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ভাৰত বন্ধ যুগ্মকণ্ঠ  
ড° ভূপেন হাজৰিকাদেৱৰ  
চতুৰ্দশ মৃত্যুবাৰ্ষিকী উপলক্ষে ৰাজ্যজুৰি

অসম চৰকাৰ  
সাংস্কৃতিক পৰিক্ৰমা বিভাগৰ উদ্যোগত

শ্ৰদ্ধাঞ্জলি অনুষ্ঠান

৫ নবেম্বৰ ২০২৫



“মোৰ গান হওক  
বহু আস্থাহীনতাৰ  
বিপৰীতে  
এক গভীৰ আস্থাৰ গান।”  
-ড° ভূপেন হাজৰিকা



জিলাবিশেষে অনুষ্ঠিত হ'বলগীয়া অনুষ্ঠানৰ মুখ্য অতিথিসকল

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# Sensex inches up 40 pts in muted trading; snaps two-day falling streak

MUMBAI, Nov 3: Benchmark Sensex edged up nearly 40 points while Nifty ended above 25,750 points in a lackadaisical trade on Monday, snapping the two-day declining streak on buying in select auto and banking shares.

The 30-share BSE Sensex inched up by 39.78 points or 0.05 per cent to settle at 83,978.49 as 14 of its constituents advanced and 16 declined. During the day, it hit a high of 84,127 and a low of 83,609.54.

The 50-share NSE Nifty eked out a marginal gain of 41.25 points or 0.16 per cent to end at 25,763.35.

Profit taking at higher levels due to the absence of fresh domestic trigger and foreign fund outflows kept the market range-bound, analysts said.

Among Sensex firms, Mahindra & Mahindra was the biggest gainer, gaining 1.7 per cent after the October sales data. Tata Motors Passenger Vehicles (TMPV) rose by 1.69 per cent. Eternal, State Bank of India, Bharti Airtel and Kotak Mahindra Bank were also among the major gainers.

However, Maruti Suzuki dropped the most by 3.37 per cent. ITC, Tata Consultancy Services, Larsen & Toubro, Bharat Electronics and Titan were the major laggards.

"The domestic market ended on a marginal positive note as profit-taking was visible at the higher



levels due to the absence of fresh domestic triggers. While the broader market outperformed since the quarterly earnings are steering investors' preference to take a short- to medium-term view," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Investments Limited, said.

The PSU Banking index remained a preferred bet for investors, driven by healthy earnings and improving asset quality. In contrast, IT stocks declined amid fading expectations of a US Fed rate cut, while a trade truce between the US and China eased the demand for safe-haven assets, Nair added.

The BSE smallcap gauge climbed 0.71 per cent and midcap index went up by 0.62 per cent.

Telecommunication jumped the

most by 2.90 per cent, followed by realty (2.26 per cent), healthcare (1.14 per cent), oil & gas (0.96 per cent), financial services (0.62 per cent) and bankex (0.61 per cent).

Utilities, consumer durables, IT and BSE Focused IT were the laggards.

"Markets held steady on Monday, with the Nifty-50 closing nearly flat at 25,763.35, indicating continued consolidation after a strong October rally. The index opened on a subdued note and remained range-bound throughout the session amid mixed global cues," Ajit Mishra - SVP, Research, Religare Broking Ltd, said.

Vodafone Idea shares hit the upper circuit at ₹ 9.60 per share before closing higher by 9.28 per

cent on BSE after reports that a US PE investor was in talks to invest up to USD 6 billion in the company.

The struggling telecom player, in a clarification to stock exchanges, stated that the company keeps exploring various opportunities and options to raise funds within the authorisations given by the board.

Wockhardt Ltd shares jumped by over 10 per cent after the company turned profitable in the September quarter, posting a net profit of ₹ 82 crore against a loss of ₹ 16 crore in the year-ago period.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth ₹ 6,769.34 crore on Friday, while Domestic Institutional Investors (DIIs) bought stocks worth ₹ 7,068.44 crore, according to exchange data.

In Asian markets, South Korea's Kospi, Shanghai's SSE Composite index and Hong Kong's Hang Seng index settled in positive territory.

Markets in Europe were trading with gains. US markets ended higher on Friday.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude dipped 0.14 per cent to USD 64.71 a barrel.

On Friday, the Sensex tanked 465.75 points or 0.55 per cent to settle at 83,938.71. The Nifty fell by 155.75 points or 0.60 per cent to 25,722.10. (PTI)

# Manufacturing activity strengthens in Oct on rise in new orders amid GST reform, healthy demand: PMI

NEW DELHI, Nov 3: India's manufacturing sector activity strengthened in October, buoyed by Goods and Services Tax relief, productivity gains and tech investment, even as international sales rose at a weaker pace, a monthly survey said on Monday.

The seasonally adjusted HSBC India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) rose from 57.7 in September to 59.2 in October, indicating a quicker improvement in the sector's health.

In the Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) parlance, a print above 50 means expansion, while a score below 50 denotes contraction.

"India's manufacturing PMI accelerated to 59.2 in October, up from 57.7 during the month prior. Robust end-demand fuelled expansions in output, new orders, and job creation," said Pranjal Bhandari, Chief India Economist at HSBC.

The pick-up in sales growth

mainly stemmed from the domestic market, as new export orders increased at a softer rate, the survey said.

New orders increased further at the start of the third fiscal quarter, with companies attributing growth to advertising, buoyant demand and the GST reform. Moreover, the pace of expansion was sharp and stronger than that recorded in September.

Manufacturers continued to purchase additional raw materials and semi-finished items in October, reportedly to supplement production and build inventories amid softening of cost inflation.

On the price front, even though there was a modest and softer increase in input costs, the rate of inflation matched September's near 12-year high.

"... Input prices moderated in October, while average selling prices increased as some manufac-

turers passed on additional cost burdens to end-consumers," Bhandari added.

Meanwhile, job creation entered its twentieth consecutive month in October. The rate of expansion was moderate and broadly similar to September.

Regarding the outlook, manufacturers attributed positive expectations to GST reform, expanded capacities and marketing efforts. They also predicted demand resilience and hoped that pending contracts will be approved.

"Looking ahead, future business sentiment is strong due to positive expectations around GST reform and healthy demand," Bhandari said.

The HSBC India Manufacturing PMI is compiled by S&P Global from responses to questionnaires sent to purchasing managers in a panel of around 400 manufacturers. (PTI)

Contd. from Page 3...

## Fair, country-specific

gas emissions-intensity of GDP by 45 per cent (relative to 2005); achieving around 50 per cent cumulative installed electric-power capacity from non-fossil-fuel based energy resources; and creating an additional carbon sink of 2.5-3 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent by 2030 through additional forest and tree cover.

India met its non-fossil fuel power capacity goal in July this year, five years ahead of schedule.

According to its fourth Biennial Update Report (BUR-4) submitted to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) on December 30 last year, the emission intensity of India's GDP reduced by 36 per cent between 2005 and 2020.

The report added that India created an additional carbon sink of 2.29 billion tonnes during 2005 to 2021.

India's previous NDCs did not cover all sectors and greenhouse gases.

The updated NDC was largely economy-wide but focused mainly on the energy sector, particularly on improving energy efficiency, expanding renewable energy and reducing the emissions intensity of GDP.

It did not set separate or absolute emission targets for individual sectors like agriculture, industry, transport or waste management.

In terms of gases, the NDC mainly targeted carbon dioxide emissions, which dominate India's total greenhouse gas output, but it did not explicitly quantify reduction targets for other gases such as methane and nitrous oxide.

The UNFCCC has been strongly encouraging countries to make their next NDCs (for 2025-2035) economy-wide, covering all sectors and all greenhouse gases. (PTI)

## IIMC Innovation Park,

raised over ₹ 2,000 crore and built a cumulative portfolio valuation of nearly ₹ 8,000 crore, the statement said.

AISF, a Section 8 company under the Assam government's DIIS, serves as a platform for supporting, incubating and promoting startups and entrepreneurial initiatives across the state.

The partnership is expected to focus on structured mentoring, capacity building and providing access to markets and investors for Assamese entrepreneurs, with a special emphasis on fostering high-impact collaborations and promoting women's entrepreneurship. (PTI)

## CM briefs Amit

trajectory. The discussion also covered future strategies to accelerate the state's socio-economic development and ensure the effective implementation of central and state government programmes aimed at public welfare, the release said. (PTI)

## Gaurav Gogoi 100

Gogoi had visited Pakistan on an invitation from its spy agency ISI and undergone training there, and that he worked closely with the establishment of the neighbouring nation.

He also claimed that Colburn was collecting various classified government documents, mainly IB reports, on behalf of the Pakistani climate lobby.

Hitting back, Gogoi had slammed Sharma over his accusation and questioned his mental state due to issues at the home front. He even said the CM's remarks were "ridiculous, baseless, insane and nonsense" and that he was behaving like an "IT cell troll" without talking with facts. (PTI)

## Flutist Dipak Sarma's

deep void in Assam's cultural and musical landscape. Known for his mastery over the flute and his soulful renditions rooted in Assamese folk traditions, he was widely regarded as one of the state's most accomplished instrumentalists.

Over a career spanning more than three decades, Dipak Sarma collaborated with leading artists from across India and performed on numerous national and international stages.

He was also a regular presence in All India Radio and Doordarshan music programmes and received several honours, including the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award (Assam) for his contribution to Indian classical and traditional music. Tributes have poured in from across Assam, with fellow musicians, cultural bodies, and admirers describing him as a "gentle soul whose flute echoed the essence of Assamese identity."

## Himanta, Gaurav hail

Many congratulations #TeamIndia. Deserved Champions," he said in a post on X.

Deputy Leader of Congress in Lok Sabha, Gaurav Gogoi, too, wished the champion team.

"My best wishes to the Indian women's cricket team for their historic World Cup triumph. Their grit, teamwork, and determination have brought glory to the nation and joy to every Indian heart," Gogoi said.

Gogoi said the achievement was "truly a golden moment in Indian cricket" and a win that will inspire generations. (PTI)

## 'Miya Muslims to remain

Lower Assam into Upper Assam. Sarma's language was uploaded with sharp rhetoric: "Why will people from Lower Assam go to Upper Assam? So that Miya Muslims can take over Assam? We will not let it happen," he told the Assembly. When opposition lawmakers criticised him, he replied tersely: "I will take sides. What can you do?"

Beyond these remarks, the Chief Minister also drew a line between what he termed "indigenous Assamese Muslims" and the Bengali-origin community.

He laid down conditions under which the Bengali-speaking community could be accepted as "indigenous" in Assam: giving up polygamy, child marriage, encouraging girls' education, avoiding madrassas in favour of professional education, and respecting local land and cultural institutions such as the satras.

## SIR exercise to

completed the mapping of current electors according to it. The primary aim of SIR is to weed out illegal foreign migrants by checking their place of birth. The move assumes significance in the wake of a crackdown in various states on illegal migrants, including those from Bangladesh and Myanmar. When SIR was launched in Bihar in June, several political parties claimed that it would disenfranchise crores of eligible citizens for want of documents.

When the matter reached the Supreme Court, the EC defended its decision to clean up the voters' list and assured that no eligible citizen of India would be left out.

After the final voters' list was published, the opposition's attack on SIR and the EC has been muted. Ahead of SIR in 12 states and Union territories, several political parties in Tamil Nadu on Sunday resolved to approach the Supreme Court against the exercise in the state.

This time, the EC has included the voters' list of Bihar published after SIR and Aadhaar card in the list of indicative documents people will have to submit in the 12 states and Union territories.

Tweaking the rules followed during Bihar SIR, the EC has now instructed its field machinery that electors do not have to submit documents at the enumeration stage itself.

People who cannot be linked with the previous SIR of their respective state will have to provide documents once they are served notice by the electoral registration officer. (PTI)

## Himanta: Iconic singer

after police found huge financial transactions, worth over ₹ 1.1 crore, from their accounts.

All seven arrested people are now in judicial custody. They were booked under various sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) for murder, culpable homicide not amounting to murder, criminal conspiracy and causing death by negligence. Singapore Police Force (SPF) is also carrying out an independent investigation into the incident of Garg's alleged drowning in the sea.

In a statement on October 17, the SPF said that the preliminary investigations have not indicated any foul play in Garg's death. It also said that investigations into the death of the popular Indian singer-songwriter-composer may take up to another three months, after which the findings will be submitted to the state coroner for further proceedings. (PTI)

## Gold falls by ₹ 300 to ₹ 1,25,300/10g

NEW DELHI, Nov 3: Gold prices fell by ₹ 300 to ₹ 1,25,300 per 10 grams in the national capital on Monday as a stronger dollar and easing global uncertainties weighed on investor appetite for the safe-haven asset. The precious metal of 99.5 per cent purity declined by ₹ 300 to ₹ 1,24,700 per 10 grams (inclusive of all taxes). It had closed at ₹ 1,25,000 per 10 grams on Friday, according to the All India Sarafa Association. Gold of 99.9 per cent

purity had settled at ₹ 1,25,600 per 10 grams on Friday.

On the other hand, silver rallied by ₹ 1,000 to ₹ 1,54,000 per kilogram (inclusive of all taxes) from Friday's closing of ₹ 1,53,000 per kg. The dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, rose 0.09 per cent to 99.89, weighed on bullion prices.

In international markets, spot gold slipped below USD 4,000, de-

clining 0.14 per cent to USD 3,996.77 per ounce, while spot silver was marginally lower at USD 48.64 per ounce.

"Gold prices fell below USD 4,000 per ounce on Monday, extending losses from the previous session, as expectations for further rate cuts diminished and safe-haven demand eased after a US-China trade deal," Jigar Trivedi, Senior Research Analyst at Reliance Securities, said. (PTI)

## IESA hails launch of ₹1 lakh crore RDI Scheme Fund

HT Bureau  
GUWAHATI, Nov 3: The India Electronics and Semiconductor Association (IESA) has lauded the Government of India, the Department of Science and Technology (DST), and the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) for launching the ₹1 lakh crore Research, Development and Innovation (RDI) Scheme Fund during the inauguration of the ESTIC 2025 conclave by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

IESA said the landmark initiative would significantly strengthen India's innovation ecosystem and empower the private sector to lead advanced research and development across high-impact domains such as semiconductors and advanced electronics.

The association noted that the fund would serve as a vital catalyst for the semiconductor sector by promoting indigenous research, design-led manufacturing, and technology development — paving the way for India's transformation from a major consumer to a global innovator and producer.

"As the apex industry body, IESA will continue to play an active role in fostering collaboration between government, industry, and academia to ensure that this historic initiative delivers impactful outcomes across the semiconductor and electronics value chain," the statement added.

## ICICI Prudential Life passes on GST exemption benefits to policyholders

HT Bureau  
GUWAHATI, Nov 3: ICICI Prudential Life Insurance Company has announced that it has passed on the full benefit of the recent Goods and Services Tax (GST) exemption on life insurance policies to its customers, effectively reducing premium rates across its products, including term insurance plans. The move follows the Government of India's decision to exempt life insurance premiums from the 18 per cent GST that was previously applicable.

Earlier, policyholders had to pay an additional ₹18 as GST on every ₹100 of premium.

With the exemption, customers now pay only the base premium amount, making insurance products more affordable.

According to ICICI Prudential Life, the revised pricing has significantly lowered the cost of term insurance. A 30-year-old male non-smoker who earlier paid a

monthly premium of ₹825 (inclusive of GST) for a ₹1 crore cover over 30 years will now pay ₹699.

Similarly, a 30-year-old female non-smoker will pay ₹594 per month, down from ₹697 earlier.

Vikas Gupta, Chief Product Officer of ICICI Prudential Life Insurance, said, "At ICICI Prudential Life Insurance, we believe that true value lies in doing what's right for our customers. Every saving we return to our customers strengthens trust, enhances affordability, and moves us closer to a future where quality insurance is within everyone's reach. It also complements our ongoing efforts to reduce the protection gap by encouraging more individuals to secure their future." The company said that the reduced premiums are expected to make protection plans more accessible to families across the country, thereby promoting financial security and supporting efforts to expand insurance penetration in India.

## PhonePe launches 'PhonePe Protect' to enhance user safety from online fraud

As an early adopter of DoT's FRI feature, PhonePe has implemented proactive measures to enhance user safety

HT Bureau  
GUWAHATI, Nov 3: Digital payments platform PhonePe has introduced a new security framework, 'PhonePe Protect', aimed at safeguarding users from fraudulent transactions by flagging potentially risky payments in real time.

The feature alerts users attempting to make payments to suspicious numbers with a 'PhonePe Protect' notification, warning them about potential risks.

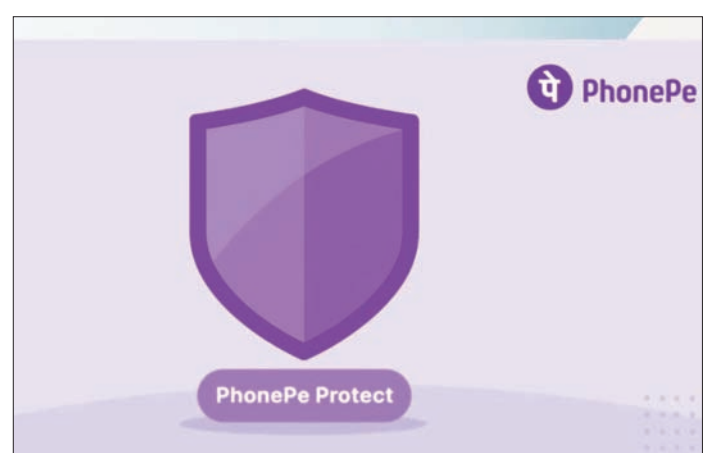
It also provides insights into why certain transactions are declined for security reasons, thereby helping users make informed decisions.

'PhonePe Protect' integrates a mechanism that identifies and blocks payments to mobile numbers flagged by the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) under its 'Financial Fraud Risk Indicator (FRI)' system.

Using this tool, PhonePe's system intelligence detects risks during the payment process and intervenes in real time.

As an early adopter of DoT's FRI feature, PhonePe has implemented proactive measures to enhance user safety.

Transactions linked to numbers marked as 'Very High FRI' are automatically declined with on-screen



alerts, while those linked to 'Medium FRI' numbers trigger cautionary warnings before allowing the user to proceed.

The launch of 'PhonePe Protect' follows the company's collaboration with the DoT at the 2025 India Mobile Congress (IMC), where the department recognised PhonePe for its efforts in combating cyber fraud through early adoption of the AI-driven FRI tool.

Anuj Bhansali, Head of Trust & Safety at PhonePe, said, "At PhonePe, payment security is paramount, and we have implemented

several initiatives to safeguard our customers. 'PhonePe Protect' represents our vision of creating a financial ecosystem where security is seamlessly embedded into every transaction. This feature is more than just a security enhancement—it's our commitment to building a safer digital payments ecosystem for India."

The company said the feature is designed to minimise unintended transfers to fraudulent recipients, prevent illicit financial activity, and strengthen public trust in digital transactions.

### AFFIDAVIT

I, Chow Latana Hopak, aged about 42 years S/o late Thaug Hopak, a resident of village Solungto, P.O. Lathao & PS. Namsai, district, Namsai, Arunachal Pradesh and presently residing at Solungto, P.O. Lathao & PS. Namsai, district Namsai, Arunachal Pradesh, that my name has been recorded in my Pan Card as Latana Hopak, but my actual and correct name is Chow Latana Hopak and my date of birth 15/08/1983, but my actual and correct date of birth is 25/09/1983. All the statement mentioned above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.  
Executed on this day of 03/ 11/2025 at Namai Notary Public

### IMPROVEMENT OF OFFICERS REST HOUSE DIMAPUR

E-Tender Notice No. DYCE-CON-DL-DMV-2025-01 Dated: 28-10-2025. Open tender through e-Tendering system is invited from experienced and reputed contractor (s)/firm (s) for the following works. Tender No. DYCE-CON-DL-DMV-2025-01. Name of work: Improvement of Officers Rest House Dimapur in connection with Lumding-Furkating Doubling project. Approx. Value: ₹ 2,65,53,606.66/- Earnest Money: ₹ 5,31,100/-. Date & Time of closing of tender: At 15:00 hrs. & opening at 15:30 hrs. on 19-11-2025. The complete information with tender documents of above e-tender will be available in website www Ireps.gov.in

### MAINTENANCE AND HOUSEKEEPING WORKS

Tender Notice No.: DYCE-CON-DL-DMV-2025-02, Dated: 28-10-2025. E-Tender are invited by the undersigned for the following work. Tender No.: DYCE-CON-DL-DMV-2025-02. Name of Work: Maintenance and Housekeeping by providing caretaker, cook and safaiwala etc. for Two year for construction Officers Rest House including office of Dy.CE/CON/DL/Dimapur of N. F. Railway (Construction Organisation) in connection with Lumding-Furkating doubling project. Approx. Value: ₹ 84,69,847.64/- Date & time of closing of tender at 15:00 hrs. and opening at 15:30 hrs. on 19-11-2025. For complete information and tender document of e-Tender will be available in website www Ireps.gov.in

### LOST

I have lost my H.S Admit Card bearing Roll - 754 No. A - 99, Registration No. - A104758, in the year of 2001/2002  
Jayanti Yadav, D/O - Hari Narayan Yadav, Village - Howraghat  
Tiniali, P.O. - Kachu Pukhuri, P.S. - Howraghat, DIST. - Karbi Anglong

# Himanta: Iconic singer was murdered

**Zubeen death: Dec 8 target set to submit charge-sheet**  
● **CM denies releasing funds for NEIF**

**TEZPUR, Nov 3:** Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Monday claimed that cultural icon Zubeen Garg was murdered in Singapore, even as the probe into the case was underway.

The celebrated singer died under mysterious circumstances while swimming in the sea in Singapore on September 19. He had gone to the Southeast Asian nation to attend the 4th edition of the North East India Festival (NEIF).

"I am not terming it an accident. The charge-sheet in Zubeen Garg's murder case needs to be submitted by December 17. I have set a target to submit it by December 8. We are ready now," Sarma told reporters here.

He, however, did not share further details about the case or the kind of evidence that establishes the death as murder.



A Special Investigation Team (SIT) under the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) of the Assam Police is currently probing Garg's death case after more than 60 FIRs were lodged across the state.

Speaking about the process of filing the charge-sheet, Sarma said, "If any incident takes place abroad, an approval is required from the Ministry of Home Affairs. Yesterday, I met Union Home Minister Amit Shah to get an approval

soon."

He said the SIT is likely to write to the MHA within the next three to four days, seeking necessary approval.

"Then, we will file the charge-sheet," the CM said.

When asked if the Assam government has released any funds to the NEIF, Sarma replied in the negative.

NEIF chief organiser Shyamkanu Mahanta, the singer's manager Siddharth Sharma, and his two band members -- Shekhar Jyoti Goswami and Amrit Prabha Mahanta -- were apprehended.

Later, Garg's cousin and Assam Police DSP Sandipan Garg was arrested in connection with the singer's death.

Zubeen Garg's PSOs Nandeswar Bora and Prabin Baishya were also arrested. **(CONTD. ON PAGE-2)**

# SIR exercise to begin in 12 states, UTs from today



**NEW DELHI, Nov 3:** Special Intensive Revision (SIR), the Election Commission's voters' list cleanup exercise, will commence in nine states and three Union territories from Tuesday.

SIR in these states and Union territories with 51 crore voters will conclude on February 7, 2026, with the publication of the final electoral roll.

After Bihar, this is the second round of SIR. The state's final voter list with nearly 7.42 crore names was published on September 30.

The 12 states and Union territories where the second round of SIR will be conducted are the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Lakshadweep, Chhattisgarh, Goa, Gujarat, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Puducherry, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.

Among these, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Kerala and West Bengal will go to polls in 2026. In Assam, an-

other state where polls are due in 2026, the revision of electoral rolls will be announced separately as a Supreme Court-supervised exercise to verify citizenship is underway in the state.

Also, a separate provision of the Citizenship Act was applicable to Assam.

"Under the Citizenship Act, there are separate provisions for citizenship in Assam. Under the supervision of the Supreme Court, the exercise of checking citizenship is about to be completed. The June 24 SIR order was for the entire country. Under such circumstances, this would not have applied to Assam," Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar said on October 27 while announcing the latest phase of SIR.

"So there will be separate revision orders issued for Assam, and a separate SIR date will be announced," he said.

SIR will begin on November 4 with the enumeration stage and continue till December 4.

The EC will release the draft electoral rolls on December 9, and the final electoral rolls will be published on February 7.

The ongoing SIR is the ninth such exercise since independence, with the last one conducted in 2002-04.

The EC is of the view that SIR will ensure that no eligible elector is left out and no ineligible elector is included in the electoral rolls.

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

Most states had the last SIR between 2002 and 2004, and they have nearly **(CONTD. ON PAGE-2)**

# 'Miya Muslims to remain in tension till I am the CM'

**HT Bureau**

**GUWAHATI, Nov 3:** Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Monday continued his attacks on Miya Muslims asserting that the eviction will continue against the Bengali origin minority community till he is ruling the state.

Talking to reporters, Sarma said, "The illegal Miya Muslims can not save themselves till I am the Chief Minister of Assam. Today, eviction notices were

served to Miya Muslims in Behali and the crackdown will continue in the state. They will not be spared even if they go to the cremation site of Zubeen Garg to pay homage. This situation can only be changed when I will not be the Chief Minister of Assam."

The Chief Minister asserted that the illegal Miya Muslims will remain in tension in Assam in the coming days as the actions against them will continue to hap-

pen.

Sarma recently also said that he will "take sides" and will not allow "Miya" Muslims — a colloquial term used for Bengali-speaking Muslims of Bangladeshi origin in Assam — to "take over" the state.

He made the remarks while answering on law and order issues, and specifically invoked what he described as a migrant influx from **(CONTD. ON PAGE-2)**

# Himanta, Gaurav hail women's cricket team on WC triumph

**GUWAHATI, Nov 3:** Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Monday congratulated the Indian women's cricket team on winning their maiden ICC World Cup, calling it a triumph of talent and teamwork.

The Indian women's cricket team made history by winning their first-ever World Cup with a 52-run victory over South Africa in Navi Mumbai on Sunday.

"Our #WomenInBlue outplayed the world and lifted #WomensWorldCup2025. A triumph of talent, teamwork & spirit, which will inspire millions across the nation. **(CONTD. ON PAGE-2)**

# Flutist Dipak Sarma's mortal remains to arrive in Guwahati today

**HT Bureau**

**GUWAHATI, Nov 3:** The mortal remains of eminent flutist Dipak Sarma, who passed away in Chennai early Monday morning, will be flown to Guwahati on Tuesday in a special chartered aircraft.

Family sources informed that the flight carrying his body is scheduled to depart from Chennai around 5 a.m. and will arrive at Lokpriya Gopinath Bordoloi International Airport shortly after.

From the airport, his mortal remains will be taken directly to his residence at



Ambikagiri Nagar in Guwahati.

After the completion of the last rites at his home, the body will be kept at Seuj Sangha from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. for members of the public, fans, and representatives

of cultural organisations to pay their final respects.

Following the public homage, the mortal remains will be taken to the Navagraha cremation ground for the final rites.

Dipak Sarma, aged 57, passed away at 6:15 a.m. on Monday at a Chennai hospital, where he had been receiving treatment for a rare liver ailment. The acclaimed musician had earlier been admitted to a hospital in Guwahati before being shifted to Chennai for advanced medical care. Sarma's demise has left a **(CONTD. ON PAGE-2)**

# World already heated up by 1.3 degrees Celsius since the pre-industrial era

## Fair, country-specific adaptation metrics top agenda for COP30: India

**NEW DELHI, Nov 3:** The rationalisation of adaptation indicators will be a major issue at the upcoming UN climate conference (COP30) in Brazil's Belem, the environment ministry said on Monday, stressing that these indicators must not disadvantage developing countries and should reflect national circumstances.

The ministry said that the framework should also enable transparent tracking of finance, technology transfer and capacity building support from developed nations.

Climate adaptation means preparing communities for rising temperatures, floods, droughts and storms, for example, by building sea walls, restoring forests or planting resilient crops.

But global progress on adaptation has been slow, limited and fragmented. To change this, countries created the Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA) under the Paris Agreement to track and strengthen adaptation efforts.

Although agreed upon in 2015, the goal only took shape at the 2023 UN climate summit (COP28) in Dubai,



UAE, where nations set a broad framework for action.

However, it still lacks clear targets and adequate support in finance, technology and capacity building.

At COP30 in 2025, countries must refine the GGA by agreeing on measurable indicators so that the world can fairly track progress and scale up protection for vulnerable communities.

The ministry also said the climate conference in Brazil will be crucial for the future of multilateralism.

COP30 is taking place against a complex geopolitical backdrop, with the United

States withdrawing from the Paris Agreement and several developed countries reassessing their climate strategies amid economic and energy security pressures.

At the Pre-COP30 Ministerial Roundtable in Brasilia last month, Union Environment Minister Bhupendra Yadav said the 30th UN climate summit in November must send a strong signal that multilateralism remains the cornerstone of global climate action.

Ministry officials also said that consultations are going on India's new nationally determined contributions (NDCs).

NDCs are climate action plans that every country makes under the Paris Agreement. These plans set targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and outline how each country will adapt to the impacts of climate change.

Together, these national plans determine whether the world can meet the goal of keeping temperature rise below 1.5 degrees Celsius this century.

The world has already heated up by 1.3 degrees Celsius since the pre-industrial era (1850-1900), largely due to burning fossil fuels.

Countries are required to submit their third round of NDCs, referred to as "NDCs 3.0" for the 2031-2035 period this year.

Officials have said that India could submit its updated NDCs ahead of at this year's UN climate conference scheduled to take place in Belem, Brazil, from November 10 to 21. In its updated NDC submitted in August 2022, India committed to three main quantified mitigation targets for the year 2030.

These are reducing green-

# CM distributes cheques among MMUA beneficiaries at Jamugurihat

## 'My goal is to eliminate child marriage'

**HT Bureau**

**GUWAHATI, Nov 3:** Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Sunday reaffirmed his government's commitment to women's empowerment, saying his goal is to eliminate child marriage, ensure education for every girl child, and create a society where women live with dignity and contribute meaningfully to the State's economy.

Addressing a function at Jamugurihat in Sonitpur district, the chief minister distributed cheques of ₹10,000 each to 31,045 beneficiaries of the Mukhyamantri Mahila Udyamita Abhiyan (MMUA) under Naduar Legislative Assembly Constituency.

The scheme, launched on April 1 this year from Bihali constituency, is now being implemented across all constituencies of the State.

Sarma said that the State government has been steadfast in fulfilling its election promises and has so far provided government employment to over one lakh youth—an achievement unmatched in the State's 75-year history.

Recalling the launch of the Orunodoi scheme before the previous Assembly election, the chief minister said that despite opposition criticism, the scheme's



coverage and benefits have expanded.

The government recently increased the monthly benefit from ₹830 to ₹1,250 and added an additional ₹250 for LPG cylinder purchases, raising the total assistance to ₹1,500.

He further noted that when the State announced the plan to provide ₹10,000 to each self-help group (SHG) member, critics had dismissed it as an unrealistic promise.

"But we have kept our word," Sarma said, adding that the MMUA reflects a broader vision of empowering women to become entrepreneurs.

Highlighting success stories from Naduar LAC, Sarma cited examples such as Monalisa Devi of Itakhola village, who transformed her small cake business into

a full-fledged bakery with a ₹2 lakh loan, now earning around ₹35,000 per month.

Another example, Rashmi Rabha from Hatbor, Jamugurihat, used loans to begin fish farming and cultivation, now earning ₹33,000 monthly. Sarma said that women have evolved from homemakers to financial contributors and business leaders, and with continued government support, they can emerge as strong pillars of Assam's economy.

The chief minister also spoke of upcoming local development initiatives, including a permanent venue for the Baresaharिया Bhaona, construction of a stadium, and new hospitals in the area.

Water Resources Minister and Guardian Minister of Sonitpur Pijush Hazarika, MP Banjit Dutta, MLAs Padma Hazarika, Prithiraj Rabha, Krishnakamal Tanti, Ganesh Kumar Limbu, Pramod Borthakur, Diganta Ghatowar, and other dignitaries were present at the event.

Later, Sarma visited the proposed site of Swahid Kanaklata Barua State University at Gohpur, where Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman is scheduled to lay the foundation stone on November 8. He reviewed the preparations and issued necessary directions to ensure the success of the event.

# Gaurav Gogoi 100 per cent Pakistani agent, Himanta claims again

**TEZPUR, Nov 3:** Two days after Assam Congress president Gaurav Gogoi termed Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma "unfit" to head the government, the BJP leader on Monday reiterated his statement that the opposition leader is a "100 per cent Pakistani agent".

Speaking to reporters here, Sarma also said that he would be happy if Gogoi files a case against him for making such a remark.

When asked about Gogoi's alleged links with Pakistani agencies, the CM said: "Yes, 100 per cent. People drink milk after mixing some water. Gaurav Gogoi's link with Pakistani agents does not have a little water, it's 100 per cent milk. That means whatever I have said is 100 per cent correct."

On October 31, he had alleged that Gogoi is a "100 per cent Pakistani agent", planted by a foreign power.

A day later, the opposition leader hit back and claimed that such comments showed that Sarma is "unfit" to hold his position as head of the government.

"Yesterday, Debabrata Saikia (Leader of Opposition in the Assam Assembly) asked Gaurav Gogoi to file a case. I will be happy if he files a case against me. Even if he does not, we will make public Gaurav Gogoi's activities after filing the charge sheet in the Zubeen Garg case," Sarma said on the sidelines of an official function here.

The Assam CM and the BJP have been attacking Lok Sabha MP Gogoi over his wife's alleged connection with Pakistan's spy agency ISI.

Sarma had claimed that Gogoi's British wife Elizabeth Colburn had travelled 19 times between India and Pakistan. The CM had also alleged that **(CONTD. ON PAGE-2)**

# CM briefs Amit Shah on state's welfare initiatives

**NEW DELHI, Nov 3:** Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma has met Union Home Minister Amit Shah and discussed with him issues related to welfare initiatives and key developmental programmes concerning the state.

During the 20-minute meeting here on Sunday evening, Sarma apprised the home minister about the progress of several welfare schemes and developmental projects currently underway in Assam, according to an official release.

The chief minister expressed gratitude to Shah for his continuous guidance and unwavering commitment to strengthening Assam's growth **(CONTD. ON PAGE-2)**

# IIMC Innovation Park, Assam govt startup body partner to boost startup in NE

**KOLKATA, Nov 3:** The IIM Calcutta Innovation Park (IIMCIP) on Monday announced signing of an MoU with Assam Innovation and Startup Foundation (AISF) to strengthen the startup and entrepreneurship ecosystem in the northeastern state.

The pact was signed by Jeevan Basavaraj, Secretary of the Department of Innovation, Incubation and Startups (DIIS) of the Assam government, and Ajay Jain, Chairman of IIM Calcutta Innovation Park, in the presence of senior officials.



The collaboration aims to leverage IIMCIP's expertise in mentoring and funding startups to support AISF's mission of building a "robust and sustainable startup

ecosystem" in Assam, a statement said.

The collaboration is aligned with the Assam Startup Policy 2025 and aims to transform Assam into a leading startup hub that promotes innovation-led growth, job creation and inclusive development, it said.

IIMCIP, a not-for-profit company established under the aegis of the Indian Institute of Management Calcutta, has till date mentored more than 2,000 startups and seed-funded 130 ventures.

These ventures have collectively **(CONTD. ON PAGE-2)**

## QUOTE OF THE DAY

*It takes an endless amount of history to make even a little tradition - Henry James*

## Cough syrup tragedy

The Chhindwara cough syrup tragedy has once again exposed the deep cracks in Madhya Pradesh's health system—especially in the quality control and supply chain of medicines. Dozens of children lost their lives, and the investigation revealed that the cough syrup administered to them contained toxic diethylene glycol. The same chemical has been responsible for several international disasters in the past. The deaths of these children have raised serious questions about the accountability of not only local authorities but the state's entire health department. The arrest of the manufacturer and the notice issued by the National Human Rights Commission are enough to show how fragile and ineffective the state's drug-regulation mechanism has become. This tragedy is not an isolated accident but a symbol of a system that has been decaying for over a decade. This is where one must look back. Around 2013–14, Dr Ajay Khare, then president of the Madhya Pradesh Medical Officers' Association, had demanded an investigation into the substandard medicines being supplied to government hospitals. Along with Arun Dwivedi, president of the Madhya Pradesh Class III Government Employees' Association, he filed a public-interest litigation in the Jabalpur High Court.

The petition came at a time when the health department was facing serious allegations of large-scale irregularities in drug procurement. Dr Khare had openly stated that medicines reaching public hospitals were often substandard and that departmental lobbies were protecting suppliers. He demanded an independent probe to identify who was profiting from the medicines bought in the name of public welfare. He was committed to restoring ethics and public interest in the health system. His belief was clear: unless transparency and accountability become integral to healthcare delivery, any reform will remain cosmetic. His uncompromising stance made him a target of the entrenched medical-supply mafia. When he spoke out against substandard drugs, he received threats and institutional pressure. In 2015, he died in a road accident, taking with him one of the few remaining voices that had dared to challenge the decay within the system.

The Chhindwara tragedy is the result of the same systemic rot he had identified a decade ago. The questions remain unchanged: Where is the transparency in government procurement? How active and independent are the state laboratories that test drug quality?

## Dr Bhupen Hazarika: The Voice of Nature and Humanity

By: Mowsam Hazarika

Dr Bhupen Hazarika—the “Bard of the Brahmaputra”—was not merely a singer or composer; he was a visionary whose songs captured the pulse of nature and the human spirit in perfect harmony. His art transcended melody; it became a reflection of the living landscape of Assam—the rivers, mountains, forests, and the people who inhabit them.

• **Songs Rooted in the Earth**

Nature, for Hazarika, was not a distant muse—it was an inseparable part of human life. The mighty Brahmaputra was more than a river; it was a living being, a silent witness to history and human struggle. In songs like “Bistimo Parore”, he transformed the river into a symbol of continuity and compassion. Through his music, the flow of the Brahmaputra became a metaphor for human endurance and resilience.

His compositions often celebrated the green hills of the Northeast, the golden paddy fields, the songs of boatmen, and the rhythms of the rain. Every tree, bird, and stream found its voice in his melodies. Hazarika's songs revealed that nature was not just scenery—it was the soul of Assamese identity.

• **The Ecological Poet**

Long before environmental consciousness became a global movement, Bhupen Hazarika sang of harmony between humanity and nature. His lyrics carried subtle ecological wisdom—a call to respect the earth, its rivers, and its creatures. In “Manuhe Manuhor Babe”, though centered on humanity, one senses an underlying call for balance and coexistence—a reminder that compassion must extend beyond human boundaries.

In his vision, the destruction of nature mirrored the moral decay of society. By giving voice to the river, the forest, and the soil, he made nature a moral force—one that observes human greed and warns against imbalance.

• **The Music of the Land**

Hazarika's connection with folk traditions deepened his portrayal of nature. The Bihu rhythms, tribal chants, and melodies of the Brahmaputra valley found their way into

his compositions. He transformed these local sounds into universal expressions of love, hope, and struggle.

His music carried the fragrance of the earth—from the echoes of a fisherman's song to the sigh of a lonely boat drifting on the river. In celebrating the life of ordinary people, he celebrated the nature that sustained them.

• **Nature as Metaphor for Emotion**

For Hazarika, nature was also the language of human emotion. Rivers symbolized the passage of time, rain expressed longing, and mountains stood for endurance. His songs often linked personal feelings with natural imagery—blending romance with the beauty of landscapes.

In “Ganga Amar Ma” and its Assamese counterpart “Bistimo Parore”, he used rivers as metaphors for human suffering and hope. The flow of water became the flow of life itself—eternal, patient, and unbroken.

• **A Universal Message**

While deeply rooted in Assamese soil, Bhupen Hazarika's vision was universal. He saw in nature a bridge that connects all people, transcending barriers of language, religion, and nationality. His songs in Bengali, Hindi, and other languages carried the same environmental and humanistic essence. He believed that music could heal the divisions among men just as nature heals the wounds of the earth.

• **Legacy of a Humanist Singer**

Dr. Bhupen Hazarika's songs remind us that humanity and nature are bound by a single rhythm. His melodies urge us to listen to the earth—to the rivers that weep, the winds that whisper, and the mountains that stand in silent wisdom. He sang not only for humans but also for the world that sustains them. His art continues to inspire generations to see the beauty of coexistence, the poetry of the landscape, and the moral duty of protecting it.

In the symphony of Assamese culture, Dr. Bhupen Hazarika remains the eternal voice of the land—the poet who turned nature into song, and song into a timeless message of love, peace, and harmony.

## Socio-Economic disparity in Assam's education system

Socio-economic disparity in Assam's education system is a complex, multi-layered, and deeply impactful problem that creates a major barrier to the state's human resource development and overall progress. Education, which is a fundamental right of every citizen and the backbone of a healthy society, is undermined by this gap based on economic poverty and social status, dimming the dream of building a just and equitable society. This disparity is not limited to school enrollment numbers alone; its effects extend to the quality of education, availability of learning facilities, levels of academic achievement, and ultimately the opportunities gained in professional life. Assam's diverse ethnic groups, demographic variations, and geographical complexities make these socio-economic differences even more pronounced, preventing the light of education from reaching all levels of society equally.

The impact of economic poverty on access to basic education and its acceptability is very clear and immediately creates obstacles in students' educational lives. For economically weak families, regularly sending children to school and bearing the associated costs of education often become a significant financial burden after meeting basic survival needs. Fees (even though mostly free in government schools), annual expenses for books and copies, school uniforms, shoes, and other supplies such as bicycles or transportation costs force many children to drop out at the primary or secondary level, thwarting government efforts to ensure universal access to education. In poor families, although the government has introduced various scholarships or free book schemes, many economically backward students remain deprived due to lack of accurate information about these benefits, bureaucratic complexities, and delays in receiving them. In contrast, children from financially affluent families not only get the opportunity to study in high-quality private sector, English-medium institutions but also access modern technology-equipped classrooms, well-stocked libraries, state-of-the-art laboratories for science and mathematics, and personal tutors or home instructors. This fundamental difference in facilities creates a vast educational gap from the very beginning, which later transforms into an insurmountable social imbalance. This economic barrier hinders the natural development of children's talent and intellect, causing their true potential to fade prematurely.

Geographical and social status differences also significantly affect the quality of education, deepening the disparity. Government educational institutions in Assam's char-chapori areas, tea garden-dominated regions, and other remote rural areas often have substandard infrastructure. In these regions, inaccessibility of paths to schools, frequent closures due to floods or other natural disasters, lack of electricity, proper

classrooms, and basic amenities like clean drinking water or toilets are common. In such unhealthy and inadequate environments, students' health, mental development, and educational standards decline considerably. Moreover, the shortage of skilled, trained, and permanent teachers in these backward areas has long been a persistent problem, as urban teachers are reluctant to take postings in rural areas. As a result, these schools often rely on low-paid temporary or untrained teachers, depriving students of proper knowledge and skills in critical subjects like science, mathematics, and languages. In contrast, urban schools enjoy modern infrastructure, well-equipped laboratories, digital learning tools, and experienced teachers, helping students acquire advanced knowledge and prepare for competitive examinations. This geographical disparity draws a clear line between access to facilities and quality of education,

DEGREE OF THOUGHT  
By: Himangshu Ranjan Bhuyan

causing students from backward areas to face obstacles in advancing in educational competition.

Most parents from economically weak families have low educational qualifications or are illiterate, making them unable to provide homework help or proper guidance related to the curriculum. In such families, survival struggles and poverty shift focus to livelihood concerns, sidelining the importance of education. The home environment is also unfavorable for studying; lack of electricity or light, space, or necessary quiet disrupts students' concentration and learning process. Furthermore, certain misconceptions or traditions prevalent among socially backward classes and tribes create barriers to girls' education, where in financially weak families, girls are quickly pulled out of school for household chores or small income-generating work. Many children from these classes must work outside school hours or after returning home to reduce family financial burdens, leaving no time for homework or exam preparation. These challenges pose major obstacles to improving their academic performance, causing them to lag progressively behind classmates. On the other hand, affluent families provide their children with private tutors, well-equipped study rooms, digital learning facilities, and high-quality materials, accelerating academic development and offering extra training for competitive exams.

In higher education, the impact of socio-economic disparity is more severe and lasting. Higher education, especially professional courses in science, technology, engineering, and medical sciences, is quite expensive, and bearing enrollment fees, textbooks, exam costs, and hostel expenses in urban areas is often impossible for poor families. Due to these financial difficulties, many talented students are forced to end their education after class twelve or midway through graduation, despite having

ambition and ability. Although government loans or scholarships for financial support in higher education exist, accurate information about these schemes is not equally available across all classes of society. Moreover, complexities in the application process, difficulties in collecting required documents, and delays in receiving funds cause backward class students to face barriers in availing these benefits. As a result, higher education opportunities increasingly concentrate among the financially affluent, keeping a large section of society away from advanced knowledge and professional skills. Additionally, children from wealthy families get chances for higher education in top central institutions or private universities within or outside India, greatly enhancing their career advancement prospects. Thus, instead of being a tool for social mobility, higher education becomes a strong reflection of disparity, blocking paths out of the poverty cycle and depriving deserving individuals of their rightful opportunities. The ultimate consequence of this socio-economic disparity in the education system is inequality of opportunities in professional life and lack of social justice. Students receiving low-standard education and deprived of higher education are often excluded from well-paying jobs or high-earning opportunities, as their skills and knowledge are insufficient to meet current market demands. Due to poor educational quality, they face significant difficulties in succeeding in competitive examinations. Consequently, they must sustain themselves with low-wage jobs or as temporary laborers, preventing economically and socially weak families from escaping the poverty cycle. This educational disparity perpetuates poverty across generations and increases social inequality. This problem not only affects individual lives but also creates larger issues in society such as unemployment, poverty, crime, and social unrest. Assam's education system has become a powerful tool of socio-economic disparity, providing all benefits to one class while depriving a large section of their fundamental rights.

To eliminate this serious socio-economic disparity, a detailed discussion of appropriate policy and implementation measures in the education sector is presented. Addressing this problem requires adopting a strong, coordinated, and multi-level strategy. First, the government must bring radical changes in education financing policy. The state budget must significantly increase funding allocation for the education sector so that schools in rural and backward areas receive adequate funds for infrastructure development and purchasing advanced teaching tools. An ‘equity-based formula’ should be applied in fund allocation, where institutions in poor and geographically isolated areas receive more funds per student than urban schools. This policy will directly address financial disparity in education by providing more resources to

disadvantaged schools. Additionally, the free education scheme should go beyond fee waivers to fully cover costs of books, copies, uniforms, school bags, midday meals, and ‘digital learning materials’, ensuring no student is deprived due to financial burden.

The quality of teachers determines the quality of education, and disparity in this area results in a shortage of skilled teachers in rural schools. To solve this, the government must formulate a special policy offering higher salaries, special ‘remote area allowances’, or priority in promotions to teachers posted in backward or remote areas. This arrangement will encourage qualified teachers to work in rural areas. Priority can be given to rural candidates in teacher recruitment, as they are more familiar with local culture and challenges. Furthermore, regular teacher training programs must emphasize modern teaching techniques, digital literacy, and multi-faceted classroom management, enabling students in all areas to receive quality education equally and teachers to handle new challenges.

To reduce socio-economic disparity in higher education, the government must simplify and expand financial aid policies. Scholarships for economically weak students should be based on financial need rather than merit alone. These scholarship schemes should extend from ‘school education’ to the path of ‘higher education’, allowing students to pursue higher education without financial barriers. The loan provision process for higher education should be completely paperless and extremely simple, enabling rural students to obtain loans easily without collateral. Interest rates on loans should be very low or made affordable through government support. Moreover, to eliminate infrastructure disparity in educational institutions, the government must work in ‘mission mode’. A policy with a fixed timeline must ensure basic facilities like proper classrooms, modern libraries, science laboratories, computer labs, and improved toilets in schools of backward areas. Special policies must be formulated for constructing schools on temporary or elevated foundations in char-chapori and flood-prone areas. Establishing a strong monitoring system to ensure quality in these developmental works is extremely essential.

Digital education is now an indispensable part of the education system. The first effective step to eliminate this disparity should be providing free internet connectivity and high-quality computer labs in all government schools in rural areas. The government should adopt a comprehensive scheme to distribute tablets or laptops at low cost or free to higher-class students from economically weak families, pre-loaded with all curriculum digital content. Additionally, the scope of educational programs broadcast through tele-

vision and radio must be expanded so that students in areas lacking electricity or internet can benefit. Again, socio-economic disparity can be reduced not only through formal education but also via skill development. ‘Integrated education centers’ should be established in rural high schools after school hours, providing free extra classes, homework help, and career guidance for weak students. These centers should offer vocational training such as carpentry, sewing, basic computer knowledge, and agriculture-based skills, preparing students for professional life. Local experienced individuals can be employed at honorable fees, utilizing local resources.

Active parental participation is essential to eliminate disparity caused by poverty. The government must run awareness campaigns to regularly inform parents about the importance of education, government schemes, and their children's academic progress. Female parents should be especially encouraged to participate in school programs. Educational materials or information leaflets should be prepared and distributed in local languages or tribal languages like Maitthili, Bodo, Karbi in a simple and understandable manner. Due to economic poverty, many children leave school to work as laborers. For an effective solution, the government must strictly enforce laws against child labor. At the same time, ‘special bridge courses’ and financial aid must be arranged to reintegrate these children into mainstream education. Their families should be provided special financial grants or micro-enterprise loans for livelihood, preventing them from forcing children back to work due to financial pressure.

In conclusion, socio-economic disparity in Assam's education system is a complex challenge that poses a major obstacle to the state's development path. Merely announcing some schemes is not enough to eliminate this disparity. It requires coherent implementation of the policy and practical measures discussed above. Policies like equity in education financing, incentive systems in teacher appointments, universal access to digital facilities, and simplification of aid for higher education will help weaken the foundation of disparity. Similarly, practical steps like establishing integrated education centers and rehabilitating child laborers will directly assist weak students at the ground level. Successful implementation of all these measures requires government commitment, social awareness, and active participation of civil society. Ultimately, for a permanent solution, the education system must be shaped as an ‘engine of social equality’, where no student is deprived of education due to their economic or social status. Only through proper implementation of these measures can Assam's education system become a common platform of equality, quality, and opportunity for all classes of society, transforming the state into a truly just and progressive society.

## Developed India 2047: A New Call for Compassion, Coexistence, and Environmental Ethics

By: Dr Priyanka Saurabh

As India moves toward the centenary of its independence in 2047, it is not merely pursuing economic development, but also resolving to rebuild a moral, balanced, and humane society. But this resolve will only be meaningful if development is founded on the welfare of all creation, not just humans. Today, when we talk of a “developed India,” its scope appears limited to industry, technology, infrastructure, and income growth. But a truly developed nation will be one where human qualities like compassion, coexistence, and kindness are at the heart of policies and plans.

The Constitution of India exemplifies this vision. Article 48(A) directs the State to protect the environment and wildlife, while Article 51(A)(g) establishes the fundamental duty of every citizen to have compassion for all living creatures. These provisions are not merely legal rules, but the hallmarks of a civilizational ideology based on the principles of non-violence, compassion, and “Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam.” For centuries, Indian culture has taught that every living being in creation has its own dignity, purpose, and rights.

Yet, animal welfare has been left far behind in the race for modern development. Industrialization, urbanization, and the race for reckless consumption have not only impacted natural resources but also threatened the survival of countless animal species. The declining numbers of vultures, the shrinking habitats of elephants and leopards, the impact of pollution on marine life—these all reflect this imbalance. When even a single species disappears from an ecosystem, it impacts the entire environment and human life. When we cut down forests, pollute rivers, and destroy animal habitats in the name of development, it's not just a harm to nature but a weakening of the roots of humanity itself. Therefore, it's essential that India's vision of a “Developed India 2047” not rest solely on human material prosperity, but rather embrace the welfare of all living beings as its fundamental goal.

Integrating animal welfare into India's development approach is not just a matter of sensitivity, but a prerequisite for sustainable development. Livestock is the backbone of India's rural economy. Millions of families depend on the milk, wool, eggs, and other products they provide. If these

*India's development should not be limited to the interests of human beings only, but it can become truly developed” only by adopting compassion and moral responsibility towards all living beings. The dream of a developed India 2047 will only be realized when development is not limited to economic prosperity but is linked to the welfare, coexistence, and environmental balance of all living beings. Placing animal welfare at the center of policy and development is consistent with India's ancient compassionate tradition and constitutional values. This approach, grounded in compassion, empathy, and sustainability, will not only strengthen ecological balance but also establish India as a nation that embodies the ideal of “Sarvabhuta Hitaya.”*

animals are cared for, fed, well-being, and treated with respect, productivity will increase and rural incomes will stabilize. Humane animal husbandry and balanced use of resources also benefit soil fertility, water quality, and environmental sustainability.

Additionally, animal welfare is directly linked to public health. Events like the COVID-19 pandemic and Nipah virus have demonstrated that animal health, human health, and the environment are deeply interconnected. An imbalance in one area impacts the others. Therefore, it is essential that the Ministries of Environment, Agriculture, and Health work together to implement the spirit of a “One Health Approach” at the policy level. Animal welfare approaches should also be incorporated into education, urban planning, and industry. If the school curriculum instills the values of compassion and coexistence towards all living things, future generations will naturally become more sensitive. Urban planning should include wildlife corridors, animal crossings, and humane arrangements for stray animals. The wildlife paths created on the Delhi-Mumbai Highway are inspiring examples in this direction.

India should also update its outdated animal protection laws. The Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960, needs timely amendments to strengthen penal provisions and ensure real impact. Furthermore, expanding veterinary services and scientific care can improve livestock quality.

Technological innovations can also be helpful in this area. Artificial intelligence-based surveillance, satellite mapping, and electronic security systems are playing a revolutionary role in wildlife conservation. The e-surveillance system in Kaziranga National Park has significantly reduced poaching incidents. This is proof that combining science and compassion can be the most effective solution to protect our envi-

ronment and wildlife. Promoting “cruelty-free production” in animal-based industries—such as dairy, leather, and textiles—will not only promote ethical trade but also enhance India's reputation internationally. Consumers also need to be aware that choosing ethical products is a social responsibility. The Indian philosophies of “Ahimsa Paramo Dharma” and “Sarve Bhavantu Sukhinah” are not just religious maxims, but rather a maxim for sustainable living. If animal welfare is combined with “Mission Lifestyle” (which emphasizes adopting environmentally friendly living), India will emerge as a nation that combines development with compassion.

The meaning of a developed India will only be meaningful when the scale of development includes not just production or income, but also morality, sensitivity, and coexistence. We must recognize that humans are not the sole masters of this Earth. Every living being, whether small or large, is an essential part of the chain of life.

The spirit of “Sarva Bhoota Hita”—that is, the welfare of all beings—has always been at the heart of India. This spirit needs to be integrated into modern policy, technology, and education. Only when India moves forward in this direction will it be called not only prosperous, but also a truly civilized and sensitive nation. This is what Developed India 2047 truly means—an India that combines compassion with progress, empathy with science, and morality with development. This will be the beginning of a golden age where every living being will be safe, respected, and happy.

The dream of a developed India will only be realized when we understand that the true measure of progress is compassion and morality. Only when India takes all living beings along on its path of development will it earn the right to be called the “World Leader.”

## Acharya stresses on sustainable pathways for strengthening Assam's dairy, livestock and cooperative sectors

# Guv inaugurates dairy, livestock conclave for sustainable growth

HT Bureau

**GUWAHATI, Nov 3:** Governor Lakshman Prasad Acharya inaugurated a two-day conclave on the Development of Dairy, Animal Husbandry and Cooperatives in Assam at Assam Administrative Staff College on Monday. The event was attended by Jogen Mohan, Minister Cooperation and Krishnendu Paul, Minister Animal Husbandry and Veterinary, Government of Assam.

The conclave was organised by Raj Bhavan, Assam, in collaboration with the ICAR-National Dairy Research Institute (NDRI), under the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Government of India, along with the Department of Animal Husbandry and Veterinary and the Department of Cooperation, Government of Assam. The event brought together scientists, policymakers, entrepreneurs, and farmers from across the country to deliberate on sustainable pathways for strengthening Assam's dairy, livestock and cooperative sectors.

In his inaugural address, Governor Acharya remarked that the conclave signifies far more than an initiative to increase milk production or expand the livestock industry. He said that the conclave has been organised and the deliberations have been aimed at initiating and sensitising collective steps towards building a self-reliant, sustainable and inclusive Assam. He expressed confidence that through the brain-storming of the experts, policymakers and rural communities, the state can lay a strong foundation for economic growth and social empowerment using the potentials of dairy, livestock and cooperative sectors.

The Governor observed that dairy and animal husbandry have long been an integral part of Assam's social, cultural and economic identity. For countless families across the State, rearing cattle, goats, pigs, or poultry is both a tradition and a livelihood that ensures nutritional security and generates employment in rural areas. He stated that



empowering these sectors means empowering the very heart of rural Assam and uplifting the lives of its people, particularly women, who form the backbone of the rural economy.

Acharya further highlighted that under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India has emerged as the world's largest milk producer. He lauded the Government of Assam for its remarkable initiatives to harness the immense potential of the dairy and livestock sectors through schemes such as the Assam Dairy Development Scheme and the expansion of Purabi Dairy Cooperative Institutions, which have revolutionised the processes of milk collection, processing and marketing. The Governor also appreciated the contributions of national programs such as the National Livestock Mission, National Gokul Mission and the Animal Husbandry Infrastructure Development Fund (AHIDF), which have played a significant role in breed improvement, ensuring quality veterinary services and promoting entrepreneurship among rural youth.

The Governor also hailed the State government's initiative such as Mukhya Mantri Mahila Udyamita Abhiyan for empowering the women and the self help groups who can lend their hands in strengthening the dairy, livestock and cooperative sectors and the resultant employment avenues.

Emphasising the importance of human resource development, the Governor said that technology alone cannot drive progress; skilled and motivated people are equally essential. He urged for greater focus on training youth and women in dairy management, veterinary care and entrepreneurship. The Governor also called for a balanced approach between progress and preservation, stressing that development must remain environmentally sustainable.

Reiterating the State's collective goals, the Governor stated that Assam must strive to become self-reliant in milk and animal products and establish the dairy and livestock sector as a key driver of rural industrialisation, youth participation and women-led entrepreneurship. He noted that by combining

the spirit of cooperation with the innovation of the youth, Assam can increase farmers' incomes, ensure food security and contribute significantly to the vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat.

During the event, several stakeholders presented their blueprints for the development of dairy, livestock and cooperative sectors. Director Dairy Development, Assam, Panchali Kakati spoke on the Status of the Dairy Sector in Assam, Managing Director NEDFL S B. Bose, presented an overview of the Assam Dairy development plan, Director of ICAR-NDRI, Karnal Dr Dheer Singh delivered an address on the National Dairy Mission - Progressive Steps of the Government of India and suggestions for Assam, Deputy Commissioner, Dairy Development Department, Government, Maharashtra, Gajanan S K Tawade shared his insights on Dairy Development in Maharashtra, Managing Director Amul Dairy Dr Amit Vyas presented an enlightening address on the Evolution of the Dairy Sector in Gujarat and the scopes available in Assam for the development of the sector.

The conclave also featured thematic sessions focusing on breeding, genetics and animal health, nutrition, fodder and feed, Dairy Cooperatives and FPO Models in Assam.

Several distinguished dignitaries including B Kalyan Chakravarty, Additional Chief Secretary, Govt. of Assam, Dr Dheer Singh, Director, ICAR-NDRI, Karnal, Dr Harbansh Dixit Advisor to the Raj Bhavan Secretariat, Prof Bechan Lal OSD to the Governor, S S Meenakshi Sundaram Commissioner and Secretary to the Governor, M S Manivannan Commissioner and Secretary, Department of Animal Husbandry and Veterinary, Government of Assam, Narayan Konwar Secretary and Registrar of Cooperative Societies, Government of Assam along with scientists, entrepreneurs, progressive farmers and a host of other eminent personalities were present on the occasion.

## Nurses and NHM staff stage protest in Kokrajhar

Demand equal pay and job regularisation



HT Correspondent

**KOKRAJHAR, Nov 3:** Nurses and staff working under the National Health Mission (NHM) across Assam have launched a statewide sit-in demonstration that began on Monday.

In Kokrajhar, NHM employees and workers carried out the protest demanding equal pay for equal work and other pending grievances. The strike aims to pressurise the authorities to address a five-point charter of demands, including implementation of pay scale benefits, equal rights as per the Supreme Court's order and related welfare measures.

Due to the strike, health services in government hospitals across the state, including Kokrajhar district have been severely affected. Only emergency medical services are continuing in the affected hospitals.

The All Assam Health and Technical Welfare Association, the NHM Employees Association and the National Health Mission Workers Union have jointly organised the three-day sit-in strike in Kokrajhar. The protest is being held in the premises of the Joint Director of Health Services Office at Habrubar, Kokrajhar where NHM workers displayed placards with

slogans such as "We demand justice," "Ensure equal pay for equal work," "Implement pay scale system for NHM staff," "Adopt EPF/CPF facilities" and "Appoint NHM staff directly to vacant posts in the Health Department."

Kajol Nandi, president of the NHM Workers' Association, Kokrajhar district, said that employees had earlier staged a protest at Chachal on October 29, urging the government to meet their five-point demands. However, the government has yet to respond, he alleged.

He added that NHM employees across the state have been compelled to wear black badges and continue their three-day protest in all district headquarters.

Nandi demanded that the Assam government immediately grant equal pay for equal work to around 20,000 NHM employees working across the state and regularise their jobs, as has been done in states like Delhi, Haryana, Odisha, Manipur, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand and Maharashtra. He further warned that if the government fails to act promptly, the employees would be forced to intensify their agitation and the administration would be responsible for any situation arising from the protest.

## Taekwondo training camp begins in Kokrajhar

HT Correspondent

**KOKRAJHAR, Nov 3:** A seven-day Taekwondo training camp on "Kyorugi" and "Poomsae" began on Monday at the Chiknajar Gymnasium, Bodofa Nagar, Kokrajhar organised by the All Bodoland Taekwondo Association.

More than 100 trainees from different parts of the Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR) are participating in the camp, which aims to provide both basic and advanced training in Taekwondo.

The special trainer for the camp is Grand Master Wanyong Lee from South Korea, an 8th Dan Black Belt holder in martial arts. During the session, he said India has many talented martial artists but lacks adequate sports infrastructure and advanced training facilities, which hampers their growth. He stressed the need to create better platforms to support promising athletes.

This is Grand Master Lee's first visit to Bodoland. He expressed his happiness after experiencing the Bodo community's food, language and culture. Officials and members of the All Bodoland Taekwondo Association were present at the inaugural ceremony. Organisers said the camp would help young participants enhance their skills and advance in their sporting careers.

## New committee elected for Batadroba Than Management

HT Correspondent

**NAGAON, Nov 3:** A general meeting of the Batadroba Than Management Committee was held at the than premises on Sunday, presided over by noted journalist and Nagaland University Vice-Chancellor Dr Samudra Gupta Kashyap during which a new committee was elected.

The meeting was attended by district officials, including District Commissioner Debashish Sarma and Superintendent of Police Swapnil Deka along with devotees and management committee members. A six-member inquiry committee was also formed to investigate allegations of corruption and irregularities in the previous committee, with a report expected within six months.

Lachit Bordoloi was elected General Secretary for a three-year term, while Amlan Jyoti Dev Goswami of Noruwa Satra was elected president and Yogendra Narayan Dev Mahanta of Shaulguri Satra as vice-president.

The meeting concluded with a resolution to hold another general meeting in six months to review the inquiry committee's findings and take action against those found guilty. The election was held under tight security, marking a milestone in the history of the Batadroba Than.

## Jorhat bans Pig transport amid Swine fever surge

HT Correspondent

**JORHAT, Nov 3:** The Jorhat district administration has prohibited the transportation of live pigs, pig products and pork meat into and within the district with immediate effect in view of the large-scale spread of African Swine Fever (ASF).

Jorhat District Commissioner Jay Shivani, in her capacity as District Magistrate, issued the order on Monday stating that information was received from the District A H & Veterinary Officer, Jorhat regarding a surge in African Swine Fever cases in pigs in Bamunpukhuri, Upper Deuri,

Baghmora, Morongial, Chenijan and Moutgaon areas of Jorhat district. Laboratory tests had confirmed the presence of the disease, prompting the administration to take preventive measures to stop further spread.

Considering the urgency, the DC, exercising powers under Section 163 of BNS 2023, promulgated prohibitory orders banning the transportation of live pigs, pig products and pork meat into and within the district, selling of live pigs, pork and pork products and pig slaughter or any buying or selling of pigs within the district.

The order further stated that any pig deaths in the district must be immediately reported to the Veterinary Department for collection of samples and confirmatory diagnosis. District authorities also emphasised that pig breeders and product handlers must maintain strict biosecurity measures to prevent the disease from spreading to new areas. Transportation of pig feed would require prior permission from the Veterinary Department.

The prohibitory order comes into immediate effect and any violation will be punishable under Section 233 of BNS.

## Sivasagar to observe Dr Hazarika's death anniversary, Ekta run

HT Correspondent

**SIVASAGAR, Nov 3:** The Sivasagar district administration is gearing up to observe the death anniversary of Dr Bhupen Hazarika on November 5 with a grand memorial event at Boarding Field, where over five thousand people are expected to gather and sing his immortal song "Manuhe manuhar babe." Eminent cultural personalities will be felicitated on the occasion by the district administration.

On November 7, the administration will organise the Rashtriya Ekta Divas Run from the bank of the historic Sivasagar Borphukhuri to commemorate the 150th birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. Arjun awardee Bhogeshwar Baruah will be felicitated at a meeting to be held at the Yuva Dal auditorium. An extempore speech competition for school students from classes VIII to X will also be organised. Former Thowra MLA Kushal Duwori will inaugurate the event on behalf of Guardian Minister Dr Manoj Pegu.

During a preparatory meeting held at Sukapha Bhawan, Samiran Bora, DDC, Sivasagar urged the media fraternity to attend the programmes with their families and extend support to make the events successful. The meeting was attended by ADCs Gauripriya Devi and Likumony Bora, Assistant Commissioner Subhajit Khound, District Sports Officer Sanjay Upadhyay and several media representatives.

## Veteran journalist Dr Nabakanta Bordoloi passes away

HT Correspondent

**MORIGAON, Nov 3:** Veteran journalist, retired professor and noted writer Dr Nabakanta Bordoloi passed away in the early hours on Monday at his residence at Ward No 2 in Morigaon town. He was 82.

Dr Bordoloi retired from Morigaon College in 2004. As the news of his demise spread, a large number of people gathered at his residence to pay floral tributes. Later, his mortal remains were taken to the office of the Morigaon District Journalists' Association, where the president, secretary and members paid their respects to their former president.

Several organisations, including Morigaon Zila Sahitya Sabha, Praktan Chatra Satirtha Sammilan, AASU, AALS and ATSU, also paid their last respects to the departed soul. Dr Bordoloi served as the Morigaon district correspondent for The Sentinel for nearly five years and had also contributed to Assam Express and several Assamese dailies. He was the author of the popular grammar book Modern English Grammar. He is survived by his wife, a daughter, a son, a sister-in-law, a son-in-law, grandchildren and other relatives. His death has cast a pall of gloom over Morigaon district.

## BJP leader demands renaming Dikhow bridge after Zubeen Garg

HT Correspondent

**SIVASAGAR, Nov 3:** Samir Gogoi, a BJP leader and son of former Assembly Speaker late Pronob Gogoi, has demanded that the old Dikhow iron bridge be renamed after singing icon Zubeen Garg, who died under mysterious circumstances in a sea of Singapore on September 19. The Dikhow bridge was constructed by the British in 1935 to facilitate the transport of tea, timber and other products from the region to Kolkata. It was later abandoned following a PWD notification due to its deteriorated and rusty condition.

## Nagaon Press Club holds mid-term session

HT Correspondent

**NAGAON, Nov 3:** The Nagaon Press Club held its mid-term session at the Dr Abu Hanifa Hall in Nagaon on Saturday. The event was attended by local MLA Rupak Sarma, along with senior journalists Prakash Mahanta and Paragmoni Aditya. In his address, MLA Rupak Sarma lauded the Press Club for its social responsibility and dedication to journalistic values. Prakash Mahanta highlighted the importance of practical experience in journalism, noting that academic qualifications alone are not sufficient for success in the profession.

During the session, senior journalists Ajit Kumar Saikia and Bhaskarjyoti Medhi were felicitated for their contributions to journalism. The club also congratulated the children of senior journalists Hemen Kumar Das and Baidyanath Sahani for their success in the Higher Secondary Final Examination. The event concluded with the adoption of several key resolutions during the general meeting held in the evening.

## Guv condoles demise of flautist Deepak Sarma

HT Bureau

**GUWAHATI, Nov 3:** Governor Lakshman Prasad Acharya has expressed deep sorrow over the passing away of internationally acclaimed flautist Deepak Sarma, who breathed his last on Monday morning.

In a condolence message, the Governor said, "Assam has lost a distinguished musician whose contribution to Indian classical music, particularly in popularising the flute on global platforms, will be remembered for generations. His soulful renditions and dedication to the art of music have left an indelible mark on the cultural heritage of our state and the nation. His demise is an irreparable loss to the world of music," Acharya stated.

The Governor also conveyed his empathy to the bereaved family and prayed to the Almighty for eternal peace of the departed soul.

## West KA to mark Bhupen Hazarika anniversary, Patel Unity March

HT Bureau

**DIPHU, Nov 3:** District Commissioner of West Karbi Anglong, Saranga Pani Sarma ACS, announced plans for the death anniversary of legendary singer and Bharat Ratna awardee Dr Bhupen Hazarika on November 5 at Serdihun Aklam, Baithalangso. Over 3,000 participants are expected to form a human chain and

sing the iconic song 'Manuhe Manuhar Babe.' The event, starting at 11 AM, will be attended by MLA Rupsing Teron and other dignitaries, followed by a cultural night with floral tributes and local musical performances. On November 7, the district administration will organise a 'Vande Mataram' programme at the DC Conference Hall, with students singing the

song in morning assemblies across schools.

Additionally, the 150th death anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel will be commemorated on November 14 with a 'Paidal Yatra' (Unity March) from Soi Ali, Hamren, involving 4,000 participants, including HAD Minister Nandita Gorlosa and police personnel.

## AMCH celebrates 79th foundation day

Honouring decades of medical education and healthcare service in North East India

HT Correspondent

**DIBRUGARH, Nov 3:** The Assam Medical College and Hospital (AMCH) celebrated its 79th foundation day on Monday with a series of events honouring its distinction as North East India's first medical college.

The day began with AMCH Principal and Chief Superintendent Prof Sanjeeb Kakati hoisting the institutional flag at the AMC OPD complex.

This was followed by a meaningful ceremony dedicating lecture halls to legendary teachers who have shaped the college's academic excellence over decades.

An open session at the Dr John Berry White auditorium brought together faculty members, students, staff and nurses for the main commemoration. Prof Kakati presented the college's annual report and presided over the felicitation of distinguished alumni and the award ceremony for MBBS toppers.

"This institution stands as a testament to the vision of those who believed in bringing quality medical



education to North East India," Prof Kakati stated during his address.

Brahmaputra Cracker and Polymer Limited (BCLP) CMD Pranjal Changmai and Dibrugarh Mayor Dr Saikat Patra, an AMCH alumnus, attended as guests of honour. Pranjal Changmai reflected on the college's impact, saying, "AMCH has not only produced competent doctors but has been instrumental

in improving healthcare access across the entire northeastern region for nearly eight decades."

The celebrations concluded with campus illumination in the evening, followed by a cultural program that united the AMCH community.

The college's remarkable history dates back to 1900 with the Berry White Medical School, named after Dr John Berry White, a

British surgeon who arrived in Assam in 1858 under the East India Company. After serving upper Assam for 24 years and retiring as civil surgeon from undivided Lakhimpur district in 1882, Dr White made an extraordinary philanthropic contribution—donating his entire life savings of fifty thousand rupees, considered a princely sum at that time, to establish a medical school.

The Berry White Medical School, established in 1900, marked the beginning of allopathic medical education in Assam. Through a process of upgradation, it evolved into the Assam Medical College in 1947, earning the distinction of being the first medical college in the entire northeastern region. Nearly eight decades later, AMCH continues its pioneering role in medical education and healthcare delivery, training thousands of doctors who serve communities across North East India and beyond, carrying forward Dr White's legacy of service and Dr Berry White's vision of accessible medical education in the region.

# Powerful earthquake kills at least 20 people injures hundreds

## The US Geological Survey said the quake's epicentre was located 22 kilometres (14 miles) west-southwest of the town of Khulm

**KABUL, Nov 3:** A powerful, 6.3 magnitude earthquake shook northern Afghanistan before dawn Monday, killing at least 20 people and injuring more than 500 others, a health official said, adding that the numbers could increase.

The US Geological Survey said the quake's epicentre was located 22 kilometres (14 miles) west-southwest of the town of Khulm, and that it struck at 12:59 a.m. at a depth of 28 kilometres (17 miles).

Sharafat Zaman, a spokesperson for the Ministry of Public Health, said 534 injured people and 20 bodies had been brought to hospitals in Balkh and Samangan provinces. Rescuers were on the scene and the figures were changing, he added.

In the nearby province of Badakhshan, the quake partially or completely destroyed 800 houses in one village in the Shahr-e-Bozorg district, said Ihsanullah Kamgar, spokesperson for the provincial police headquarters. But with a lack of internet in the remote area, there were still no accurate casualty figures, he added.

Yousaf Hammad, a spokesman for Afghanistan's disaster management agency, said most of the injured suffered minor wounds and were discharged after treatment.

In the Afghan capital of Kabul, the Ministry of Defence announced that rescue and emergency teams had reached the quake



areas in Balkh and Samangan, which suffered the most damage, and were transporting the injured and assisting others.

The Taliban government's chief spokesman, Zabihullah Mujahid, posted on X that the earthquake caused casualties and financial loss. He said government organisations were working to get the needed help.

According to the Afghan officials, the

quake was also felt in Mazar-e-Sharif, the capital of northern Balkh province, where footage on social media showed damage to the historic Blue Mosque. Several bricks had fallen from the walls, but the mosque remained intact. The centuries-old site is one of Afghanistan's most revered religious landmarks and a major gathering place during

Islamic and cultural festivals.

The quake was felt in Kabul and several other provinces. The Defence Ministry said that a rockslide briefly blocked a main mountain highway linking Kabul with Mazar-e-Sharif, but the road was later reopened. It said some people who were injured and trapped along the highway were transported to the hospital.

The United Nations in Afghanistan said on X that Monday's tremor came just weeks after a deadly earthquake struck eastern Afghanistan. The U.N. said its teams were on the ground assessing needs and delivering urgent aid.

"We stand with the affected communities and will provide the necessary support," the post said.

A magnitude 6.0 earthquake hit eastern Afghanistan on Aug. 31 near the border with Pakistan, killing more than 2,200 people. On Oct. 7, 2023, a magnitude 6.3 quake, followed by strong aftershocks, left at least 4,000 people dead, according to the Taliban government.

The impoverished country often faces difficulty in responding to such natural disasters, especially in remote regions. Buildings tend to be low-rise constructions, mostly of concrete and brick, with homes in rural and outlying areas made from mud bricks and wood, many poorly built. (AP)

# Law and order issue in Nepal discussed during PM Karki's meeting



**KATHMANDU, Nov 3:** The issue of maintaining law and order across Nepal ahead of the general elections in March was raised during the meeting between Prime Minister Sushila Karki and chief ministers of the seven provinces here.

During the meeting held on Sunday, the provincial chief ministers also said they are ready to cooperate with the federal government to create a conducive atmosphere for the March 5 general election.

Prime Minister Karki has been holding a series of meetings with various political parties and the Gen Z group in a bid to create a favourable environment for conducting the Parliamentary election.

Karki, 73, became Nepal's first woman prime minister on September 12 after the ouster of then Prime Minister K P Sharma Oli following youth-led 'Gen Z' protests against the government over corruption and a ban on social media.

On Sunday, Karki sought cooperation from the chief ministers of Koshi, Madhes, Bagmati, Lumbini, Gandaki, Karnali and Sudur Paschim provinces in conducting the election in a free and fair manner.

The chief ministers urged the government to be serious in maintaining the law and order situation in the country, as maintaining security is the most challenging task for conducting the March 5 election, according to sources at the Prime Minister's secretariat.

The chief ministers expressed the view that if federal, provincial and local governments work with the spirit of cooperation, collaboration and co-existence, then the general election could be conducted within the stipulated time, the sources pointed out.

Assuring the chief ministers of providing necessary security, the prime minister on the occasion expressed confidence that the election will be held as per schedule. Most of the weapons looted

from security personnel from different places have already been returned and more than 50 per cent of prisoners, who escaped from different jails during the violent protests, have already returned to the respective prisons, the Prime Minister pointed out.

"The government is seriously working towards returning the looted weapons and the inmates, who escaped different jails, have started returning to their respective jails. Therefore, there is no need to worry about the security situation," Karki told the chief ministers during the meeting.

The chief ministers also asked the government to bring a package for the reconstruction of the government buildings that were damaged during the Gen Z protests on September 8 and 9. The meeting was a continuation of the prime minister's consultations with various stakeholders in connection with poll preparations. On Saturday, she met Nepali Congress (NC) general secretaries Gagan Thapa and Bishwa Prakash Sharma on the need for political parties to make their positions clear regarding elections.

Karki, for the first time since the formation of the caretaker government in September, had met with representatives of major political parties on October 21 to discuss preparations for the general elections and security issues.

The meeting was attended by prominent leaders of several political parties of the dissolved House of Representatives. Karki sought cooperation from all the political parties in conducting free and fair elections while the leaders urged the government to create a conducive environment for elections.

Days after, Nepal Home Minister Om Prakash Aryal on October 25 called all the stakeholders concerned to sit for a dialogue with the caretaker government instead of organising street protests ahead of the March 5 general election. (PTI)

# Trump justifies decision to restart testing of nuke weapons

**WASHINGTON, Nov 3:** Pakistan and China are among the countries which are testing nuclear weapons, US President Donald Trump has said to justify his administration's plans to resume testing of the US's own nuclear assets after a gap of over three decades.

Ahead of his meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping last week, Trump announced that the US will start testing nuclear weapons on an "equal basis" with rival powers.

In an interview with CBS News' Norah O'Donnell on Sunday, the US president named Russia, China, North Korea and Pakistan as the countries testing nuclear weapons.

"Russia's testing, and China's testing, but they don't talk about it. You know, we're an open society. We're different. We talk about it... We're gonna test, because they test and others test," Trump said.

"And certainly North Korea's been testing. Pakistan's been testing," he asserted.

Shortly before meeting Xi in South Korea on Thursday last, Trump said on social media that the US will resume testing nuclear weapons for the first time in three decades.

Trump claimed some of the countries conducting tests of their nuclear weapons don't acknowledge them.

"They don't go and tell you about it. You don't necessarily know where they're testing. They test way under -- underground, where people don't know exactly what's happening with the test," he said.

Last week, Russian President Vladimir Putin said that Russia had tested a Poseidon nuclear-capable super torpedo.

In his remarks, Trump strongly justified his decision to restart the process for testing nuclear weapons, saying testing was necessary to ensure the reliability of the weapons.

"They (other countries) test, and we don't test. We have to test. And Russia did make -- a little bit of a threat the other day when they said they were gonna do certain forms of a different level of testing. But Russia tests, China -- and China does test, and we're gonna test also," the president said. (PTI)

# Hegseth visits inter-Korean border ahead of security talks with South Korean officials



**SEOUL, Nov 3:** (AP) US Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth visited the Demilitarised Zone separating the two Koreas on Monday as he began a two-day visit to ally South Korea for security talks. Hegseth and South Korean Defence Minister Ahn Gyu-back received a briefing from military officials at Observation Post Ouellette, a site near the military demarcation line that past US presidents, including Donald Trump during his first term in 2019, had visited to peer across the border into North Korea and meet with American soldiers.

Hegseth and Ahn also visited the Panmunjom border village, where an armistice was signed to pause the 1950-53 Korean War. Ahn's ministry said the visit "reaffirmed the firm combined defence posture and close coordination" between the allies. Hegseth did not mention North Korea, which has ignored Washington

and Seoul's calls for dialogue in recent years while accelerating the expansion of its nuclear weapons and missile programs.

South Korea's military also said Monday that the country's Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Gen. Jin Yong-sung and his US counterpart, Gen. Dan Caine, oversaw a combined formation flight aboard South Korean and US F-16 fighter jets above a major US military base in Pyeongyang. The flight, conducted for the first time, was intended to demonstrate the allies' "ironclad combined defence posture" and the "unwavering" strength of the alliance, Seoul's Defence Ministry said. Hegseth and Ahn, who previously met on Saturday at a defence ministers' meeting in Malaysia, will attend the allies' annual defence talks in Seoul on Tuesday.

The talks are expected to cover key alliance issues, including South Korea's commitment to increase defence spending and the implementation of a previous agreement to transfer wartime operational control of allied forces to a binational command led by a South Korean general with a US deputy.

There are also concerns in Seoul that the Trump administration may

demand much higher South Korean payments for the US military presence in the country or possibly downsize America's military footprint to focus more on China.

Hegseth's visit comes days after Trump travelled to South Korea for meetings with world leaders, including South Korean President Lee Jae Myung and Chinese President Xi Jinping, on the sidelines of this year's Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit in Gyeongju.

During his meeting with Trump on Wednesday last week, Lee reaffirmed South Korea's commitment to increasing defence spending to reduce the financial burden on America and also called for US support in South Korean efforts to acquire nuclear-powered submarines.

Trump later said on social media that the United States will share closely held technology to allow South Korea to build a nuclear-powered submarine, and that the vessel will be built in the Philly Shipyard, which was bought last year by South Korea's Hanwha Group. The leaders also advanced trade talks, addressing details of \$350 billion in US investments South Korea committed to in an effort to avoid the Trump administration's highest tariffs. (AP)

# Lankan Navy arrests 35 Indian fishermen for illegal fishing

**COLOMBO, Nov 3:** At least 35 Indian fishermen have been arrested and their four trawlers seized by the Sri Lankan Navy allegedly for illegal fishing in an overnight operation that ended early Monday.

The Navy spokesman Commander Buddika Sampath said the arrests came at the Sri Lankan waters around the northern Jaffna district's Kankesanthurai area.

The fishermen, arrested for illegal fishing, and their equipment will be handed over to the fisheries inspectorate in the north for further action, the Navy said.

This is the second such arrest by the Navy within a month.

Earlier on October 9, as many as 47 Indian fishermen were arrested by the Sri Lankan navy and their five trawlers seized at Talaimannar in northern Sri Lanka for alleged illegal fishing in the island nation's waters. The fishermen issue is a contentious one in the ties between India and Sri Lanka, with the Sri Lankan Navy personnel sometimes even firing at Indian fishermen in the Palk Strait and seizing their boats for illegally entering Sri Lanka's territorial waters. (PTI)

# Ukraine gets more Patriot air defence systems to counter deadly Russian attacks

**KYIV, Nov 3:** Ukraine has received more American-made Patriot air defence systems to help it counter Russia's daily barrages, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said, as Russian drones killed a man and injured five of his family members, including two children, in the latest nighttime attack. Russia's relentless pounding of urban areas behind the front line following its full-scale invasion of Ukraine nearly four years ago has killed thousands of civilians. It has also targeted the energy supply to deny civilians heat and running water in winter, as well as disrupt industrial production of Ukraine's newly developed drones and missiles. The sophisticated Patriot systems are the most effective weapon against Russian missiles. Zelenskyy has pleaded with Western partners to provide more of them, but production limitations and the need to maintain stockpiles have slowed their delivery.

"More Patriots are now in Ukraine and being put into operation," Zelenskyy said on social media on late Sunday. "Of course, more systems are needed to protect key infrastructure sites and our cities across the entire territory of our state." He thanked Germany and its Chancellor, Friedrich Merz, for the Patriots. Germany said three months ago it would deliver two more Patriot air defence systems to Ukraine. It agreed to the move after securing assurances that the US will prioritise the delivery of new Patriots to Germany to backfill its stocks. Patriot systems are made only in the US. NATO is coordinating regular deliveries of large weapons packages to Ukraine. European allies and Canada are buying much of the equipment from the United States, which has greater stocks of ready military materiel, as well as more effective weapons. (AP)

# UK police charge man with attempted murder over train mass stabbings

**LONDON, Nov 3:** British police on Monday charged a 32-year-old man with attempted murder in connection with the stabbings that injured 11 people on board a London-bound train over the weekend.

Anthony Williams, a black British national, appeared before a court in eastern England on Monday morning.

British Transport Police (BTP) said Williams is charged with 10 counts of attempted murder, one count of actual bodily harm (ABH) and one count of possession of a bladed article in connection with the "major incident" at Huntingdon railway station on Saturday evening.

Armed police had stormed the train after several people were attacked on the Doncaster to London King's Cross high-speed service.



"The criminal investigation and support for the victims is a priority for British Transport Police," said BTP Deputy Chief Constable (DCC) Stuart Cundy.

"Our investigation is also looking at other possible linked offences. Following the charges authorised by the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), I would stress the importance of not saying or publishing anything which might jeopardise or prejudice ongoing criminal proceedings, or the integrity of the investigation," he

said. The police revealed that Williams is also charged with another count of attempted murder and possession of a bladed article in connection with an incident at Pontoon Dock DLR station in London on Saturday.

The man, of Langford Road in Peterborough, appeared before Peterborough Magistrates' Court following the charges and will remain remanded in custody.

A second man, a 35-year-old British national from London who was also arrested at the scene in Huntingdon, was later released "with no further action".

"It was reported in good faith to officers responding to the incident that he was involved in the attack, and following enquiries we can confirm that he was not involved," BTP said in a statement on Sunday night. (PTI)

# Tanzania's President Hassan sworn in after disputed election sparks deadly protests

**DODOMA (TANZANIA), Nov 3 (AP)** Tanzania's President Samia Suluhu Hassan was sworn in on Monday at a ceremony limited to invited guests, following a disputed election that sparked deadly protests after two main opposition candidates were barred from running. The ceremony was held on government-owned grounds in the administrative capital of Dodoma, a departure from the past, when the president took the oath at packed football stadiums that were open to the public.

Tension remained high in the commercial capital, Dar es Salaam, following three days of election protests. Gas stations and grocery shops were closed, with streets nearly empty as government employees continued to work from home. In Dodoma, most people stayed home. (AP)

# Abu Dhabi hosts oil summit as OPEC+ halts production hikes planned for first quarter of 2026

**ABU DHABI, Nov 3:** Abu Dhabi opened a major oil summit Monday with officials offering bullish optimism that power demands for artificial intelligence and global aviation will boost energy prices, just hours after OPEC+ paused production increases planned for next year.

The comments at the annual Abu Dhabi International Petroleum Exhibition and Conference in the Emirati capital highlighted the contradictions in the market and in the United Arab Emirates, a major oil producer that hosted the United Nations COP28 climate talks in 2023.

Sultan al-Jaber, the head of the state-run Abu Dhabi National Oil Co, who led COP28, described the energy market as needing "reinforcement, not replacement." US Interior Secretary Doug Burgum applauded al-Jaber's remarks and criticised what he described as "a set of policies that have been driven by an ideology around climate extremism."

"The demand for power is going to go up and up and up," Burgum said. "Today's the day to announce that there is no energy transition. There is only energy addition."

OPEC+ halts first-quarter production hikes On Sunday, OPEC+ met and decided to increase its production by an additional 1.37,000 barrels of oil beginning in December. However, it

said other adjustments planned in January, February and March of next year would be paused "due to seasonality."

OPEC+ includes the core members of the cartel, as well as nations outside of the group led by Russia.

Benchmark Brent crude sold Monday around USD 65 a barrel, down from a post-COVID high of some USD 115 a barrel after Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022. It had fallen to USD 60 a barrel in recent days over concerns that the market had too much production.

"Yes, OPEC+ is blinking, but it's a calculated move," said Jorge Leon, the head of geopolitical analysis at Rystad Energy. "Sanctions on Russian producers have injected a new layer of uncertainty into supply forecasts, and the group knows that overproducing now could backfire later. By pausing, OPEC+ is protecting prices, projecting unity and buying time to see how sanctions play out on Russian barrels."

Suhail al-Mazerouei, the Emirates' energy and infrastructure minister, however, dismissed any idea long-term of too much oil being in the market.

"I'm not going to talk about an oversupply scenario," he said. "I can't see that. I can't justify that. And I think all of what we are seeing is more de-



mand."

Burgum backs production, knocks Russia Burgum, a former Republican governor of North Dakota and the chair of US President Donald Trump's National Energy Dominance Council, was on hand for the Abu Dhabi oil summit on Monday.

He praised the partnership oil-producing Gulf Arab states have with America, saying: "We share a belief about energy policy."

"People have described the climate as an existential threat. Again, to help people understand US energy policy, we are focused on two substantial threats. One is Iran could not have a nuclear weapon," Burgum said. "But the second thing is that the free world cannot lose the AI arms race. ... You need chips, you need software models and you need more electricity."

The average price for a gallon of gasoline in the US, a key economic and political indicator in the country, stood at USD 3.03 on Monday. Trump also has criticised both OPEC+ and Saudi Arabia at times over the price per barrel, particularly in his first term.

Meanwhile, both the United States and the United Kingdom implemented new oil sanctions targeting Russia over its war on Ukraine. Those sanctions targets included Rosneft and the Russian oil company Lukoil, whose red-and-white logo hung over the annual oil conference.

The UAE has maintained close ties to Russia despite the war, but has served as a key interlocutor between Kyiv and Moscow to negotiate prisoner exchanges.

"The Russian and Ukraine war is being funded by energy sales," Burgum said on a stage that had flashed the Lukoil logo before his remarks. Climate change worries take a backseat

The oil conference comes after the UAE hosted COP28. Those talks ended with a call by nearly 200 countries to move away from planet-warming fossil fuels — the first time the conference made that crucial pledge. Scientists have called for drastically slashing the world's emissions by nearly half in the coming years to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius compared with pre-industrial times.

But the UAE as a whole still plans to increase its production capacity of oil to 5 million barrels a day in the coming years as it pursues more clean energy at home.

Qatari Energy Minister Saad Sherida al-Kaabi repeated a warning to the European Union that his nation could halt their liquefied natural gas shipments — something crucial due to Russian LNG being banned — over its Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive. That seeks to have companies pursue net-zero emission goals.

"I think, you know, a small part of this conference, unfortunately, changes with politics depending on when it was President Biden and President Trump and so on," al-Kaabi said. "I think that they're not looking at facts and realities and I think we shouldn't be following politics when we look at the lives of people for the future and how much energy we need in the future." (AP)

# APPEIRC chairman calls on Lt General KT Parnaik

Guv urges APPEIRC to ensure quality, innovation and employability in private education



**HT Correspondent**  
ITANAGAR, Nov 3: Arunachal Pradesh Private Educational Institutions Regulatory Commission (APPEIRC) Chairman, Tsering Naksang, called on Governor Lt General KT Parnaik,

PVSM, UYSM, YSM (Retd), at Raj Bhavan, Itanagar. The Chairman handed over the APPEIRC annual report for 2024-25 and apprised the Governor of various activities undertaken by the Commission.

The Governor emphasised that the Commission must ensure quality education and ensure private educational institutes follow the laid-down norms. He highlighted that through accreditation, inspections and performance au-

ditions, institutions should meet national and global standards while fostering innovation, inclusivity and employability.

Lt General Parnaik suggested that the Commission undertake projects contributing to the State's development and focus on education, sports and other social and cultural activities. He stressed aligning educational outcomes with national developmental priorities, with an emphasis on skill-based learning, innovation, entrepreneurship and digital literacy to contribute towards Viksit Bharat@2047.

The Governor further urged APPEIRC to foster partnerships between academia, industry and government to bridge the gap between education and employability, preparing youth to drive growth and social transformation. He underscored the need for transparency, academic excellence and equity, while periodically reviewing benchmarks for curriculum design, teaching standards, research, infrastructure and student welfare.

APPEIRC members Dr Limo Ete, Dr Joram Aniya and Secretary Dr AK Tripathy were present during the meeting.

Party announces full participation in IMC, PMC and panchayat polls, urge citizens to join its people-centric movement

## AAP to contest All Local Body elections in Arunachal Pradesh



**HT Correspondent**

**NAHARLAGUN, Nov 3:** The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), Arunachal Pradesh has announced its full-fledged participation in the forthcoming local body elections, declaring that it will contest all seats of the Itanagar Municipal Corporation (IMC), Pasighat Municipal Corporation (PMC) and the panchayat elections across the state for the 2025-26 term.

The announcement came during a state-level meeting of the party executive held at the AAP headquarters in Naharlagun, attended by state president Yama Taya, Dr Malo Tasso, Nabam Nikia, senior party functionaries and a large number of karyakartas. The meeting deliberated on the party's strategy, organisational expansion and the importance of strengthening democratic participation at the grassroots level.

Addressing the gathering, Yama Taya said the party is determined to bring a new wave of transparent and accountable governance at the local level. "AAP will field candidates in every seat of IMC, PMC and the panchayats. We invite all citizens who genuinely wish to serve their community and work for the betterment of the state to join us," he said.

He emphasised that the Aam Aadmi Party's mission is not to compete with the ruling party but to empower common people to take part in governance. "We believe in people-centric politics. Every individual has the potential to make a difference if given the opportunity," Taya stated, adding that those with integrity and dedication are welcome to contest on the party's ticket.

Dr Malo Tasso and Nabam Nikia also urged educated youth,

social workers and grassroots leaders to come forward and contribute to strengthening local self-governance in Arunachal Pradesh. They stressed that AAP's approach will focus on clean politics, public welfare and inclusive development.

The party further informed that its headquarters at Pappu Nallah, Naharlagun remains open round the clock for interested candidates and supporters. "Our doors are open 24/7. Anyone willing to serve society can visit our office, collect forms and be part of this movement," the leaders said in a joint statement.

Reaffirming the party's commitment to honest politics, Taya concluded, "This is the time to rise above political divisions and work collectively for a stronger, transparent and progressive Arunachal Pradesh. Let's break records and make history together."

### Mental health awareness workshop in Anini



**HT Correspondent**  
ANINI, Nov 3: Ahichu Self Help Group, initiated by Nanu Linggi and Chimmi Linggi, organised a two-day Mental Health Awareness Workshop at the Panchayat Conference Hall, DC Office, Anini.

The workshop was conducted by Thanmayi N, Founder of Manoha Therapy and Koj Topo, Co-founder of Manoha Therapy, both Clinical Psychologists specialising in child and couple therapy.

Day 1 focused on parents, guiding them to identify early signs of mental health issues in children and maintain their own mental wellness. Day 2 targeted teachers, covering classroom management, understanding child behavior and relaxation techniques. Evening sessions included one-on-one counseling for parents and children.

The organisers thanked the District Administration, Dibang Valley, ZPC Theko Tayu, Dumpi Mega and all contributors for their support, expressing hope that such initiatives will continue to promote a culture of mental well-being in the community.

## DKGCT celebrates 9th annual college week

Students and faculty showcase talent, unity and sustainability initiatives

**HT Correspondent**  
TAWANG, Nov 3: The 9th Annual College Week of Dorjee Khandu Government College, Tawang (DKGCT) was inaugurated on Monday at the Gyalwa Tsangyang Gyatso High Altitude Sports Auditorium by Namgye Tsering, MLA of Tawang, Namgyal Angmo, IAS, Deputy Commissioner, Tawang graced the occasion as the Guest of Honour.

The inaugural ceremony saw the presence of Addl DC Rinchin Leta, DDSE Hridar Phuntso, MMT Tawang Unit president Pema Chowang, secretary general of TMES Kesang Norbu, faculty members led by Principal Dr Yeshi Gyeseen, along with parents and students. The event commenced with a vibrant march past by the four college houses, followed by a colourful cultural programme reflecting the unity and diversity of the college community.

In his inaugural address, MLA Namgye Tsering described himself as a close member of the DKGCT family and urged students to dedicate themselves to academic excellence and skill development, emphasising competitive preparedness beyond college life. Expressing concern over the low success rate of local candidates in APSSB examinations, he encouraged



youth to engage with local leaders and share innovative ideas for the region's progress.

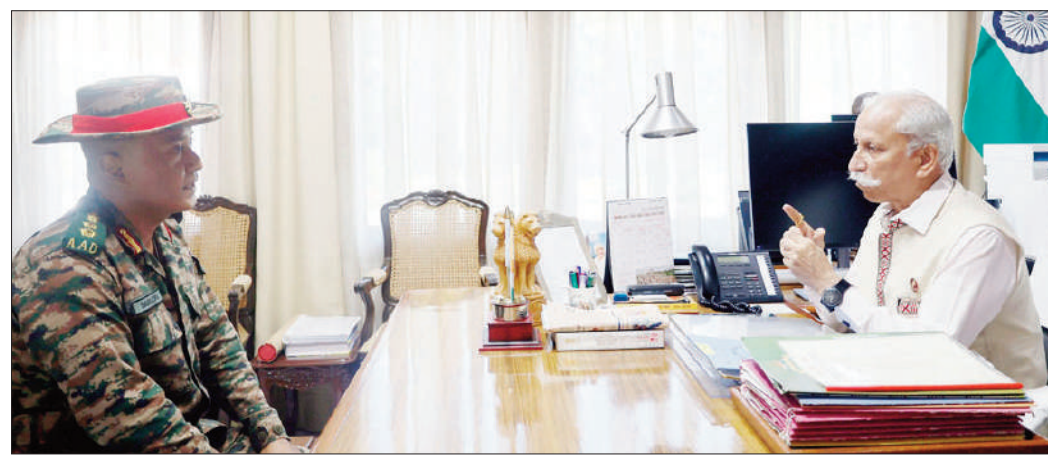
Highlighting the distribution of glass water bottles to all 333 students and faculty members, the MLA emphasised this as a step toward reducing single-use plastic and promoting a "Clean and Plastic-Free Tawang," encouraging students to act as ambassadors of this initiative. He also felicitated faculty members who recently completed their doctorates from Rajiv Gandhi University and students who excelled academically.

Principal Dr Yeshi Gyeseen described College Week as a celebration of festivity, unity, excellence

and learning, paying tribute to Late Dorjee Khandu, former Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh for his visionary leadership. He also acknowledged challenges due to non-sanctioning of regular faculty posts but expressed satisfaction over the college's consistent academic achievements.

Student leaders including general secretary Tashi Drema and assistant general secretary spoke on the occasion expressing gratitude and enthusiasm. The week-long celebration promises a range of sports, cultural and literary competitions, embodying the spirit of teamwork, talent and youthful energy.

## NCC CO calls on Guv to strengthen NCC programmes



**HT Correspondent**

**ITANAGAR, Nov 3:** Commanding Officer of the 1st Arunachal Pradesh NCC Battalion, Colonel Samudra Vijay Sharma called on Governor Lt General K T Parnaik, PVSM, UYSM, YSM (Retd), at Raj Bhavan, Itanagar to discuss ways to further strengthen and expand NCC programmes and activities across the state.

The Governor emphasised that the reach of the NCC should extend to every district and institution in Arunachal Pradesh ensuring that the maximum number of students can benefit from it. He highlighted that NCC is not just an extracurricular activity but an integral part of education, nurturing unity, discipline, leadership, patriotism and the spirit of

'Nation First' among young minds.

Lt General Parnaik stressed the importance of providing NCC cadets with regular training opportunities and proper guidance to qualify for the 'A', 'B' and 'C' certificate examinations. He urged the Commanding Officer to motivate cadets to aim for participation in the Republic Day Parade, one of the highest honours for cadets and to focus on sports and adventure activities.

The Governor also highlighted the need to establish more NCC units across the state, noting that expanding the organisation's footprint will help develop a generation of disciplined, confident and service-minded youth dedicated to nation-building.

## LJP (RV) active ahead of Local Body polls



**HT Correspondent**  
ITANAGAR, Nov 3: Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas) Arunachal Pradesh state president Riba Pangia Dolo informed that the party is actively involved in various political activities, including party programs across the state, in view of the upcoming

local body elections in Arunachal Pradesh.

Dolo stated that since his appointment as state president, the party's national president and Union Minister Chirag Paswan has visited the state twice. "He has immense love for the people of Arunachal Pradesh, just like

his father, Ram Vilas Paswan," he said.

He further mentioned that the state office was formally inaugurated by the national president, who also gave the green signal for strengthening the party across the state.

Dolo has been actively engaged in party affairs, noting that several inquiries have been received regarding the upcoming local body polls and the party is closely monitoring the situation.

He added that those interested and eligible to contest for positions such as ZPM, GPM, Corporator or Councillor can contact party leaders in various districts. Visitors to the state capital may also visit the party office at 6 Kilo to meet office bearers for further confirmation and updates.

"We are equally committed to the welfare of the people and the development of the state. We aim to field candidates not just for namesake but to make a meaningful contribution and leave our footprint," Dolo said.

He also stated that LJP (RV) is part of the NDA alliance at the Centre and is contesting on a seat-sharing basis in the Bihar assembly elections. However in Arunachal Pradesh, the party is free to contest the local body elections on a friendly basis.

## Training session highlights importance of certified seeds, seed testing and improved agricultural practices

### Farmers' seed quality awareness programme conducted in Tawang



**HT Correspondent**

**TAWANG, Nov 3:** A Farmers' Training-cum-Awareness Programme on Seed Quality Control was conducted on Monday at Tawang by the State Seed Testing Laboratory (SSTL), Naharlagun in coordination with the District Agriculture Office, Tawang. The programme was attended by farmers, agricultural officers and officials from the Department of Agriculture.

Welcoming the gathering, Jongship Tikhak, Seed Testing Officer (Seed & QC), SSTL Naharlagun highlighted the critical role of seed testing in ensuring better crop yield, productivity and overall farm sustainability. He stressed that using high-quality seeds not only improves crop performance

but also reduces the risk of crop failure and enhances farmers' income.

During the technical session, Duyu Tadu, Junior Scientific Assistant, explained the Seed Act in detail, providing insights into the legal framework regulating seed quality and certification. Mudo Rinya, Agriculture Development Officer, elaborated on practical

seed testing methods, including germination tests, moisture checks and identification of seed-borne diseases, demonstrating how these techniques can be applied at the farm level.

Addressing the participants, Pema Dechhen, District Agriculture Officer urged farmers to test their seeds before sowing and to use only certified quality seeds to ensure healthy crops and better yields. He also encouraged farmers to adopt modern agricultural practices and maintain proper records of seed sourcing to enhance traceability and farm management.

The session concluded with an interactive segment, during which farmers actively participated, shared their experiences and clarified doubts regarding seed testing, storage and related agricultural practices. Officials highlighted the importance of regular training programmes and continuous awareness campaigns to empower farmers with the latest knowledge in agriculture and seed quality management.

The programme reinforced the message that proper seed selection, quality control and timely testing are crucial for sustainable farming and increasing the overall productivity of the region's agricultural sector.

## 'The waters of the Koshi river will be harnessed to irrigate 50,000 hectares in the Mithilanchal region'

# NDA to set up defence corridor in Bihar: Shah

**SHEOHAR (BIHAR), Nov 3:** Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Monday said a defence corridor will come up in Bihar and factories will be set up in each district if the NDA is voted to power.

Addressing poll rallies in Sheohar and Sitamarhi, Shah exuded confidence that the NDA will gain form government in Bihar, and the RJD-Congress will be "wiped out by 1 pm on November 14" when the election results are declared.

"From the time of Emperor Chandragupta Maurya to Narendra Modi, the Gandak, Koshi and Ganga rivers have wreaked flood havoc in Bihar. The NDA, if voted to power, will form a commission to make Bihar flood-free," he said.

The waters of the Koshi river will be harnessed to irrigate 50,000 hectares in the Mithilanchal region, he said.

"We will establish a defence corridor in the state, and set up factories in each district in addition to building MSME and industrial



Shah said earlier, "Biryani used to be served on a platter" to militants, but the Narendra Modi-led government launched Operation Sindoor within 10 days of the Pahalgam attack, neutralising terrorists in their own land.

"In future military offensives against Pakistan, explosives manufactured in Bihar's proposed de-

fence corridor will be used," he said.

Shah said the Mithilanchal region will be developed as a global knowledge centre at a cost of ₹ 500 crore, and the Sitamarhi-Ayodhya Ramjanaki Path will be built for ₹ 550 crore.

Besides, ₹ 5,000 crore will be spent on doubling the Ayodhya-Sitamarhi rail track, he said.

The NDA will "transform Patna, Darbhanga, Purnea and Bhagalpur airports into global standards", he said, adding, each district of Bihar will also have a medical college.

"Our PM sanctioned ₹ 18.70 lakh crore to Bihar in 10 years compared to only ₹ 2.80 lakh crore during the RJD-Congress rule... Lalu Prasad's tenure was full of scams; only the Nitish Kumar-Narendra Modi pair can ensure a developed Bihar," Shah asserted.

All closed sugar mills in Bihar will also be revived within a 2.5-year span, he said. (PTI)

Shah also said he performed the ground-breaking ceremony for the ₹ 850-crore Sita temple at Punaura Dham here.

Taking a jibe at the Congress,

Shah said earlier, "Biryani used to be served on a platter" to militants, but the Narendra Modi-led government launched Operation Sindoor within 10 days of the Pahalgam attack, neutralising terrorists in their own land.

"In future military offensives against Pakistan, explosives manufactured in Bihar's proposed de-

## PM accuses Oppn of insulting country, Bihar: Priyanka

**SAHARSA (BIHAR), Nov 3:** Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Monday mocked Prime Minister Narendra Modi for frequently accusing opposition leaders of insulting the country and Bihar, saying he should set up a new ministry, the 'Apamaan Mantralaya' (Ministry of Insults).

Addressing election rallies in Saharsa and Lakhisarai districts, Vadra launched one of her fiercest attacks yet on the prime minister, accusing him of diverting public attention from unemployment, corruption and poverty by constantly targeting his opponents.

"Instead of talking about development, the prime minister keeps accusing every opposition leader of insulting the country. He should form a new ministry, 'Apamaan Mantralaya', because that's what his government seems most focused on," she said, drawing loud cheers from the crowd.

Her remarks came days after Modi accused the Congress-RJD combine of "insulting Chhathi Maiyya," opposing the Ram temple in Ayodhya and protecting infiltrators for vote-bank politics.

Vadra said the Centre's Agnipath scheme was neither in the interest of the country nor of the young generation aspiring to serve in the armed forces.

"The Agnipath scheme is neither serving the interests of the youth nor the country. The government must answer why it is playing with the future of lakhs of young men who dream of India. Whose interest is this NDA government trying to serve?" she said.

Taking a sharp dig at the prime minister, the Congress general secretary said, "Whenever you ask any question to the PM, he is either touring the globe or starts crying that everyone is insulting him. Instead of cribbing, he should answer the people of Bihar and the youth about the misrule here." (PTI)

## 'Congress and RJD opposed the law against triple talaq'

# Tejashwi trying to hide Lalu's 'sins' by relegating his pictures to corner of RJD posters: PM

**KATIHAR/SAHARSA, Nov 3:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday claimed that the INDIA bloc's CM candidate Tejashwi Yadav was trying to "hide the sins" of his father Lalu Prasad, relegating his pictures to the corner of RJD's poll posters.

The PM made the remark at a rally in Katihar district, where he did not mention the father-son duo by their names but used the expression "jungle raj ke yuvraj" (crown prince of lawlessness) to point towards Yadav.

"What is sin he is hiding by not having the pictures of his own father, whom you claim to be such a tall leader and was a CM for years, on RJD posters? Perhaps it is because he has become aware that the big leader carries the baggage of jungle raj," he alleged.

The PM also alleged that while the RJD was controlled by "the most corrupt family in Bihar", its ally Congress was run by "the most corrupt family in the country".

In an attempt to drive a wedge between the two allies, Modi reiterated that the Congress agreed to name Yadav the CM candidate when the RJD "put a katta (country-made gun) on its head", and claimed that the grand old party was trying its best to ensure that its ally was drubbed in the assembly polls.

"Congress leaders are distancing themselves from promises made in the joint manifesto, saying the RJD should offer an explanation. They have been inviting CMs of Telangana and Tamil Nadu, known for deriding Biharis, to the state with the hope that it will lead to a resentment against their ally as well, causing it to lose the elections," he alleged.

Earlier, addressing a rally in Saharsa, Modi charged the RJD with having stalled development projects in Bihar by putting pressure



on the Congress-led UPA government at the Centre to "avenge" its ouster from power in the state in 2005.

"The RJD was sharing power at the Centre when it was voted out of power in Bihar in 2005. Projects like the Kosi Mahasetu had been sanctioned by the Atal Bihari Vajpayee government. So enraged was the RJD by Nitish Kumar forming a new government in the state that it put pressure on Manmohan Singh and Sonia Gandhi and stalled all such projects in Bihar," he alleged.

"The RJD can never understand the sufferings of the people of the Kosi region, which were alleviated through the construction of the bridge. We are also working on interlinking of rivers. The NDA manifesto has also put forth a blueprint on flood control," he alleged.

He claimed that while the NDA stands for 'vikas', the "jungle raj wallahs" (leaders of lawlessness) stood for 'vinash' (destruction).

"They should be punished for their sins. It is time that you punish them in the assembly elections," he said.

"The RJD is now making fake promises of development, but while in power, its leaders used to play truant by saying that constructing roads will lead to accidents, better power supply will increase the risk of electrocution.

Even flooding used to be described as auspicious," he claimed.

Speaking in an area which has a substantial Muslim population, Modi charged the RJD-Congress combine with being soft on "infiltrators" and disdainful towards the Ram temple at Ayodhya and Chhath Puja.

"Infiltrators cannot be allowed to partake of the resources that are meant for people of our country. The leaders of the RJD and Congress take time off to visit all types of places abroad, but not the Ram temple at Ayodhya," he alleged.

Modi alleged that efforts were on to change the demography of the Seemanchal region, and RJD and Congress were compromising national security for votes.

"Congress and RJD opposed the law against triple talaq and are now talking about scrapping the Waqf Amendment Act under pressure from extremists," he alleged.

Modi alleged that Congress and RJD jump in to protect infiltrators whenever the BJP takes steps to oust them.

Noting that the north Bihar region of Mithila was known, in ancient times, for female deities like Sita, Bharti and Gargi, the PM said, "From this land of glorious women, I would like to congratulate our daughters who have made us proud by winning the Cricket World Cup." (PTI)

## Dynastic politics 'grave threat' to Indian democracy: Shashi Tharoor

**NEW DELHI, Nov 3:** Senior Congress leader Shashi Tharoor has said that dynastic politics across the political spectrum poses a "grave threat" to Indian democracy and asserted it is high time that India traded "dynasty for meritocracy".

He said that when political power is determined by lineage rather than ability, commitment or grassroots engagement, the quality of governance suffers.

In an article for international media organisation Project Syndicate, the Thiruvananthapuram MP pointed out that while the Nehru-Gandhi family is associated with the Congress, dynastic succession prevails across the political spectrum.

Tharoor's remarks come weeks after the row over his comments on the India-Pakistan conflict and the diplomatic outreach after the Pahalgam attack. His comments were at variance with the Congress stand and many party leaders took a swipe at him, questioning his intentions.

In the article titled 'Indian Politics Are a Family Business', Tharoor said that for decades, one family has towered over Indian politics and the influence of the Nehru-Gandhi dynasty -- including independent India's first prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru, prime ministers Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi, and current opposition leader Rahul Gandhi and MP Priyanka Gandhi Vadra -- is bound up with the history of India's struggle for freedom.

"But it has also cemented the idea that political leadership can be a birthright. This idea has penetrated Indian politics across every party, in every region, and at every level," Tharoor said.

Pointing out that dynastic succession prevails across the political spectrum, Tharoor said that after the passing of Biju Patnaik, his son Naveen won his father's vacant seat in the Lok Sabha.

The Maharashtra-based Shiv Sena's founder Bal Thackeray passed the mantle to his son Uddhav, whose own son Aditya is waiting visibly in the wings, he said.

"The same goes for Samajwadi Party founder Mulayam Singh Yadav, a former chief minister of Uttar Pradesh, whose son Akhilesh Yadav later served in the same post; Akhilesh is now an MP and the president of the party. In Bihar state, the leader of the Lok Janshakti Party, Ram Vilas Paswan, was succeeded by his son Chirag Paswan," Tharoor said, citing more examples of political dynasties.

Beyond the Indian "heartland", Jammu and Kashmir has been led by three generations of Abdullahs, with the principal opposition party dominated by two generations of Muftis, he said.

"In Punjab, the Shiromani Akali Dal, long commanded by Parkash Singh Badal, has been taken over by his son Sukhbir. Telangana is currently witnessing a battle for succession between the son and the daughter of the Bharat Rashtra Samithi's founder, K Chandrababhan Rao. In Tamil Nadu, the late M Karunanidhi's family controls the ruling Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam party, with his son M K Stalin



now serving as chief minister and his grandson anointed as heir apparent," he said in his article.

Tharoor also argued that this phenomenon is not limited to a handful of prominent families but is rather woven deeply into the fabric of Indian governance, from village councils to the highest echelons of Parliament.

"To be fair, such dynastic politics are practised across the Indian subcontinent," he said, citing examples of the Bhuttos and Sharifs in Pakistan, the Sheikh and Zia families in Bangladesh, and the Bandaranaiaks and the Rajapaksas in Sri Lanka.

"But they appear particularly incongruous with India's vibrant democracy. Why then has India embraced the dynastic model so fully? One reason might be that a family can serve effectively as a brand: candidates with built-in name recognition do not have to work as hard to attract voters' attention or build their trust. If voters accepted a candidate's father, aunt or sibling, they would probably accept the candidate -- no credibility-building required," Tharoor said in the article published October 31.

However, he noted that with the literacy rate approaching 81 per cent and mobile-internet penetration exceeding 95 per cent, other forces must also be at work.

"Perhaps the most important arises from internal party dynamics. Indian political parties are largely personality-driven (with a few exceptions). Leadership-selection processes are often opaque, with decisions made by a small clique or even a single leader -- figures with little interest in rocking the boat. As a result, nepotism generally trumps meritocracy," he said.

Tharoor asserted that dynastic politics pose a grave threat to Indian democracy.

"When political power is determined by lineage rather than ability, commitment or grassroots engagement, the quality of governance suffers. Drawing from a smaller talent pool is never advantageous, but it is especially problematic when candidates' main qualification is their surname," he said.

In fact, given that members of political dynasties are likely to be insulated from the challenges faced by ordinary people, they are often particularly ill-equipped to respond effectively to their constituents' needs, Tharoor said. (PTI)

## JEE-Main 2026: NTA clarifies no use of calculator allowed

**NEW DELHI, Nov 3:** The National Testing Agency (NTA) has clarified that the use of calculator will not be permitted in engineering entrance exam JEE-Main, officials said. The agency said that the update in the information bulletin in this regard was a typo error and has been rectified.

"In the information bulletin for JEE-Main 2026, it has been mentioned that an onscreen standard calculator will be available during the Computer-Based Test (CBT). However, this feature forms part of the generic test conducting platform and does NOT apply to JEE (Main) conducted by the NTA, as the use of calculators in any form is not permitted," a senior NTA official said.

"The revised bulletin has been uploaded and candidates are advised to download this. NTA regrets the typographic error in the information bulletin and for the inconvenience caused to the candidates," the official added. (PTI)

## COAL SCAM CASE

# Former Coal Secretary, RKM Powergen and promoters discharged

**NEW DELHI, Nov 3:** A special court here has discharged RKM Powergen Pvt. Ltd, former Coal Secretary HC Gupta and three others in the Fatehpur East coal block allocation case in which they were chargesheeted by the CBI, saying there was no evidence to prosecute them.

The two promoters of the company, Andal Arumugam and T M Singaravel, and former Joint Secretary Kuljeet Singh Kropha have also been discharged by Special Judge Dheeraj Mor after hearing arguments from both sides.

Nearly three years after filing the FIR in 2014, the CBI submitted its closure report on September 21, 2017, claiming that allegations in the FIR under Indian Penal Code section 120B (criminal conspiracy) read with Section 420 (cheating), besides provisions of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988, were not substantiated.

Not satisfied with the findings, the special court directed the agency to conduct a further probe. Six years later, the CBI submitted a charge sheet against five accused in 2023 under IPC sections related to criminal conspiracy, cheating, forgery and provisions of the Prevention of Corruption Act.

In its charge sheet, the CBI had alleged that RKM Powergen and its directors misrepresented their project preparedness, submitted forged documents and cheated the government to secure the coal block.

Judge Mor did not find evidence to substantiate CBI's allegation while hearing detailed arguments from both sides with the company being represented by senior advocate Abhimanyu Bhandari.

The special court noted that the recommendation of the 35th Screening Committee in favour of RKM Powergen "cannot be held to be against public interest".

It said the decision to allocate coal blocks stemmed from a policy approved by the Energy Coordination Committee and the Prime Minister's Office to ensure optimum utilisation of coal reserves for power, cement and steel industries.

"Therefore, there is not even an iota of material available on record to suggest that the act of accused public servants was without public interest," the court said while discharging Gupta and Kropha.



The CBI had alleged that the company and its directors secured the coal block by misrepresenting their preparedness to set up a power project and by submitting forged documents, thereby cheating the government.

The court cited a testimony from the CBI witness A Ravishankar (CMPDIL) who had ranked RKM Powergen on top of all the applicants after fulfilling 09 criteria out of total 10 parameters -- underlining that the company was most deserving.

"Thus, it is evident that the accused... company (RKM Powergen Pvt. Ltd) was the most deserving company for the allocation of Fatehpur East Coal Block out of all the applicants," the Special Judge noted.

The recommendation of the 35th Screening Committee for allocation of Fatehpur East Coal Block to the most meritorious and deserving company -- RKM Powergen -- is an act in public interest, he said.

The CBI had registered the Coal scam FIR on August 7, 2014, under Indian Penal Code section 120B (criminal conspiracy) read with Section 420 (cheating), besides provisions of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988.

RKMPL had submitted its application on November 13, 2006, to the Ministry of Coal for allocation of Fatehpur East Coal Block in Janjgir-Champa, Chhattisgarh, earmarked for the power sector, for its proposed 1200 MW Thermal Power Plant.

It was alleged that RKMPL misrepresented its net worth to be ₹ 306.14 crore, and the 35th Screening Committee and the officials of the Ministry of Coal deliberately violated the guidelines of the Ministry of Power and the guidelines for allocation of coal block, and shares were sold at a premium after the allocation making windfall gains. (PTI)

## India backing high-risk, high-impact R and D projects: PM Narendra Modi

**NEW DELHI, Nov 3:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday launched a Rs 1 lakh crore fund to spur private sector investment in research and development and announced that his government was now supporting high-risk and high-impact projects, as India aims to emerge as a science and technology powerhouse.

Inaugurating the first-ever Emerging Science, Technology and Innovation Conclave (ESTIC), the annual flagship event involving policy-makers, innovators and global visionaries, Modi said his government has introduced significant reforms for a modern ecosystem of innovation to flourish in the country.

The prime minister said the world was witnessing a new shift in the global order and the pace of change was exponential.

"In this time of the 21st century, there is a great need for experts from all over the world to come together to brainstorm on emerging science, technology and innovation, and together they should show the direction," said Modi, giving the reasons for hosting the Conclave, which will be an annual feature.

At the Conclave, the prime minister also launched the ₹ 1 lakh crore Research, Development and Innovation Fund to spur private sector investment in the domain.

"This significant investment is aimed at benefiting the public and unlocking new avenues of opportunity. Our goal is to foster a culture of research and development within the private sector as well," he said.

India spends 0.6 per cent of its GDP on research and development, which is below the global average. On this share, the private sector accounts for 36 per cent of the invest-



ments, as against countries such as China, South Korea and the US. In these countries, the private sector spending accounts for 75 per cent of the gross expenditure on research and development.

"For the first time, capital is being allocated specifically for high-risk, high-impact projects, ensuring support for ground-breaking endeavours," he said, adding the government was focusing on 'Ease of Doing Research' so that a modern ecosystem of innovation can flourish in India.

"To achieve this vision, our government has introduced significant reforms in financial regulations and procurement policies. Additionally, we have streamlined incentives and supply chain frameworks to accelerate the transition of prototypes from the lab to the market," he said.

Union Science and Technology Minister Jitendra Singh, Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of India Prof. Ajay Kumar Sood, Nobel Laureate Sir Andre Geim and other dignitaries were present at the event.

Modi urged scientists to shift focus from food security to nutrition security and wondered whether India can develop next-generation biofortified crops to help combat malnutrition globally.

"Can innovations in low-cost soil health enhancers and bio-fertilisers serve as alternatives to chemical inputs and improve soil health? Can India better map its genomic diversity to advance personalised medicine and disease prediction? Can new and affordable innovations be developed in clean energy storage, such as batteries," he said.

The prime minister stressed the importance

# NFSL says leaked audio clips alleging ex-Manipur CM's role tampered with: SC

NEW DELHI, Nov 3: The Supreme Court on Monday observed that the National Forensic Science Laboratory (NFSL) at Gujarat has said the leaked audio clips, which allegedly pointed to the purported role of former Manipur chief minister N Biren Singh in the 2023 ethnic violence in the state, were "tampered with".

A bench of Justices Sanjay Kumar and Alok Aradhe observed that according to the NFSL's report, the audio clips exhibited signs of editing and tampering and were not scientifically fit for forensic voice comparison. "Consequently, no opinion regarding the similarity or dissimilarity of the speakers in the question and the controlled clips can be offered," the bench said, while referring to the NFSL's report.

The apex court was hearing a petition filed by Kuki Organisation for Human Rights Trust (KOHUR) which has sought an independent SIT probe into the matter.

Advocate Prashant Bhushan, appearing for KOHUR, said that a copy of the NFSL's report be shared with the parties so that they could respond to it.

The bench directed the apex court registry to submit a copy of the report to the counsel appearing for the parties and posted the matter for hearing on December 8.

The bench observed that according to the report, the audio clips do not constitute the original source



recordings and are not scientifically fit for forensic voice comparison. Bhushan referred to a separate forensic report and said it had found that one of the recordings was unedited.

"We have just shared the final conclusions in that report (of NFSL) which say that the disputed recording has been tampered with," the bench told Solicitor General Tushar Mehta who also appeared in the matter.

"It is now quite peaceful there..." Mehta said.

On August 19, the top court expressed displeasure over Central Forensic Science Laboratory's (CFSL's) exercise to test the audio recordings, pointing to the alleged role of the former Manipur chief minister in the ethnic violence,

calling it "misdirected".

While hearing the plea on August 25, the apex court referred the matter to NFSL, Gandhi Nagar, to examine the audio clips in question to determine whether they were modified, edited or tampered with in any manner.

It also asked the NFSL to determine whether the voice in the disputed audio clips matches the voice in the admitted audio clip, so as to give a clear finding that it was the same person who was speaking in all the audio clips.

On May 5, the apex court examined a forensic report on the authenticity of the leaked audio clips and asked the state government to file a fresh report on the probe.

Singh resigned as the chief minister of Manipur on February 9,

amid rumblings within the state BJP and growing demands for a change in leadership.

The top court had previously sought a sealed-cover forensic report from the CFSL on the authenticity of the leaked audio clips, alleging Singh's role in the ethnic violence that began in May 2023.

On November 8 last year, the apex court directed KOHUR to produce material to indicate the authenticity of some of the leaked audio clips.

Over 260 people were killed and thousands displaced since the ethnic violence broke out between the Imphal valley-based Meitei and neighbouring hills-based Kuki communities in May 2023.

The clashes began after a "Tribal Solidarity March" was organised in the hill districts to protest against an order of the Manipur High Court on the Meitei community's demand for Scheduled Tribe (ST) status.

Bhushan alleged that the recorded conversation prima facie showed the complicity and involvement of the state machinery in the violence against the Kuki community.

KOHUR's plea alleged that Singh was instrumental in "inciting, organising and thereafter centrally orchestrating the large-scale murder, destruction and other forms of violence against the Kuki-dominated areas in Manipur". (PTI)

# Four news services in GB and AGMC soon Tripura Govt aims to bring AGMC among top 10 in India: CM

HT Correspondent

AGARTALA, Nov 3: Tripura Chief Minister Prof Dr Manik Saha on Monday said that the state government is working on improving the health system infrastructure in the state with priority and emphasized that work should be done to bring the Agartala Government Medical College within the top 10 across the country.

Along with this, he stressed the need to increase the confidence and skill development of doctors.

Dr Saha said this after laying the foundation stone for various infrastructure projects at Agartala Government Medical College and GBP Hospital, highlighting the importance of this initiative.

The projects inaugurated include the Critical Care Building (CCB), Communicable Disease Centre (CDC), a 20-bed special ward at GBP Hospital, the launch of a digital telemedicine connection with Sanjay Gandhi Post Graduate Institute, Lucknow, and the Inter Departmental Call Management System (IDCMS).

Speaking on the occasion, Dr Saha, who is also the Health Minister, said that currently there are 400 seats for the MBBS course in the state's medical colleges.

"Students will have to score better in the examinations in medical colleges. GB Hospital, TMC Hospital, and other district hospitals are performing quite well now. I



have information that some brokers are sitting in GB Hospital or TMC Hospital. Their job is to influence patients and send them to outside hospitals. Therefore, measures are being taken to trap them," he said. Giving further information, the Chief Minister said that so far, eight hip replacements have been done in the state.

"Knee replacements have also been performed. In addition, many other significant treatments have been carried out. Various types of medical services are now being provided at Agartala Government Medical College Hospital. The infrastructure will be further developed to provide advanced medical services. Nine super specialties have been launched at AGMC at a cost of about ₹ 250 crore. Very soon, about four more new services will be launched. Allocation is required for this. For this purpose,

I met the Union Health Minister a few days ago. I informed him about the need for allocation for infrastructure development. He assured that the Central Government will purchase the necessary equipment and tools," said Dr. Saha.

Dr Saha also said that doctors in the state have to further improve themselves and establish their expertise. The position of AGMC has to be elevated at the national level. "At least arrangements have to be made to bring it within the top 10. For this, everyone has to make an effort. It will not be possible for the government alone. A building for mothers and children is being started at AGMC and GB Hospital. The DoNER Ministry has sanctioned about ₹ 192 crore. Another ₹ 202 crore has been allocated for the development of the infrastructure of the Dental College," he added.

# NPF is the guardian that upholds the identity and cultural values of the Naga people: CM Rio

KOHIMA, Nov 3: Nagaland Chief Minister and NPF president, Neiphiu Rio, reiterated that the Naga People's Front is the guardian that upholds the identity and cultural values of the Naga people and asserted that the coming together of the two regional political parties (NPF and NDPP) is a result of God's grace and will.

Speaking during the reception program for the Secretary General at the new NPF Central office headquarters in Kohima recently, Rio reaffirmed the party's commitment to regional unity and the protection of Naga identity. He delivered an extensive address tracing the party's formation, evolution, and future goals.

Rio said that the party's journey, from its formation in 1963 and its first election in 1964, has been guided by "God's grace, the prayers of believers, and the wisdom of elders."

Rio then noted that although the Nagas are a small group, "no one has conquered us," highlighting how the Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation Act of 1873 and Article 371(A) of the Constitution continues to protect Naga land, culture, and customary laws. "We are here to protect the rights of the Nagas. While

we are under the Constitution of India, many provisions of the 16-Point Agreement remain unfulfilled, and we must continue to fight for them," he asserted. The chief minister then recalled his early years as a youth leader and his role in the creation of the Nagaland People's Front in 2002, later renamed the Naga People's Front (NPF) to include Nagas from Manipur and Arunachal Pradesh.

"When we formed the NPF, we had nothing but determination. By God's blessing and people's support, we built this party brick by brick," he said. Referring to the recent merger between NPF and NDPP legislators, Rio called it a "historic unification" that reflects Naga solidarity. "The coming together of 32 MLAs with 2 MLAs is symbolic of unity and purpose. We are returning to the mainstream historical party that stood for the Nagas," he added.

Rio also spoke about the change of the state emblem from the Ashoka Chakra to the Mithun, calling it a symbol of Naga pride and unity.

"Our new state motto, Unity, represents our strength. Oneness makes us strong and earns us respect," he emphasized. Cautioning against



greed and political division, he remarked, "God or nature can provide for our needs, but not our greed. Greed blinds us and divides us."

He urged party members to show discipline, humility, and a sense of duty in serving the Naga people. "To be in a regional party is not easy—it is a burden and a sacrifice. But fighting for the Nagas is our responsibility," Rio said.

He expressed his gratitude to party colleagues and noted that while he would eventually retire as the 10th president of NPF, the "legacy, ideology, and principles must live on through the younger generations."

He also called upon party leaders to bury all hatred amongst one another and start afresh, stating that the party

serves not individuals but the people; therefore, serving the people should be our priority.

MLA and NPF secretary general Achumbemo Kikon, in his speech, categorically stated that the NPF is not just a political party that contests elections but a movement for the Naga people, and he reminded everyone to carry on that responsibility.

He also urged all party workers to prioritise the party's aims, objectives, ideology, and principles in whatever they do.

Additionally, he recalled that it was through God's will, people's cooperation, and the boldness of the chief minister, who guided and navigated the process that the two regional political parties were able to come together. (NNN)

# Manipur Excise Dept destroys IMFL worth over 1 cr

IMPHAL, Nov 3: Manipur Excise department recently destroyed over 51,000 litres of seized Indian Made Foreign Liquor (IMFL), beer, wine and distilled indigenous country (DIC) liquor worth more than ₹ 1.21 crore.

The development comes following an order issued by the office of the Commissioner of Excise, Manipur and as part of the state government's continued enforcement of the Manipur Liquor Prohibition Act, 1991, which bans the manufacture, sale and consumption of alcohol in the state.

According to an official order (No. Ex/51/DE/2018 Pt. II) issued by Hungyo Worshang, Commissioner of Excise, Manipur, on October 30, 2025, had said that the seized items were to be destroyed on November 2 at 11 am. at the Excise Headquarters complex in Lam-

phelpat. The confiscated liquors were seized by thirteen excise stations across various districts between January 1 and October 29, 2025, for "being transported or possessed without valid permits".

The order stated that the total seized quantity amounts to 51,753.21 litres of excisable items, including IMFL (rum and other spirits), beer, wine and illicit country liquor.

The total value of the seized items stands at ₹ 1,21,09,826.

The seized items were stored in the Malkhana (storage facility) located within the Excise Department's office campus at Lamphelpat.

However, the room had become congested due to the accumulation of seized articles, making it difficult to store newly seized items.

The department further stated that the

Malkhana has been proposed for use in storing Excise Adhesive Labels (EAL), which are expected to arrive by the first week of November.

To make space for the storage of the new EALs, the existing seized items will be disposed of as per the recommendations of the Malkhana Monitoring Committee of the Excise Department.

The decision to destroy the seized liquors has been taken in accordance with Section 66 of the Manipur Liquor Prohibition Act, 1991, which allows for the disposal of seized intoxicants.

The order has also been circulated to the chief secretary (finance), commissioner-cum-secretary (finance), all officers of the Excise Department, the officers-in-charge of the thirteen excise stations, and the print and electronic media for public information. (NNN)

No. SCDB/MPLAD/575/2025-26/2361 Dated Sidihi the 3<sup>rd</sup> Nov, 2025

**NOTICE INVITING TENDER**

Scaled Tender are invited in P-2 Form for the works shown below from the intending Registered Contractor of Class-I and Class-II (A, B & C) categories of Assam PWD (Roads & Building)/PHED with affixing Non-refundable court fee of Rs. 8.25 (Rupees Eight and twenty-five paise) only in a prescribed form for 2 (two) Nos. of construction work under MPLADS fund for the year 2024-25. The Tender will be received on 25/11/2025 up to 2.00 P.M. in the office of the undersigned and will be opened on same day at 2.30 P.M. in the office of the undersigned.

| Sl. No. | Name of Work   | Estimated Amount | Bid Security   | Cost of BID document (D/D) @ 0.03% (Approx) |
|---------|--|------------------|--|---|
| 1       | Construction of road at Dunabari near Okahadwi house under Sidihi-Chirang Dev. Block                             | Rs. 4,00,000.00  | 1% on Estimate amount for ST/SC/OBC & 2% for General | Rs.120/-                                    |
| 2       | Construction of Box culvert at No. 2 Amguri village road to Asiguri village road under Sidihi-Chirang Dev. Block | Rs. 7,00,000.00  | 1% on Estimate amount for ST/SC/OBC & 2% for General | Rs.210/-                                    |

The details may be seen at Notice Board in the Office of the Block Development Officer, Sidihi-Chirang Development Block from 03/11/2025 to 25/11/2025 up to 2.00 P.M.

**IPR(BTC)/C/2025-26/3036**

Sd/-  
Block Development Officer,  
Sidihi-Chirang Dev. Block, Sidihi

# Two more held in Tripura in massive eskuf seizure case from train

HT Correspondent

AGARTALA, Nov 3: The Tripura Police Crime Branch has apprehended two additional suspects in connection with the major Eskuf cough syrup seizure at Jirania Railway Station in West Tripura District on October 17. The arrests were made following sustained investigation and intelligence-led operations.

According to Tripura Police press release, the accused have been identified as Arun Kumar Ghosh (58), son of late Krishnadhan Ghosh, who was nabbed from Kolkata, and Himanshu Jha alias Sonu (32), son of Alok Jha, who was taken into custody in Delhi. Authorities confirmed that legal transit formalities for both detainees are currently underway.

These latest arrests bring the total number of individuals held in the case to three, including Rajib Dasgupta (42), son of Basanta Kumar Dasgupta, who was arrested earlier on October 31.

The case revolves around the recovery of 1,07,800 bottles of Eskuf cough syrup from a goods train at Jirania Railway Station on October 16, 2025.

"The Anti-Narcotics Wing of the Tripura Police Crime Branch continues its investigation to trace and apprehend other members of the illegal drug transportation and supply network," said a police spokesperson.

# 8 militants arrested in Manipur

IMPHAL, Nov 3: Security forces have arrested eight militants belonging to various proscribed outfits in Manipur, police said on Monday. All the arrests were made on Sunday.

Three active cadres of the banned Kangleipak Communist Party (Taibanganba) were arrested from Khongjom Bazar in Thoubal district, while another member of the outfit was apprehended from Pureimomba in Imphal East.

Two members of the proscribed United National Liberation Front (P) were also arrested from Chongtham Kona area in Thoubal district, a police officer said.

The security forces also apprehended two active cadres of the KCP (PWG) from Wahengbam Leikai area in Imphal West, he said.

Arms and ammunition, including rifles, grenades, cartridges and pistols, were seized from their possession, the officer said. The UNLF (P) had signed a peace pact with the Centre in 2023. However, members of the outfit continue to be arrested for alleged involvement in extortion activities and illegal arms smuggling, police said. (PTI)

# Manipur gov, former CM congratulate women's cricket team for winning WC

IMPHAL, Nov 3: Manipur Governor Ajay Kumar Bhalla and former chief minister N Biren Singh have congratulated the Indian women's cricket team for winning their maiden World Cup. In a post on X, the Raj Bhavan quoted Governor Bhalla as saying, "India creates history! Heartiest congratulations to the Indian Women's Cricket Team on winning the ICC Women's ODI World Cup for the very first time. Your dedication, teamwork, and spirit have made the nation proud."

It added that the victory was "a glorious moment for Indian sports and for every young girl who dreams big."

Singh also lauded the team's exceptional performance, saying their success has brought immense pride to the nation.

"The team's exceptional performance and determination have made our Nation proud. This remarkable achievement will inspire many to pursue excellence in sports," he posted on X.

Manipur's lone Rajya Sabha MP Leishemba Sanajaoba also congratulated the team, saying, "India Women paint the world blue, beat South Africa by 52 runs to win maiden Women's ODI World Cup for the first time in 52 years." (PTI)

Tender Notice No. APGCL/KLHEP/GM/Tech-22/C/2025-26/07

Date

ASSAM POWER GENERATION CORPORATION LIMITED

# NOTICE INVITING TENDER

The General Manager, KLHEP, APGCL, Lengery, West Karbi Anglong invites sealed tender from the reputed Civil firms/contractors for the contract of the following works.

| St. No. | Name of work  | Approx. Value of the work (Rs.) (Including GST) | Earnest money in the shape of DD/Bankers Cheque. |                      | Time of completion |
|---------|---|---|--|----------------------|--------------------|
|         |   |   | 1% for SC/ST/OBC (Rs.)                           | 2% for General (Rs.) |                    |
| 1       | Improvement of road near quarry no 1 to Dam deck by providing granular sub base on left bank upstream side of Hatidubl Dam at KLHEP from Chainage 3105.00 m to 4201.00 m. | 14,62,410.00                                    | 14630.00   | 29260.00             | 60 days            |
| 2       | Renovation of GM Office entrance at KLHEP Office, Lengery, West Karbi Anglong, Assam  | 8,75,523.00                                     | 8760.00  | 17520.00             | 60 days            |

Tender Paper issue : Up to 04:00 PM on 17.11.2025

Tender receiving : Up to 01:00 PM on 18.11.2025

Tender opening : At 3:00 PM on 18.11.2025

Detailed tender documents & eligibility criteris may be obtained from the O/s. the General Manager, KLHEP, APGCL, Lengery West Karbi Anglong, Assam during working hours. The Tender Inviting Authority reserves the right to accept or reject any bid/tender and to cancel the bidding process and reject all bids at any time period to contract award.

Sd/-

General Manager  
APGCL, KLHEP,  
Lengery, West Karbi Anglong,  
Assam-782450

## The passengers of the bus were brought out of it, says police official

# 19 killed in road accident in Telangana, PM Modi, state govt announce ex-gratia

**HYDERABAD, Nov 3:** Nineteen people, including 13 women and a girl child, were killed and 22 others suffered injuries when a tipper lorry carrying gravel collided head-on with a public transport bus in Ranga Reddy district of Telangana on Monday, officials said.

The tipper collided with the Telangana Road Transport Corporation (RTC) vehicle near Chevella, about 50 kms from Hyderabad, on Monday morning, resulting in the gravel falling on the bus.

A district official said 22 people suffered injuries in the mishap.

Cyberabad Police Commissioner Avinash Mohanty said the drivers of both vehicles died in the accident.

Noting that a head-on collision occurs when one of the vehicles is on the wrong side, he said the cause of the accident would be known after the inquiry.

With the gravel falling on the bus, several passengers got trapped inside the vehicle and officials carried out relief measures using earthmovers.

The passengers of the bus were brought out of it, a police official said.

In a post on X, Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed grief over the loss of lives in the accident.

He announced a compensation of ₹ 20 lakhs to the families of those who died, and ₹ 50,000 each to the injured.

"I extend my deepest condolences to the affected individuals and their family members during this difficult time. I pray that the injured recover quickly," he said.

Telangana Transport Minister Ponnampallabharathi said he visited the government hospital at Chevella, where the accident victims were admitted, said, "19 people were killed in the accident".

He said 72 people were in the ill-fated bus, which was proceeding to Hyderabad from Tandur in Ranga Reddy district early Monday morning.

Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy held a tele-conference with ministers and officials on the accident.

The government would ensure advanced medical care to the injured and also assist the families of the deceased in conducting funerals, he said.

The government has ordered an inquiry into the incident.

The Transport Minister also said the state government would offer ₹ 5 lakh each to the kin of the deceased in addition to ₹ 2 lakh from TGSRTC.

The government would also provide



₹ 2 lakh each to the injured.

Soon after coming to know of the mishap, the Chief Minister instructed officials to take up relief measures on a war footing.

He also told ministers and officials to undertake relief measures, including providing compensation to the families of the deceased, in addition to the insurance provided by the RTC, an official release said.

Recalling the horrific incident, a survivor said he was dozing in the bus when

a loud thud jolted him awake, leaving him half-buried in gravel.

"Several people were buried under the gravel. The tipper lorry came from the opposite direction. I was seated on the left side of the bus. We managed to climb out, but those who were sitting behind the driver couldn't make it — some of them died. I was seated three rows behind the conductor," he told mediapersons.

He further said he opened a window and escaped, with six others following.

Later, another person broke the window panes to free more passengers.

A doctor at the government hospital in Chevella said the accident victims suffered fractures, facial, abdominal and leg injuries.

The injured were undergoing treatment, including administration of IV fluid, TT injections and referred to major state-run hospitals in Hyderabad.

According to TV visuals, half the bus was filled with gravel, trapping passengers inside.

The authorities deployed heavy earthmoving equipment to clear the wreckage of the ill-fated bus.

Meanwhile, Chevella MLA Kale Yadav attributed the accident near Chevella to the narrowness of the road.

Chevella Inspector Sridhar sustained minor injuries during a rescue operation after an excavator ran over his leg, a police official said.

Telangana Governor Jishnu Dev Varma, Union Ministers G Kishan Reddy and Bandi Sanjay Kumar, state BJP president N Ramchander Rao, BRS Working President K T Rama Rao and several other leaders expressed sadness over the loss of lives in the accident. (PTI)

## India, Bahrain begin negotiations for ambitious trade deal

**NEW DELHI, Nov 3:** India and Bahrain on Monday announced commencement negotiations for an ambitious trade deal and inching closer to seal an investment pact as External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar held extensive talks with his Bahraini counterpart Abdullah bin Rashid Alzayani to further broad-base overall ties.

In their talks, the two ministers also agreed to develop a common understanding to commence negotiations for a double taxation avoidance agreement (DTAA).

This would help eliminate double taxation, provide tax certainty and promote trade and investment, officials said.

Alzayani landed in India on Sunday on a two-day visit with an aim to further expand bilateral ties in the areas of trade, investment and defence at a time West Asia has been witnessing conflicts and geopolitical turmoil.

In his opening remarks at the meeting, Jaishankar reiterated India's support for the Gaza peace plan and hoped that it would lead to a lasting and durable solution to the conflict in the region.

In their talks, Jaishankar and Alzayani explored ways to boost bilateral cooperation in areas of defence, security, economic, trade, investment, health, fintech, space, culture and people-to-people ties.

The two sides also resolved to work towards further growth and diversification of trade in areas such as electronics, petroleum, processed foods, base metals and gems and jewellery, according to a joint statement released following the Jaishankar-Alzayani talks.

Bahrain is an important country for India in West Asia, and the overall bilateral relations have witnessed a major upswing in the last few years, with two-way trade reaching USD 1.64 billion in 2024-25.

The Gulf nation is home to close to 332,000 Indian nationals who comprise nearly a quarter of the total population of 1.5 million in that country. India is among the top five trading partners of Bahrain.

In the talks, both sides noted the progress made toward establishing the joint working group on trade and investment as also on the commencement of negotiations on a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) between the two countries, the statement said.

"These initiatives will further promote trade and investment between both countries," it said. "Both sides welcomed the progress made in ongoing negotiations for a bilateral investment treaty." (PTI)

## BJP won't make Nitish CM, instead give post to some 'chela': Kharage



**HAIJIPUR (BIHAR), Nov 3:** Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Monday claimed that if the NDA returns to power in Bihar, the BJP will not make Nitish Kumar the chief minister, and instead give the post to some "chela" of the saffron party.

Addressing his maiden Bihar election rally at Raja Pakar in Vaishali district, around 40 km from headquarters Hajipur, Kharge lambasted Kumar for allegedly betraying the legacy of socialist icons like Jayaprakash Narayan, Ram Manohar Lohia and Karpoori Thakur and joining hands with "anti-women" BJP, which he said is a believer of 'Manu Smriti'.

"Nitish Kumar is sitting in the lap of the BJP, which believes in Manu Smriti. He has given up on JP, Lohia and Thakur. He cannot

champion the cause of Dalits, OBCs and EBCs," he claimed.

"But Nitish Kumar is not aware that after the elections, the BJP is not going to make him the CM again and instead it will give the post to some 'chela' (foot soldier) of theirs," Kharge said, in a bid to drive a wedge between the saffron party and the JD(U).

He mocked Prime Minister Narendra Modi for carrying out an intensive campaign in the state "as if it were his son's wedding".

"The PM has time to tour the world but not to take stock of the state of affairs in his country, where he is seen only at the time of elections. You can see Modi roaming through the streets of a city even during municipal polls. Even during Bihar assembly elections, he is so busy as if it is his son's wedding," said the octogenarian,

known for his earthy humour.

Attacking the PM, he said Modi was the chief minister of Gujarat for 13.5 years and has been the prime minister for the last 12 years but could not develop either the western state or the country.

Lashing out at Kumar, he said, "Nitish took oath as Bihar's CM nine times and ruled the state for 20 years, still he couldn't provide jobs or stop out-migration of youth."

Kharge alleged that Bihar's NDA government was involved in scams worth Rs 70,000 crore, and claimed that even a Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) report confirmed it.

"Modi and Shah talk about 'jungle raj' but what did the NDA do for Bihar in the last 20 years?" he asked.

Kharge also claimed that 50 lakh posts were lying vacant in central government departments and alleged that Modi was not concerned about it, and asked about his poll promise of providing 2 crore jobs every year.

In an apparent reference to activists and student leaders being charged with sedition upon voicing criticism of the Modi government, Kharge said, attempting a poetic flourish, "It is a carnival of lies in which truth stands alone. Anyone who dares to ask questions is branded an anti-national." (PTI)

## Omar gets grand welcome in Jammu as historic Darbar Move resumes after 4 years

**JAMMU, Nov 3:** Amid scenes of jubilation and festivity, Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Monday received a rousing welcome from the people here as the historic 'Darbar Move' resumed after a four-year hiatus.

The tradition involves shifting the Jammu and Kashmir capital and administrative offices from Srinagar to Jammu in the winter and vice versa in the summer.

Walking from his official residence to Raghunath Bazar en route to the Civil Secretariat, Abdullah was cheered on by massive crowds along the Residency Road, where traders and citizens showered flower petals on him and distributed sweets as the air thrummed with drumbeats and celebratory slogans.

Abdullah, accompanied by Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary and Jal Shakti Minister Javed Rana, left his official residence around 9 am and had to board his vehicle at Raghunath Bazar to reach the Secretariat.

His decision to walk the distance drew praise from locals, who saw it as a symbol of humility and connection with the people.

The chief minister was given a guard of honour by the Jammu and Kashmir Police contingent and took the salute on reaching the Civil Secretariat, where another group of people showered flower petals on



Abdullah's cavalcade while the sound of drumbeats rent the air.

"I was humbled to receive a warm and rousing welcome from the people of Jammu as I arrived for the biannual Darbar Move today and interacted with traders and members of civil society at Shahidi Chowk and Raghunath Bazar," the chief minister said in a post on social media.

The Darbar Move tradition was started by the Dogra rulers nearly 150 years ago. It was halted by Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha in June 2021, citing the administration's complete transition to e-office, which, he said, would save around ₹ 200 crore annually.

The decision drew sharp criticism from various quarters, including Jammu's business community, which termed the move a blow to trade and the traditional bond be-

tween the two regions. They had been pressing for the revival of the practice ever since.

On October 16, Abdullah fulfilled his election promise by reviving the tradition, bringing relief to the business community here.

The Civil Secretariat and other offices closed in Srinagar on October 30 and 31, and started functioning from the winter capital on Monday for the next six months.

"How important was this (decision), especially for Jammu, you might have come to know this morning. The journey (to the Secretariat), which usually takes five minutes, took an hour with people pouring out on the streets and showering their love... Jammu was greatly affected when the Darbar Move was stopped," the chief minister told reporters at the Secretariat. (PTI)

## Local body polls after cleaning up of voters list, says Uddhav

**MUMBAI, Nov 3:** Shiv Sena (UBT) chief Uddhav Thackeray on Monday said local body polls in Maharashtra must be held only after the electoral rolls are cleaned up. He also refuted the ruling BJP's allegation of "appeasement politics" with regards to voters list irregularities and said the Shiv Sena (UBT) and other Opposition party have not referred to any bogus voter by religion.

Addressing a press conference, Thackeray alleged the Election Commission and the Union government were "scared of Gen Z", claiming those turning 18 after July 1 will be deprived of their right to vote as the poll panel has set a cut-off date of July 1 for voter eligibility in the upcoming local body elections.

"The Election Commission should rectify errors,

including duplicate and bogus names, in the voters' list. Neither Shiv Sena (UBT) nor any other opposition party has referred to any bogus voter by religion. We are not opposing elections but want them to be held only after the rolls are cleaned," Thackeray said.

He appealed to citizens to visit the nearest Shiv Sena (UBT) 'shakha' (locality offices) and verify whether their names are listed correctly and if any errors or omissions have occurred.

"We are opening centres for voters' convenience. People must check whether they can vote in their polling stations so that we know how many youngsters are being deprived of voting rights," the former chief minister said.

Taking a swipe at BJP leader Ashish Shelar,

Thackeray said the minister had "shown courage" by "unknowingly" calling Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis "Maharashtra's Pappu" for not acknowledging irregularities in the voters' list.

Thackeray alleged there were rifts within the BJP over the issue. He charged that Shelar has killed many birds with one stone.

"If the BJP is demanding cleansing of electoral rolls, they should have come with us (Opposition parties) to the ECI and State Election Commission with their demands," Thackeray said.

"We haven't asked for voter rolls correction based on religion. We will move the court asking for correcting the voters list. If Shelar agrees there are problems in the list, the BJP should also be a party to the case," he said. (PTI)

## New NDA govt in Bihar will chase out infiltrators: Yogi

**DARBHANGA/MUZAFFARPUR/SARAN, Nov 3:** Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Monday claimed that if the NDA returned to power in Bihar, it would "chase" infiltrators out of the state and redistribute their wealth among the poor.

Addressing back-to-back election rallies in Darbhanga, Muzaffarpur and Saran districts, he lampooned Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, Tejaswi Yadav of RJD and Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav as "three monkeys of the INDI Alliance" who were unable to see, unwilling to hear and incapable of speaking about all the good work that the ruling NDA was doing. "Mahatma Gandhi's three monkeys saw, heard and spoke no evil. But now we have three monkeys of the INDI Alliance. The new monkeys are Pappu, who sees no good work done by NDA, Tappu, who cannot hear about it, and

Akku, who will not admit to these while speaking," he said.

Adityanath alleged that the Congress, RJD and SP were "embracing" criminals in Bihar and allowing infiltrators to compromise with the state's security.

He claimed that if the NDA returned to power in Bihar, it would "chase infiltrators out of the state, and redistribute their wealth among the poor". The UP CM alleged that the opposition was working to divide people in the name of caste and perpetuate riots.

"Let us resolve that we shall neither be divided nor fight with each other (na batenge, na katenge)," he added. Referring to the alleged misuse when the RJD-Congress combine was in power in Bihar, he said that "back then, ration shops got looted. Today, 80 crore people, including those in Bihar, are getting free ration". (PTI)

## BJP-JDU established only 'migration industry'; Bihar needs reconstruction, not migration: Congress

**NEW DELHI, Nov 3:** The Congress on Monday claimed that the BJP-JDU in their 20 years of rule in Bihar have only established the "migration industry" and "systematically and deliberately weakened" the state's tradition of industry.

Congress general secretary in-charge communications Jairam Ramesh reiterated his party's resolve to revive and strengthen Bihar's tradition of industry, asserting that the state needs reconstruction, not migration.

"In its 20 years of rule, the BJP-JDU has established only the migration industry in Bihar, a state brimming with limitless industrial potential. Bihar has been virtually erased from the national map of development and industry," Ramesh said in a post on X.

Once renowned for its sugar, paper, jute, silk, and dairy sectors, Bihar has today become synonymous with unemployment and migration, he claimed. Ramesh said that after Independence, Congress governments in undivided Bihar set up numerous industrial units that firmly established the state on the country's industrial map.

During that era, Bihar's develop-

ment wheel spun rapidly around heavy industries, energy, dairy, and rail production, he said.

Listing key industrial units established under the Congress rule, Ramesh cited the Barauni Oil Refinery which he said turned Bihar into an energy production hub.

He said the Sindri and Barauni fertiliser plants bolstered the nation's fertiliser security while Barauni Dairy was the foundation of today's Sudha Dairy.

Ramesh also gave the example of Rail Wheel Plant, Bela; Diesel Locomotive Plant, Marhowrah; Nebi Nagar Thermal Project; and Sudha Cooperative Dairy Network.

"On one hand, Congress governments laid the industrial foundation in Bihar with vision -- on the other hand the BJP-JDU government hasn't established a single significant industry; instead, through their corrupt and disorganised policies, they've ruined even the existing ones," Ramesh alleged.

He cited the example of Ashok Paper Mill, claiming that his 400-acre complex has now turned into ruins, and machines have rusted away, while workers have been uprooted. (PTI)

## 'Shocking, will deal with iron hand', says SC on over ₹ 3000 crore being extorted in digital arrest cases

**NEW DELHI, Nov 3:** The Supreme Court on Monday said it needs to deal with digital arrest cases with an iron hand as it expressed shock over the scale of such cybercrime cases in the country, with over ₹ 3000 crore allegedly extorted from victims, including senior citizens.

Digital arrest is a growing form of cybercrime in which fraudsters pose as law enforcement or court officials or personnel from government agencies to intimidate victims through audio and video calls. They hold the victims hostage and put pressure on them to pay money.

A bench of Justices Surya Kant, Ujjal Bhuyan and Joymalaya Bagchi, which appointed an amicus curiae to assist the court in the matter, pursued two sealed cover reports submitted by the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Central Bureau of Investigation.

"It is shocking that over ₹ 3000 crore have been collected from the victims, including senior citizens, across the country. If we don't pass stringent and harsh orders, this problem will magnify."

"We have to strengthen the hands of our agencies through judicial orders. We are determined to deal with these crimes with iron hands," the bench observed.

The top court posted the matter for hearing on November 10 and said that it will pass certain directions based on the suggestions from the amicus.



Justice Kant said that the CBI has pointed out that crime syndicates were being operated from offshore locations where they have "scam compounds" having financial, technical and human pillars.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Centre and the CBI, said that the Ministry of Home Affairs's cybercrime division is dealing with these issues.

The apex court has taken cognisance of a letter written by an elderly woman from Haryana's Ambala to Chief Justice of India BR Gavai complaining that she and her husband were put under the so-called "digital

arrest" on the basis of forged orders of the court and probe agencies by fraudsters, who extorted ₹ 1.05 crore from them in September.

The woman said the court orders were shown through multiple audio and video calls by people impersonating as CBI, ED and judicial officers to arrest them.

The top court was informed that two FIRs were lodged with the cyber crime department at Ambala under various provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS).

On October 27, the top court said it is inclined to entrust the CBI with the probe into

digital arrest cases after taking into consideration the magnitude and pan-India spread of such crimes.

It had sought details of FIRs registered in different states and Union territories.

The top court had said it would monitor the progress of the CBI investigation and issue whatever directions necessary to deal with these crimes.

It had asked the CBI to respond whether it needs more resources, including cyber experts who are not in the police force, to investigate digital arrest cases.

On October 17, taking note of the rising incidents of online fraud in the country, especially digital arrests to dupe citizens by fabricating judicial orders, the top court sought responses from the Centre and the CBI, saying such offences strike at the "very foundation" of public trust in the system.

The apex court had flagged the rising number of digital arrest cases across the country and said forging expert, high court orders and signatures of judges to digitally arrest innocent people, including senior citizens, strikes at the bottom of trust and faith of people in judicial institutions.

It said the forgery of documents and the criminal misuse of the name, seal and judicial orders of this court or high court is a matter of grave concern, and such criminal acts cannot be treated as an ordinary or solitary offence of cheating or cyber crime. (PTI)

# ROY'S CAREER-BEST EFFORT PUTS JHARKHAND ON COURSE FOR WIN AGAINST NAGALAND

**RANCHI, Nov 3:** Spin-bowling all-rounder Anukul Roy produced a career-best eight-wicket haul to dismiss Nagaland for 154 and enforce the follow-on, putting Jharkhand on course for victory in their Elite Group A Ranji Trophy match here on Monday.

The 26-year-old left-arm spinner returned figures of 8 for 55 as Nagaland were bowled out in 73.5 overs. Following on, the visitors were 104 for 5 in 36 overs, still 252 runs behind Jharkhand's first-innings total of 510 for 8 declared.

After Jharkhand declared at their overnight score of 510-8, Roy spun a web around the Nagaland batters. Only five batters managed to reach double digits, with Chetan Bist top-scoring with an unbeaten 46.

Nagaland made a decent start to their first innings as openers Sedzhalie Rupero (33) and Nischal (41) added 61 runs for the opening wicket. But once Roy cleaned up Rupero in the 36th over, the innings collapsed.

Sushant Mishra and Manishi



picked up a wicket apiece.

Things were no different in the second innings as Nagaland struggled again, losing half their side within 36 overs.

Skipper Rongsen Jonathan scored a fighting fifty before being bowled by Roy, who also accounted for Imliwati Lemtur.

Manishi removed both openers, Nischal and Rupero, early before getting rid of Bist.

At stumps, Yugandhar Singh (4) and Hem Chetri (6) were at the crease.

In Cuttack, Andhra Pradesh dismissed Odisha for 151 in 56.4 overs and then enforced

follow-on, putting themselves in a strong position.

The trio of Kavuri Saiteja (3/30), Sourabh Kumar (3/32) and Tripurana Vijay (3/14) shared nine wickets among them as Odisha, resuming at 80 for 4, folded quickly.

Sandeep Pattnaik (58) scored a fighting half-century but lacked support from the other end as Odisha collapsed in 56.4 overs. Following on, Odisha showed better resistance, reaching 190 for 2 in 58 overs.

Gourav Choudhary (79 not out) and Govinda Poddar (4) were at the crease at stumps with Odisha still 134 runs behind Andhra's first-innings score of 475 for 7 declared.

In Coimbatore, Vidarbha, resuming at 211 for 2 in 68 overs, piled up 501 in 148.4 overs.

Yash Rathore struck a magnificent 133 off 189 balls with 15 boundaries, while Ravi Kumar Samarth (56), Nachiket Bhute (51 not out) and Akshay Vathkar (43) contributed useful runs.

For Tamil Nadu, Sai Kishore (5/150) picked up a five-wicket

haul, while D Chandrasekhar (2/100) and Trilok Nag (3/98) also chipped in.

In reply, Tamil Nadu, who had scored 291 in their first innings, were six for no loss at stumps, with openers Athish SR and Vimal Kumar at the crease.

In Vadodara, no play was possible for the third successive day due to wet outfield following rain at the BCA Stadium.

**Brief Scores:**

**Tamil Nadu** 291 & 6 for no loss in 5 overs vs Vidarbha 501 all out in 148.4 overs (Yash Rathore 133, Ravi Kumar Samarth 56, Nachiket Bhute 51 not out; R Sai Kishore 5/150).

**Andhra** 475 for 7 decl in 123.1 overs vs Odisha 151 all out in 56.4 overs (Sandeep Pattnaik 58; Kavuri Saiteja 3/30) and 190 for 2 in 58 overs (Gourav Choudhary 79 not out, Sandeep Pattnaik 63; Sourabh Kumar 1/36).

**Jharkhand** 510 for 8 decl in 105 overs vs Nagaland 154 all out in 73.5 overs (Chetan Bist 46, Anukul Roy 8/55) and 104 for 5 in 36 overs (Rongsen Jonathan 50; Manishi 3/41). (PTI)

## Skipper said that she does not want to again lose by a small margin: Amanjot Kaur



**NAVIMUMBAI, Nov 3:** Harmanpreet Kaur was desperate to win the Women's World Cup this time. But the India skipper was more desperate to not lose it by a small margin, having met a similar fate in the past.

After the heartbreak of 2107, she was looking to break the jinx, so much so that she called all her teammates hours before the title clash against South Africa and implored them to give their best in the ultimate game of the tournament here on Sunday, said all-rounder Amanjot Kaur.

Speaking at the mixed zone after India's maiden World Cup triumph, Amanjot said, "It had been more difficult for her because the highs and lows that she has seen are something that we have not.

"To lose by small margins is not good and she had said this time around that she does not want to lose out by a small margin, everyone will have to go all out. We were just counting the wickets and not keeping an eye on what the score was."

From hitting the winning runs against Australia in the semifinal to taking the catch of in-form South Africa skipper Laura Wolvaardt in the title clash, Amanjot played her part in India's winning campaign.

In the summit clash, Wolvaardt, looking to up the ante having crossed her hundred, hit one high in the air towards deep midwicket. Amanjot fumbled thrice but managed to hold on to the ball one-handed to give India the most decisive wicket of the game off Deepti Sharma's bowling.

"My god, it was the toughest catch of my life. I have never fumbled before — either I have taken them or spilled them. There has been nothing in between but for the first time god gave me three chances (to take it)," she told the media after the match.

"It was a crucial catch and we knew she would attack after completing her century and charge from one end," she said.

Amanjot had hidden being injured from her family before the World Cup and went to Centre of Excellence in Bengaluru for recovery.

ery. "I have not spoken at home yet. All I know is that they have burst some crackers and my grandparents are asleep," she said.

"(In the morning) my aunt (had) told me to just swing without seeing the ball. My family members don't understand cricket much. For them, if the ball hits the bat, it's a four. If not, then you are out and if you are leg-before, why are you even carrying a bat for?"

Amanjot praised Deepti for having a huge impact on India's campaign, with the senior all-rounder also scoring 58 in the final besides taking a five-wicket haul.

"You can pull out any match whenever she is playing, some or the other record is breaking. Deepti is like that glue which holds our team together, be it bowling, batting or fielding," she said.

Meanwhile, spinner Radha Yadav said the DY Patil Stadium has been lucky for the Indian team.

"DY Patil has always been lucky for us. Coming here, we always produce something magical and everyone in the team, including the staff and players have to come together for it," she said.

India pacer Renuka Singh Thakur said it did not matter if she was overlooked in the initial matches of a triumphant World Cup campaign.

"It doesn't matter if you are in or out, all that matters is what the team needs at that point. There was a different combination at that time," she said.

Star of the win over mighty Australia in the semifinal, Jemimah Rodrigues said she was pleased with India managing to go over the line in that match.

"That knock (127 not out) was really, really special. Not because I got a hundred but we defeated Australia," she said.

"We have always come in close situations and moments and given it away but this Indian team changed that and I loved it for that reason — we defeated them and today we are world champions.

"We spoke about how we give our lives for every single ball," Rodrigues said talking about the final. (PTI)

## IDCA inaugurates 9th T20 National Cricket Championship for Deaf



**NEW DELHI, Nov 3:** The Indian Deaf Cricket Association (IDCA) on Monday inaugurated the ninth edition of the T20 National Cricket Championship for Deaf that will be held here from November 3 to 9 and feature 20 teams.

The opening ceremony of the championship was attended by Delhi minister Praveesh Sahib Singh Verma among others.

The week-long championship, organised under the patronage of Cyrus Poonawalla Group, will run from November 3-9, bringing together some of the most talented hearing-impaired cricketers from across India.

This year's tournament features 20 teams — Kerala, Chhattisgarh, Chandigarh, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Haryana, Telangana, Mumbai, Maharashtra, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Karnataka, Punjab, Odisha, Delhi, and Bengal.

The matches will be hosted across four venues in Chhawla — Essex Farms Cricket Club and Academy, Haryana Cricket Academy, Arihant Cricket Ground, and Arihant Mount Cricket Club — ensuring simultaneous matches.

The fixture includes 40 league matches, followed by quarter-finals on November 8, semi-finals and final on November 9.

Speaking about the championship, Sumit Jain, President, IDCA, said, "The 9th T20 National Cricket Championship for Deaf is not just a tournament — it's a movement celebrating the spirit, resilience, and talent of our hearing-impaired athletes." (PTI)

## Gayle, Ryder, other former stars stranded in Srinagar hotel after IHPL scam

**SRINAGAR, Nov 3:** Billed as a major event to unearth new cricket talent from Kashmir, the Indian Heaven Premier League (IHPL) has turned out to be a scam as the organisers have fled, leaving several former international stars like Chris Gayle stranded in a hotel here due to non-payment of bills.

The IHPL, which began here amid huge fanfare in the last week of October, was organised by the Mohali-based Yuva Society.

Huge billboards featuring former cricketers like Gayle, Devon Smith, Jesse Ryder and Shakib-ah-Hassan came up at several places across the city, announcing that these megastars will play alongside the local players in the league which was scheduled to end on November 8.

Most of the matches were played at Bakshi Stadium with music blaring from loudspeakers during the intervals.

However, the league ended abruptly on Saturday as the players refused to turn up for matches due to unpaid dues. The organisers did a vanishing act, forcing the hotel where the players were staying, to stop them from leaving till their dues were cleared.



The story came to the fore when Mellisa Juniper, an Englishwoman who was an umpire at the event, said they had not been paid.

"We have not received any payment," Juniper said, adding she was informed by the hotel staff about the "missing organisers". While police did visit the hotel, there was no official word whether any action has been initiated by the cops.

Gayle was among several players who had played in the Legends' League cricket tournament last year in Kashmir. The event, which was a private one just like the IHPL this year, had drawn huge

crowds to the stadiums as locals got to see international players in action for the first time in nearly 40 years.

Parminder Singh, who is listed as chairman of the Yuva Society, might have been swayed by the success of the Legends' League to organise the IHPL in Kashmir.

They booked the Bakshi Stadium, owned by the Jammu and Kashmir Sports Council, and paid the rent up front for hosting the matches.

Eight teams — Srinagar Sultans, Jammu Lions, Ladakh Heroes, Pulwama Titans, Uri Panthers, Gulmarg Royals, Patnitop Warriors

and Kishtwar Giants — were formed to play the league. Each team had a former international player in its ranks.

However, the IHPL did not pull the crowds in despite the presence of Gayle and other international stars. The organisers offered huge discounts on tickets and used the services of a local social media influencer, Umar Zargar, in an attempt to boost ticket sales but in vain.

Questions are being asked as to how the organisers — Yuva Society — with no past experience in holding leagues of such magnitude was allowed to use Bakshi Stadium to host the matches.

Secretary of the Sports Council Nuzhat Gul said the organisers wanted to use the venue to host the matches and had paid the money. "I have no association with the IHPL. I was present at the inaugural ceremony only as an invitee," she added.

The Yuva Society, while announcing the IHPL on its website, used photographs of former cricketers Surendra Khanna and Ashu Dani without mentioning roles, if any, the duo played in the organisation. (PTI)

## I performed exactly how I wanted as a senior player: Deepti Sharma

**MUMBAI, Nov 3:** Deepti Sharma, one of the star performers of the victorious Indian women's cricket team, feels they were destined to end their long wait for an ICC a world title at home.

The win over South Africa on Sunday night came after years of disappointment and heartbreak.

Deepti starred with a five-wicket haul and a crucial 58 in the all important final. She took 22 wickets and scored 215 runs in total to earn the player of the tournament award.

"I am feeling really good, since the day we played the first game of the World Cup, I have performed exactly how I wanted to play as a senior player. There cannot be anything better than giving such a good

performance in the final and lifting the trophy," Deepti told PTI Videos.

On the long wait for a world title, she added: "It took us really long to win the World Cup, but what God has written for you happens only at the destined time and I think it was written to take place in India.

"I have so many good memories of DY Patil Stadium as we have won all the series here. We were very positive as a team, and whatever the result might be we will play as a team.

"We wanted to win it as this was happening in India and we had to win this as a team. Every ball we were feeling like this game will end soon, and the result will be in our favour, and now that wait has come to an end." (PTI)

## IOA to give cash rewards to AYG medal winners, 4th place finishers, coaches

**NEW DELHI, Nov 3:** Indian Olympic Association (IOA) on Monday announced that the gold, silver and bronze medal winners at the recent Youth Asian Games in Bahrain will be given cash rewards of Rs 5 lakh, 3 lakh and 2 lakh respectively in recognition of their achievements.

The fourth place finishers will also receive Rs 50,000 each, while both the gold winning men's and women's kabaddi teams will get Rs 10 lakh each.

Coaches of medal-winning athletes will also get Rs 1 lakh each.

India had finished sixth in the final standings in the October 23-31 Games with 48 medals (13 gold, 18 silver, 17 bronze). Boxing had contributed four gold, while beach wrestling and kabaddi yielded three and two yellow metals.



The IOA said the achievement of the athletes reflects the growing strength and depth of the country's youth sporting ecosystem.

"The IOA recognizes that such performances are the result of sustained effort, rigorous training, and invaluable guidance provided by coaches and support staff. In acknowledgment of these

commendable accomplishments, the IOA has decided to felicitate all medal winners, coaches, and athletes who secured fourth positions at a special ceremony to be held shortly," the apex body said in a release. IOA chief P T Usha said her organisation takes immense pride in the exemplary performance of the young athletes at the third Asian Youth Games.

"Their achievements reflect the future of Indian sport and the potential that lies within our youth. The IOA remains fully committed to providing every possible support to nurture and develop this emerging talent," she said.

The IOA also acknowledged the efforts of the coaches, National Sports Federations, and support teams who have played a role in this success. (PTI)

## When there was constant criticism, Harman and Smriti kept the team together: Neetu David

**NEW DELHI, Nov 3:** Neetu David could not have wished for a better finish to her five year tenure as a chief selector of the Indian women's cricket team, having witnessed numerous heartbreaks on the big stage before Harmanpreet Kaur and Co finally cracked the winning code in world events on a steamy Sunday night.

A new selection panel was recently appointed but it was David and her team that picked the squad for the ODI World Cup at home.

Despite all the resources at their disposal, India's wait for an elusive world title kept getting longer with defeats from winning positions becoming the norm in ICC events.

Senior players including Harmanpreet, Smriti Mandhana, Jemimah Rodrigues were heavily criticised for their inability to land the killer punch. Reversing that dubious trend in front of the home crowd was stuff of the fairytale and with the perfect blend of luck and pluck, the trophy was finally won.

Speaking to PTI after the pathbreaking result in Navi Mumbai, ICC Hall of Famer and former India spinner David

listed out the reasons why India were able to go all the way this time after years of disappointment.

**Q. It was a journey full of ups and downs, how would you sum it up?**

A. This team was criticised a lot, coaches came and went, a lot of ups and downs. People were saying they keep losing when BCCI is doing everything for them, they said they are losing to Australia all the time. But the senior players played a major role (Harman, Smriti, Jemi, Deepti) in keeping the unit together.

When Amol Mujumdar came as head coach (in October 2023), his vision was simple. It was now or never. The hard work of girls and support staff over the past 18 months have seen it myself in camps, it is for all to see now.

They took team bonding to the next level and found a perfect blend of senior and junior, reminding me of Sourav Ganguly's days as captain when he bloodied in the youngsters and backed them to the hilt. Shree Charani, Kranti Goud, Pratika Rawal, they were very well supported by the seniors.

**Q. How did the senior players deal**



with the constant criticism after painful losses in one ICC event after the other?

A. You do feel hurt when you are criticised but they (Harman, Smriti, Jemi,

Deepti) took it positively, if they would have become negative then probably they would not have bounced back. The result is in front you. To perform in a high pressure environment at home, the

girls handled the pressure really well.

It was not a fluke, we beat Australia and South Africa, we needed improvement in all three departments especially fielding, we showed that. Bowling coach Avishkar Salvi efforts also stand out. Strength and Conditioning coach Harsha came in and has done a brilliant job.

Amol worked tirelessly with the girls and had individual batting sessions with every member of the team. He looks calm but is very aggressive.

**Q. Youngsters like Goud, Charani and Pratika made a big impact on the World Cup campaign and it was not long ago that they made their international debut. How would you rate their performance?**

A. When Renuka Singh and Pooja Vastrakar were not there due to injuries, we were worried about the pace attack. We found Kranti, the fire in her to excel is amazing. She is very mature for her age. She wanted a slip in the Pakistan game and soon after she got the wicket. She is very focussed.

Pratika has been a great find for the Indian team. Amanjot Kaur too has made a big impact as an all-rounder.

After this win, I would say future is brightest for women's cricket in India. You will see plenty of talent coming through.

**Q. How should we plan for the next World Cup and build on the legacy created last night? Harmanpreet Kaur has been leading India (first T20 and then ODIs) for close to a decade. Is it now time for a change of guard?**

"The new selectors and management will decide on future leadership. I have always believed India are the only team that can dominate Australia, I have believed we have an upper hand in the longer version of the game (ODI and Test), as technically we are very good.

What we would need is a bigger pool of fast bowlers and focus more on leg spinners. We need a pool of at least 10 pacers as they tend to get injured often, we should have adequate back up and we have worked on that.

"Batting, we have lot of options in domestic cricket, there is no concern on that front. U15 girls and u19 girls are coming through very nicely, they know what they need to do excel at the highest level." (PTI)

# Amol Muzumdar: Indian cricket 'Nearly Man' and 'those five minutes of blur'

NAVI MUMBAI, Nov 3: Amol Muzumdar had carried his scars of a "what could have been" for far too long. But not anymore though.

One of the domestic doyens of 1990s, Muzumdar was a rare Mumbai stalwart, who missed out on a coveted Test cap due to presence Rahul Dravid, VVS Laxman and Sourav Ganguly in that Indian line-up.

As a school cricketer, he remained padded forever as Sachin Tendulkar and Vinod Kambli recorded a 664 run stand for Sharadashram Vidya-mandir in the Harris Shield final.

But Harmanpreet Kaur's catch to dismiss Nadine de Klerk was that soothing balm must have had its healing effect on that wound that Muzumdar must have been carrying for years.

"After the catch, I don't know what happened. The next five minutes was blur. I was here only (in the dugout). I was looking up in the dugout. I was looking up. I didn't know what (had) happened," he said during an interaction with a select group of journalists.

He never experienced the highs of an India cricketer but now he is a World Cup winning head coach and we have had only three -- Gary Kirsten, Rahul

Dravid and now Amol Muzumdar.

Kapil Dev's "Class of 1983" didn't have any national coach as the concept was alien back then and MS Dhoni's "Batch of 2007" had Lalchand Rajput, who was a stop-gap cricket manager.

"It has not sunk in yet but probably as the days go by, it will sink in. But it's a surreal feeling," he said when asked about his reaction to winning the tournament.

What was special about this team was that they had each other's back.

"Two years have been incredible with this team. They're all together all the time. We back each other. You'll see, nobody leaves in anyone's back and it's been fantastic to work with such talented group of players," he said when asked about his two-year stint with the Indian side.

As a player, Muzumdar was an old school 'Khadoos Mumbaikar' and when asked if the team's approach had his footprints, he didn't deny.

"Whatever inputs I can give, whatever experience I do have, I love to share it always with them. I don't hold back from sharing certain things, so whether that you may call it an imprint, but it's just the experience that I share," he said.



Muzumdar said he urged the team not to read much into their three defeats on the trot.

"I kept telling (the team) that we have not lost the game; we just were not able to just cross the line. We were competitive in those matches, we were very close in beating South Africa, Australia, and England," he said.

"We just were not able to cross the line, but post that, what grit and determination girls have shown, has just been phenomenal in beating New Zealand in a virtual quarterfinals, then semifinals against Australia and then now again, South Africa in the finals. Unbelievable," he said.

During the last six weeks, the hardest decision for him as a coach was to drop Jemimah Rodrigues from the England game in Indore to get an extra bowler in all-rounder Amanjot Kaur.

"To be very honest, we were absolutely clear that if we want to have six bowling options at a certain time then we will have to sacrifice one batter," Muzumdar told the media after India's win in the final over South Africa.

"We were very clear about that so whoever, whether it was Harleen or whether it was Jemimah, we were clear about it. Six bowling option, one batter misses out -- somebody has to make way to some for someone to come in."

Muzumdar admitted Shafali Verma's inclusion from outside of the selected group of 15 squad members and six reserves was "a sudden change", highlighting at the selection headache in form of multiple options.

"Maybe it appears from outside, it's a sudden change, but we were clear about it and Shafali was a sudden change I would say. Nobody expected Pratika (Rawal) to get injured, but if things happen and that itself tells, if you look at a positive way, it shows that a player as good as Shafali was not finding a place in the (squad of) 15. So there you go, but she came and played a magical game," he added.

Talking about the legacy, Muzumdar believes that the win will usher a new beginning for women's cricket in the country.

"It's a watershed moment in Indian cricket. Not just women's cricket in Indian cricket. You must have seen, stadium khacha-khach bhara hua tha (the stadium was jam-packed). I don't know how many crores of people must have watched on the television," he said.

"I'm sure from there, some of them must have got inspired. You never know. Like 1983 (India's maiden World Cup win), it inspired a lot of cricketers in that generation. You never know. I just met a little girl; three or four-years-old, whose inspiration is Harman. She follows Harman wherever she goes, so there you go," Muzumdar added. (PTI)

## World Cup triumph a testament to women's empowerment in India: Mandaviya



NEW DELHI, Nov 3: Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya on Monday lauded the Indian women's cricket team for their historic ICC World Cup title triumph, saying the feat is a testament to women's empowerment in the country.

India on Sunday defeated South Africa by 52 runs in the final in Navli Mumbai to lift their maiden Women's World Cup title.

"I would like to congratulate the Indian women's cricket team. The victory is a respect towards women's empowerment of the country. It's a victory of our women

power," Mandaviya said during the announcement of preparations for 100 years celebrations of Indian hockey here.

Indian hockey, which boasts of 13 Olympic medals including record eight gold, and one World Cup triumph in 1975, will be celebrating its 100 years on November 7, for which Hockey India and Sports Ministry have made grand plans.

The celebrations will be organised across the country, with the main function to be held at the Major Dhyan Chand Stadium. Over 1,400 hockey matches will be

played simultaneously across 550 plus districts nationwide, involving more than 36,000 players at the grassroots level.

The milestone event will commemorate a century of India's rich hockey heritage, honouring the legends who brought glory to the nation.

"As India celebrates 100 years of hockey, we honour a century of pride, perseverance, and national glory. This milestone is an occasion to remember our heroes who brought honour to the country and to draw inspiration from their journey as we look ahead.

Hockey is more than just a sport for India -- it is part of our identity and collective spirit.

"The celebrations across more than 550 districts will not only highlight our legacy but also take the story of Indian hockey to every corner of the nation, inspiring young boys and girls to pick up the stick and play with passion," said Mandaviya.

A 30-minute exhibition match featuring the Sports Minister's XI and Hockey India's Mixed XI (Men & Women) will highlight gender parity, teamwork, and inclusivity, with elite players from both the men's and women's national teams participating.

This will be followed by the felicitation of hockey legends across generations, recognising their contribution to the sport.

"The government remains deeply committed to strengthening India's sporting ecosystem through greater investment, modern infrastructure, and institutional reforms. Our vision is clear -- to make India one of the top sporting nations in the world by 2036 and to consistently perform at the highest levels in every discipline," the minister said.

"With continued collaboration between the ministry, the Sports Authority of India, and federations like Hockey India, we will continue to nurture young talent, expand access to sport, and ensure that India's tricolour flies high on every international stage."

The centenary will also witness the release of the official commemorative volume, "100 Years of Indian Hockey", chronicling the sport's remarkable journey, its triumphs, challenges, and revival.

The publication will serve as both a historical record and a tribute to generations of players who have shaped India's hockey legacy.

Also present on the occasion were Hockey India president Dilip Tirkey and secretary general Bhola Nath Singh. (PTI)

## Head released from Australia's T20I squad for last two matches against India to prepare for Ashes

HOBART, Nov 3: Opening batter Travis Head was on Monday released from Australia's T20 International squad for the remaining two matches against India to play in the Sheffield Shield ahead as part of preparations for the Ashes.

The 31-year-old left-hander will play alongside Alex Carey for South Australia against Tasmania here from November 10 as he switches to red-ball cricket ahead of the first Ashes Test starting November 21 in Perth.

It will be his first first-class match since the tour of West Indies in July. He has had a relatively lean run in white-ball cricket over the last month with a top score of 31 in eight innings across T20Is and ODIs after making 142 against South Africa in August.

Head is the third member of Australia's T20I squad to prioritise preparation for the five-Test campaign against England.

Josh Hazlewood and Sean Abbott are the others, having both faced India over the course of the first three matches of the T20 series. The pair will now turn out for New South Wales in a star-studded clash with Victoria at the SCG.

The selectors left the decision on whether to play in the Shield or the final two T20Is against India to Head himself, but he opted to feature in the domestic competition, according to a report in cricket.com.au.

The report also said that every member of Australia's likely squad for the first Ashes Test squad will feature in the next round of Sheffield Shield.

Head played one early round of Sheffield Shield leading into last summer's Border-Gavaskar Trophy series and finished as its leading run scorer.

The five-match T20I series between India and Australia are tied 1-1 after three matches. The last two matches will be played at Carrara (November 6) and Brisbane (November 8). (PTI)



## 'Destiny's child' Shafali Verma thrives in God's plan

'What happened with Pratika, as a sportsperson, it wasn't a good thing'



NAVI MUMBAI, Nov 3: If Shafali Verma decides to sport a tattoo that reads "God's Plan", no one can possibly disagree that it is an apt messaging.

Destiny's child Shafali Verma found her way back into the Indian women's ODI side in unfortunate circumstances but left an indelible mark on the team's victorious World Cup campaign, thriving in "God's Plan" which can work in mysterious ways.

On a rainy August afternoon in Mumbai, former chairperson of selectors Neetu David had assured the media that Shafali will get her chance to play for India after she confirmed the exclusion

of the 21-year-old from India's World Cup squad, despite having played five of those events across formats.

Shafali had blown hot and cold in the opportunities that she got but more importantly, her absence from the ODI side was met with Pratika Rawal's impressive rise, and the selectors had kept the decision on the former for another day.

But as it panned out, an unfortunate injury to in-form opener Pratika sent India back to ensuring Shafali, who was busy representing Haryana in the Senior Women's T20 Tournament in Surat, joined the Indian squad

ahead of their World Cup semi-final against Australia as soon as she could.

Shafali had no spare time to waste as she clocked in two separate one-hour batting sessions here at the DY Patil Stadium and it's University Ground ahead of the semi-final.

"What happened with Pratika, as a sportsperson, it wasn't a good thing. No one wants any sportsperson to sustain such an injury. But God has sent me here to do something good," Shafali told the media prior to the semi-final.

While her promising comeback lasted only five balls including two fours for 10 runs against Australia, it was in the final where Shafali played a knock akin to a seasoned player with several years of experience behind her.

Shafali's 87, in which she played some spectacular shots as well as farmed the strike, set the platform even though India managed an under-par 298/7 in their bid to set a big target.

But interestingly, a few very outside the playing group knew Shafali, who had rolled over her arms only five times in 30 ODIs before Sunday's final, was also going to chip in as the sixth bowler.

"When Shafali joined the team, we were missing the overs from Pratika. So, when Shafali came in, we saw that she was bowling a lot of overs in domestic cricket. Sir and I spoke to her about it, and she said, 'I'm ready for (even) 10 overs'. That shows how confident she was to bowl," skipper Harmanpreet shared with the media later.

"When that partnership started (between Laura Wolvaardt and Sune Luus, who added 52 runs for the fourth wicket) in the middle, suddenly I got the thought that I should give Shafali a try to see what happens."

"It was a gut feeling. I didn't want to go back to the (dressing) room later thinking, 'Why didn't I try?' because they were looking good and when I gave her that over and she got back-to-back breakthroughs, that was the turning point for us," Harmanpreet said.

Head coach Amol Muzumdar said he was following Shafali's progress in the Senior Women's T20 Trophy, which helped India to settle the debate of a sixth bowler.

"When she walked in into the team, we knew that she's bowling in domestic cricket. I did ask her and I followed her in domestic cricket that she was bowling all four overs in a T20 game. All four overs (and) every game she bowled," Muzumdar told media later.

"We knew that a sixth bowler will end up bowling only 4-5 overs so if Shafali is doing the job, she's either the 6th or the 7th bowling option."

But the decision to introduce her today was entirely Harman's," he added.

Only time would tell if Shafali would retain her place in the side or make way for whenever Pratika, who has an impressive opening record with Smriti Mandhana, returns but for now the 21-year-old is back in the business. (PTI)

## India wanted World Cup win more than us but South Africa will give it a good go in next edition: Mashimbyi



NAVI MUMBAI, Nov 3: India wanted to win the Women's World Cup more than South Africa who will give it a "good go" in the next edition, said head coach Mandla Mashimbyi after their loss in the summit clash.

South Africa, who made their third consecutive final in ICC women's events and first time in ODIs, lost to India by 52 runs in a contest where they were well placed in a chase of 299 with skipper Laura Wolvaardt (101) leading the charge.

"The way India played the game, they came out (hard) in the first 10 overs. We pegged them back in the last 40 overs. There was a time we were expecting them to score 350, 360. For them to not get to 300 was really a good effort from our bowlers," Mashimbyi told the media after the match on Sunday.

"(But) the way they (India) went about their business with the ball, the way they changed their bowlers gave them the edge because we couldn't get some rhythm as a batting unit."

"They kept on taking wickets at crucial stages. But they wanted it on the day, I think, they wanted it more than us and yeah, kudos to them. Well done. They deserve it to win a World Cup at home. We wouldn't want that," he said.

Mashimbyi hoped South Africa will come back stronger in the next edition having managed some com-

manding victories, including one over hosts India in the league stage.

"To see how the team has progressed from the time I took over, it's obviously a humbling experience for me. But at the same time, I'm sitting here and I'm actually kind of excited because when nobody gave us a chance, we gave ourselves a chance," he said.

"You look at the team and see where you need to improve, and I know what to do going forward and make sure that we leave no stone unturned."

A respected figure in South African cricket circles for his work across teams from both genders, Mashimbyi also provided some insights into his coaching philosophy.

"Well, my name firstly is Mandla Mashimbyi and they've got different names," he replied when asked what separated him from other coaches.

"I just bring a different vibe into the changing. My coaching style is unconventional in terms of me focusing on the person before the cricketer. So more love, care, because the environment for me is much more important than playing cricket itself."

"When people are happy in an environment, they're able to do what these girls have done throughout this whole tournament and the proof is in the pudding with regards to that, in terms of the performances that the girls have put on," he added.

Mashimbyi said it is about managing emotions of the players when it comes to coaching the women's team.

"There's a lot of differentiation around that fact (coaching men's and women's sides). Cricket is cricket, whether you're coaching women or men. The language that I use with the boys, I'm using with the girls," he said. (PTI)

## Argentina football team to visit Kerala in March 2026: Minister

MALAPPURAM (KERALA), Nov 3: Kerala Sports Minister V Abdurahiman on Monday said the Argentina football team led by star player Lionel Messi will play a match in the state in March next year.

He was speaking at a function related to the Kerala government's Sports Vision 2031 event here.

"Two days ago, we received a mail from the Argentina team confirming that they will come in March. They also mentioned that an official announcement will be made soon," he said.

He said all preparatory works have been completed for the team's visit.

Abdurahiman added that the government had earlier intended to host the south American team at the Jawaharlal Nehru International Stadium in Kochi this month.

"Even though we expected to complete the facilities at the stadium in Kochi, due to some inconvenience, the work could not be finished on time. As the stadium approval was not received, we could not host the match," he said.

The minister said changes in the schedule of international matches are common and should not be seen as anyone's victory or defeat. "We tried to bring such a major football event to Kerala, and that attempt itself is commendable," he said.

As part of promoting the sports economy, the government has decided to host several international sports events in the state, he added. "Football and cricket have now become part of a large sports economy that provides employment to lakhs. So why should we hesitate to be part of it. We have decided to engage actively in this sector," Abdurahiman said. (PTI)