have asked Eknath Shinde about it. But I did not sense any disgruntlement," Pawar said. (PTI)

SC refuses to entertain fresh PIL on rising pollution levels in Delhi, others cities

NEW DELHI, Nov 18: The Supreme Court on Tuesday refused to entertain a fresh PIL by a wellness expert seeking urgent judicial intervention to tackle a "persistent and systemic failure" in addressing the country's rising air pollution levels.

The top court, however, allowed holistic health coach Luke Christopher Coutinho to withdraw the PIL and file an intervention plea in a pending case filed by environmentalist M C Mehta on pollution.

"The petitioner seeks liberty to withdraw the plea to file an intervention in pending proceedings in the MC Mehta case," the CJ said.

The court is scheduled to hear the main plea on pollution on Wednesday.

Coutinho had filed the plea on October 24 and made the Centre, Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM), several Union ministries, NITI Aayog, and the governments of Delhi, Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and Maharashtra as parties.

The plea said the current air pollution crisis has reached proportions of a "public health emergency", violating citizens' fundamental right to life and health under Ar-



article 21 of the Constitution.

The plea sought declaration of air pollution as a national public health emergency and formulation of a time-bound national action plan.

"The National Clean Air Programme

(NCAP), launched in 2019 with the target of reducing particulate matter by 20-30 percent by 2024 (subsequently extended to 40 percent by 2026), has not met its modest objectives. As of July 2025, official data reveals that only 25 of the 130 designated

cities have achieved a 40 per cent reduction in PM10 levels from the 2017 baseline, while 25 other cities have in fact seen an increase," it said.

Similar violations are cited in the plea for Kolkata and Lucknow, among others.

The plea sought a direction to make NCAP targets binding with "statutory force, including clear timelines, measurable indicators, and enforceable penalties for non-compliance".

In Delhi alone, 2.2 million schoolchildren have already suffered irreversible lung damage, as confirmed by government and medical studies, the plea alleged.

The plea also submits that air quality monitoring systems are inadequate.

It also sought setting up a National Task Force on Air Quality and Public Health chaired by an independent environmental health expert.

It sought immediate curbs on crop residue burning, including farmer incentives and sustainable alternatives besides phasing out high-emitting vehicles and promoting e-mobility and public transport.

The plea sought strict enforcement of industrial emission norms with real-time monitoring and public disclosure. (PTI)

PM's Rammath Goenka Lecture served as both economic outlook: Tharoor

NEW DELHI, Nov 18: Senior Congress leader Shashi Tharoor on Tuesday said Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Rammath Goenka Lecture served as both an economic outlook and a cultural call to action, urging the nation to be restless for progress.

Noting that Prime Minister Modi appealed for a 10-year national mission to restore pride in India's heritage, languages and knowledge systems, Tharoor said he wishes the PM had also acknowledged how Rammath Goenka had used English to raise a voice for Indian nationalism.

"Attended PM Narendra Modi's Rammath Goenka Lecture at the invitation of @IndianExpress last night. He spoke of India's 'constructive impatience' for development and strongly pushed for a post-colonial mindset," he said on X.

"On the whole, the PM's address served as both an economic outlook and a cultural call to action, urging the nation to be restless for progress. Glad to have been in the audience despite battling a bad cold and cough!" the Congress leader said.

Tharoor said the PM emphasised that India is "no longer just an 'emerging market' but an 'emerging model' for the world, noting its economic resilience. PM Modi said he'd been accused of being in 'election mode' all the time, but he was really in 'emotional mode' to redress the problems of the people".

A significant part of the speech was dedicated to overturning Macaulay's 200-year legacy of "slave mentality", Tharoor said.

"PM Modi appealed for a 10-year national mission to restore pride in India's heritage, languages, and knowledge systems. I wish he had also acknowledged how Rammath Goenka had used English to raise a voice for Indian nationalism!" the senior Congress leader said. (PTI)

PPA announces first list of ZPM candidates

Election campaigning launched from Kimin as Arunachal gears up for Panchayat polls

HT Correspondent

ITANAGAR, Nov 18: The People's Party of Arunachal (PPA) on Tuesday announced its first list of Zilla Parishad Member (ZPM) candidates for the upcoming Panchayat Raj elections in the state, becoming the first party to release names ahead of the polls scheduled for December 15.

PPA president and Doimukh MLA Nabam Vivek said that despite being an alliance partner in the Arunachal Pradesh government under NEDA, the party has taken the lead in announcing its candidates. The notification issued by the State Election Committee covers ZPM candidates for the 14th Doimukh Assembly Constituency, including Gomu Boje Yab (2nd Doimukh), Tana Rekha (13th Gumto), Biri Taming (12th Banderdewa), Nabam Sina (5th Lower Balijan), Teli Taya (4th Upper Balijan/Sangdupota), Dake Thomas (6th Tarasso) and Bamang Yau (3rd Kimin).

The State Election Commission (SEC) has announced polls for 27 Zilla Parishads, 245 ZP constituencies, 2,103 Gram Panchayats and 8,181 GP constituencies, spread



across 2,171 polling stations. Upper Subansiri tops with 17 ZP constituencies and 146 GPs, while Namsai leads with 573 GP constituencies. The total electorate stands at 7,59,210 with females accounting for 52.91% of voters.

For municipal elections, Itanagar Municipal Corporation has 60,066 electors across 20 wards, while Pasighat Municipal Council has 12,372 electors across 8 wards. Polling will be conducted at 67 stations in IMC and 12 stations in PMC. The last date for filing nominations is November 24, scrutiny on November 26, withdrawal by November 29,

with polling on December 15 and counting on December 20. The election process is expected to conclude by December 23.

Campaigning has officially begun at Kimin in Papum Pare district with the presence of four PPA MLAs and the announcement of eight candidates across all ZP segments of the Doimukh Assembly constituency.

The Model Code of Conduct (MCC) has been enforced statewide, prohibiting activities that incite tension, misuse of places of worship, loudspeakers without permission, distribution of liquor 48 hours prior to polling and electioneering near hospitals or schools. Candidates are barred from offering food or gifts to influence voters, including meat distribution and must adhere to expenditure limits: ₹ 3 lakh for ZPM and ₹ 50,000 for Gram Panchayat candidates.

Authorities have emphasised strict compliance with MCC rules, traffic regulations and prior permissions for political events to ensure smooth and fair conduct of Panchayat and Municipal elections across Arunachal Pradesh.

The DEO reviewed election readiness with the ROs and AROs, seeking feedback and suggestions from ground-level officials to ensure smooth conduct of the polls. He instructed officers to thoroughly study election guidelines and manuals to avoid mismanagement and emphasised the need for proactive engagement in all election-related matters.

DEO reviews preparedness for Panchayat Raj elections



HT Correspondent

DAPORJO, Nov 18: The District Election Officer (PR) of Upper Subansiri District, Tasso Gambo, convened a review meeting with all Returning Officers (ROs), Assistant Returning Officers (AROs) and designated nodal officers to assess preparedness for the upcoming Panchayat Raj elections. The meeting was held in his office chamber at Daporjo.

The DEO reviewed election readiness with the ROs and AROs, seeking feedback and suggestions from ground-level officials to ensure smooth conduct of the polls. He instructed officers to thoroughly study election guidelines and manuals to avoid mismanagement and emphasised the need for proactive engagement in all election-related matters.

The meeting was attended by SP Pawan Yadap, RO Daporjo Biaro Sorum, RO Dumorjo Otem Jamoh, RO Taliha Mobia Tai, RO Nacho Balwan Kamlo, along with all designated nodal officers and election staff.

Privilege committee holds 5th sitting

HT Correspondent

ITANAGAR, Nov 18: The 5th sitting of the Privilege Committee of the 8th Arunachal Pradesh Legislative Assembly was held on Tuesday under the chairmanship of Deputy Speaker Kardo Nyigyor at the Assembly Conference Hall.

The Committee examined replies submitted by various departments, including the District Administration, Tawang regarding the breach of privilege motion moved by Nangey Tsering, MLA (2-Tawang). After scrutiny, the Committee decided to issue strictures to all Deputy Commissioners, directing them to strictly follow prescribed protocols during official programmes to prevent future lapses.

Members present included Chau Zingnu Namchoom (HMLA), Pui-nyo Apum (HMLA), Hayeng Mangfi (HMLA) and Hage Appa (HMLA). Additional Advocate General Ninong Ratan and Legislative Assembly officers Tadar Meena, Agaab Mossang and Kheto Lowang also attended the meeting.

The Committee will continue its deliberations to uphold institutional protocols and protect the dignity of the House.

APUWJ honours journalists with Excellence Awards



HT Correspondent

ITANAGAR, Nov 18: The Arunachal Pradesh Union of Working Journalists (APUWJ) presented its annual Excellence in Journalism Awards on Sunday, honouring journalists and media organisations for outstanding contributions across various categories on the occasion of National Press Day.

Instituted in memory of veteran journalists V Ravindran and Taro Chatung the awards aim to promote ethical, ground-based and impactful reporting in Arunachal Pradesh. Ravindran, a former editor was known for his high standards in writing and public-interest reporting, while Chatung the state's first video journalist, championed free and responsible press, inspiring generations of reporters.

This year, the V Ravindran Excellence in Journalism Awards went to Marina Dai in the Human Interest category for her Down to Earth article, "Mobility Crisis in Itanagar: Rising Vehicle Dependency and Struggling Infrastructure." Liyum Ete won the Politics and Governance award for the NewsFy report "Electric fires main cause of blaze surge in Arunachal."

Under the Taro Chatung Excellence in Journalism Awards, DDK Itanagar won the Human Interest award for its documentary "New Dawn—New Voices." Khoda Yapi and Akom Tanju Don were recognised in Politics and Governance for their NewsFy report "On the Ground: Siang Dam backed by some, others demand dialogue." The Investigative award was conferred on Yomge Chisi and Akom Tanju Don for their NewsFy investigation "From Fields to the Streets: Inside Arunachal Drug Trade."

The awards were presented during the state-level National Press Day observance, highlighting the importance of a free, ethical and accountable media in strengthening democracy.

Parnaik urges volunteers to stay disciplined, prepared and become ambassadors of the North East

Governor calls youth 'torchbearers of tomorrow' at North East NSS Festival



HT Correspondent

ITANAGAR, Nov 18: Governor Lt General KT Parnaik, PVSM, UYSM, YSM (Retd), graced the valedictory ceremony of the North East National Service Scheme (NSS) Festival at Himalayan University, Itanagar on Tuesday, celebrating the participation of 320 volunteers from all eight North Eastern States.

The Governor presented awards and merit certificates to winners of cultural, quiz and PowerPoint presentation competitions. Akshya Thakur of Bodoland University, Assam received the Best NSS Volunteer award, while Manipur was adjudged the most disciplined team.

Arunachal Pradesh won the Traditional Group Dance competition, Heisnam Cindy of Manipur bagged first prize in PPT presentation, Curie Kojan won the extempore speech contest and Tech Monica along with Vicky Puroik of Arunachal Pradesh secured first prize in the quiz competition.

Addressing the volunteers, the Governor described youth as the "future torchbearers of the region and the nation," stating that they will shape India's journey towards 2047. He encouraged them to prepare for future responsibilities by acquiring knowledge, practicing discipline and dedicating themselves to nation-

RGU holds leadership workshop on student mental health

HT Correspondent

ITANAGAR, Nov 18: Rajiv Gandhi University (RGU) hosted a one-day Leadership Engagement training workshop under the ongoing ICMR multistate research project on suicide risk reduction and improving mental well-being in Arunachal Pradesh, implemented through AITS-RGU. The workshop brought together school leaders including Tabom Dabi (Govt Secondary School Karsingsha), Joya Geiyi (Govt Secondary School RGU), Meena Bhakat (Alphabet Public School, Amba), and Tassar Amung (Govt Secondary School Mani). The session aimed to equip school heads with strategies to support student mental well-being and reduce suicide risks.

Participants discussed challenges faced by students in difficult home environments, including domestic conflict, alcohol abuse, financial stress, broken families and limited parental presence.



Tribal parenting practices, where children take on responsibilities early were also noted as factors affecting emotional development.

The workshop emphasised the importance of parental engagement and suggested reintroducing subjects like 'Moral Science' to foster holistic development. Participants recalled earlier practices

such as teacher home visits, which strengthened student-parent-teacher relationships.

The program concluded with certificate distribution and the release of the second edition of RI-WATCH's international journal by Vijat Swami, Director, RIWATCH and Prof Simon John Samuel, Director, AITS-RGU.

Cycling Club marks 7th foundation day

HT Correspondent

ITANAGAR, Nov 18: The Itanagar Cycling Club celebrated its 7th Foundation Day on Monday at Indira Gandhi Park, Itanagar highlighting the occasion with awards, felicitations and a community-driven trail initiative. During the programme, the club conferred the Friends of Cycling Award on nine personalities for their contributions to promoting cycling culture. The awardees included Joram Lali, Ige Kadu, Charu Timba, Biken Nyigyor, Kampung Welly, Yaluk Padung, Kabak Geda, Tech Anthony and Guddu Prasad.

The club also felicitated Kanto Danggen and Karma Leki for their nomination to the IAS, along with Sang Lida for his selection to the APCS.

As part of the foundation day activities, members of the club undertook a cleanliness drive coupled with a trail walk along the 4-km IG Trail inside Indira Gandhi Park, a trail curated and maintained by the Itanagar Cycling Club.

building. He urged them to remain physically strong, mentally alert, morally upright and self-disciplined.

Calling the North East NSS Festival a vibrant celebration of youth energy and cultural harmony, the Governor said the festival truly embodied the spirit of Ash-talakshmi, a vision promoted by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He highlighted the transformative impact of the Act East Policy and urged volunteers to become ambassadors of the North East, showcasing its natural beauty, culture and harmony.

The Governor also recommended that NSS programmes include sessions on national security and discussions on major national and global issues to better prepare students. Expressing concern over the rising drug menace, he urged volunteers to spread awareness and compassion in their communities.

He commended the Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports, NSS Regional Directorate Guwahati, the State NSS Cell, Directorate of Higher & Technical Education and Himalayan University for successfully organising the festival. Senior officials including Education Commissioner Amjad Tak, Vice Chancellor Prof (Dr) Prakash Divakaran and State Liaison Officer Dr AK Mishra also addressed the gathering.

The valedictory ceremony featured a vibrant cultural parade and performances showcasing the diversity of the North East. During his maiden visit to the Himalayan University campus, the Governor also participated in the 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' plantation programme.

OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT UNIT NATIONAL HEALTH MISSION DISTRICT HEALTH SOCIETY, KARBI ANGLONG

Karbi Anglong, Diphu. Tele-03671-273038

Email: nhm.karbianglong@gmail.com

OFFLINE SHORT TENDER NOTICE

Sealed quotation affixing court fee of Rs.8.25 (Rupees Eight and Twenty five paise) only or Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council cash receipt of Rs. 10.00 (Rupees Ten) only are invited for supply of medicine for Emergency purpose at District Drug Ware House.NHM Karbi Anglong, respectively. The quotation will be received in the office of the undersigned up to 2.00 PM on 28 Nov 2025 and if the office is closed on this day due to Govt. Holiday or any other bandh, the next working day of the office will be the date of receiving and opening of quotation.

The undersigned reserve the right to reject any of the quotation.

Particulars/Items to be supplied:-

Sl. No.	Item Name	Rate including GST	Specification	Remarks
1.	As per EDL (https://amscl.assam.gov.in)			

* Quotation with any deviation in specification will be straight away rejected.

* Incomplete and late Quotations are liable to be rejected summarily.

Terms and Conditions:

- Each supplier shall submit only ONE quotation.
- Evaluation of Quotations
- The Purchaser will evaluate and compare the quotations determined to be substantially responsive i.e. which
 - Are properly signed
 - Confirm the terms and conditions, and specifications.
 - The Quotations would be evaluated for all the items together, on the basis of rates, delivery terms
- Location of Delivery will be in Office of the District Drug Ware House, National Health Mission, Karbi Anglong, Diphu.
- The Purchaser will award the contract to the bidder whose quotation has been determined to be substantially responsive and who has offered the lowest evaluated quotation price.
- Notwithstanding the above, the Purchaser reserves the right to accept or reject any quotations and to cancel the bidding process and reject all quotations at any time prior to the award of contract.
- Payment shall be made within 15 working days of delivery of goods and successful installation at destination as per the contract.
- The Bidder shall indicate the name of the Bank, address and account number Bank's Information: Name of the Bank: Account number:
- All legal disputes shall be subject to the jurisdiction of the Courts of Law of Karbi Anglong district only.

N.B. For EDL, please visit <https://amscl.assam.gov.in>

Sd/-
Joint Director of Health Services
Cum Member Secretary
Dist. Health Society, Karbi Anglong

Pad off: Sudharsan, Jurel bat against spinners wearing single pad

KOLKATA, Nov 18: Staying true to batters' quirks and routines during net sessions, India's Sai Sudharsan and Dhruv Jurel on Monday faced spinners while wearing only one pad to counter the turning deliveries, a method that comes with an element of risk.

As is the case with most unorthodox practices, there was a method to the madness during this nearly three-hour optional session at the Eden Gardens.

For left-hander Sudharsan, the decision to remove his right pad was aimed at ensuring a big front-foot stride without any protection on that leg.

Sudharsan did not play the Eden Test, and there is no guarantee he will get a start in Guwahati either.

Batting against left-arm spinners and off-spinners without a front pad meant he had to be especially cautious about avoiding blows on the shin bone or any exposed area that could lead to a fracture.

This is a very old-school training method, where coaches insist batters use their bat more than their front pad to block the deliveries.

With pads on, batters tend to fall back on conditioned reflexes, bringing the front pad across as the first line of defence and often ending up in front-foot leg-before positions.

Removing the front pad in nets forces the batter to rely on the bat instead.

Another reason behind this drill is the current tendency among Indian left-handers to



go on the back foot, as they struggle to read spinners from the hand and try to play with the turn.

The practice encourages batters to step out of the crease and smother the spin.

Similarly, Jurel was also seen without his right pad as he worked on the reverse sweep on one of the three strips.

For a right-hander, the execution of the stroke demands a big stride forward with the right leg.

This again is an exercise designed to ensure correct movement while minimising the risk of injury.

During the optional session, head coach Gautam Gambhir kept a close watch on Sudharsan, one of the contenders to replace Shubman Gill, who may have to sit out the second Test due to neck spasm.

The youngster did not look entirely confident against the pacers, as Akash Deep found his outside edge multiple times and even the net bowlers troubled him with movement.

Gambhir and batting coach Sitanshu Kotak spoke to him at length during several breaks.

It was a bit surprising that only six players

turned up for the optional session, including senior-most member Ravindra Jadeja, who batted the longest.

Nitish Reddy checks in With Gill's participation in the second Test highly unlikely, all-rounder Nitish Reddy has been taken out of the ongoing India A series against South Africa A in Rajkot.

As per BCCI sources, Gill will be flying with the team to Guwahati although with the amount of stiffness on the nape of his neck, chances of him playing the second Test looks bleak.

In case Gill cannot make it to Guwahati he will travel to BCCI COE in Bengaluru from Kolkata as there are no restrictions on flying.

In the case of Reddy, the third and final List A match is scheduled for Wednesday. But the Andhra batting all-rounder reached Kolkata on Monday evening but did not take part in the day's net session.

It is understood that it would have been difficult for Reddy to play on Wednesday night in Rajkot and then take a connecting flight the next day to Guwahati, which would also have meant missing the first practice session.

The team management was averse to such a possibility.

With a Test century to his name and being a right-hander, Reddy could again be in contention for a place in the playing eleven at Guwahati. (PTI)

You cannot win everyday, I'm always cheering for India: Manu Bhaker



NEW DELHI, Nov 18: Double Olympic medalist Manu Bhaker has taken the failure to live up to her exalted standards in the ISSF World Championships on her chin and acknowledged that she "cannot win everyday" while lauding the performance of her compatriots.

That Bhaker couldn't feature among the 13 Indian medalists in the just-concluded tournament has come as a bit of a surprise to many in the shooting fraternity.

"I was aiming (for medals) at the World Championships. My performance was good, scored decently, couldn't make it to the podium. My teammate Esha Singh did... in sports you cannot win everyday, sometimes you lose as well," Bhaker said during an event on Tuesday.

"For me it is like India should win a medal and it shouldn't be about me or someone else winning it. As long as India is winning any medal, I am cheering for it, be it any sports," she added.

The 23-year-old pistol ace was speaking on the sidelines of the launch of ASMITA (Achieving Sports Milestone by Inspiring Women) social media handle.

After the Olympic high in Paris, Bhaker hasn't quite set the stage ablaze this year and the bronze medal in the women's 10m air pistol competition of the

Asian Shooting Championship in August remains one of her highlights in 2025.

Speaking about specially-abled athletes, Bhaker said they are an inspiration to everyone.

The shooters won India's first medals at the ongoing Tokyo Deaflympics with Dhanush Srikanth defending his men's 10m air rifle title with a new world record score of 252.2 and Mohammad Vania winning the silver in the same event.

"All the specially abled athletes are an inspiration and motivate us a lot. We learn a lot from them, the fighting spirit they showcase is incredible and we all look up to them. I would like to extend my heartiest congratulations to all of them and if they need any kind of help or support we'll be there."

On the ASMITA initiative, Bhaker said it will help in changing the mentality of people in rural areas about women aspiring to make it big in sports.

"Initiatives like this will play a major role in transforming the mentality about girls in sports. Coming from a rural background myself, I have faced a few issues if not many regarding mentality, like she is a girl and shouldn't play sports and doesn't belong here."

"We still have this kind of mentality in few parts of our country. So, ASMITA will surely play a major role in changing that. If women are given equal chances just like men, they can do well."

"I would like to highlight that in the last few Olympic Games, women have done tremendously well. I just want to say that it is high time now that we should support our women and also support ASMITA to become a bigger success than Khelo India."

In Paris last year, Bhaker became the first athlete from independent India to win two medals at a single Olympic Games. (PTI)

India's air rifle mixed teams win gold and bronze at Deaflympics

TOKYO, Nov 18: Indian shooters continued their domination at the 25th Deaflympics here Tuesday, securing a double-podium finish by winning both the gold and bronze medals in the 10m air rifle mixed team event.

The pair of Dhanush Srikanth and Mahit Sandhu clinched gold by overcoming the South Korean duo of Jeon Dain and Kim Woorim, while Mohammed Murtaza Vania and Komal Milind Waghmare added a bronze to their individual medals after getting the better of Ukraine's Violeta Lykova and Oleksandr Kostyuk.

In the gold medal match, Dhanush and Mahit raced to a 4-0 lead in the beginning and maintained a clear gap with the Korean pair, eventually clinching the match 17-7.

This is Dhanush's second gold medal of the Deaflympics, while Mahit added a yellow metal to her silver which she won in the individual event.

The bronze medal match was tighter, with the Ukrainian pair also featuring the women's individual gold medal winner Violeta Lykova. Both pairs were tied 4-4 after the end of the fourth series and at the end of the sixth series, Ukraine were leading 7-5.

Murtaza Vania and Komal then tied the scores at 7-7, 8-8 and 10-10 after four more rounds. The Indians then won two out of the next four rounds, with the points being shared in the other two. Eventually, they secured the bronze medal, winning 16-12.

The Indian shooters have won a total of nine medals across three days of competition. The air pistol mixed teams will be in action Wednesday as India look to add more medals to their tally in shooting at the Deaflympics. (PTI)

India women's white-ball home series against Bangladesh postponed

NEW DELHI, Nov 18: The Indian women's cricket team's white-ball home series against Bangladesh next month has been postponed by the BCCI, which is aiming to work out an alternate assignment for the world champion side in the same window. The three ODIs and as many T20Is against the neighbours were a part of the ICC Future Tours Programme and expected to be played in Kolkata and Cuttack.

"We will try to arrange an alternate series in December but details are still being worked out. As far as the series against Bangladesh is concerned, we didn't get a go ahead for it," a BCCI source told PTI without divulging any details.

The series against Bangladesh could have been the first outing for the team after winning the ICC ODI World Cup earlier this month.

Though it was not revealed in as many words, the currently tense diplomatic relations between the two nations might have played a part in rescheduling the series.

A tribunal court in Bangladesh on Monday sentenced to death, the country's former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina for alleged crimes against humanity. There has witnessed sporadic violence there because of the upheaval and Bangladesh's relationship with India has also nose-dived in the wake of these developments.

The interim government in Dhaka has demanded that India hand over Hasina, who has been living here after fleeing her country.

"We (BCB) have received a letter from the BCCI regarding the cancellation of the series, and now we are waiting to hear new dates or details," a Bangladesh Cricket Board official told PTI.

It may be recalled that the BCCI had deferred the men's white-ball tour to Bangladesh in August this year to September 2026, following the unrest in that country that led to the toppling of the Hasina-led government.

The Indian women will now have to wait for an opponent in December before joining their respective teams for the upcoming edition of the Women's Premier League (WPL). They will embark on an all-format tour of Australia after the WPL. (PTI)

Nalkande puts Vidarbha on top against Baroda

NAGPUR, Nov 18: Pacer Darshan Nalkande (4/7) struck four times to rock the Baroda top-order and put Vidarbha in the driver's seat on the third day of their Ranji Trophy Group A match here on Tuesday.

Set a target of 276, Baroda were tottering at 73 for five in their second innings when the stumps were drawn on the third evening.

With half their side back in the dressing room, it could be an extremely difficult task for the visiting side Baroda to get the remaining 203 runs and claim an outright victory on a challenging fourth day pitch at the Vidarbha Cricket Association Stadium.

Following up his first-innings 40 not out, middle-order batter Yash Rathod proved to be the fulcrum around which the Vidarbha

second innings revolved.

The 25-year-old Rathod worked hard to play what could prove to be a priceless knock of 91 off 142 balls.

His knock was studied with seven hits to the fence, and more importantly, he was involved in a vital partnership of 128 runs for the fourth wicket with Ravikumar Samarth, who chipped in with 45 off 129 balls.

This was after former Delhi batter Dhruv Shorey contributed 61 and Atharva Taide made 40 at the top of the order after the early departure of Aman Mokhadde for a duck on the second day, leaving Vidarbha with plenty of ground to cover.

Skipper Atit Sheth was the most successful bowler for Baroda, finishing with fine figures of 5/47 in

just under 16 overs.

Baroda's chase began on a disastrous note with Nalkande sending back the first four visiting batters to the dressing room with just 17 runs on the board.

Parth Rekhadde then chipped in with the wicket of wicketkeeper Mitesh Patel to leave Baroda reeling at 55 for five.

At stumps, Sukirt Pandey and Ninad Rathva were batting on 35 and 10 respectively.

Earlier, Vidarbha began the third day's play from 126 for three with Rathod on 15 and Samarth on 8.

Brief scores: In Nagpur: Vidarbha 169 and 272 all out in 98.2 overs (Yash Rathod 91, Dhruv Shorey 61; Atit Sheth 5/47) vs Baroda 166 and 73/5 in 32 overs (Sukirt

Pandey batting 35; Darshan Nalkande 4/7).

In Coimbatore: Tamil Nadu 455 in 136.3 overs (Baba Indrajith 149, C Andre Siddarth 121, Guruswamy Ajitesh 86; Kunal Tyagi 2/51, Kartik Yadav 5/103) vs Uttar Pradesh 339 for 6 in 113 overs (Abhishek Goswami 79, Rinku Singh batting 98).

In Jamshepur: Jharkhand 328 and 34 for 2 in 15 overs (Shandeep Singh 115, Virat Singh 41, Sahil Raj 50; KV Sasikanth 4/67, Saurabh Kumar 4/77) vs Andhra 567 for 6 declared in 128 overs (Abhishek Reddy 247, Karan Shinde 94).

In Bhubaneswar: Odisha 275 and 350 for 5 declared in 71 overs (Swastik Samal 169, Subhranshu Senapati 137) vs Nagaland 161 and 41 for 1 in 18 overs. (PTI)

Karnataka, Maharashtra register innings wins to go 1-2 in Group B

HUBBALLI, Nov 18: Spinners Shreyas Gopal and Shikhar Shetty came up with stellar spells as Karnataka trounced Chandigarh by an innings and 185 runs on the third day of their Ranji Trophy Elite Group B match here on Tuesday.

Chandigarh started the day from 72 for four in their first innings, and folded for 222 in their first innings despite skipper Manan Vohra making an unbeaten 106.

Leg-spinner Shreyas (7/73) was the lead act in the destruction of Chandigarh's batting unit in the first innings.

Shetty (2/43) gave him good support, but in the second innings the 20-year-old left-arm spinner assumed the mantle of the leader.

Having conceded a massive first innings lead of 325, Chandigarh had the tough task of batting out a total of five sessions to avoid an innings defeat.

But the visitors faltered in the second innings as well to get bowled out for 140. Shetty (5/61) led Karnataka's bowling with fine

support from Shreyas (3/45).

Shetty bowled 11.5 overs non-stop from his end in the second spell to take five wickets conceding 47 runs, after conceding 14 runs in his one over first spell.

Shreyas thus completed a match-haul of 10 for 118 runs.

Karnataka bagged seven points from the match, including a bonus point for an innings win to go atop Group B with 21 points from five matches.

Ravichandran Smaran, who made a double hundred in the match, was named player of the match.

Maharashtra win In another Group B match, Maharashtra inflicted an innings and 92-run defeat on Punjab to leap to second place with 18 points from five matches.

Left-spinner Vicky Ostwal (6/26) and pacer Rajvardhan Hangargekar (5/44) were the lead performers for Maharashtra at Mullanpur.

Brief scores: At Hubballi: Karnataka: 547/8 declared in 160

overs beat Chandigarh: 222 all out in 63.2 overs (Manan Vohra 106 not out, Shreyas Gopal 7/73, Shikhar Shetty 2/43) and 143 all out in 33.5 overs (Shivam Bhambrani 43; Shikhar Shetty 5/61, Shreyas Gopal 3/45) by an innings and 185 runs.

Karnataka: 7 points; Chandigarh: 0

At Mullanpur: Maharashtra: 350 all out beat Punjab: 151 all out in 58.4 overs (Anmol Malhotra 35; Rajvardhan Hangargekar 5/44, Rajneesh Gurbani 4/39) and 107 all out in 40.5 overs (Vicky Ostwal 6/26) by an innings and 92 runs.

Maharashtra: 7 points; Chandigarh: 0.

At Rajkot: Saurashtra: 587/7 declared vs Goa: 358 all out in 106.2 overs (Abhinav Tejana 118, Lalit Yadav 59, Rajsekhar Harikant 69; Yuvrajsinh Dodiya 6/98) and 77/2 in 16.3 overs.

At Indore: Kerala: 281 all out and 218/3 in 62 overs (Sachin Baby 81 batting, Baba Aparajith 85 batting) vs Madhya Pradesh: 192 all out. (PTI)

Medal-winning Indian archers endure night-long ordeal in Dhaka after flight chaos

KOLKATA, Nov 18: Indian archers endured a night of chaos when their return to the country from Dhaka after the Asian Championships was delayed by a day due to a cancelled flight, forcing them to stay at a "substandard shelter" after navigating through the violence-hit Bangladeshi capital without security.

Eleven members of the 23-strong squad, including two minors, were left stranded for nearly 10 hours at the airport amid repeated flight delays and a "complete absence of support" from the airline on which they were booked.

The group, which included senior pros Abhishek Verma, Jyoti Surekha and Olympian Dhiraaj Bommadevara, had reached the Dhaka airport on Saturday for their 9.30pm flight to Delhi, only to be told after boarding that the aircraft had developed a technical snag and would not take off.

It was at a time when Dhaka witnessed violence on the streets as it awaited a special tribunal's verdict against deposed Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in a case of alleged crimes against humanity.

The archers, seven of them women, remained inside the terminal till 2am with no clarity. When the cancellation was finally announced, passengers were informed that no alternate flight would be arranged that night.

The moment the team stepped out of the airport, their ordeal escalated.

They were herded into a "window-less local bus" and taken nearly half an hour away to a makeshift lodge which was like a "Dharamshala", the country's most decorated compound male archer Verma alleged.

The 36-year-old said the place where the team was taken "was not even a proper hotel", but a cramped dormitory with six beds in one room for the women and only one filthy toilet.

"The 'dharamshala' that was given in the name of the guest house was very pathetic. In one room there were six double beds... There was only one toilet and the condition of the toilet was very bad," he told PTI.

"It was such that I don't think anyone could have taken a bath there," Verma, who has consecutive Asian Games silver medals (2018 and 2022), alleged.

Their attempts to make alternative arrangements also could not work out as they could not do any international transaction.

"Personally, we could not manage anything as no international cards were accepted there. We couldn't do get Uber because there was some error coming in payment method... And we were not confirmed about the flight," Verma said. (PTI)

Germany and Netherlands reach the World Cup after big wins in final qualifiers

BERLIN, Nov 18: So much for Germany being at risk of missing the World Cup.

A 6-0 thrashing of Slovakia on Monday completed Germany's recovery from a shocking start to group play as the four-time champion maintained its proud record of always qualifying for the World Cup.

The Germans will be competing on soccer's biggest stage for the 21st time in 23 editions. They didn't enter the inaugural 1930 World Cup and were not allowed to enter the 1950 edition.

The Netherlands — a long-standing rival of Germany — also won its group to reach next year's tournament being held in the United States, Canada and Mexico. A 4-0 win over Lithuania saw the Dutch qualify with an unbeaten record, finishing ahead of Poland.

Slovakia and Poland will be in the play-offs, the draw for which takes place on Thursday.

Germany and the Netherlands joined England, France, Portugal, Croatia and Norway as the European teams to have qualified for the 2026 World Cup.

The remaining five automatic spots will be booked on Tuesday when group play is wrapped up.

Handling the pressure was Slovakia which handed Germany a surprising 2-0 loss in the first round of matches in Group A. That was only the Germans' third ever defeat in World Cup qualifying but they have responded with five straight wins, culminating



in the heavy beating of Slovakia in Leipzig where the pressure was firmly on Julian Nagelsmann's team.

Four of the goals came in the first half; Leroy Sane scored twice after strikes by Nick Woltemade — his fourth in the last three qualifying games — and Serge Gnabry.

The second-half goals were by two Leipzig players — substitute Ridle Baku and Assan Ouedraogo, a 19-year-old midfielder making his debut.

Germany entered the game needing only a draw and finished three points ahead of Slovakia.

No team has reached the World Cup final more times than Germany. It was the winner in 1954, 1974, 1990 and 2014 — the first three as West Germany — and the runner-up in 1966, 1982, 1986 and 2014.

Germany has been eliminated in the group stage in the last two World Cups, however, to damage its status as a global heavyweight.

In the group's other game, Luxembourg

lost to Northern Ireland 1-0 and finished on zero points.

Netherlands rout The Netherlands will get another chance to win that elusive first World Cup trophy, four years after exiting the 2022 tournament in a dramatic penalty shootout loss to Lionel Messi's Argentina in the quarterfinals.

A draw with Lithuania on Monday also would have been enough for the Dutch, who started the game three points clear of Poland, but they wound up pouring in the goals in Amsterdam — starting with Tijjani Reijnders in the 16th.

Cody Gakpo made it 2-0 from the penalty spot in the 58th and there were more goals from Xavi Simons and Donyell Malen, who scored off a powerful effort at the end of his solo run that began inside his own half.

The Netherlands has been runner-up at the World Cup three times — in 1974, 1978 and 2010.

Poland wrapped up its group campaign with a 3-2 win at Malta, squandering the lead twice before Piotr Zielinski netted an 85th-minute winner.

Robert Lewandowski scored the first goal for the Poles, who were already assured of at least second place and are set to have a home semifinal in the March playoffs.

Croatia unbeaten Already-qualified Croatia ended up unbeaten in Group L after winning at Montenegro 3-2.

The Czech Republic, assured of second place, beat Gibraltar 6-0. (AP)