

DEO Mridul Yadav chairs meeting with EROs, AEROs and media to streamline verification

Cachar district reviews special revision of Electoral Roll 2026

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, Nov 21: The Cachar District Administration on Thursday convened a coordination meeting to discuss the Special Revision (SR) of the Electoral Roll with reference to 1 January 2026 as the qualifying date. The session, chaired by District Election Officer and District Commissioner Mridul Yadav, IAS was attended by Electoral Registration Officers (EROs), Assistant EROs (AEROs) from the seven Legislative Assembly Constituencies and media representatives.

Yadav outlined the official schedule and emphasised the importance of ensuring a clean, accurate and error-free electoral roll. As of the final publication on 6 January 2025, Cachar has 13,93,482 registered voters, including 6,93,651 males, 6,99,813 females and 18 third-gender electors. The timeline for SR activities was detailed: Head-to-Head (H2H)



surveys from 22 November to 20 December, preparation of Forms 1-8 from 21-26 December and publication of the Integrated Draft Roll on 27 December. Claims and objections can be filed from 27 December to 22 January 2026, with disposal by 2 February, health parameter checks by 6 February and the final roll scheduled for 10 February 2026.

The DEO stressed adherence to Election Commission guidelines, including removal of logical errors, standardisation of addresses, image quality improvements and EPIC corrections. BLOs will carry pre-filled registers (Statement-1)

and blank Forms 6, 7 and 8 for inclusion, deletion, correction and transfer. Identification of un-enrolled eligible citizens and 17+ prospective electors will be done using Statements-2 and 3. D-voter modifications require Foreigners' Tribunal or court orders.

Additional polling stations will be considered based on H2H findings, ensuring no station exceeds 1,200 electors without Commission approval. Recognised political parties' Booth Level Agents (BLAs) will accompany BLOs for transparency, with identity cards issued to both BLOs and BLAs.

Special campaign days will be organised for claims and objections at polling stations, while online submissions are allowed via the ECINET app, ECI website, Voters' Helpline App (VHA), or VSP. Yadav urged cooperation from all stakeholders to achieve a fault-free electoral roll for the district.

10 pairs of NFR trains to be upgraded to modern LHB coaches

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, Nov 21: Indian Railways is upgrading ten pairs of trains under Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) from conventional ICF coaches to modern LHB (Linke Hofmann Busch) rakes during the 2025-26 financial year. The move is part of a broader modernisation drive aimed at improving passenger safety, comfort and operational efficiency.

LHB coaches offer superior safety features, higher speed potential, lower maintenance requirements and an overall improved travel experience. Of the ten pairs identified for conversion, five have already been upgraded between June and August 2025, including trains on the Kishanganj-Ajmer, New Jalpaiguri-

Digha, Kolkata-Jogbani, Danapur-Jogbani and Sarsaha-Jogbani routes.

Three more pairs—Tinsukia Junction-Naharlagun, Sealdah-Sabroom and Sealdah-Silchar—are scheduled for conversion by the end of November 2025. Two additional pairs, Agartala-Dharmanagar and Silchar-Agartala are planned for LHB conversion in January 2026.

NFR plans to expand LHB deployment further in the coming years, evaluating more train conversions based on operational feasibility, demand and availability of rolling stock. This transition is a significant step towards a fully LHB-based fleet, ensuring safer and more reliable rail services across the Northeast.

Goalpara DC reviews special electoral roll revision

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, Nov 21: Goalpara District Commissioner cum District Returning Officer Pradip Timung on Thursday held a detailed meeting with representatives of recognised political parties regarding the ongoing Special Revision of the electoral roll. The session held in the DC's conference hall was attended by ADC Jagadish Brahma and Election Officer Pallabi Borah. The DC addressed queries from the representatives and clarified that the entire process will strictly follow guidelines laid down by the Election Commission of India (ECI). Block Level Officers (BLOs) will begin visiting households from November 22 to collect data for inclusion and exclusion with the draft electoral roll scheduled for publication on December 27. Citizens will have the opportunity to submit claims and objections from December 27 to January 22. After resolving all disputes the final electoral roll will be published on February 10. Pradip Timung urged political parties and the public to cooperate fully to ensure the preparation of an accurate and error-free electoral roll.

National seminar on Article 280 & Sixth Schedule Amendments held in New Delhi

HT Correspondent

KOKRAJHAR, Nov 21: A National Seminar on the amendment of Article 280 and the Sixth Schedule of the Indian Constitution, aligned with the 125th Constitution Amendment Bill, 2019 was held at the Constitution Club of India, New Delhi on Thursday. The event was organised by the All Bodo Students Union (ABSU) to highlight the implementation of the Bodo Peace Accord, 2020 and the need to strengthen financial and administrative powers of the 10 Sixth Schedule councils in Northeast India.

ABSU president Dipen Boro said the seminar served as a platform to press for the passage of the 125th Constitution Amendment Bill during the upcoming winter session of Parliament. The discussions

focused on increasing council seats, expanding territorial jurisdiction, granting ST Hill status to Borokachari in Karbi Anglong, provincialising schools, providing ex-gratia to martyr families and enhancing recruitment in army, paramilitary and Assam Police forces.

Guest speakers included Prof Ramesh Bhardwaj, Pramod Boro, Vijay Hansaraj, Sukla Charan Noatia, Pnyind Sing Syiem, Aditya Khakhlari and several other leaders and constitutional experts from across the region.

The seminar concluded with a call for a united approach from all Sixth Schedule councils to ensure timely implementation of the Bodo Peace Accord and financial autonomy reforms.

Planned power shutdown in Diphu from today

HT Bureau

DIPHU, Nov 21: The Assam Power Distribution Company Limited (APDCL), Diphu Electrical Sub-Division-I has announced a planned power shutdown in Diphu and surrounding areas to facilitate essential maintenance and renovation of the electricity supply system.

The shutdown will commence on 22 November 2025 and continue for three days, or until the work is completed. During this period, power supply will be interrupted each morning from 5:00 AM to 8:00 AM.

APDCL has requested residents and businesses to cooperate and expressed regret for the temporary inconvenience caused, emphasising that the maintenance is necessary to ensure reliable electricity service in the region.

Police celebrates World Children's Day with visit to 'Aai' Children's Home

HT Correspondent

MANGALDAI, Nov 21: In a heartwarming celebration of World Children's Day and the culmination of Child Rights Protection Week, Darrang Police visited the inmates of 'Aai' Children's Home and Specialised Adoption Agency (SAA), managed by local NGO Crystal Vision.

The police team, led by SSP Hemanta Kumar Das, along with ASP Ema Das, DSP (Probation) C W Chakrabarti and Inspector Chandanjyoti Bora, spent the afternoon engaging with children in need of care and protection (CNCP) at the home in Ward No 4, Mangaldai. The children welcomed the officers with a soulful rendition of Zubeen Garg's song "Mayabini

Ratir Bukut".

SSP Das interacted with the children about their studies, hobbies and overall well-being, while also reviewing the care and facilities with the home's staff. The team appreciated the children's creative talents, especially their award-winning artworks and distributed gifts as a gesture of love and support.

SAA Chief Functionary Mayukh Goswami, along with staff Namita Saha and Jumani Saharia were present. The visit marked the grand finale of a week-long series of awareness initiatives by Darrang Police from November 14 to 20, aimed at promoting child rights and welfare.

Cachar to host Assam-Mizoram Border Festival on Nov 24

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, Nov 21: The Cachar District Administration is preparing to host a vibrant, day-long Border Festival at Dholai on 24th November, aimed at celebrating harmony, culture, and sports between communities of Assam and Mizoram. A preparatory meeting was held at the Co-District office in Dholai on Thursday to finalise all logistical, cultural and security arrangements.

The meeting saw participation from senior officials from Mizoram, including H Vanlalbiakzauva, SDO (Civil), Vairengte and Lalnufela Chawngthu, MCS, SDO (Sadar), Mamit. Cachar officials were led by District Development Commissioner Narsing Bey, ACS, who emphasised seamless coordination between both states. Co-District Commissioner Dholai, Roktim Baruah, ACS, supervised on-ground planning. Other officials present included Neihat Haolai, ACS (Assistant Commissioner and Block Development Officer, Dholai-Narsingpur), Bonnykha Chetia, ACS, Circle Officer Sonai Maria Tamim, ACS and Deepa Das, ACS (Assistant Commissioner & In-Charge, DDIPR Barak Valley Zone).

On the festival day, the B N M P School field will host a friendly football match followed by a volleyball game between teams from Cachar and Mizoram, symbolising inter-state unity and sportsmanship. Meanwhile, the CDC Dholai office ground will feature a cultural programme from 11 AM to 2 PM, showcasing performances by troupes from Vairengte, Mamit and Cachar, highlighting the shared heritage and traditions of border communities.

Adding to the festivities, ASRLM will organise food stalls offering traditional cuisines from the region, giving visitors an authentic taste of local delicacies.

DU fellow wins best poster at International Symposium

HT Correspondent

DIBRUGARH, Nov 21: Anindita Borah an Inspire Fellow (SRF) from the Department of Physics, Dibrugarh University, won the Best Poster Presentation Award at the International Symposium on Tropical Meteorology held at the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM), Pune from 18-20 November 2025.

Her poster, titled "Regional Hydrological Response to Climate Variability in North-East India: Emphasising Water Availability," examined the impacts of climate variability on regional water resources, highlighting hydrological shifts, vulnerabilities and the need for sustainable interventions.

The award underscores the contributions of young researchers from Dibrugarh University in addressing climate and environmental challenges. Faculty members and the university community have congratulated Borah for her achievement on the international platform.

SPARSH outreach camp for ex-servicemen on Nov 28

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, Nov 21: The Controller of Defence Accounts (CDA), Guwahati will hold a day-long SPARSH Outreach Programme at Sainik Bhawan, Silchar on 28th November 2025, from 9:30 AM to 4:30 PM.

The initiative aims to support Ex-Servicemen of the Army, Navy and Air Force, along with Veer Naris and widows in resolving pension-related issues, documentation and other SPARSH-linked services. Officials said the camp will allow direct interaction with defence accounts authorities, ensuring timely grievance redressal and greater transparency. Part of a broader government effort to streamline welfare access for veterans, the programme is expected to assist beneficiaries facing challenges due to the digital transition under the SPARSH system. The Zila Sainik Welfare Office, Cachar has urged eligible participants to attend and share the information within the Barak Valley veteran community. The engagement is expected to benefit numerous families who have served the nation.

CEM Debolal Gorlosa inaugurates Heritage Week at Maibang

North Cachar Hills celebrates Dimasa culture with competitions and increased prizes

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, Nov 21: The North Cachar Hills Autonomous Council (NCHAC) celebrated Heritage Week on Friday with a one-day programme at Khasmaipur, Maibang inaugurated by Chief Executive Member (CEM) Debolal Gorlosa.

Speaking at the event, Gorlosa highlighted the importance of preserving the rich cultural traditions of the Dimasa community and urged citizens, especially children to carry forward their heritage. He stressed safeguarding the mother tongue and historical artefacts of Khaspur noting that many cultural items have been lost over time.

The celebration included a Literary Competition on Cultural Heritage, featuring Folk Stories, Folklore Recitation and Sol



Badaiba (Traditional Cultural Oration). In a significant move, CEM Gorlosa announced an increase in prize money for the competitions: ₹ 15,000, ₹ 10,000 and ₹ 5,000 for 1st, 2nd and 3rd positions, respectively, up from the earlier ₹ 1,500,

₹ 1,000 and ₹ 500.

The event was convened by Adhunikha Khersa and attended by Executive Member Monjit Naiding, MAC Monjoy Langthasa, local officials and the Gaon Bura of Khasmaipur.

BJP will retain power in Assam, claims Minister Krishnandu Paul

HT Correspondent

NAGAON, Nov 21: Guardian Minister of Nagaon, Krishnandu Paul on Thursday addressed the press after a review meeting with heads of various departments at the Deputy Commissioner's office, asserting that the teacher recruitment process in Nagaon has been entirely transparent. He said the district administration has been instructed to ensure strict oversight to prevent irregularities.

Speaking on the upcoming Assam Assembly elections, Paul claimed that the BJP is poised to win over 90 seats and form the government again. Criticising the Congress for its remarks on voter list revisions, he alleged that the party relied on votes from Bangladesh

and said that the "people of Assam will not allow such politics." Paul further asserted that the BJP would continue governing Assam for the next "100 years," arguing that only the party can ensure security, development and peace in the state.

He informed that Union Home Minister Amit Shah is scheduled to visit Nagaon on December 21-22 to inaugurate the Batadroba mega project. On the recent death of singer Zubeen Garg, Paul said the BJP does not wish to politicise the matter.

Reiterating the government's stand, the minister said the administration remains committed to delivering a corruption-free and transparent governance environment in Assam.

Red Cross Margherita refutes 'false and defamatory' encroachment allegations

HT Correspondent

MARGHERITA, Nov 21: In a strongly worded press conference held on Friday evening at the Multi-Purpose Industrial Bhawan in Jayanagar, Indian Red Cross Society (IRCS) Margherita Sub-District Branch General Secretary Pabitra Borgohain denied what he described as "baseless, malicious and defamatory" allegations against him and the organisation.

Borgohain said that a news report circulated by three individuals—Jarna Dey of Segunbari, journalist Manish Dutta and web portal owner Md Sharif of Tinsukia—had falsely claimed that the Red Cross branch illegally encroached upon and demolished a shop owned by Jarna Dey on land allegedly donated to the Society.

Clarifying the matter, he stated that noted social workers Keshavananda Goswami and Brahmananda Goswami had voluntarily

donated one katha of land (Dag No 245, Patta No 341) at Jayanagar exclusively for constructing the Red Cross office. He alleged that Jarna Dey had forcefully occupied the land and was now circulating "fabricated and misleading information" to obstruct the project.

Calling the published report "motivated and one-sided," Borgohain confirmed that the IRCS Margherita Sub-District Branch has lodged an FIR at Margherita Police Station against the three individuals for spreading false information and criminal defamation. He added that civil defamation proceedings will also be initiated soon.

Borgohain said the Red Cross remains committed to serving vulnerable communities and asserted that such attempts to malign the organisation would not deter its humanitarian work.

Over 2,000 aspirants join Territorial Army rally at Solmara

HT Correspondent

TEZPUR, Nov 21: The 121 Infantry Battalion (Territorial Army) GARH RIF is conducting its recruitment rally at Solmara Military Station from November 15 to 29, open to aspirants from Assam, Manipur, Nagaland, Mizoram, Tripura, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim, West Bengal and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

So far, more than 2,000 candidates from Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, Nagaland, the Andaman and Nicobar Islands and nine districts of Upper Assam have participated with numbers expected to rise as aspirants from other states arrive. To prevent overcrowding, the recruitment process is organised district- and state-wise, ensuring orderly conducts throughout.

All stages—including height and physical fitness tests, running, physical measurements, documenta-

tion and medical examinations are being carried out strictly in line with merit-based evaluation and recruitment policies. Observers, civil representatives and candidates have praised the rally for its professionalism, impartiality and efficient management.

Multiple welfare measures have been provided to ensure candidate comfort, including free food and refreshments for those traveling from distant locations, rest areas, organised waiting zones and guidance teams to assist with paperwork and procedural clarity.

The rally underscores the Indian Army's commitment to empowering youth from Northeast India and neighboring regions, offering a transparent, accessible and fair opportunity to join the armed forces. The Sonitpur District administration's co-operation has been credited for contributing to the smooth and orderly execution of the event.

Silchar marks World Toilet Day with weeklong sanitation drive

SMC Commissioner leads awareness and cleanliness drive, ensuring functional and hygienic public toilets

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, Nov 21: The Silchar Municipal Corporation (SMC) observed World Toilet Day with a weeklong sanitation initiative, focusing on raising public awareness and improving hygiene at the Trunk Road and Dak Bunglow public toilets. The programme, held on November 19 was led by SMC Commissioner Sriшти Singh, IAS, highlighting the civic body's commitment to a cleaner more responsible Silchar.

Commissioner Singh, accompanied by Executive Officer Nabutom Sharma, Poursakhis collection agency supervisors and the Shrishti Waste Management Team, inspected the facilities and engaged with frontline workers overseeing their maintenance.



Both public toilets were made fully functional, providing citizens with clean, safe and hygienic sanitation services from World Toilet Day

onward. Speaking on the occasion, Commissioner Singh praised the dedication of the maintenance teams

and underscored that public toilets reflect a city's civic discipline. She urged citizens to use the facilities responsibly and participate in the city's cleanliness drive, emphasising that public cooperation is key to the initiative's success.

To honour their efforts, individuals responsible for consistent upkeep of the toilets were felicitated, recognising their contribution to Swachh Silchar and fostering collective responsibility in maintaining shared spaces.

Adding a visual appeal to the campaign, the toilets were decorated with bright colors and fresh flowers, while the Shrishti team engaged visitors with messaging promoting clean toilet habits, reinforcing the importance of sanitation and community participation.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

Begin to be now what you will be hereafter.
- William James

Warning against investment in AI

Famed Indian origin tech guru, Sunder Pichai, the supremo of Google has spoken some home truths about the much-hyped potentials of AI (artificial intelligence). He has observed that any collapse of the astronomically high valuation of small AI start-ups could result in a generalised crash in the technology sector. The global stock markets have valued the AI companies extremely high and their market capitalisation bears no semblance to their present operations. He cited that OpenAI, which shot into fame relating its AI chatbot, "ChatGPT, has been now valued at \$1.4 trillion by investors, when its own operations did not reach even one-thousandth of that figure. So the question would surely arise how eventually the start-up would justify its astronomical valuation and meet the expectations of returns on their investments. Pichai apart, a major player in the financial sector, Jamie Dimon, chief of US investment bank, J.P. Morgan, similarly predicted a possible correction in the valuation of the AI start-ups and other investments. Dimon had observed that a collapse in the AI bubble could quickly morph into a general slide.

Pichai was talking to an exclusive interview with the BBC at the company headquarters. Pichai is one of the strongest proponents of strong AI initiatives and believes that the new breakthrough could bring fresh gains in the technology sector which could also translate into higher efficiency across the economy. However, many observers believe that while AI can have immense new potential, the AI tools could result in wide spread loss of employment as well. What will be needed would be re-tool the present day skills and make these complementary to the AI products which should start being available on a wider scale. Pichai's company, Google and its parent Alphabet, has been heavily invested in AI and its development. Google has reaped some benefits from these initiatives and can no longer be considered an AI-laggard. At the same time, huge sums invested in development of AI might backfire if these did not prove as effective as predicted.

Some of the experts are comparing the rising value of the AI segment in the stock market valuation to what has come to be known as the "dot.com burst" of the late 1990s. The proliferation of the internet based activities and companies in the 1990s had bred expectations of huge profits and therefore the market valuation of these companies rocket upwards. The process could not have been recreated ad infinitum and thereby when small corrections took these got amplified many times over. This is more so because the financial markets and the economies are today much more globally integrated than these were even in 2008 at the time of the global financial crisis. If anything, brace your seat belt and hope for the best.

Talking Points

The Global Opportunity Engine

In a world lost in endless reels and distractions, one platform quietly helps people grow, connect, and rise. LinkedIn is not just for job seekers; it's for everyone with purpose

By: Narvijay Yadav

Leave timepass, focus on your goals. Most people today scroll through life instead of living it. Hours vanish in short videos, memes, and gossip updates. Instagram shows you everything, yet gives you nothing concrete to build on. It's fun, yes, but mostly momentary. Then there's LinkedIn. Calm, clear, and quietly powerful. It doesn't shout for your attention; it rewards your intention.

LinkedIn works differently because it's designed for growth. It helps you show who you are and what you stand for. A few lines in your bio, one strong post, or one meaningful connection can change your direction. Whether you are a student, teacher, freelancer, entrepreneur, or homemaker, this single space can make your skills and ideas visible to the world. It's not a job site anymore; it's the global opportunity engine.

Start with your presence. Your cover image and profile headline are not decoration; they are digital real estate. Use that space to say what you do and why it matters. Complete your profile like you would complete a resume, because this one lives online, 24x7, visible to anyone who searches for your name. A clear, professional profile silently does the talking for you.

Once you're visible, start engaging. Drop comments that add value, not emojis. Share insights, not noise. Like others' posts, not out of habit, but to show presence. The algorithm notices activity, but people notice sincerity. Create content regularly. It can be one story a week, one learning, one reflection. Add visuals, a photo, or a small video clip if it helps explain your point. The format may change, but authenticity always shines through.

The first two lines of your post are the hook. Think of them as the open door that invites people to step into your thought. Tell a small story, ask a question, or share something real. The post doesn't need to go viral; it just needs to resonate. When you write from experience, readers pause. And when they pause, your reach grows naturally.

Consistency is the quiet hero here. Show up three to five times a week. Reply to people who comment on your posts. Follow others who inspire you. Build a small circle of genuine professionals, classmates, or colleagues who uplift your work. Social media may celebrate overnight fame, but professional growth is a marathon of small, steady steps.

LinkedIn works best when you treat it like a conversation, not a campaign. You don't have to sound serious all the time; you just have to sound real. Write the way you talk. Share what you learn. Post at the right time; usually in the morning or early evening, when people are mentally fresh. And yes, use hashtags, but don't overdo them. Two or three are enough to guide the algorithm and the reader.

This platform quietly rewards good energy. People looking for partners, mentors, clients, or team members often search here first. Recruiters still rely on it, but so do writers, artists, consultants, and small business owners. Many have found projects, collaborations, or ideas that shaped their careers; all because they chose to post purposefully instead of scrolling endlessly.

LinkedIn is not about self-promotion; it's about self-expression. It's where you translate your thoughts into visibility, and your visibility into opportunity. You can't control algorithms, but you can control your effort. Be curious, consistent, and kind in your interactions. Offer help, share credit, and express gratitude when someone supports you.

Every platform has a personality. Instagram entertains. X provokes. LinkedIn builds. It builds networks, narratives, and next steps. That's why, in this noisy digital bazaar, it stands apart as a quiet, global engine of opportunity. Use it like it's meant to be used; with focus, purpose, and a human touch. The world may scroll past distractions, but it always stops for authenticity.

Government Schools of Assam and Parents' Trust

Apart from quality education, the weakness of infrastructure and unsatisfactory environment in Assam's government schools also play a significant role in reducing parental trust. The buildings of many government schools in the state are old, in need of repair, and on the verge of collapse. Especially during the rainy season, water leaking from roofs, water entering classrooms, and lack of adequate light create major obstacles to a healthy and comfortable learning environment. Moreover, basic facilities such as separate and clean toilets for boys and girls, safe sources of drinking water, and electricity connection are still not of improved standard in many schools

The government schools of Assam have been playing a historic and presently vital role in the intellectual, social, and economic development of the state. These institutions are not merely centres for acquiring knowledge; thousands of dreams of children from poor and backward families of the state are woven around their foundation. At one time, these schools were unique hubs of quality education and good values where parents used to send their children with deep faith and trust. The foundation of that trust lay in the dedication of teachers, a cohesive teaching environment, and success in examination results. Yet, with the passage of time and the emergence of various new educational challenges, a gradual sense of doubt and mistrust has arisen in the minds of parents towards these schools, which has become a major concern in present-day society. Multiple complex reasons lie behind this decline in parental trust, and to understand them we need to analyse in depth the infrastructure of Assam's education system, the accountability of teachers, and the impact of socio-economic changes. In the context of Assam, restoring this trust is not only necessary for educational success; it is also a primary driving force for strengthening the foundation of the entire society. Education is the strongest pillar of a well-organised human society, and when that pillar weakens, its negative effect falls upon the whole social structure. The challenge of parental trust is an important reflection of Assam's future, and solving this problem requires a powerful and coordinated effort.

A deep analysis of the main reasons for the decline in parents' trust in government educational institutions reveals that it is not the result of a single factor but a collective outcome of several complex and interconnected issues. A big question mark is constantly raised over the quality standards of teaching in government schools. Although government schools have highly qualified and trained teachers, the lack of continuous training and upgradation of knowledge keeps them detached from the new teaching methods that change with time. Moreover, teachers are engaged in many non-academic tasks besides teaching, leaving them with insufficient time to focus on the classroom. The most important factor in the erosion of parents' trust in Assam's government schools is the perception of a clear disparity in the quality of teaching. Parents have now begun to feel that, compared to the modern and timely education provided in private schools, government schools are unable to deliver education of equal quality. One major reason for this is irregularity in the teacher-student ratio and the regular absence of teachers. In many cases, especially in rural schools, the lack of teachers or one teacher having to teach multiple classes simultaneously makes the teaching process extremely weak. All these factors together shake the foundation of the deep trust that once existed in government schools.

Apart from quality education, the weakness of infrastructure and unsatisfactory environment in Assam's government schools also play a significant role in reducing parental trust. The buildings of many government schools in the state are old, in need of repair, and on the verge of collapse. Especially during the rainy season, water leaking from roofs, water entering classrooms, and lack of adequate light create major obstacles to a healthy and comfortable learning environment. Moreover, basic facilities such as separate and clean toilets for boys and girls, safe sources of drinking water, and electricity connection are still not of improved standard in many schools. When parents become worried about their children's health and safety, they are reluctant to send them to such schools. The widespread absence of facilities necessary to keep pace with today's competitive age—computers, internet connection, and modern science laboratories—is also a matter of concern. Private schools have made teaching more attractive and effective by using modern technology and state-of-the-art equipment, while government schools remain deprived of these facilities.

The overall lack of cleanliness and security in school premises, especially in the minds of parents of girl students, creates deep anxiety and is one of the main reasons for the decline in trust. The weak-

ness of infrastructure does not merely cause physical inconvenience; it also weakens the overall social perception of the school.

To regain the lost trust of parents, government schools need to adopt a multi-level and coordinated approach. In this regard, the role of teachers is paramount. Teachers must give importance to more than merely completing the syllabus; they need to identify the individual needs and hidden talents of each student and help develop them. For this, high-standard and regular training programmes must be arranged for teachers, emphasising new teaching techniques, child psychology, and the use of modern teaching tools. Teachers should be freed from the burden of non-academic tasks so that they can fully concentrate on classroom teaching. On the other hand, infrastructure development is an inevitable step. A well-organised plan must be in place for the regular repair and improvement of school buildings, classrooms, and other facilities so that the entire learning environment becomes healthy, safe, and modern. Only through these efforts can schools create a positive image in the minds of parents and become capable of regaining their trust. Establishing regular, transparent, and two-way communication with parents can be an important strategy. School heads and teachers should discuss students' progress through parent meetings, personal interactions, and other formal platforms and accept constructive feedback from them. Through these steps, schools not only establish trust in parents' minds but also create a collaborative attitude.

Depending on contemporary social changes and the needs of the education system, government schools must bring about a radical change in their perception and functioning. In today's age, merely providing book-based knowledge is not enough; students must be prepared for the challenges of life. This means giving importance in the curriculum to skills such as analytical thinking, problem-solving ability, creativity, and emotional intelligence. To meet the needs of the present time, government schools must also include subjects like technical education and vocational training in the curriculum so that after completing education, students can easily find their place in the real world. This holistic approach will give parents the confidence that government schools truly care about a bright future for their children. These efforts will not only increase individual parental trust but also help create a new and powerful image of the government education system in the entire society. When parents see that government schools are providing education and facilities equal to or better than private schools, they will naturally be attracted to these institutions. As a result, socio-economic inequality in the field of education will decrease, and equitable education will be ensured for people of all classes.

To achieve overall development in education, government schools will not only have to solve their internal problems but also pay attention to the misconceptions in parents' minds and the current social mindset. In today's society, private schools are regarded as a kind of social status or prestige symbol, and sending one's child to a government school has become an indicator of lower social standing for many. To change this mentality, government schools need strong and positive external publicity. Schools must widely publicise their success stories—such as achievements of their students in various competitions, the positive contributions they have made to society, and their commitment to providing quality education. This publicity should not be limited to formal media but must also spread through local society and word of mouth.

In this regard, the role of former students is also extremely important. Individuals who studied in these schools earlier and became successful in life can send a powerful positive message by reconnecting with the schools and informing the public about their current success. They can inspire current students and encourage parents to trust the capability of these schools. Thus, government schools need to be re-established as a place of pride for society.

The educational institutions of Assam must accept the use of science and technology as an indispensable part of improving



educational standards. In the modern age, the importance of digital tools and e-learning in teaching is steadily increasing. Government schools must upgrade their classrooms to smart classrooms where multimedia projectors, internet connection, and digital content for teaching are available. As a result, the teaching process will become more attractive, interactive, and effective—something parents expect from private schools. Teachers will be able to explain complex concepts more easily using digital methods. Along with this, it is essential to provide all teachers with regular and high-quality training on digital literacy and the use of technology in teaching. Schools can be provided with a digital platform where students, teachers, and parents can communicate with one

DEGREE OF THOUGHT
By: Himangshu Ranjan Bhuyan

another and view reports of students' progress. Such a transparent and technology-driven system will create deep trust in parents' minds regarding the functioning of the school. Especially for schools in remote areas, the use of technology can play a crucial role in removing the shortage of quality educational content and teachers.

Instead of merely following the central curriculum, government educational institutions of Assam must give importance to local needs and culture. Including content related to Assam's history, culture, society, and environment in the curriculum will enable students to gain knowledge about their roots and become more sensitive to the local environment. This localisation will give parents the confidence that the school is shaping their child not only for a general society but also appropriately for their own society and culture. Moreover, vocational education and skill-development curricula must be made more realistic and activity-based. Providing students with practical experience related to local industries, agriculture, or handicrafts will enable them to acquire not only theoretical knowledge but also the skills necessary for livelihood. Thus, schools will be able to prepare graduates not only for higher education but also for direct entry into the workforce. This approach will have an important positive impact on parents' minds, because they will be assured that their children's education will ensure their future financial security. This flexibility and relevance of the curriculum will make government schools more credible and necessary compared to private schools.

Arranging continuous professional development for teachers is the main key to improving educational standards. It is observed that training for government school teachers stagnates after a certain period, making them unable to cope with the challenges of modern teaching. Therefore, teachers must be provided with continuous and effective training not only during formal training periods but throughout their entire career. These training programmes should not be limited to the new curriculum but should also emphasise classroom management, strategies for solving children's behavioural problems, development of emotional intelligence, and special teaching methods to meet the needs of diverse students. A monitoring system must be in place to ensure the effectiveness of these trainings, and teachers' skills should be evaluated on that basis. Moreover, teachers should be encouraged to conduct research in their own areas of expertise and interest and to develop new teaching tools. When parents see that government school teachers, like or even more than private school

teachers, always keep themselves active with advanced knowledge and skills, their trust will naturally deepen. This continuous professional development increases teachers' self-confidence, which gives birth to high-standard teaching in the classroom.

Giving importance to students' health, safety, and mental well-being in Assam's educational institutions is also an indispensable part of gaining parents' trust. Government schools must not compromise in any way on students' physical and mental safety. The school premises must be secured with proper fencing, regular supervision, and appropriate plans for emergency situations. Moreover, regular psychological counselling facilities should be provided in schools, giving importance to students' mental well-being.

In today's competitive world, students face mental stress, anxiety, and academic pressure, making it extremely necessary to help them properly. Teachers should be trained to understand issues of children's mental health and to intervene appropriately when problems arise. Arranging regular health check-ups and proper distribution of nutritious mid-day meals will assure parents that the school also values their children's physical health. When parents feel that the school gives importance not only to their children's learning but also to improving the overall quality of their lives, their trust will increase. This holistic approach to health and safety will establish government schools as a safe and nurturing place of learning.

Ensuring greater transparency in the financial management and functioning of government schools can be a powerful tool for gaining parents' trust. Many parents harbour doubts about the use of government funds and administrative decisions of schools. School management committees must hold regular meetings and inform parents about the use of school funds, procurement processes, and important administrative decisions. Making the proceedings of these meetings and financial reports public will ensure transparency and accountability. This transparency will remove doubts from parents' minds and they will begin to believe that the school authorities are working in the best interest of their children. Thus, parents should be given the opportunity to feel like administrative partners of the school. Moreover, schools can share students' performance and teacher evaluation results with parents while maintaining confidentiality, enabling them to know the actual standard of the school. This transparent and accountable system will create a positive aura around the functioning of government schools, fostering deep trust in parents' minds. It serves as a pillar of credibility.

Furthermore, various sections of society—such as local businessmen, alumni associations, and voluntary organisations—should be actively involved in the developmental work of schools. These organisations can assist schools in infrastructure development, providing additional teaching tools, or offering vocational education to students. Former students can counsel students based on their experience and knowledge and become sources of inspiration for them. Local businessmen can provide training and employment opportunities to students. These steps establish a close relationship between the school and society, which is extremely useful for parental trust. When parents see that the entire society is working together for their children's education, a deep sense of trust and affection towards government

schools will be created in their minds. Thus, schools will be regarded as a common asset, for whose development and success everyone is equally responsible. This journey to restore parents' trust in Assam's educational institutions is not merely a journey of educational reform; it is a journey of social reconstruction. The success of this journey will enrich Assam's future generations with knowledge, skills, and confidence.

Political commitment to education and the introduction of stable policies are an indispensable driving force for the improvement of government schools and parental trust. Educational reforms must be based on long-term planning, and their fundamental aspects must not change with political changes. The government must ensure adequate and regular allocation of funds in the education sector and establish strict monitoring of the proper expenditure of these funds. Merely announcing policies is not enough; a strong administrative framework must be built to implement them. The government must set high-standard learning targets without any compromise on educational quality and evaluate over time whether these targets are being met.

Political leadership must actively inform the public about the value and importance of government schools so that misconceptions in parents' minds are removed. When parents see that education is among the government's highest priorities and a strong policy foundation has been laid for it, their trust will naturally increase. Political will and stability in education bring a sense of trust and security to the entire learning environment.

Government schools are the platform where students from diverse social and socio-economic backgrounds study together. Schools must be able to meet the needs of these diverse students. This means introducing appropriate facilities and inclusive teaching methods for specially-abled students. When teaching arrangements are made for tribal and linguistic minority students while respecting their mother tongue and culture, they will feel that they are part of the school. This inclusive approach creates a sense of security and trust in the minds of all parents that their child, regardless of social or physical status, will receive equal respect and quality education in school. This commitment to equitable education will re-establish government schools as the best option for people of all classes in society, deepening parental trust. In this regard, teachers should be specially trained to work with diverse students.

In conclusion, these multi-layered factors behind the loss of parental trust in government schools cannot be resolved through some immediate measures. It requires a long-term plan, continuous monitoring, and deep cooperation among all stakeholders. Assam's government schools must constantly strive to maintain high standards in the quality of teaching, infrastructure development, teacher accountability, and transparency of communication. Parents too must play their role not merely as consumers but as responsible partners of the school. Parental trust is the biggest key to the success of the government education system. Only when parents willingly and proudly send their children to government schools can it be considered that Assam's education system has truly achieved success. The challenge of restoring this trust may be great, but it is an indispensable investment for Assam's future that will take the entire state to a new pinnacle of knowledge and progress.

9 signs you're in a toxic work Environment-and what to do about it

By: Puneet Sandhu

For most of my career, I thought I'd been lucky enough to steer clear of toxic work environments. Of course, I knew toxic organizations existed, and I knew to avoid them at all costs—theoretically. But it was many years before I learned to recognize what toxic workplaces actually looked like. Once I did, I realized that I had in fact worked in some of them myself.

I just didn't realize it at the time because I'd assumed that I was the problem—my work wasn't strategic enough, I didn't have management potential, or I wasn't ready for that promotion—rather than the organizations where I'd worked.

Speaking with friends and colleagues helped me see that my experience wasn't unique. Many people in my network had encountered toxicity in their workplaces, but like me, they hadn't always been able to identify it from the get-go.

Find the right job for you

Fortunately, in recent years, there's been a true shift toward making workplaces more transparent, nurturing, and inclusive, and the conversation around toxicity is now more open and accessible to everyone.

This means that leaders and employees alike are now far more aware of the common signs of a toxic work environment—and what to do about it. This guide will bring you up to speed. Let's start with the basics.

What is a toxic work environment?

A toxic work environment is one where negative behaviors—such as manipulation, bullying, yelling, and so on—are so intrinsic to the culture of the organization that a lack of productivity, a lack of trust, high stress levels, infighting, and discrimination become the norm. It's an environment that makes you feel "psychologically unsafe," says career coach Eli Bohemond.

You might feel like you'll be punished, humiliated, or rejected for speaking up—whether to share ideas, raise concerns or objections, or show up as yourself at work. Bohemond warns that over time, toxic workplaces can lead to anxiety or depression.

An employee might find themselves crying before work because they feel trapped; they don't want to face yet another day of stress and rejection, but they really need the job. Or it can manifest as anxious people-pleasing behaviors, where someone works hard to exceed expectations even while feeling underappreciated, eventually leading to burnout.

"I suspect most of us have experienced a toxic boss at one point or another," says executive and leadership coach Lisa Quinn. "But in my experience, a toxic workplace goes beyond the behavior of one or two individuals—it's systemic."

Quinn likens organizations to living, breathing systems made up of many different relationships. Seen through that lens, a toxic workplace is a system where the whole is detrimental to the individuals and teams working within it.

What are the signs of a toxic work environment?

It can sometimes feel hard to know if you're in a toxic work environment or not. Some of Quinn's clients have struggled to identify their workplace as toxic because they just assume that such environments are normal.

Over time, they may even learn to navigate them well. Or you may feel like the issue is with you, as I did, because everyone else seems to be tolerating it. "It can feel very lonely," Quinn says.

Defining a toxic work environment can be tricky because there are many traits that can make it so. Also because the same environment can have different effects on people based on their work history, triggers, and working styles, among other factors.

Having said that, there are a few common characteristics of toxic workplaces. While this isn't a comprehensive list by any means, it should serve as a good starting point for anyone looking to understand whether they're in a toxic environment. Here are some signs to look out for:

1. There are no boundaries around work

Toxic cultures often normalize and glorify a lack of healthy boundaries, Bohemond says, encouraging you to prioritize work over everything else. Management might push themselves to burnout and exhaustion and expect their teams to do the same, whether they're working in the office or virtually.

Maybe they expect employees to stay as late as they do in the office or respond to messages and emails at all hours on the weekend. Bohemond advises job seekers to look out for this trait during the recruiting process, as it can often become visible early.

"If the hiring manager is giving you a task on a Friday afternoon and wants it back by Monday morning, or expects you to respond to emails on a quick turnaround early in the morning or late at night, that's a red flag," he says.

2. People don't trust each other

In a toxic work environment, the lack of trust

between colleagues is palpable. Bohemond gives an example of an organization where the management team's offices face employees' desks, allowing them to monitor activity on the floor. Or it could be a work environment where managers ping their direct reports incessantly to check on what they're doing. Whitney Simon, a communications consultant and inclusion expert, says being micromanaged as a Black woman—who's often the only person of color on her teams—made her imposter syndrome worse.

"While this is no longer the case today, there was a time when I'd internalized the implications of that lack of trust from my former managers; I would tell myself that they wouldn't have had to chase me on tasks if I was more capable," she says. "But I know today that managers who hold on too tight or who are too prescriptive build toxic teams that underperform."

3. There's no room to make mistakes

Quinn has coached a lot of clients who were working in what she calls "aggressive, dog-eat-dog" cultures. "They're very blame-heavy," she says. "There's no room to make an error and learn from it. If you make a mistake, you're hauled over the coals."

In an environment like this, people start to do whatever it takes to avoid being in the line of blame and to get ahead of their colleagues. For example, not sharing work-related information with teammates or throwing coworkers under the bus when something goes wrong. This type of culture can be especially hard on minorities, who already have to deal with the expectation of always-on excellence and perfection. "If a white person messes up, it's an opportunity for growth for them," Simon says. "But for minorities, it can often feel like an indictment on our status and roles at the company."

4. People treat each other with contempt

Contempt—a key pillar in psychologist John Gottman's definition of toxic relationships—also comes up in toxic work environments, Quinn says. She recalls coaching a client whose boss would roll his eyes at her in meetings. They would even ignore her suggestions, only to pick them up when someone else, often a man, offered the same idea a few minutes later.

The same boss would also revise this client's work over and over again, according to Quinn, and the edits weren't just for substance. Many were personal attacks on her writing or working style.

5. The interpersonal relationships aren't healthy

You can often gauge the emotional health of

a workplace by looking at how people within it are interacting with one another, Bohemond says. Are they smiling and chit-chatting together while brewing their morning coffee, or are most people just scowling and typing?

Do they share memes and jokes on Slack, or just send blunt messages tinged with contempt? "You can pick up on the energy of a workplace through the general ambience and body language of individuals," he says.

Another behavior to watch out for in this context is stonewalling, which also comes from the Gottman framework of communication challenges. "My lawyer client was stonewalled by her boss all the time," Quinn says. "She'd go into the office and say hello to him, or try to engage otherwise—and he'd just ignore her. She'd have no idea what she'd done, and obviously, that's incredibly stressful."

6. There is no support for employee growth

Many people in toxic workplaces have to "figure it out" on their own because there's no mentorship or support to help them grow, Bohemond says. He warns that this has gotten worse virtually since it's that much easier to become disconnected from your manager or team.

It takes its toll in particular on entry-level employees—who are left to their own devices in such a workplace, leading to demotivation and disillusionment. Employees from marginalized communities, who often get very little support to translate potential into growth opportunities, are also particularly affected, Simon says.

"When I talk to people of color in my industry, most are just trying to excel at their job description," she says. "They have no idea what other opportunities may exist for them at their firms. Often, no one else is championing them, leading to career stagnation as compared to their peers."

7. People frequently feel gaslighted

When someone gaslights you, they make you question your own feelings, perceptions, or sanity. I once had a manager, for example, who would assign projects to me and my teammates with a specific goal and methodology in mind.

But when it came time to review, they would ask why the project had been done that way and change the goals on us, often entirely misremembering or forgetting their initial brief. As a result, my teammates and I would walk away doubting our skills. Over time, we began to dread working on that team entirely.

Like other toxic behaviors, gaslighting can be doubly harmful for inclusion and equity in the workplace. For example, if a Black person speaks up about a colleague who made a racist

remark, they may be told that the colleague didn't mean it, or that they must have misheard.

Incidents like this can often cause minorities to question their own reality and lived experience in the workplace, not to mention feel demoralized due to the lack of support.

8. People regularly experience physical symptoms of work stress

In a toxic work environment, mental stress may start to affect you physically. "You might feel that your body and brain are on high alert—and you'd be right, because our brains are constantly scanning for threats—and as far as your brain is concerned, you're in danger," Quinn says.

Being in "fight or flight" mode for a prolonged period of time can affect your long-term physical health, and you may start to experience some of the more common symptoms of stress, anxiety, or depression. The list of symptoms include digestive issues, sleep problems, fatigue, aches, and panic attacks.

9. People are disengaged and turnover is high

In a toxic work environment, employees start to mentally shut down and disengage from the work, their team, and the company overall. Bohemond has seen this translate to virtual environments, where people might keep their cameras off during meetings and communicate only with short-form comments.

Over time, people start to leave toxic workplaces at high rates. "Turnover is definitely a good sign that you are sniffing around some toxicity, especially if you are seeing a specific department or segment that is struggling to keep people over 12 months," Bohemond says.

How to deal with a toxic environment

Now that you know what a toxic environment might look like, it's time to decide how to deal with it. Below are some tips on how to navigate your path at, or out of, a toxic company.

Consider your options

Generally speaking, you have two options: stay and navigate the toxicity, or leave. It may sound like an easy choice, but the truth is that you may need to stay, at least temporarily, for multiple reasons. Perhaps you can't leave the job abruptly (or at all) due to financial or immigration reasons, or there aren't many other options in your industry.

It could also be that your company offers you something relatively uncommon—like remote work if you're in an industry that hasn't fully embraced it yet, or a hefty child care stipend that's crucial to your household finances. That makes any decision more complicated. Thus, you should calmly consider your options before taking any next steps.

Intelligence Bureau Recruitment 2025 – 362 Multi Tasking Staff (MTS) Posts

Last Date: 14/12/2025.

Intelligence Bureau (IB) has released an employment notification for the recruitment of 362 Multi Tasking Staff (MTS) Posts in the following Subsidiary Intelligence Bureaux, (Ministry of Home Affairs), Government of India. Interested and eligible candidates may apply online here .

Name of post: Multi Tasking Staff (General) (MTS (G))

No of posts: 362 posts

No of posts @ Guwahati: 10 posts

Category-wise vacancy:

UR: 160

EWS: 34

OBC: 72

SC: 42

ST: 54

Name of organisation: Intelligence Bureau, (Ministry of Home Affairs), Government of India

Classification of service: General Central Service, Group 'C' (Non-Gazetted, Non-Ministerial)

Pay scale: Level 1 (₹18,000-56,900) in the pay matrix (Plus admissible Central Govt. allowances).

Helpline Phone No: 022-61087526

Nationality: Candidate must be an Indian national.

Age Limit: The candidate's age should be between 18 years to 25 years as on 14.12.2025.

Age Relaxation: Permissible relaxations in upper age limit for different categories are as under:

> Upper age limit is relaxable by 5 years for SC/ST and by 3 years for OBC candidates.

> Upper age limit is relaxable for departmental candidates' up to 40 years of age who have rendered 3 years of regular & continuous service. This relaxation is applicable only to Central Govt. Civilian employees holding civil posts & not applicable to personnel working in PSUs, Autonomous/Statutory bodies, etc.

> The age limit is relaxable upto age of 35 years for UR candidates, 38 years for OBC and up to 40 years for SC/ST in case of widows, divorced women and women judicially separated from their husbands and not remarried.

Educational Qualification: Must have passed Matriculation (Class 10) or equivalent from a recognized board.

Domicile Requirement: Must possess a valid domicile certificate of the state they applied for.

Examination Fee:

Category	Fee
UR/OBC/EWS (Male)	Rs.650/-
Others	Rs.550/-

Payment Mode: Payment can be made online via SBI EPAY LITE through Debit Cards (RuPay/Visa/MasterCard/Maestro), Credit Cards, Internet Banking, UPI, SBI challan etc.

Interested and eligible candidates may apply online for these vacancy. They may follow below mentioned steps to apply online.

Scroll down, go to Important Web-Links section .

Click on the "Online Application Form" and complete the registration process .

In the next stage, click on "Online Application Form" Link and Login.

Fill your all personal and educational details and upload necessary documents.

Make payment of application fee as per your category and submit the form.

At the end, take a print out of the application form .

Starting date of submission of online application: 22nd November 2025

Last date of submission of online application: 14th December 2025 (11:59 PM)

KVS & NVS Recruitment 2025 – 14967 Non-Teaching & Teaching Posts, Online Apply

Last Date: 04/12/2025.

CBSE on behalf of Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (KVS) & Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti (NVS) has released an employment notification for the recruitment of 14967 non-teaching and teaching positions. Interested and eligible candidates may apply here.

1. Principal

No of posts: 134 (KVS)+ 93 (NVS)

Educational Qualification:

i) Master's Degree with at least 50% marks from recognized institution/University.

ii) Bachelor degree in Education (B.Ed.) with at least 50% marks from NCTE recognized Institution/University. OR

Three year integrated B.Ed.-M.Ed. from NCTE recognized institution/University with at least 50% marks

OR

Four years Integrated Degree with at least 50% marks including B.Ed. component from NCTE recognized Institution/University (50% marks)

iii) Working as Principal in Pay Level-12 (Rs.78800-209200) in the Pay Matrix in Central/State Govt./Autonomous organizations of Central/State Govt.

OR

For KVS: Working as Vice-Principal for 3 years in Pay Level-10 (Rs.56100-177500) in Central/State Govt. /Autonomous organizations of Central/State Govt.

For NVS: Vice-Principal/Asstt. Education Officer in Central/State Govt./Autonomous organizations of Central/State Govt. in Level-10 (Rs.56100-177500) in the Pay Matrix, having 09 years of combined service as PGT and Vice-Principal, in which minimum 03 years as Vice-Principal.

OR

12 years regular service as PGT/Lecturer in Pay Level-8 (Rs.47600-151100) in Central/ State Govt./Autonomous organizations of Central/State Govt.

iv) Knowledge of Computer Applications.

v) Working knowledge of Hindi and English

2. Vice Principal

No of posts: 58 (KVS)

Educational Qualification:

i) Master Degree from a recognized university with at least 50% marks in aggregate.

ii) Bachelor Degree in Education (B.Ed.) with atleast 50% marks from NCTE Recognized Institute/University

OR

Three-year integrated B.Ed.-M.Ed. with atleast 50% marks from any NCTE recognized Institute/University

OR

Four years Integrated degree with at least 50% marks from NCTE recognized Institution/ University including B.Ed. component (50% marks).

iii) Working as Vice Principal in Central/ State Govt./Autonomous organizations of Central/ State Govt. in the Pay Level 10 (Rs.56100 to Rs.177500)

OR

Working as PGT or Lecturer in Central/ State Govt./ Autonomous organizations of Central/ State Govt. in the Pay Level 8 (Rs.47600 to Rs.151100) for at least 06 years

iv. Knowledge of Computer Applications.

v. Working knowledge of Hindi and English.

3. Assistant Commissioner

No of posts: 8 (KVS) + 9 (NVS)

Educational Qualification:

Assistant Commissioner (NVS):

i) Master's Degree from a recognized university with at least 50% marks

ii) B.Ed. from NCTE Recognized Institute/University

iii) Working as Principal in the Pay Level 12 (Rs.78800 to Rs.209200) for at least 03 years in Central/State/Autonomous Organizations of Central Govt./State Govt.

Assistant Commissioner (KVS):

i. Master's Degree from a recognized university with at least 50% marks

ii. B.Ed. from NCTE Recognized Institute/University with atleast 50% marks

OR

Three-year integrated B.Ed.-M.Ed. from NCTE Recognized Institute/University with atleast 50% marks

iii. Working as Principal in the Pay Level 12 (Rs.78800 to Rs.209200) for at least 03 years in Central/State/Autonomous Organizations of Central Govt./State Govt.

iv. Knowledge of computer applications.

v. Working knowledge of Hindi and English.

4. Post Graduate Teacher (PGT)

No of posts: 1465 (KVS) + 1513 (NVS) + 18 [PGT(MIL) in NVS]

Educational Qualification:

(a) Integrated Post Graduate Course from NCTE recognized institution/University, in the concerned subject with at least 50% marks in aggregate including B.Ed. component.

OR

Master Degree from a recognized institution/University with at least 50% marks in aggregate in the concerned subject

AND

(b) B.Ed. Degree from NCTE recognized institution/University with atleast 50% marks

OR

Three years Integrated B.Ed.-M.Ed. from NCTE recognized Institution/University with atleast 50% marks

OR

Four years Integrated Degree with at least 50% marks from NCTE recognized Institution/ University including B.Ed. component

(c) Proficiency to Teach in Hindi and English medium.

PGT (Computer Science):

1. M.Sc. (Computer Science/IT) / MCA from a recognized institution/University with at least 50% marks.

OR

M.E. or M. Tech. (Computer Science/IT) from recognized institution/University with at least 50% marks.

2. B.Ed. Degree from NCTE recognized Institution/University with at least 50% marks

OR

Three years integrated B.Ed.-M.Ed. from NCTE recognized Institution/University with at least 50% marks

OR

Four years integrated degree with at least 50% marks from NCTE recognized in-

stitution/University including B.Ed. component.

PGT (Physical Education) (Male/Female) in NVS:

Master in Physical Education (M. P.Ed.) Degree from NCTE recognized Institution/University with at least 50% marks.

PGT (Modern Indian Language) in NVS:

Integrated Post Graduate course in the concerned subject with at least 50% marks from NCTE recognized Institution/University including B.Ed. component OR

Master Degree from a recognized Institution/University with at least 50% marks in aggregate in the Modern Indian Language concerned.

And

B.Ed. Degree from NCTE recognized Institution/University with at least 50% marks OR Three years integrated B.Ed.-M.Ed. from NCTE recognized Institution/University with at least 50% marks

OR

Four years integrated degree with at least 50% marks from NCTE recognized institution/University including B.Ed. component.

5. Trained Graduate Teacher (TGT)

No of posts: 2794 (KVS)+ 2978 (NVS) + 443 NVS(3rd language)

Educational Qualification:

For KVS:

A. 1. Four years integrated degree course from NCTE recognized Institution/ University with at least 50% marks in the concerned subject(s) as well as in the aggregate including B.Ed. component. OR

2. i. Bachelor/Honours Degree from a recognized institution/University with at least 50% marks in concerned subject, combination of subjects as well as in the aggregate.

ii. B.Ed. Degree from NCTE recognized institution/University with atleast 50% marks OR Three years

Integrated B.Ed.-M.Ed. from NCTE recognised Institution/University with atleast 50% marks.

3. Graduation in concerned subject with at least 50% marks and 1-year B.Ed. (Special Education) from Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI) with atleast 50% marks.

4. Post-Graduation in concerned subject / any specialization in concerned subject with a minimum 55% marks or equivalent grade provided that the candidate has studied the subject(s) mentioned in the note below at the graduation level and three years integrated B.Ed.-M.Ed. from NCTE recognized institution/University with atleast 50% marks.

(B) Qualified in the Central Teachers Eligibility Test (Paper-II) conducted by Central Board of

Secondary Education (CBSE) TGT (Hindi, English, Sanskrit and Regional Languages).

For NVS:

A. 1. Four years integrated degree course from NCTE recognized Institution/ University with at least 50% marks in the concerned subject(s) as well as in the aggregate including B.Ed. component. OR

2. i. Bachelor/Honours Degree from a recognized institution/University with at least 50% marks in concerned subject, combination of subjects as well as in the aggregate.

ii. B.Ed. Degree from NCTE recognized institution/University with atleast 50% marks OR Three years

Integrated B.Ed.-M.Ed. from NCTE

'If past is prologue, it would seem untenable for Zelenskyy' Trump plan to end Ukraine war would cede territory to Russia

WASHINGTON, Nov 21: President Donald Trump's plan for ending the war in Ukraine would cede land to Russia and limit the size of Kyiv's military, according to a draft obtained Thursday by The Associated Press.

The proposal, originated from negotiations between Washington and Moscow, appeared decidedly favourable to Russia, which started the war nearly four years ago by invading its neighbour.

If past is prologue, it would seem untenable for Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, who has opposed Trump's previous calls for territorial concessions.

There has also been resistance from European leaders, who are likely to decry the US peace push as rewarding Russian President Vladimir Putin for his aggression, leaving him emboldened rather than defeated.

For example, the proposal would not only bar Ukraine from joining NATO but would also prevent the alliance's future expansion. Such a step would be a significant victory for Moscow, which views NATO as a threat.



Putin would also gain ground he has been unable to win on the battlefield. Under the draft, Moscow would hold all the eastern Donbas region, even though approximately 14 per cent still remains in Ukrainian hands.

There would be a path to lifting sanctions on Russia and returning it to what was formerly known as the Group of 8, which includes many of the world's biggest economies.

Proposal increases pressure on Zelenskyy

The US team began drawing up the plan soon after US special envoy Steve Witkoff held talks with Rustem Umerov, a top adviser to Zelenskyy, according to a senior administration official who was not authorised to comment publicly and spoke on the condition of anonymity.

The official added that Umerov agreed to the majority of the plan, after making several modifications, and then presented it to Zelenskyy.

US Army Secretary Dan

Driscoll was also in Kyiv on Thursday and discussed the latest draft with Zelenskyy, according to a senior administration official. Zelenskyy offered a measured statement on social media about it but did not directly speak to the substance of the proposal.

"Our teams — of Ukraine and the United States — will work on the provisions of the plan to end the war. We are ready for constructive, honest and swift work," he wrote.

Under the proposal, Russia would commit to making no future attacks, something the White House views as a concession. In addition, USD 100 billion in frozen Russian assets would be dedicated to rebuilding Ukraine.

However, handing over territory to Russia would be deeply unpopular in Ukraine. It also would be illegal under Ukraine's constitution. Zelenskyy has repeatedly ruled out such a possibility.

Russia would also be allowed to keep half of the power generated by Europe's largest nuclear power plant, Zaporizhzhia, which it captured from Ukraine early during the war. (AP)

Russian glide bomb hits apartment block, kills 5 in southern Ukraine

KYIV, Nov 21: A Russian glide bomb slammed into a residential district in the southern Ukrainian city of Zaporizhzhia, killing five people, officials said on Friday, as Moscow's forces continued to hammer civilian areas of Ukraine.

The overnight attack, which also injured 10 people, including a teenage girl, occurred after details emerged of a US plan to end the war, nearly four years after Russia's all-out invasion of its neighbour.

Ukrainian officials were weighing the proposals, and President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said he expected to talk to US President Donald Trump in the coming days.

The powerful glide bomb that hit Zaporizhzhia damaged some high-rise apartment blocks for the third time since the war began and also wrecked a local market, according to the head of the regional military administration, Ivan Fedorov.

The brute force of glide bombs, a retrofitted Soviet weapon launched by Russian jets flying at high altitude, has for months laid waste to Ukraine's front-line cities. Ukraine has no effective countermeasure against them.

A Russian drone assault on the southern city of Odesa also struck a residential area during the night, injuring five people, including a 16-year-old boy. (AP)

Death toll in Bangladesh earthquake rises to 6



DHAKA, Nov 21: At least six people were killed and several injured as a massive earthquake of magnitude 5.7 jolted Dhaka and parts of the country on Friday, damaging buildings, causing fires and sending panic among residents.

Three people were killed in Dhaka, while the fourth died in the suburban river port town of Narayanganj, officials said, as local media reported injuries to at least 50 people across the country.

The other two deaths were reported from Narsingdi, where the epicentre was located some 10 kilometres beneath the surface.

The epicentre of the quake that struck at 10:38 am (local time) was at Narsingdi on the northeastern outskirts of Dhaka at a depth of 10 kilometres, Bangladesh's meteorology department said. The place is around 13 kilometres east of the seismic centre in Dhaka's Agargaon area.

Dhaka's deputy police commissioner Mallik Ahsan Uddin Sami said, quoting the fire service, that at least three people were killed after a ralling, bamboo scaffolding and debris of a five-storey building fell on them at Old Dhaka's Armanitola area.

A bystander was critically wounded at the scene in the crowded neighbourhood, he said.

Sami confirmed that one of the deceased was a medical student who was there to buy meat along with his mother. She is critically wounded, requiring an emergency surgery, he added.

Local media reports said one of the three dead was an eight-year-old who had not been identified.

The fourth death was reported from Narayanganj where a newborn baby on her mother's lap died as they were walking near a wall that collapsed as the tremor hit.

In Sutrapur's Swamibagh area, also located in old Dhaka, an eight-storey building was reported to have leaned against another structure following the earthquake, while at the Kalabagan area, a seven-storey building looked tilted, though fire officials reported it remained structurally sound.

A fire broke out at a residence in Dhaka's posh Baridhara area soon after the tremor hit, but the firefighters could not immediately confirm if it was linked to the earthquake.

Another fire at a residential building was reported from the Gazaria area of suburban Munshiganj, while the fire service responded immediately to douse the blaze.

The Prothom Alo newspaper said the tremor wounded over 50 people in three districts around Dhaka.

Experts have long said the risk of major quakes was high in Bangladesh because of its location on active tectonic plate boundaries, with many of them saying a major earthquake is inevitable, though it could be decades away.

Earthquake expert Professor Mehedi Ahmed Ansary of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) said a tremor with a magnitude of 6 could collapse most structures in the country.

"This tremor (on Friday) is an alarm bell for Bangladesh," Ansary said. (PTI)

Fire breaks out at main venue of UN COP30 Climate Summit in Brazil's Belem, 21 people injured

BELEM (BRAZIL), Nov 21: At least 21 people were injured in a fire which broke out at the main venue of the ongoing UN COP30 Climate Summit in Brazil's Belem, forcing thousands of people to run for safety.

The fire broke out at around 2 pm on Thursday at the 'Blue Zone', where all meetings, negotiations, country pavilions, media centre and offices of all high-profile dignitaries are housed, including the main plenary hall.

As soon as news of the fire spread, people ran out of all exit gates for safety. The authorities closed the venue for a thorough safety inspection and reopened it after more than six hours at 8:40 pm, sans the country pavilions — the area which caught fire.

"...according to updated data as of 6 pm this Thursday, 21 people have received medical care as a result of the fire that affected the Blue Zone of the event," the Brazilian Ministry of Health said in a statement.

Of the total cases, 19 are related to smoke inhalation and two to anxiety episodes following the incident. There have been no reports of individuals sustaining burn injuries from the flames, it added.

"Patients were promptly assisted and 12 have already been discharged. The remaining individuals are receiving appropriate care in health facilities in Belem and in a designated referral unit for such cases," the statement said. Municipal, state and federal health teams continue to monitor and follow up on the medical assistance and health status of those affected, it added. It is learnt that UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres was present at the venue and promptly evacuated by the United Nations Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) protection detail.

India's Environment Minister Bhupendra Yadav was also present with the Indian delegation inside the Blue Zone when the fire broke out, but he and other officials safely exited the venue, a spokesperson of the ministry told PTI. In a mail to all participants, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) said that following a comprehensive safety assessment, the venue has been thoroughly inspected and deemed fully safe.

"Brazilian authorities have restored all working conditions on the conference premises, secured the post-fire operating permit from the Fire Department and formally returned the area to the UNFCCC," it added.

The Blue Zone has now been reinstated to full operational status and has been reopened as of 8:40 pm. All accredited COP participants are now able to access the COP30 venue in the usual ways. (PTI)

'Communist' coming to White House, says Trump's official

NEW YORK/WASHINGTON, Nov 21: New York City Mayor-elect Zohran Mamdani's visit to Washington "speaks volumes" that a "communist" is coming to the White House and that US President Donald Trump is willing to meet and talk with anyone, Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt has said.

Mamdani will meet Trump in the White House Friday, the first meeting between the two and also since his victory in the New York City Mayoral election on November 4.

"It speaks volumes that tomorrow we have a Communist coming to the White House, because that's who the Democrat Party elected as the Mayor of the largest city in the country," Leavitt said Thursday at the press briefing in the White House. She said it is very telling and also "speaks to the fact that President Trump is willing to meet with anyone and talk to anyone, and to try to do what's right on behalf of the American people, whether they live in Blue States or Red States or Blue Cities, in a city that's becoming much more left than I think this President ever anticipated in his many years of living in New York."

Leavitt did not give details of what Trump's first meeting with Mamdani could entail and also said she didn't want to speak for the President. "I think you'll all hear from him (Trump) directly," she said. (PTI)

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Armed men abduct children and staff at a Catholic school in Nigeria, days after latest abduction

ABUJA (NIGERIA), Nov 21: Armed men attacked a Catholic boarding school in a western region of Nigeria and abducted several schoolchildren and staff early Friday, the latest in a spate of abductions in Africa's most populous country that came just days after 25 schoolgirls were abducted in a neighbouring state.

The attack and abductions took place at St. Mary's School, a Catholic institution in Agwara local government's Papiiri community, said Abubakar Usman, the secretary to the Niger state government. He did not disclose the number of students and staff abducted, nor who might be responsible for the attack.

Local media broadcaster Arise TV said 52 schoolchildren were abducted.

The Niger State Police Command said the abductions took place in the early hours of Friday and that military and security forces have since been deployed to the community. It described St. Mary's as a secondary school, which serves children between the ages of 12 and 17.

The statement by the secretary to the Niger state government said the incident occurred despite prior intelligence warnings of heightened threats.

"Regrettably, St. Mary's School proceeded to reopen and resume academic activities without notifying or seeking clearance from the State Government, thereby exposing pupils and the staff to avoidable risk," it read.

The Catholic Diocese of Kontagora said in a statement that a security staffer was "badly shot" during the attack.

The abductions took place days after gunmen on Monday attacked a high school and abducted 25 schoolgirls in the neighbouring Kebbi state, in Maga, around 170 km (105 miles) from Papiiri. Once the girls escaped and were safe, the school's principal said.

In a separate attack on Monday in Kwara state, which borders Niger state, armed men attacked a church, killing 2 people. During the attack, 38 worshippers were also abducted, Femi Agbabiaka, secretary of the Christ Apostolic Church, told The Associated Press on Friday.

Nigeria's President Bola Tinubu postponed his trip to this weekend's Group of 20 summit in light of the schoolgirls abductions and attack on the church.

No group has claimed responsibility for the attacks in Niger and Kebbi state, but analysts and locals say gangs often target schools, travellers and remote villagers in kidnappings for ransom. Authorities say the gunmen are mostly former herdsmen who have taken up arms against farming communities after clashes between them over strained resources.

Abductions have come to define the insecurity prevailing in Africa's most populous nation and the painful consequences.

At least 1,500 students have been abducted in the region since Boko Haram jihadi extremists seized 276 Chibok schoolgirls more than a decade ago. But bandits are also active in the region, and analysts say gangs often target schools to gain attention. (AP)

Deposed PM Oli led UML, Gen Z youths came face to face in Kathmandu

KATHMANDU, Nov 21: Nepal's Gen Z groups and the supporters of CPN-UML led by deposed Prime Minister K P Sharma Oli once again came face to face in capital Kathmandu on Friday, a couple of days after clashes between them led to curfew in Bara district.

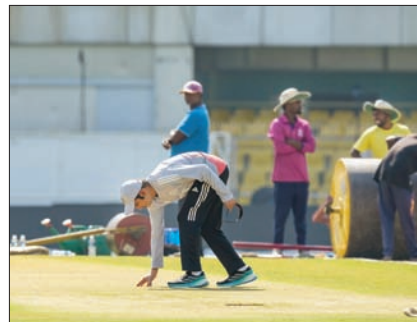
Dozens of injured youths belonging to a Gen Z group on Friday staged a sit-in at Matigaha Mandala in Kathmandu to protest against ex-Prime Minister Oli, whom they hold responsible for the September 8 crackdown against the students' protests in which 76 people were killed.

The Friday protests were held following a CPN-UML rally in the nearby Baneshwor-Babarmahal area, where the party's chief Oli announced the National Volunteers Force to give protection to UML leaders and cadres.

Both the programmes by UML cadres and Gen Z youths were organised at the same time in almost the same venue, with the presence of a large number of riot policemen providing security to avoid any clash.

"Arrest the corrupt leaders," "Arrest the murderers," "Where is the probe commission?" and "Fulfill the demands of Gen Z group," were written on the placards carried by those Gen Z youths who got injured during the September's deadly protests.

A day earlier, tension erupted as 10 people were injured after Gen Z youths clashed with members of Oli's party, prompting authorities to impose curfew to contain the situation in Nepal's Bara district bordering India.



However, life has returned to normal in the Bara district on Friday as the curfew has been lifted.

The situation came under control after the police arrested three cadres of CPN-UML who were involved in beating up Gen Z youths who were staging peaceful protests at Simara Airport on Wednesday.

The Oli-led CPN-UML has become the main target of the Gen Z youths these days because of the aggressive activities and hostile remarks made by certain UML leaders, including former Prime Minister Oli and youth leader of the party, Mahesh Basnet, against the Gen Z.

While other political parties, including Nepali Congress and Nepali Communist Party, adopted a soft attitude towards the Gen Z and have welcomed the general election announced for March 5, Oli's party has opposed the general election.

It has been campaigning for the reinstatement of the House of Representatives and demanded the resignation of Prime Minister Sushila Karki. (PTI)

EU sanctions Sudanese paramilitary leader after atrocities by his forces in Darfur

CAIRO, Nov 21: The European Union imposed sanctions on a top leader of Sudan's paramilitary group over "grave and ongoing atrocities" by his forces in the more than two-year war with the Sudanese army, including in the western Darfur region, where they captured the army's last stronghold last month.

The measures announced Thursday against Abdel-Rahim Hamdan Dagalo follow similar sanctions against the Rapid Support Forces, the paramilitary group at war with the Sudanese army. The United States also imposed sanctions on Dagalo in September 2023, early on in the conflict. Dagalo is the No. 2 in the paramilitary group and the brother of its leader, Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, better known as Hemedti.

The EU's Foreign Affairs Council said it imposed the measures against Abdel-Rahim Hamdan Dagalo over violations committed by his troops, including during last month's seizure of el-Fasher, a key city in Darfur.

"The European Union condemns in the strongest terms the grave and ongoing atrocities perpetrated by the Rapid Support Forces in Sudan, including following the seizure of the city of el-Fasher," it said.

"This sends a signal that the international community will come after those who are responsible," EU's foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas told reporters during a news conference on Thursday.

There was no immediate reaction from the RSF, which had besieged el-Fasher for over 18 months before taking the city from the army and effectively seizing the entire Darfur region. The RSF attacks left hundreds dead and forced tens of thousands to flee to overcrowded camps.

The war between the RSF and the military began in 2023, when tensions erupted between the two former allies that were meant to oversee a democratic transition after a 2019 uprising. The fighting has killed at least 40,000 people, according to the World Health Organisation, and displaced 12 million. However, aid groups say the true death toll could be many times higher. (AP)

Iran rejects UN atomic agency's resolution, threatens more reprisal actions

TEHRAN, Nov 21: Iran's foreign ministry called a resolution by the UN atomic watchdog's board of governors "anti-Iranian" and threatened unspecified retaliatory actions, state media reported on Friday.

The International Atomic Energy Agency on Thursday demanded that Iran fully cooperate with the agency and provide "precise information" about its stockpile of near weapons-grade uranium, as well as grant its inspectors access to Iranian nuclear sites.

A report by the official IRNA news agency on Friday quoted foreign ministry spokesman Esmail Baghaei as saying that Iran informed the Vienna-based IAEA in a letter that, in addition to ending an agreement forged over the summer in Cairo, the Iranian government could take "other actions" in response to Thursday's resolution.

Iran suspended all cooperation with the IAEA after the war with Israel. IAEA Director-General Rafael Mariano Grossi then reached an agreement with Iranian

Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi in Cairo in early September to resume inspections.

Baghaei didn't immediately elaborate on what further actions Iran would take, but further uranium enrichment by the country is a possibility. He accused the IAEA of amplifying "grudges" held against Iran by the United States, the United Kingdom, France and Germany. The minister complained that the resolution didn't mention the reason that Iran halted inspections was because of the strikes by Israel and the US against Iran's nuclear facilities in June.

The IAEA's resolution sets the stage for a likely further escalation of tensions between the UN nuclear agency and Iran, which has reacted strongly to similar moves by the watchdog in the past.

After a 12-day air war in June with Israel, Iran suspended all cooperation with the IAEA. Strikes on Iran killed nearly 1,100 people, including military commanders and nuclear scientists. (AP)

India for equity-driven Just Transition Mechanism Criticises trade restrictions in climate actions

BELEM (BRAZIL), Nov 21: In the run up to the conclusion of the annual climate summit COP30 here, India has pushed for a Just Transition Mechanism that is based on equity and CBDR-RC while criticising unilateral trade restrictions for climate actions from rich countries.

"Unilateral actions — particularly trade-restrictive climate measures — undermine the principles of equity and justice and act as serious dis-enablers for a fair and equitable Just Transition," Union Environment, Forest and Climate Change Minister Bhupendra Yadav said.

"India looks forward to an ambitious outcome at Belem with the establishment of this Mechanism to address a critical gap in delivering the Convention and Paris Agreement. We must now operationalise Equity and Common but Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities (CBDR-RC) to advance a truly just transition," Yadav said.

The environment minister was addressing the Third Annual High-Level Ministerial Roundtable on Just Transition under the



UAE Just Transition Work Programme on Thursday.

Negotiators from India and more than 190 countries are discussing a phasing-out of fossil fuels and scaling-up renewable energy while ensuring a just transition based on differing capabilities of rich and poor nations.

On concrete outcomes for the UAE Just Transition Work Programme (JTWP), Yadav said that India along with other developing countries strongly supports the creation of a Just Transition Mechanism.

Established during the 2022 annual summit, called the Conference of Parties (COP), and operationalised in 2023, the JTWP has turned into a major issue during this year's meet.

The minister noted that such a mechanism is crucial for bridging existing gaps and advancing practical solutions.

"For the Global South, affordable and equitable access to finance, technology and capacity building, aligned with national circumstances, is vital to ensure that no one

is left behind," he said as he pushed that the JTWP integrates equity and CBDR.

Yadav underlined that the dialogues have firmly established that a just transition extends far beyond the energy sector, calling it an economy-wide, all-inclusive, people-centred transformation that must respect national circumstances, ensure equity, and secure social justice.

The minister emphasised that such a transition must enable all countries to contribute their fair share to global mitigation efforts "without compromising developmental imperatives."

Yadav stressed that each nation must retain the ability to chart its own sustainable development pathways consistent with their national priorities and circumstances.

He further said that global equity must remain at the core of all just transition efforts. "Developing countries require sufficient policy space to bridge development gaps, address systemic vulnerabilities and ensure the well-being of their people according to their stage of development and national conditions," he added. (PTI)

CM warns of strict action over Frontier Highway compensation scam

Khandu urges united fight against corruption at NES conference

HT Correspondent

ITANAGAR, Nov 21: Chief Minister Pema Khandu on Friday delivered a strong message against corruption at the 14th General Conference of the Nyishi Elite Society (NES), urging community-based organisations to lead a collective, state-wide movement for transparency and accountability.

Expressing deep concern over alleged large-scale irregularities in land compensation for the Lada-Sarli stretch of the Frontier Highway in East Kameng district, Khandu said preliminary findings point to "massive misuse" of compensation funds. Calling the misappropriation unacceptable, he reminded that the money comes from taxpayers and warned that strict action will be taken against those found guilty.

Terming the Frontier Highway a transformative project for the frontier districts, Khandu lamented that the "actions of a few" had delayed progress. He appealed to NES to take the lead in fighting corruption and resisting the growing money culture which, he said, is eroding public values. With panchayat and municipal elections approaching, he urged CBOs, NGOs and stu-



dent bodies to campaign actively against electoral malpractices.

Highlighting NES's role as the apex

body of the state's largest tribe, Khandu said the organisation carries a "big brother responsibility" in fostering unity among

Arunachal's 26 major tribes and over 100 sub-tribes. He praised NES for its contributions to education, youth empowerment, cultural preservation and social reform, describing it as a symbol of progressive leadership.

The Chief Minister welcomed the inclusion of an environment session in the conference, calling it timely amid rampant hill-cutting, particularly in the Itanagar Capital Region. He urged adoption of terrain-friendly construction practices. Khandu also sought NES's support in improving education standards and combating drug abuse, stressing that CBOs have unmatched grassroots influence.

On illegal immigration, he said the government has identified weaknesses in the existing ILP system and is working toward full digitisation to plug loopholes and ensure employer accountability for migrant labour.

Reiterating concerns over youth unemployment, Khandu called on CBOs to promote dignity of labour, stating that unless local youth embrace all forms of work, the inflow of migrant labour will continue and disrupt the state's demographic balance.

Arunachal's traditional 'dao' earns GI tag, marking major boost for tribal artisans

By CM Chowna Mein says recognition will strengthen cultural economy and safeguard ancestral craftsmanship



ITANAGAR, Nov 21: The Arunachal Pradesh 'dao', a traditional handcrafted blade by several tribal communities has received the Geographical Indication (GI) tag, marking a major milestone in the preservation of the state's indigenous craftsmanship.

Announcing the development, Deputy Chief Minister Chowna Mein said the recognition reaffirms the cultural and economic value of the state's ancestral blacksmithing traditions.

"The Arunachal Pradesh dao is meticulously hand-forged by master artisans using techniques passed down over generations," Mein said in a post on X on Friday.

Each piece embodies functional utility as well as the courage, identity and cultural endurance of our tribes. "This recognition further strengthens our efforts to preserve indigenous craftsmanship and promote our cultural economy," he said.

Mein added that the dao's GI certification will open new avenues for artisans, improve market access and help safeguard authentic production practices.

"It's forged in tradition, shaped by heritage and now it carries official recognition," he said.

"We will support our artisans through training, branding and marketing linkages so that the value of this heritage reaches their

homes and livelihoods," he added.

Arunachal Pradesh has in recent years emerged as one of the Northeast's key contributors to India's list of GI-protected products. The state has already secured several GI tags across categories such as handloom, agricultural produce and traditional crafts.

Items like the Wakro Orange, Idu Mishmi textiles, Khamti rice, Yak churpi and Wancho wooden craft are among the prominent products that highlight the cultural richness and geographic uniqueness of the region.

Officials say more applications are in process as the state seeks to expand economic opportunities rooted in traditional knowledge systems.

With the 'dao' now included in the expanding roster of recognised heritage products, the government expects blacksmithing clusters and tribal artisan groups to gain greater visibility, strengthened identity and enhanced livelihood prospects through authentic GI-certified branding.

The GI recognition of the Arunachal 'dao' now adds to a growing list of products from Arunachal Pradesh that has secured these protections. According to recent reports, the state has so far garnered 20 GI-tagged items with a target of reaching 50 by 2030, officials said. (PTI)

RGU, NE-Organics ink pact to drive agri-innovation, farmer capacity building

ITANAGAR, Nov 21: The Rajiv Gandhi University (RGU) and Arunachal Pradesh-based food startup 'NE-Organics' have signed an MoU, aimed at boosting research and development in organic agriculture, expanding value-added food products and strengthening farmer training in the state.

Under the agreement, the university will provide extensive product and process consultancy to NE-Organics to support the development of new food products from underutilised local fruits and vegetables, a release said. This will help expand the startup's existing portfolio of more than 14 food items, it said. The faculty of Agricultural Science at RGU will lead the R&D efforts, offering product testing, development facilities and advanced training programmes.

"This joint initiative marks the beginning of a truly productive future for both our organisations and more importantly, for the farmers of the state," NE-Organics CEO and founder Nima Sona said.

Beneficiary farmers associated with NE-Organics will receive training on modern agricultural practices and the adoption of emerging technologies to boost productivity and livelihood outcomes, the release said.

RGU Registrar Dr N T Rikam added: "This collaboration will be instrumental in promoting entrepreneurship in the agricultural and food processing sector among our students." (PTI)

Arunachal Literature Festival opens with a vibrant celebration of culture and creativity

HT Correspondent

ITANAGAR, Nov 21: The 7th edition of the Arunachal Literature Festival (ALF) began on Friday evening with a grand inaugural ceremony at the Dorjee Khandu Convention Centre, setting the tone for three days of literary exchange, cultural dialogue and creative celebration. The festival, themed "Building Bridges through Literature," brings together an impressive gathering of authors, poets, storytellers, scholars and artists from India and abroad, reaffirming its stature as Arunachal Pradesh's premier annual literary event.

Organised by the Department of Information & Public Relations in collaboration with the Arunachal Pradesh Literary Society (APLS), the festival provides an inclusive platform for voices from diverse literary traditions, while also nurturing the state's emerging writers.

Inaugurating the festival, Chief Secretary Manish Kumar Gupta highlighted the enduring power of literature in shaping society and preserving cultural identity.

Describing the ALF as "a celebration of imagination, creativity and the enduring power of words," he praised the rise of young and first-time writers, particularly students and women for enriching the literary landscape with new perspectives. He emphasised that the strength of a society lies not only in material progress but also in "the ideas and the stories it tells about itself," noting literature's role in safeguarding collective memory and inspiring future generations.

Gupta also underscored the rich oral traditions of Arunachal Pradesh, including its folk songs,



myths and ancestral narratives and expressed optimism about the new generation of writers who are revitalising these traditions while adapting to new digital mediums. Reaffirming the government's commitment to preserving linguistic and cultural diversity, he highlighted initiatives to document indigenous oral literature, support local authors and promote reading habits, especially by strengthening school and university libraries as hubs of creative engagement.

Festival Advisor and acclaimed author Padmashree Mamang Dai in her introductory remarks, reflected on the festival's expanding influence and reiterated literature's capacity to offer solace and clarity, remarking, "In the time of crisis, literature comes to the rescue." Festival Nodal Officer Higio Zangam welcomed participants and noted the renewed digital outreach after six years, emphasising that literary discourse must extend "beyond these four walls," as "literature belongs to everyone."

The inaugural session also featured ceremonial lamp lighting, screening of the ALF promo video, folk dance presentation by

IPR staff and release of two books: Tagin Proverbs by Er Lardik Kare and Himbitach: Tale of a Transcended Beauty by Lopa Rebi Kojum with illustrations by Tomar Tomsai Nayam. Commissioner to HCM Sonam Chombay engaged in a conversation about his book 'In Between the Blurry Lines', moderated by senior journalist Ranju Dodum.

This year's festival includes a wide range of sessions across three venues—Namdapha, Pakke and the Children's Corner—featuring author interactions, poetry and prose readings, panel discussions, workshops, storytelling sessions, children's activities and thematic talks. International participation adds further vibrancy with renowned Japanese author Mami Yamada and SAARC Literature Award recipient Kunzang Choden from Bhutan joining the festival. Maria Gil Burman, Director of Instituto Cervantes, Embassy of Spain will speak on the institution's role in promoting Hispanic literature in India.

The festival continues over the next two days with a packed programme celebrating the many voices and visions that shape contemporary literature.

Guv urges NERIST students to build inclusive tech to reduce disparity, uplift communities

ITANAGAR, Nov 21: Governor Lieutenant General (Retd) K T Parnaik on Friday called upon graduating students of the North Eastern Regional Institute of Science and Technology (NERIST) near here to use their knowledge and skills to build inclusive technology for reducing disparities and uplifting communities. Speaking at the institute's 11th convocation ceremony, he said the graduates' contributions in infrastructure, energy, digital literacy and local innovation can transform lives. Parnaik

urged the youth to uphold their duties towards the society, the state and the nation.

He said NERIST must expand its academic scope by introducing programmes in sustainable development, environmental management, artificial intelligence, internet of things applications and by establishing centres of excellence in geospatial AI, remote sensing, artificial intelligence and data science. The governor also called for proactive efforts to increase women's participation in Science, Tech-

nology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) disciplines.

The governor, who also serves as president of the NERIST Society, encouraged the faculty to embrace interdisciplinary research and teaching, link academic expertise with societal needs and nurture an ecosystem where innovations move from classrooms to communities. The governor underscored the importance of instilling practical problem-solving skills, leadership articulation and "perception management" among students.

Earlier, Parnaik presented gold medals to toppers across various engineering, postgraduate and undergraduate programmes. He also felicitated distinguished alumni, including Subrata Chakrabarti (ISRO scientist, 1990 batch), Dr Sarat Kumar Dash (Scientist and Head, Quality Assurance and Control Division, URSC, ISRO, 1994 batch) and entrepreneur Tage Rita (founder of Naara Aaba, 1996 batch). (PTI)

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The inaugural day featured Tai Khamti traditional dances, release of the festival souvenir, opening of exhibition stalls showcasing crafts and cuisine and a community feast, setting an energetic and harmonious tone for the rest of the festival.

72nd All India Cooperative Week valedictory ceremony and APSCU golden jubilee

HT Correspondent

ITANAGAR, Nov 21: The valedictory function of the 72nd All India Cooperative Week held alongside the Arunachal Pradesh State Cooperative Union (APSCU) Golden Jubilee Celebration 2025, concluded on Friday at I.G. Park with Chief Minister Pema Khandu and Minister of Cooperation Ojing Tasing gracing the event as Chief Guest and Guest of Honour. The ceremony began with the unfolding of the Golden Jubilee and Cooperative Week flags. The programme was attended by Secretary Cooperation Dr Sonal Swaroop, Director AH & Veterinary and Dairy Development Dr Danjan Longri, APSCU Chairman Nabam Tahil Nekil, APSCU CEO Tech Kaku, Assam state cooperative union president Pradip Goswami, ICM Guwahati Director H K Das, Joint RCSs Michi Gumbo and P Tayeng, former APSCU Chairman and a host of officers, dignitaries and cooperative leaders.

Addressing the gathering, Chief Minister Pema Khandu stressed the need to streamline and strengthen the cooperative sector at the grassroots, noting its significant role across LAMPS, Thrift and Credit Societies, fishery, dairy, agriculture, tourism and other allied sectors. He underscored the need to transform cooperatives into successful enterprises and highlighted their contributions in linking SHGs and farmers' clubs, promoting livelihoods through skills and market access, enhancing financial inclusion and creating social capital that enables sustainable poverty reduction.

Responding to the memorandum submitted by APSCU Chairman, the Chief Minister assured that he would direct all Deputy Commissioners to conduct meetings to plan strategies for cooperative growth, link societies with higher-level federations and extend necessary support after the Model Code of Conduct for Panchayat elections is lifted. He also spoke about key initiatives of the Government of India for the Northeast under the DoNER Ministry and the formation of high-level task forces to drive development programmes in Arunachal Pradesh.

Guest of Honour and Cooperation Minister Ojing Tasing emphasised the need for training and education in the cooperative sector. He encouraged stakeholders to participate in capacity-building programmes and announced that a delegation from the state will be sent to Tribhuvan Sahkari University in Anand, Gujarat to study advanced cooperative training methods. He also expressed hope for establishing a Cooperative School or College in Arunachal in the near future and urged cooperators to work with dedication to bring the sector on par with those in Gujarat and Maharashtra.

APSCU Chairman Nabam Tahil Nekil submitted a memorandum seeking enhanced fund allocation, creation of an Additional Registrar post, more staff appointments and infrastructural strengthening at both headquarters and district levels. Assam State Cooperative Union President Pradip Goswami noted that without committed government support, the cooperative sector cannot achieve new heights.

In her welcome address, Secretary-cum-RCS Dr Sonal Swaroop presented an overview of departmental achievements and announced a five-day Management Development Programme beginning from November 21 with faculty support from Tribhuvan University, Anand, urging all nominated trainees to attend. Another welcome message from Krishna Kumar Singh, IAS, RCC-cum-Secretary Cooperation, urged cooperators to adhere to cooperative principles and comply with government mandates to ensure their growth.

The Chief Minister and dignitaries later inaugurated a Cooperative Exhibition-cum-Sale featuring stalls from 22 selected cooperative societies. Former APSCU Chairman Bengia Hementa and APSCU Advisor Tech Kaku also addressed the gathering.

The event saw participation of around 2,000 attendees, including district cooperative union chairmen, department officials, HoDs, representatives of federal organisations, LAMPS, primary societies, former leaders, social workers, youth, women and SHGs, marking a significant milestone in the cooperative movement of the state.

Preparedness review of Panchayat election 2025

HT Correspondent

TAWANG, Nov 21: The Tawang district administration on Friday held a coordination-cum-briefing meeting for Sector Officers, Nodal Officers and their teams at the DC Office, chaired by Deputy Commissioner-cum-DEO (PR) Namgyal Angmo, IAS.

The DC urged officers to carry out duties with diligence and immediately inspect polling stations to assess requirements, report gaps and ensure proper vulnerability checks. Dy DEO (PR) Rinchin Leta briefed that 87 polling stations have been mapped into 16 sectors and stressed the need to ensure Assured Minimum Facilities (AMFs). He also highlighted the roles of Flying Squad and Static Surveillance Teams in ensuring transparency.

Superintendent of Police Dr DW Thongon outlined security arrangements, noting that 32 polling stations are categorised as sensitive and 55 as normal with classifications subject to change.

Three-day Tai Khamti New Year festival celebrates cultural harmony, heritage and cross-border unity

Poi Pee Mau Tai 2120 begins with grandeur and spiritual vibrancy

HT Correspondent

NAMSAL, Nov 21: The three-day Poi Pee Mau Tai 2120 Festival, the New Year celebration of the Tai Khamti community, commenced in Namsal with a colourful and spiritually uplifting inaugural ceremony marked by traditional processions, cultural performances, Tai art displays, release of souvenirs and an array of indigenous cuisine. The opening day showcased the dignified heritage and timeless traditions of the Tai Khamti people.

Extending warm greetings, the Deputy Chief Minister described Poi Pee Mau Tai as an agro-religious festival symbolising renewal, peace and the cultural identity of the Tai Khamti community. More than a New Year festivity, he said the celebration marks the start of post-harvest socio-cultural activities and unites Tai communities under one shared tradition. He noted that the festival transforms the entire district with illuminated pagodas, prayer chants by monks, folk dances, sports, cultural exhibitions and communal feasts that embody the essence of Tai culture.

Highlighting extensive community par-



ticipation, the Deputy Chief Minister shared that youth from seventy-eight villages are taking part in performances, literary events, exhibitions and competitions. He praised their commitment, emphasising that such festivals instil pride and con-

fidence in the younger generation and remind them that heritage is a living treasure to be preserved.

He placed special emphasis on the presence of the Assam delegation, including Minister Pijush Hazarika and MLA Binod

Chetia, calling their participation a reflection of the deep bonds between Assam and Arunachal Pradesh. Their presence, he said, strengthens the Tai Khamti community and enriches the festival with warmth and solidarity. Stressing the longstanding ties between the two states, he said their cultural relations are ancient and built on trust and that both states must work together for peace and progress in the Northeast.

The Deputy Chief Minister also acknowledged the Tai Phake and other Tai communities living across both states for acting as cultural bridges and preserving shared traditions. He noted the growing international attention on Tai festivals, referring to the recently held International Sangken and International Kathina Civara Dana, which drew foreign guests and boosted cultural diplomacy. He added that Poi Pee Mau Tai offers visitors a glimpse into the beauty of Namsal, known as the Land of the Golden Pagodas with its monasteries, traditional villages and serene rivers. He reaffirmed his commitment to developing Namsal into one of the

cleanest districts and to revitalising rivers through 'Nadi Utsav'.

Addressing the gathering as chief guest, Assam Minister Pijush Hazarika reiterated the strong bond of brotherhood between Assam and Arunachal Pradesh and called for collective progress. Praising Namsal's scenic beauty and rich tourism potential, he expressed gratitude for being invited and lauded the community for upholding Lord Buddha's message of peace. He acknowledged the past boundary differences between the two states, noting that through the efforts of both Chief Ministers — Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma and Pema Khandu — the issue has largely been resolved. He stressed that cooperation is essential for mutual development and highlighted the cultural unity that binds the Northeast's diverse communities.

The inaugural day featured Tai Khamti traditional dances, release of the festival souvenir, opening of exhibition stalls showcasing crafts and cuisine and a community feast, setting an energetic and harmonious tone for the rest of the festival.

Will throw out every 'ghuspetiya' from India: Shah

'Today, the BSF is engaged in preventing infiltration at all borders of the country'

BHUJ (GUJARAT), Nov 21: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday said the government will throw out every "ghuspetiya" from the country and alleged that some political parties are opposing the SIR exercise as they want the names of infiltrators to remain on the electoral rolls.

Addressing the BSF Diamond Jubilee (61st Raising Day) celebrations in Bhuj, Shah said SIR is the "purification" of the voters' list. Shah's remarks on the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of the voters' rolls came a day after West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee wrote a strongly worded letter to Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar, asking him to immediately halt the exercise, which she claimed was "chaotic, coercive and dangerous."

Banerjee alleged that the SIR of the electoral rolls in Bengal had reached a "deeply alarming stage" and was being conducted in an "unplanned, dangerous" manner.

"Today, the BSF (Border Security Force) is engaged in preventing infiltration at all borders of the country. Stopping infiltration is not only essential for national security but also to protect the democratic system from being polluted," Shah said.

Describing SIR as the "purification" of the voters' list, Shah accused some political parties of trying to weaken the government's campaign against illegal infiltrators.



"These parties are opposing the ongoing SIR and the voter list purification process being carried out by the Election Commission because they want to ensure that the names of infiltrators remain on the electoral rolls," he added. At the Diamond Jubilee celebration, Shah asserted: "Today, I want to make it very clear that we will deport every single infiltrator from this country, one by one. This is our resolve (Main is Heerak Jayanti Samaroh mein bahut spashat karna chahta hoon ki hum is desh mein se ek-ek ghuspathiye ko chun-chun kar bahar nikalenge; yeh hamara pran hai). This is the resolve of the Modi government to deport each and every infiltrator from the country."

"Who will be the chief minister of any state in the country, or who

will be the prime minister, is a decision that can only be made by the citizens of India. Infiltrators do not have the right to pollute our democratic system and influence our democratic decisions," Shah said.

Stressing that SIR is a process to secure and purify India's democracy, he urged every citizen to fully support it. "I also want to warn those political parties which are engaged in protecting these infiltrators. The Bihar election was the mandate of the people of the country. And that mandate is against the presence of infiltrators in our country," Shah said.

In the recently concluded Bihar assembly elections, the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) decimated the Mahagathabandhan—an alliance of Congress,

RJD and other parties—winning over 200 seats in the 243-member House.

"Those parties working to secure infiltrators' place in the voter list should know that the people of the country will never support such intentions," Shah added.

At the BSF event, Shah also praised its role in Naxal-affected areas. He said that thanks to the joint efforts of all security forces, India will be free from the Naxal menace very soon.

"We are determined to free the country from the Naxal problem forever by March 31, 2026, and pave the way for the development of our tribal brothers and sisters. The entire corridor from Tirupati to Pashupati will be safe and will progress like the rest of India. In Chhattisgarh, the BSF has forced 127 Maoists to surrender, arrested 73, and neutralised 22," Shah said.

He added that not just Prime Minister Narendra Modi but the entire nation salutes the bravery and exemplary courage of BSF jawans. The Home Minister noted that so far, 2,013 brave soldiers of the BSF have made the supreme sacrifice while securing the country's borders.

On the occasion, Shah said the BSF now has 193 battalions and a strength of over 2.76 lakh jawans. The force currently guards and monitors over 2,289 km of the border with Pakistan and over 4,095 km of the border with Bangladesh. Shah announced that the coming

year will be dedicated to the welfare of the force's personnel and their families.

"The BSF and the Home Department will take various initiatives for the welfare of the personnel and their families. Additionally, the coming year will be dedicated to modernising the force, with a target of transforming it into the world's most modern and most capable border security force within five years," he said.

"In the coming days, we are also introducing a new concept called e-border security. We have completed the trial phase. I am happy to announce that the BSF has played a major role in implementing the e-border security concept, and the initiative was also taken by it," Shah said.

He also praised the BSF's role during Operation Sindoor, launched by India's armed forces to avenge the Pahalgaon terrorist attack.

"During Operation Sindoor, Pakistan took our attack on terrorists as an attack on them, and when the Pakistani army came into action, our BSF soldiers left no stone unturned in giving them a befitting reply," Shah said.

"Due to the efforts of the BSF and the Army, Pakistan announced a unilateral truce, and because of this, it became clear to the entire world that India's border should not be violated. Otherwise, they will have to face the consequences," he added. (PTI)

Mamata trying to obstruct SIR in Bengal, TMC goons threatening BLOs: BJP



NEW DELHI, Nov 21: The BJP on Friday accused West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee of trying to obstruct the ongoing special intensive revision of electoral rolls in the state, and urged the poll panel to ensure the exercise is completed "smoothly and transparently" like Bihar.

Speaking to reporters here, BJP national spokesperson Guru Prakash Paswan alleged that "Trinamool Congress goons" were threatening booth level officers in West Bengal, asking them not to follow the Election Commission's directives.

He also alleged that Banerjee, who is also the Trinamool Congress supremo, was objecting to the voter roll cleanup exercise as "infiltrators are a part of her vote bank."

The West Bengal chief minister wrote to Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar on Thursday, alleging that SIR was being conducted in the state in an "unplanned and coercive" manner, putting citizens and officials at risk. She also claimed the exercise has reached an "alarming" and a "dangerous" stage, and demanded an "immediate corrective action".

Responding to Banerjee's claims, Paswan said, "In West Bengal, a game of letters is being played and doubts are being cast on an entirely constitutional process."

"The INDI alliance had to face defeat in the Bihar polls, and we saw that they are not able to accept it with dignity. The Supreme Court has said that SIR is a clear, historic and constitutional process," the BJP leader said.

Highlighting that SIR is a prerogative of the Election Commission under Article 324-325 of the Constitution, he said, "Despite that, the type of atmosphere being created around it is unfortunate and against the spirit of the Constitution and constitutional morality."

"You play politics in the name of the Constitution, but when you get the opportunity, you insult it," the

BJP spokesperson remarked. Paswan alleged that both level officers, who happen to be state government employees, are being threatened by "Trinamool Congress goons" and "criminals", asking them not to abide by the Election Commission's directives.

"Imagine what the mental state of such employees would be who are receiving such threats. State-sponsored goons and criminals are threatening and intimidating BLOs. The SIR process was completed peacefully in Bihar without any claims or objections.

"When this (SIR) happened so peacefully in Bihar and is happening peacefully in other states, who is Mamata Banerjee to come in the way of this constitutional process? Who is she to deprive genuine electors from their right to vote?" he posed.

Paswan urged the Election Commission not to tolerate any violation of constitutional dignity.

"You (EC) should ensure there is no obstruction in the SIR process. If there is a need, deploy extra forces. If needed, further streamline your administrative machinery.

"Ensure that the rights of the people are not sacrificed for appeasement. The Election Commission must ensure that this process is conducted in a smooth and transparent manner, as it was done in Bihar and as it is being done in other states," he said.

The BJP spokesperson further claimed that as soon as the SIR of the electoral rolls was announced for West Bengal, "infiltrators" are returning to their country in droves.

"This proves that in West Bengal, Mamata Banerjee's party gains lead (during polling) in the Kolkata area, the North and the South Parganas because she has made infiltrators her vote bank. This is her vote bank politics and appeasement.

"This appeasement cannot be allowed. Only those who are citizens of the country have the right to vote," Paswan added. (PTI)

Delhi blast: LG issues slew of directions

Cops to maintain record of ammonium nitrate buyers, sellers

NEW DELHI, Nov 21: Keeping a record of buyers and sellers of ammonium nitrate, conducting security audits and tracking radicalised content are among a slew of directions issued by Delhi Lt Governor V K Saxena to the city police, days after a blast near the Red Fort claimed 15 lives.

The directions were issued in separate written communications to Delhi Police Commissioner Satish Golcha and Chief Secretary Rajeev Verma on November 19.

Ammonium nitrate was one of the explosives used in the November 10 blast, which was carried out by a "suicide bomber".

The blast came shortly after an interstate "white-collar" terror module was uncovered with the recovery of around 3,000 kg of explosives, including ammonium nitrate, mainly from Faridabad in Haryana.

Saxena asked police to maintain a digital record of entities purchasing and selling ammonium nitrate beyond a certain limit.

"Commissioner Police may revisit the Standing Order of 2022 for licensing of

sale, storage and transport of Ammonium Nitrate in exercise of powers conferred under Delhi Police Act, 1978, read with Explosives Act, 1884 and Ammonium Nitrate Rules, 2012.

"In particular, he has desired that police must maintain a digital record of entities purchasing and selling Ammonium Nitrate beyond a certain threshold, including photographs of buyers and sellers apart from other relevant details," said the official communication from the LG office to the police chief.

The Standing Order, issued in 2022, laid down rules and procedures related to grant of ammonium nitrate licence and to regulate and control manufacture, conversion, stevedoring and bagging, import, export, transport, possession for the sale or use of the chemical.

Saxena also directed police to hold a consultation exercise with heads of social media platforms, including Meta and X, for a scientific tracking of radicalised content aimed a brainwashing citizens.

"The police commissioner has also been asked to strengthen human and technical intelligence with a focus on vulnerable areas prone to radicalisation. Community outreach and citizen engagement should also be enhanced for more robust preventive policing," a Raj Niwas official said, citing the communication.

Saxena also directed police to conduct a rigorous security audit of busy markets and ISBTs to track CCTV camera coverage and deployment of security personnel.

"All DCPs be advised to undertake a rigorous security audit of busy markets

and public places with high footfalls, including ISBT, railway stations, cinema halls, parks and metro stations, etc. In particular, the audit should focus on the deployment plan of security personnel, beat roster and existing CCTV network," the official communication said.

In case there are dark spots where additional CCTV coverage is required, a consolidated reference may be compiled and sent to the chief secretary, it said.

The administration has been asked to create a central data repository, containing records of doctors and para-medical staff engaged by hospitals, especially private facilities, along with details of their medical degrees.

"In cases where medical professionals have secured degrees from foreign countries, information should also be shared with the police department for secondary background checks," the official said.

It has also been asked to hold a consultation exercise with all digital platforms and financiers engaged in sale and purchase of vehicles, especially second-hand vehicles.

"Clear directions should be given that under no circumstances will vehicles be allowed to ply where actual owner is different from the registered owner. This problem is reportedly most acute in cases of autorickshaws, where the permit holder is different from actual owner," the official said. (PTI)

BJP slams Cong for giving peace prize to ex-UN body chief

NEW DELHI, Nov 21: The BJP on Friday launched a scathing attack on the Congress, calling it an "army of traitors" days after its Parliamentary Party chairperson Sonia Gandhi presented the Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament, and Development to Michelle Bachelet, former president of Chile and ex-chief of UN Human Rights. BJP national spokesperson Gaurav Bhatia also slammed the Congress over the presence of Jagdish Tytler at the event and asked Sonia Gandhi if she doesn't feel the pain of the victims of the 1984 anti-Sikh riots.

The BJP's objection to the awardee stems from her remarks expressing concern over the lockdown in Kashmir after the abrogation of Article 370 in 2019, among other factors. The prize for the year 2024 was presented by Gandhi to Bachelet at an event here on Wednesday. Bhatia said, "The Congress' DNA is anti-India. It presented the award to Michelle Bachelet, who attacks India's sovereignty." Speaking at a press conference at the BJP headquarters here, Bhatia said the "blood of traitors" runs in the veins of the "fake Gandhi family".

"This is not Mahatma Gandhi's Congress. This is the Congress party that stands with anti-India forces and

murderers," he alleged. "The Congress is an army of traitors. They only want power for which they can cross all limits," he said.

The BJP spokesperson said Bachelet, the former UN Human Rights chief, had disfavoured the abrogation of Article 370, alleging human rights violations in Kashmir, and also raised objections to the implementation of the National Register of Citizens (NRC) in Assam.

"Don't Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi know the NRC was happening in Assam after the Supreme Court's order? Who is this woman (Bachelet) to say that this NRC will spread unrest if implemented?" he asked. Bhatia also questioned whether Sonia Gandhi had the "right" to present the award to Bachelet, who "indulges in anti-India activities, insults the Indian Constitution, and our mandate".

"Does Sonia Gandhi still not consider herself an Indian in the country that gave her respect? Is it not the violation of the oath of the Constitution that she has taken?" he charged. Bhatia alleged that the presentation of the award indicates that for Gandhi, "her birthplace is still supreme, and not the Indian Constitution". "The religion she follows is everything for her," he said. (PTI)

SC seeks EC's response on fresh pleas challenging SIR exercise

NEW DELHI, Nov 21: The Supreme Court on Friday agreed to hear a batch of pleas challenging the Election Commission's decision to conduct the special intensive revision (SIR) exercise in Kerala, Uttar Pradesh and other states.

A bench of justices Surya Kant, SVN Bhatti and Joyimalya Bagchi issued notice to the Election Commission (EC) on all the fresh petitions filed by different political leaders, challenging SIR exercises in different states on different grounds.

Senior advocate Kapil Sibal, appearing for the Kerala government challenging the conduct of SIR of electoral rolls in Kerala simultaneously along with the conduct of elections to the local body which is being held in the state, said that there is some urgency involved in the matter.

The bench directed the pleas challenging SIR exercise in Kerala will be listed on November 26 and rest of the petitions challenging electoral roll revision exercise in other states will be taken up for hearing in the first or second week of December.

Justice Kant said that it is good that political parties are now coming forward to challenge the exercise instead of private individuals. The top court is already hearing a batch of pleas challenging the validity of the EC's decision to conduct pan-India SIR exercise.

On November 11, the top court sought separate responses of the poll panel on pleas filed by DMK, CPI(M), West Bengal

Congress and Trinamool Congress leaders challenging the SIR of the electoral rolls in Tamil Nadu and West Bengal respectively. The Kerala government's plea said that the state, as an entity, is of the view that the SIR, particularly in the manner in which it is being undertaken, is not conducive to the democratic polity of the country.

"The state prays for leave of this court to reserve its right to challenge the process of the SIR in appropriate proceedings, if deemed necessary. However, the grievance of the State highlighted in this writ petition is limited to request for deferment of the SIR in Kerala," it said.

The state government further said that the deferment is sought for since undertaking of the SIR simultaneously with the elections to the local self government institutions (LSGI) will adversely affect the smooth conduct of the said elections and will possibly result in an administrative impasse in the state.

The Kerala government further said there are 1200 LSGIs in the State, made up of 941 Grama Panchayats, 152 Block Panchayats, 14 District Panchayats, 87 municipalities and six corporations.

It added that the notification of the EC apart from being violative of various provisions of the Constitution, is also bad for the reason that the duration of the SIR and the timing of the SIR in Kerala is loaded with ulterior motives. (PTI)

New Nitish Kumar cabinet full of corrupts, criminals, alleges Prashant Kishor

BETTIAH, Nov 21: Jan Suraj Party founder Prashant Kishor on Friday alleged that the new cabinet of the Nitish Kumar government in Bihar was full of corrupt and criminal leaders. Speaking to reporters after a day-long silent fast at Gandhi Ashram in West Champaran, Kishor also said his party will launch the 'Bihar Navnirman Sankalp Yatra' on January 15, during which Jan Suraj Party workers will visit all houses in the state.

"The new cabinet of Nitish Kumar, which took oath on Thursday, is full of corrupts and criminals. I must say that this council of ministers is a slap in the face of the people of Bihar. It's like rubbing salt on the wound as several corrupt leaders were inducted," he alleged, days after drubbing in the recently held assembly elections in the state.

Kishor claimed the leaders inducted into the cabinet include that Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah and CM Kumar are least concerned about Bihar. "They have purchased votes by transferring ₹ 10,000 into the bank account of more than 1 crore women. Now, they have no concern for the state or the people," he alleged.

"If I am saying anything wrong, the state government can put me behind bars," he added. Kishor claimed the government diverted funds from the state's contingency fund and a grant from the World Bank for the cash transfer scheme.

"Now, we will ensure that women get Rs 2 lakh as promised by the NDA ahead of the polls," he said. Kishore said as part of the 'Bihar Navnirman Sankalp Yatra', Jan Suraj Party workers, including him, will visit every house in the state.

"We will visit all houses in the state over 15-18 months and create awareness among the people about the misdeeds of this government. The organisation of the Jan Suraj Party will be strengthened before the campaign starts," he said. (PTI)

Will present India's perspective at G20 summit in line with our vision: PM Modi

NEW DELHI, Nov 21: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday embarked on a three-day visit to South Africa to attend the G20 Summit in Johannesburg, and said he will present India's perspective at the forum in line with its vision of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' and 'One Earth, One Family, One Future'.

This is the first time a G20 Summit is being held on the African continent.

"Will be attending the G20 Summit in Johannesburg, South Africa. This is a particularly special Summit as it is being held in Africa. Various global issues will be discussed there. Will be meeting various world leaders during the Summit," Modi posted on X.

On the margins of the summit, the prime minister is expected to hold bilateral meetings with some of the leaders present in Johannesburg. He will also attend the sixth IBSA Summit there.

In his departure statement, the Prime Minister said, "I will present India's perspective at the Summit in line with our

vision of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' and 'One earth, One Family and One Future'."

He is visiting South Africa from November 22-23 at the invitation of President Cyril Ramaphosa to attend the 20th G20 Leaders' Summit under South Africa's Presidency.

"This will be a particularly special Summit given that it would be the first G20 Summit being held in Africa. During India's Presidency of the G20 in 2023, the African Union had become a member of the G20," Modi said in his statement.

The Summit will be an opportunity to discuss key global issues. The theme of this year's G20 has been 'Solidarity, Equality and Sustainability', by which South Africa has carried forward the outcomes from the previous Summits held in New Delhi and Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, he said.

"I look forward to my interactions with leaders of the partner countries, and participation in the 6th IBSA Summit sched-



uled on the sidelines of the Summit," Modi said.

"During the visit, I also look forward to my interaction with the Indian dias-

pora in South Africa, which is one of the largest outside India," he added.

The Ministry of External Affairs on Tuesday had said that Prime Minister Modi is expected to speak in all three sessions of the Summit.

The three sessions of the Summit include "Inclusive and Sustainable Economic Growth Leaving No One Behind: Building our economies, the role of trade, financing for development and the debt burden".

The other two sessions are "A Resilient World—the G20's Contribution: Disaster Risk Reduction, Climate Change, Just Energy Transitions, Food Systems"; and "A Fair and a Just Future for All: Critical Minerals, Decent Work, Artificial Intelligence".

A top official of the MEA on Thursday had said that he would not like to pre-judge what would figure in the leaders' declaration, but all important matters relevant from the perspective of India and the Global South will be "highlighted by

our leadership". This will be the fourth consecutive summit of the grouping that will be held in the Global South.

Before South Africa, the G20 presidencies were held by Brazil (2024), India (2023) and Indonesia (2022).

During the G20 Summit in 2023 in New Delhi, the African Union became a permanent member of the group of 20 largest economies of the world, with Prime Minister Modi announcing its entry into the grouping.

G20 members include the world's major economies, representing 85 per cent of global GDP, 75 per cent of international trade, and two-thirds of the world's population, according to the website of the G20.

It comprises Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Türkiye, the UK, the US, the European Union, and the African Union. (PTI)

'Today, except for Kerala, they are not in power in two states' Arson, violence, terror tactics imported from CPI(M): Tripura CM

HT Correspondent

AGARTALA, Nov 21: Tripura Chief Minister Prof Dr Manik Saha on Friday said that many people still have the communist mentality and that violence like arson and terrorism has been imported from the CPI(M).

He said that the Bharatiya Janata Party never accepts politics based on terrorism.

Chief Minister Prof Dr Manik Saha said this while visiting the houses of BJP workers affected by violence yesterday by Tipra Motha Party workers at the TTAADC headquarters, Khumulwng, today.

After inspecting the violence-affected houses and workers, Dr Saha said that wherever the communists ruled be it Tripura, West Bengal, or Kerala people have seen the traces of the way they ruled during that time.

"Today, except for Kerala, they are not in power in two states. But their culture still remains in many parties. And our Bharatiya Janata



Party and our government always believe in working for the people. The kind of violence they do, such as arson and terrorism, they have all acquired from the CPI(M). We do not accept this kind of politics under any circumstances. In this case, the police will do the work of the police. The law will do the work of the law. I will still say that

there is time we have to come out of this. The same situation has been witnessed in West Bengal," he said.

Dr Saha said that there is no point in talking about Kerala.

"Many of our parties, many places, and many individuals still have the mentality of communists. I am calling for people to come out

of this mentality. Nothing can be forced or established. People will not accept it under any circumstances. We are seeing all this," he said.

Dr Saha said, "Today I came to Khumulwng and went to the house of the affected family. The woman of the house was brutally tortured. Their household belongings were looted. Jewellery and money were snatched. Everything, including the refrigerator, was destroyed."

The Chief Minister also said that the party office had been destroyed.

"Even before this, the party office was demolished and set on fire. This cannot be accepted under any circumstances. Therefore, whatever action needs to be taken in the coming days will be taken," he added.

During the visit, the Chief Minister was accompanied by the Bharatiya Janata Party's general secretary Bipin Debbarna, local mandal presidents, and other leaders.

Nagaland IPR dept made nodal dept for live-event business devp

HT Correspondent

DIMAPUR, Nov 21: The Nagaland government designated the information and public relations Department as the nodal department for the implementation of the execution framework for the development and promotion of the live entertainment economy in the state on Thursday.

Chief secretary Sentiyanger Imchen, in a notification, said the department will work closely with all relevant line departments to consolidate approval processes and improve the overall ease of doing live-event business in the state.

The notification aligns Nagaland with the national agenda outlined in the white paper "India's Live Events Economy: A Strategic Growth Imperative." The department has been entrusted with coordinating the state's efforts to strengthen and streamline the live entertainment and events sector. This includes facilitating the development of a supportive ecosystem for promoters, creators, event managers and cultural stakeholders engaged in live events across Nagaland.

A key mandate under the notification is the integration of state-level event permissions into the proposed single window clearance system on the India Cine Hub Portal, ensuring faster, transparent and efficient facilitation for organisers. This move reflects the government's commitment to professionalise Nagaland's growing creative and cultural industries, encourage investment and unlock new economic opportunities.

Mizoram consumer panel orders state govt to pay ₹ 52.20 lakh compensation for maternity death

AIZAWL, Nov 21: The Mizoram State Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission has directed the state government to pay ₹ 52.20 lakh as compensation to the family of a 40-year-old woman who died following childbirth at Serchhip district hospital in 2021, allegedly due to medical negligence, an official said on Friday.

He said the commission took serious note of the death of Malsawmkimi, who died soon after delivering a stillborn, and blamed the hospital for negligence.

According to the commission, Malsawmkimi, a resident of Tlangpui village in Khawzawl district, had gone to Serchhip district for consultation in 2021. Following a sonography test, she was admitted to the district hospital for delivery.

On the second night, she delivered a stillborn child around 8.30 pm. Although doctors had reportedly told her family that both mother and child were fine, she began to bleed heavily after delivery and died around 10.40 pm due to postpartum haemorrhage (PPH), the commission said.

According to the commission, the victim had earlier suffered miscarriages on four occasions but had also delivered three children normally. The incident triggered widespread criticism on social media, prompting the state government to order a magisterial inquiry led by the Serchhip deputy commissioner. The inquiry later recommended an expert review by a medical team from Aizawl Civil Hospital. The medical expert team con-



cluded in its report that Malsawmkimi should have been strictly instructed to undergo a caesarean section considering her history of miscarriage and age as she had attained 40 years.

In his reply during the proceeding, state health service principal director indicated that Malsawmkimi had anaemia with chronic hypotension as was appeared in her clinical report at Tlangpui Health Sub-Centre, which according to the commission, required serious attention.

Her medical condition was ignored by doctors at Serchhip district hospital, who did not treat her for anaemia, it said. "The treating doctors and hospital staff were found guilty due their negligence and failure to discharge their duties faithfully," the commission said.

Believing that there were lapses leading to his wife's death, Zaithankima, husband of Mal-

sawmkimi, had first approached the Aizawl bench of Gauhati High Court (Aizawl Bench), which found negligence and lapses in her treatment and awarded ₹ 5 lakh to the petitioner as compensation, the commission said.

The High Court also permitted him to seek enhanced compensation before another forum, following which he filed a case before the State Consumer Dispute Redressal Commission or State Consumer Court, it said.

The state consumer court also expressed serious concern that when Malsawmkimi was admitted, she was attended not by regular nurses but by substitutes.

"Allowing untrained or substitute personnel to handle critical patients is unacceptable," the Commission said, terming it a severe lapse and directing the state government to pay ₹ 52.20 lakh as compensation. (PTI)

Mizoram gov attends 13th convocation of ICAFI University, urges graduates to strive for competence



AIZAWL, Nov 21: Mizoram Governor Vijay Kumar Singh graced the 13th convocation of ICAFI University here on Friday, Raj Bhavan officials said.

The event was attended by Padma awardee and founder of Thutak Nunpuitte Team (TNT) orphanage Sangthankima, retired IPS officer C. Dothanga, and Dr. Anil Kumar Joshi.

Speaking on the occasion, Singh described the occasion as a celebration of students' perseverance, dedication and achievements, and a moment of pride and joy not only for the graduates but also for their parents and teachers.

Emphasising the importance of hard work, honesty, integrity, and knowledge for true success, the governor urged students to prepare themselves for the many challenges that lie ahead.

He advised them not to be content with merely obtaining a degree, but to strive for genuine expertise and competence.

The governor also encouraged the graduates to think big, prepare accordingly, and equip themselves to excel in whatever career path they choose.

Singh appreciated the efforts of ICAFI University Mizoram in providing high-quality, industry-relevant higher education in the state.

He expressed happiness over the introduction of Ph.D programmes in English and Management, as well as the university's plans to further expand its doctoral offerings.

He called upon the university to continue focusing on skill-based and job-oriented courses that will contribute to the development and self-reliance of India and the vision of Viksit Bharat @2047 vision.

A total of 242 students, including 212 postgraduate and 30 undergraduate, across 15 academic disciplines (5 undergraduate and 10 postgraduate) were conferred degrees during the event.

Twelve outstanding students were awarded gold medals, which were personally presented by the governor along with certificates.

In recognition of their exemplary contributions to society and public service, honorary doctorate degrees 'doctor of letters (D.Litt. Honoris Causa)' were conferred to three distinguished personalities Sangthankima, C. Dothanga and Anil Kumar Joshi during the convocation. (PTI)

Nagaland finance panel to review financial position of rural, urban bodies

HT Correspondent

DIMAPUR, Nov 21: The Nagaland government has extended the term of the Fourth Nagaland State Finance Commission till March 31, 2026, and asked it to review the financial position of the rural and urban local bodies.

A finance department notification on Thursday said the commission will make recommendations for five years, commencing on April 1, 2026, to March 31, 2031, on the distribution of the net proceeds of taxes, duties, tolls and fees leviable by the state between the state and local bodies.

In making its recommendations, the commission has been asked to consider the objective of balancing the receipts and expenditure of the state government and the local bodies and to generate surplus for capital investment.

The commission has invited suggestions/views on issues relating to its terms of reference from the members of the public, institutions and organisations. It said interested individuals, institutions and organisations may send their suggestions/views to the commission by December 10, 2025.

Job fair held in Kohima, 74 candidates shortlisted for employment '74,500 registered unemployed youth in Nagaland'

HT Correspondent

DIMAPUR, Nov 21: Nagaland continues to face a high unemployment rate, with over 74,500 youth registered in employment exchanges across the state as of July 2025, according to the organisers of a job fair in Kohima on Friday.

A one-day job fair was organised at the regional employment exchange, Kohima, bringing together job seekers, employers, and key placement agencies under a single platform. The event was jointly conducted

by the regional employment officer, Kohima, the sub-regional employment officer (National Career Service for ST/SC), Kohima, and Don Bosco Placement Network (AIDA), Dimapur.

More than 250 candidates attended the fair, out of which 74 were shortlisted for employment opportunities across various sectors. The job fair aimed to create direct engagement between recruiters and candidates, promote employment opportunities, and support the state's skill develop-

RSS involvement will not resolve Manipur crisis: Cong

IMPHAL, Nov 21: Manipur Congress president Keisham Meghachandra Singh on Friday said the involvement of the RSS will solve the crisis in the state, as it requires a government-led political solution and confidence-building measures.

Reacting to the three-day tour of RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat, he said any visit that "prioritises strengthening organisational growth" over the suffering of the people sends a wrong message.

"The Manipur Pradesh Congress Committee takes note of the visit of RSS Sarsangchalak Mohan Bhagwat to Manipur. At a time when Manipur is still suffering from unprecedented violence, displacement, social division, and administrative collapse, the people expected the Central Government to send a concrete plan for peace and restoration of normalcy," he said in a post on X.

"However, instead of addressing the humanitarian crisis and the breakdown of governance, the visit appears to be focused primarily on strengthening RSS organisational activities in the State," he added.

Claiming that RSS involvement will not solve the crisis, Singh said the ongoing turmoil requires a government-led political solution, administrative accountability, and confidence-building measures.

"Strengthening ideological organisations will not bring peace,"



he added.

The Congress leader said if the Centre was serious about solving the ethnic crisis in the state, it should provide a concrete roadmap for peace, a unified command structure, a plan for the safe return of displaced families, and accountability for administrative failures.

"MPCC reiterates that the focus must remain on restoration of normalcy, protection of all communities, and justice for victims. Political or ideological visits cannot substitute real governance," he said.

"Manipur needs healing, not polarisation. Any visit that prioritises organisational growth over people's suffering sends a wrong message at this critical time," he added.

Bhagwat reached Imphal on Thursday, his first visit since ethnic violence broke out in the state in May 2023.

During his stay, Bhagwat will hold a series of closed-door interactions with RSS members to oversee the functioning of the organisation in the northeastern state.

He will also interact with entrepreneurs, tribal leaders from the Manipur hills, prominent citizens and leaders of youth organisations in the state.

Manipur has been under the President's Rule since February after CM N Biren Singh, who led a BJP government, resigned amid criticism of his administration's handling of the ethnic violence, which has claimed over 260 lives. (PTI)

BSF, Customs, DRI conduct operations in Tripura

Narcotics worth over ₹8.95 Crore seized

HT Correspondent

AGARTALA, Nov 21: In a series of coordinated operations, the Border Security Force (BSF), Customs Sabroom, and the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) Agartala seized contraband worth more than ₹ 8.95 crore in South Tripura and Sepahijala districts on 20-21 November.

The agencies also apprehended one smuggler while preventing multiple attempts to smuggle narcotics and consumer goods.

As per BSF acting on specific intelligence, BSF troops and Customs Sabroom under South District launched an operation along NH-08 near the Sabroom-Jolaibari-Matai Tri-junction on 20 November. Around 2010 hrs, the joint team intercepted a vehicle bearing registration number TR01-AE-1816, arriving from Agartala. "A detailed search of the vehicle led to the recovery of a substantial consignment of clothing and other consumer items valued at ₹ 73.89 lakh. The goods were reportedly being transported to border areas for illegal smuggling into Bangladesh. The driver was apprehended on the spot, and the seized materials were taken into custody for further investigation," he said.

In a separate major operation on 21 November, BSF and DRI Agartala acted on intelligence inputs about the movement of a large consignment of Yaba tablets from Agartala towards Bishramganj of Sepahijala district via NH-08. A Mobile Check Post (MCP) was set up.

"During checking, a Suzuki Ecco Van (TR 01 CH 0353) attempted to evade the MCP and sped toward Udaipur via the Bishalgarh Bypass Road. The joint team immediately initiated a pursuit. The van was later found abandoned near Kalkaliya High School around 0930 hrs.

10 packets of Yaba tablets weighing around 10 kg, valued at approximately ₹ 8 crore, 750 boxes of Etaddol 100/Tapentadol 100 mg tablets worth ₹ 20.32 lakh, Indian currency totaling ₹ 25,400. The total recovery from the operation amounts to ₹ 8.21 Crore. In another intelligence-driven operation in Sonamura, BSF units recovered 1 kg of Yaba tablets, further strengthening the crackdown on narcotics movement along the border", said BSF.

Assam man arrested with drugs in Manipur

IMPHAL, Nov 21: A suspected drug peddler from Assam was arrested in Manipur's Senapati district with yaba tablets, police said on Friday.

The arrest was made at Phikomei Junction on Thursday during a frisking and checking drive by a joint team of the Manipur Police, Assam Rifles, and CRPF, they said. A total of 5.6 kg of yaba tablets were found with the suspect, wrapped in five packets, they added. The suspect, a resident of Assam's Goalpara district, was arrested, police said.

Yaba, which is Thai for 'crazy medicine', is a highly addictive and potent illegal drug. Its key components are methamphetamine, a powerful and dangerous stimulant that affects the central nervous system, and caffeine.

In another operation, three suspected drug peddlers were arrested from Hattā Gollapati in Imphal East district.

They were identified as Ibemma (46), MD Afzal (28) and Shahabuddin (51), police said.

Around ₹ 2 lakh in cash, and 91 empty bottles used for storing brown sugar were recovered from their possession, they said. (PTI)

Tripura BJP state president hospitalised after chest pain

AGARTALA, Nov 21: The BJP's Tripura unit president and Rajya Sabha MP Rajib Bhattacharjee was on Friday admitted to a private hospital here after complaining of chest pain, Chief Minister Manik Saha said.

"He had been experiencing pain in the chest for the last couple of days. The pain escalated on Friday, leading to his hospitalisation. He is under observation and is stable," the chief minister told the reporters. Saha said an angiogram would be conducted on Bhattacharjee to find out whether he has any blockages.

"Immediate treatment would be conducted here, and if necessary, he would be shifted outside the state for better treatment after consultation with his family," he said.

Senior party leaders, including general secretary Amit Rakshit, rushed to the hospital and inquired about Bhattacharjee's health condition. (PTI)



SHILLONG, Nov 21: Health authorities in Meghalaya on Friday ordered the immediate removal of all products using the term 'ORS' in any misleading manner from retail shelves across the state, officials said.

In a directive issued here, the Commissionerate of Food Safety instructed wholesalers and distributors to "recall" such products from retailers, pharmacies and doctors' clinics immediately.

The wholesalers and distributors have been directed to return the products to the respective manufacturers for relabelling in line with Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) directives.

They have also been told to follow the Standard Op-

erating Procedures to ensure complete traceability during the recall process.

"We cannot allow products to misuse the term ORS, which has a very specific therapeutic purpose," a senior official of the commissionerate told PTI.

"These drinks do not meet the prescribed formulation under the Food Safety & Standards Regulations, and continuing to sell them would amount to misleading consumers," the official added.

Officials said the state-wide enforcement drive would be conducted by designated officers and food safety officers in compliance with an FSSAI clarification dated October 15, which stated that beverages using the term 'ORS' are misbranded and misleading as they do not meet the formulation standards for oral rehydration salts.

The FSSAI has clarified that ORS is a therapeutic formulation and cannot be marketed or sold as a general-consumption beverage.

"We expect full cooperation from all manufacturers, distributors and retailers," the official added.

"This action is necessary to protect public health and ensure that only standard and compliant products reach consumers," he added.

The authorities have urged all stakeholders to ensure consumers are protected from misleading and non-standard products. (PTI)



From Goa to the world: IFFI expands platform for Indian and local talent

Goa's two-decade-long association with the International Film Festival of India (IFFI) has helped transform the coastal state into a vibrant hub for cinematic exchange, serving as a major platform for national and homegrown filmmakers.

Speaking at the inauguration of the festival's 56th edition on Thursday, Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant said IFFI has grown alongside Goa since it first travelled to the state in 2004.

IFFI, which was held in various parts of the country since its inception in 1952, was brought to Goa under the leadership of then chief minister Manohar Parrikar. The state be-

came the permanent venue for the festival in 2014.

Sharmad Pai Raiturkar, member of the executive council and general body of the Entertainment Society of Goa (ESG), recalled Parrikar's efforts in bringing IFFI to the state and establishing it as a regular feature on the country's cultural calendar.

"IFFI is not just about the films but it provides the platform to showcase one's language, culture and even cuisine. Goa has been able to showcase its uniqueness through this festival to the world," he said.

Delegates too have witnessed the festival's rise. Ancil Mathais, who has attended IFFI for a

decade, said the festival has consistently improved.

"I have been attending IFFI for the last 10 years, from 2015 to 2025. The experience is quite great because over the past 10 years, the quality of the films has been increasing as the years go by," he told PTI.

He said it is not just films but the quality of audience that arrive to watch the film is great.

Mathais noted that the festival offers local filmmakers a rare opportunity for global exposure.

Rajesh Karekar, a filmmaker from Goa, recalled how the film "Baga Beach", in which he acted, was featured at IFFI during its initial years and later

won a national award.

"The commercial or financial aspect of IFFI is something I cannot comment on, but as far as I am concerned, it has benefited me a lot for me as an artist," he said.

He said that Goan actors and filmmakers got to learn about filmmaking, techniques, concepts and scripts.

Arunkumar Senthil, an independent film director from Chennai, said he has been attending the festival for last eleven years.

"The facilities are developing every year. The festival is growing," he said.

The 2025 International Film Festival of India will run till November 28. (PTI)



Siddhant Chaturvedi-Mrunal Thakur's 'Do Deewane Seher Mein' to release in Feb 2026

Do Deewane Seher Mein, an upcoming romantic drama featuring Siddhant Chaturvedi and Mrunal Thakur in lead roles, will hit cinema halls across the country on February 20, 2026, the makers announced on Friday.

Directed by Ravi Udyawar, the project comes from Zee Studios and filmmaker Sanjay Leela Bhansali's production banner Bhansali Productions.

"Do Deewane Seher Mein" will chronicle the "imperfectly perfect" love story of Chaturvedi's Shashank and Thakur's Rohini.

Zee Studios shared the announcement through a teaser posted on its official Instagram page.

"Do dil, ek seher, aur ek imperfectly perfect prem kahani! This Valentine's Day, isq se isq ho jayega! #DoDeewaneSeherMein - 20th Feb 2026," the studio wrote in the caption.

The movie marks a reunion between Udyawar and Chaturvedi after they worked together on the 2024 action thriller "Yudhra".

Bhansali, the director of acclaimed movies such as "Khamoshi", "Black", "Bajirao Mastani" and "Gangubai Kathiawadi", produces alongside Premea Singh, Umesh Kumar Bansal and Bharat Kumar Ranga.

Chaturvedi was most recently seen in "Dhadak 2" alongside Tripti Dimri. The Shazia Iqbal-directed film was adapted from the 2018 Tamil film "Pariyerum Perumal".

Thakur's latest project was "Son of Sardar 2", co-starring Ajay Devgn. She will be next seen in Hindi-Telugu project "Dacoit" alongside Adivi Sesh. (PTI)

PRIME VIDEO SETS 'BEAST GAMES' SEASON TWO FOR JANUARY 2026 PREMIERE



Streaming service Prime Video has announced that the second season of "Beast Games", the record-breaking global competition series from YouTube creator Jimmy Donaldson, popularly known as MrBeast, will premiere on January 7, 2026.

The streamer also released a first-look tease of the show's signature Beast City, which returns this season with an all-new theme built around a "Strong vs Smart" narrative. Created by Donaldson, the show follows 1,000 contestants as they compete for the prize

money of USD 5 million. According to a press release, the first three episodes will debut on January 7, with subsequent episodes dropping weekly until the season finale on February 25.

Season two will feature 100 of the "strongest competitors" and 100 of the "smartest minds" battling for a USD 5 million prize, billed as one of the largest in reality competition history.

The first season of "Beast Games" became the streamer's most-watched unscripted show ever, drawing 50 million viewers within 25 days of its launch. The series has already been renewed for a third season.

Donaldson returns as host and executive producer alongside Sean Klitzner, Tyler Conklin and Mack Hopkins.

Klitzner and Matt Apps serve as showrunners, with Michael Cruz, Jeff Housenbold, Michael Miller, Josh Kulic and Chris Keiper also attached as executive producers. Conklin is back as series director. (PTI)

India's policy framework fosters strong global co-production ties: MoS Murugan

Independent cinema is as free as India, said veteran actor Kamal Haasan on Friday, stressing that he has been raising the issue of non-commercial films not finding space in theatres for four decades now.

The veteran actor walked the red carpet of the International Film Festival of India (IFFI) ahead of the screening of his film "Amaran", which he produced through his banner Raaj Kamal Films International. Haasan, the star of movies such as "Apoorva Raagangal", "Nayakan", "Thevar Magan", "Sadma", "Pushpak Vimana" and "Chachi 420", believes independent cinema shouldn't be forced into the same mould as mainstream cinema.

"Independent cinema is very independent, as free

as India... don't bring it into a confining space of a very commercialised cinema," the 71-year-old told PTI. Asked about indie films not getting space to be showcased in theatres, Haasan said, "Yes, that's been my complaint for about 40 years."

At the red carpet, Haasan was accompanied by "Amaran" lead stars Sivakarthikeyan and Sai Pallavi.

The film, based on Major Mukund Vardharajan who was martyred during a counter terror operation in Kashmir in 2014, serves as the opening film of the 56th IFFI.

Adapted from a chapter of the book "India's Most Fearless: True Stories of Modern Military Heroes", the movie is directed by Rajkumar Periasamy. (PTI)

India's policy framework fosters strong global co-production ties: MoS Murugan



Union minister of State for Information and Broadcasting Dr L Murugan on Friday said co-production is one of the most powerful avenues for deepening audio-visual cooperation and India's policy environment provides a strong foundation for international collaborations. Murugan was speaking at a round table conference on ambassadors during the 56th edition of the International Film Festival of India (IFFI) audio-visual cooperation.

"India's policy environment — improved digital infrastructure, regulatory enhancements, and dedicated facilitation mechanisms like the India Cine Hub — provides a strong foundation for international collaborations," he said. Murugan said India's bilateral agreements are designed to encourage joint development, simplify permissions, and enable smoother mobility of talent and resources.

The minister added that India's media and entertainment sector stands at a defining moment with the industry projected to reach USD 31.6 billion in 2025, driven by rapid growth in digital media, OTT platforms, live events, advertising, and emerging segments such as gaming and the AVGC fields of animation, VFX, virtual production and XR (Extended Reality). "With our vast talent pool, multilingual creative base and technological capabilities, India is increasingly being seen as a 'studio for the world', a destination where global stories can be imagined, produced and shared," he said. For the partnering nations, the evolving ecosystem offers enormous potential, Murugan added.

"Collaborating with India means not only engaging with one of the world's largest and most diverse audiences, but also gaining access to a global diaspora that embraces content from across cultures," he said.

The minister said that India is equally committed to supporting technological and skills-oriented collaboration.

"India's world-class studios, growing VFX and animation sector, and expanding virtual production capabilities offer opportunities for co-development of digital content. Joint training programmes, scholarships, and talent exchanges can further strengthen our combined creative workforce," he added. Murugan said the government also recognise the need to continuously improve ease of doing business in this sector.

"Our ministry has taken significant steps to streamline permits, enhance transparency, and enable predictable processes for international projects. In addition, our anti-piracy task force, comprising representatives from MIB, MeitY, MHA, DPIIT, DoT, law-enforcement agencies, digital platforms and industry bodies, is working to safeguard creative rights and protect creators across borders," he added. (PTI)

Manish Malhotra's 'Gustaakh Ishq-Kucch Pehle Jaisa' to be showcased at 2025 IFFI

Gustaakh Ishq - Kucch Pehle Jaisa, the maiden production venture of renowned fashion designer Manish Malhotra, is set to be screened at the 56th International Film Festival of India (IFFI) in Goa. The movie, produced by Manish Malhotra and his brother Dinesh Malhotra under their banner Stage5 Production, will be showcased on November 24.

"Gustaakh Ishq" is described as a tribute to old-school romance, blends poetry, nostalgia and the timeless charm of classic love sto-



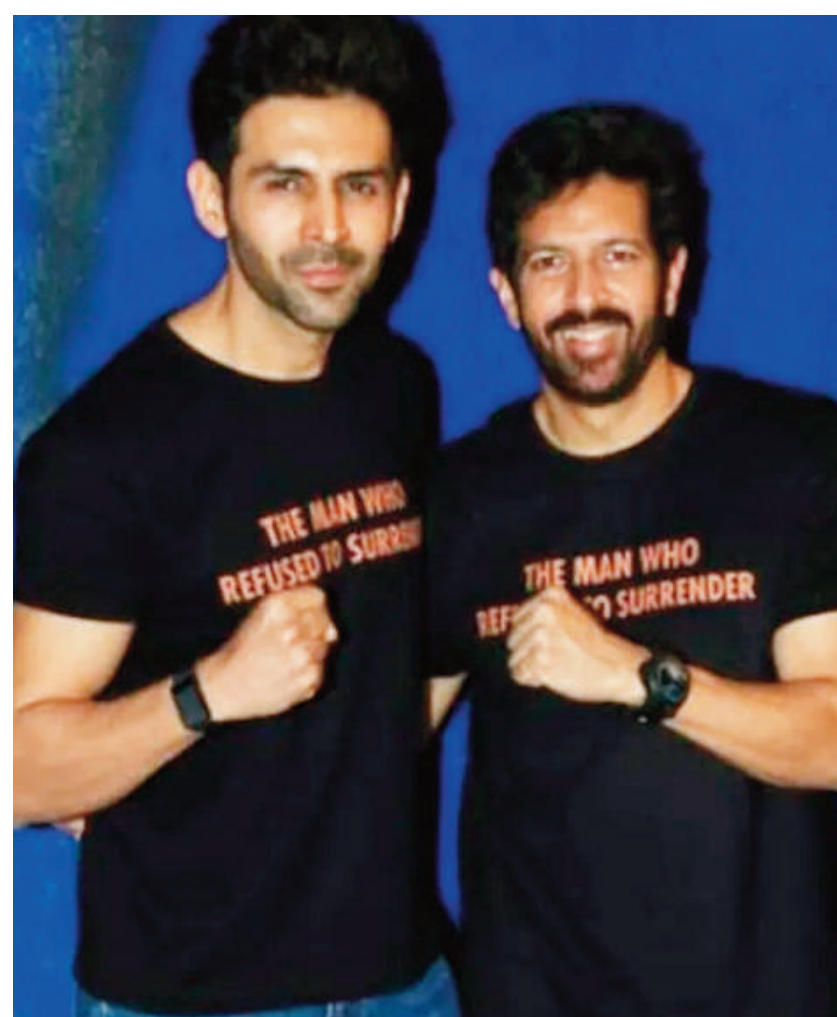
ries. The film features an ensemble cast of Naseeruddin Shah, Vijay Varma, Fatima Sana Shaikh and Sharib Hashmi.

Directed by Vibhu Puri, the story unfolds across the bylanes of Purani Dilli and the fading kothis of Punjab, exploring themes of passion and unspoken desire.

"Gustaakh Ishq - Kucch Pehle Jaisa" will be released in theatres on November 28.

The 2025 edition of the IFFI opened with Brazilian auteur Gabriel Mascaro's "The Blue Trail", a sci-fi and fantasy feature following a 75-year-old woman's defiant voyage through the Amazon.

The festival will run till November 28. (PTI)



Kabir Khan teases reunion with Kartik Aaryan: 'I have the script, it's an exciting project'

Filmmaker Kabir Khan on Friday hinted at a potential reunion with actor Kartik Aaryan for his next directorial project.

The project would reunite Khan and Aaryan after their 2024 collaboration, "Chandu Champion", a sports drama about India's first Paralympics gold medalist Murlikant Petkar.

"We are still talking... We are still working on some ideas and in a month or so, we will be able to announce exactly what we are working on," Khan told PTI on the sidelines of the 56th International Film Festival of India (IFFI) here.

"I have the script but there are so many other things that have to come in place. The actor needs to come in and his dates have to be figured out, the studio needs to come in. We are working on that... It's an exciting project," he added.

The filmmaker further said that the project is right up his alley -- an exciting human interest drama.

"It is in my space, which is good, exciting human interest story and of course it has larger than life backdrop of politics, society, everything. At the end of the day, it is an exciting human story," he said.

The director, known for movies such as "Kabul Express", "New York", "Ek Tha Tiger" and "Bajranghi Bhaijaan", is also excited to join hands with producer Sameer Nair and his banner Applause Entertainment.

"Sameer and I are working on a couple of ideas and I am looking forward to that. I really respect Sameer as a person in the industry who I think has a great knack for selecting interesting stories and more importantly being able to support them.

"He goes against the grain and has proven many times with shows and films where conventional wisdom would not be towards, he goes ahead with, and makes success of it," Khan said.

At the film gala, the filmmaker is

presenting "My Melbourne", an anthology film exploring diverse stories and voices shaped by the multi-cultural fabric of the Australian city.

The film features four short films from four directors -- Khan, Onir, Rima Das and Imtiaz Ali -- and tackles themes of diversity, sexuality, gender, disability, and race.

"The movie has already received a lot of love when it was released. It got a great response from audiences. It was released through PVR in India as well. So it's lovely to be a part of it and to come here and share it with the audience.

"IFFI is such an exciting platform. I think everybody — the I&B Ministry and the FDC — they've all done such a fabulous job of creating IFFI as a world-class platform," Khan said.

Khan believes that the film industry doesn't function on its own as the audience is a crucial part of the ecosystem.

He said people often complain that only one kind of film is being made, and that there is no space for different or unconventional stories.

"But when different cinema is made, the audience doesn't step up and support it. Of course there has to be support from exhibition space, you have to give them good shows and enough screen because only then will an audience will be able to come," Khan said.

He said smaller or unconventional films are often given only morning or afternoon slots, while most viewers prefer evening shows.

"Theatres need to make sure that showcasing is done. Give them at least one good show so that the audience can come and watch. Otherwise even if an audience wants to watch it they are unable to come. But it is a two-way thing audience needs to really support it and the exhibition space needs to give appropriate showcasing," the filmmaker added. (PTI)

BCCI invites application for head of education post at COE after Sujith Somasunder's departure

NEW DELHI, Nov 21: The BCCI on Friday invited applications for the post of head of cricket education at the board's Centre of Excellence (COE) in Bengaluru after former India opener Sujith Somasunder relinquished the position to contest in the Karnataka State Cricket Association (KSCA) polls.

The full-time position is central to BCCI's long-term vision of developing a world-class cricket education system that supports coaches, athletes, state academies and high-performance programs across the country.

The head of cricket education will oversee the design, delivery and continuous advancement of cricket and sports-science education at the COE. Somasunder, who was holding the same position

at the erstwhile National Cricket Academy (NCA) since his appointment in 2019, quit recently to contest in the upcoming KSCA elections as part of the faction led by former India seamer Venkatesh Prasad.

Both Prasad and Somasunder were earlier part of the KSCA administration when the legendary Anil Kumble and Javagal Srinath had served as president and secretary.

The head of cricket education is responsible for administering all aspects of coach education, accreditation and curriculum development at the COE, including planning, implementing and reviewing all coaching courses, including Level A, B and C programmes, and conducting and coordinating nationwide refresher courses for coaches.



The role will also involve using modern performance-analysis tools such as athlete-management systems, video analytics, GPS and wearable

technology to derive actionable game insights, collaborating with the head of cricket, COE on on-line education initiatives and the development of advanced coaching modules.

It also entails managing the re-accreditation process for coaches and ensuring world-class documentation of coaching content, working with BCCI's umpires panel and head curator on educational seminars, examinations and specialised training interventions.

The new appointee will also be responsible for supporting coach-intake processes for COE, Zonal Cricket Academies and specialist camps, assessing suspect bowling actions referred to the COE and presenting findings to relevant committees.

As far as qualifications and experience is con-

cerned, a proven track record in developing and delivering cricket-education programmes is a must. Active Level-3 coach (or higher) with impeccable credentials; international playing or coaching experience will be preferred, the BCCI said in a statement.

Other requirements are strong background in coach training, player-progress reporting and high-performance systems. A minimum of five years' experience working with elite athletes; prior experience as a trainer with cricket players is essential.

Excellent communication skills and the ability to work with diverse groups across domestic and high-performance ecosystems is also one of the key requirements. (PTI)

One off match not best scenario for captaincy: Pant



GUWAHATI, Nov 21: Captaincy in a one-off Test is "not the best scenario" but Rishabh Pant doesn't want to "over-think" and would rather focus on blending conventional leadership with some "out-of-the-box" ideas during his debut as India's 38th Test skipper in the second game against South Africa starting here on Saturday.

Pant will lead the side as regular captain Shubman Gill has been ruled out because of a neck injury.

"Definitely, one-off match is not the best scenario as a captain. But at the same time, I'm really proud that BCCI has given me this opportunity. You know, whenever you're leading your country, it's the proudest moment," he said in the

pre-match press conference.

As the discussion veered towards his style of captaincy, the man from Rourkee said he wants to be a mix of old and new.

"I think being conventional also helps. And also adding that outside (out-of-the-box) thinking definitely works out. So, you're going to find, for me, it's all about finding that balance between a conventional and out-of-the-box thinking," Pant said as he braced up for the tough battle against the Proteas who have an unassailable 2-0 lead in the series.

A primary task, according to him, would be to give his players freedom to express themselves. "To generalise, I want to be

someone who gives that freedom and I want people and players to learn around and make the right decision for the team eventually," Pant explained his philosophy.

"That's the real goal and obviously whatever my knowledge is, that's going to help them on the field," the keeper batter stated.

Asked if he can remain free-spirited while taking decisions, Pant said it wasn't particularly difficult.

"And for the free spirit part of the thing, see, I personally don't think about that. I just want to give my 100 per cent in whatever I'm doing and enjoy the game," he was categorical.

Pant informed that he was officially asked to lead on Thursday night.

Asked if he has spoken to Gill, he offered a trademark cheeky response.

"I speak to Gill everyday," he laughed.

Comebacks are tough

He conceded that bouncing back in a two-match series is difficult.

"It is always good to have more matches because you can come back from it. When you have a two-match series, it's harder because the pressure is all the more if you lose the first match. But at the same time, you know, these are the things which we can't control as a team," he said.

Captaincy is never a bed of roses and Pant faced some probing questions on his tactical calls on the third day of the first Test when he had to stand in for an injured Gill. He didn't give the ball to Mo-

ammed Siraj and Jasprit Bumrah on a deteriorating pitch where variable bounce would have made them all the more dangerous.

Temba Bavuma scored a fifty and the runs added in the morning when Pant introduced spinners became decisive.

Asked if he could have done things differently in terms of strategic calls, the burly keeper acknowledged the scrutiny that comes with the job.

"Going with a spinner was our thought process but there was always a chance when you can get a fast bowler in. But that's the challenge as a captain, you want to face each and every day that you're going to be questioned.

"But eventually you're going to do what you believe is right in that given frame of mind and trust that person who has the ball will do the job for the team."

While he didn't officially declare who is replacing Gill and if there could be one more change to maintain the balance of the squad, Pant clarified that people selected in playing eleven have been duly informed.

Asked if there could be a place for a right-hander considering the presence of off-spinner Simon Harmer in the opposition line-up, Pant replied: "We have taken that in consideration because we have a lot of left-handers in the batting line-up."

"Mostly we have taken a decision and the person who is going to play, he already knows he's going to play." (PTI)

India announce 23-member squad for AFC U17 Asian Cup 2026 Qualifiers

AHMEDABAD, Nov 21: Head coach Bibiano Fernandes on Friday named a 23-member India squad for the 2026 AFC Under-17 men's Asian Cup Qualifiers, beginning Saturday at the EKA Arena here.

India will face Palestine (November 22), Chinese Taipei (November 26), Lebanon (November 28) and Iran (November 30).

The group winners will qualify for the final tournament in Saudi Arabia next year, which will act as the qualification pathway for next year's FIFA U17 World Cup in Qatar.

India's squad:
Goalkeepers: Manashjyoti Baruah, Maroof Shafi, Rajrup Sarkar.

Defenders: Abhishek Kumar Mondal, Ankur Rajbagh, Indra Rana Magar, Korou Meitei Konthoujam, Lawmsangzuala, Md Aimaan Bin, Shubham Poonia.

Midfielders: Dallalmoon Gange, Denny Singh Wangkhem, Diamond Singh Thokchom, Mukundo Singh Ningthoujam, Nitishkumar Meitei Yengkhom, Thong-goungom Touthang.

Forwards: Aazim Parveez Najar, Azlaan Shah Kh, Gunleiba Wangkheirakpam, Heeranganba Seram, Jasir Khan, Lesvin Rebelo, Rahan Ahmed. (PTI)

Starc takes a career-best 7 wickets as Australia dismisses England for 172 on Day 1 of the Ashes



PERTH, Nov 21: Mitchell Starc took a career-best 7-58 as Australia bundled England out for 172 despite losing the toss Friday in the Ashes cricket series opener.

Starc took a wicket in the first over of the test for the 24th time to set the tone, having Zac Crawley caught at slip by Usman Khawaja on the sixth delivery before England had scored a run.

The 35-year-old left-armer snared three wickets in his first five overs, picking up his 100th career wicket, and had England in trouble at 105 for four at lunch on Day 1.

He took four more after the interval, including the key wicket of Ben Stokes, as England lost six wickets for 67 runs after lunch — the last five wickets tumbling for 12 runs to be all out in the second session.

Ben Duckett (21) was punishing an off-rhythm Scott Boland's half-volleys at the other end to keep the runs flowing, punching four boundaries down the ground, before Starc trapped him lbw in the seventh over with a full-length ball.

Duckett reviewed the decision but tracking technology confirmed the umpire's decision and England was 33-2.

Joe Root, the No. 1-ranked test batter but still searching for his first Ashes century in Australia, faced seven balls before he nicked Starc to Marnus Labuschagne at third slip for a duck and England slumped to 39-3.

The key dismissal gave Starc his 100th Ashes wicket, at an average of 26.65, and gave Australia the ascendancy after England won the toss and batted.

A 55-run stand between Ollie Pope (46) and Harry Brook (52) gave England some momentum before allrounder Cameron Green (1-10) struck at the end of his first over of bowling in a test match since 2023.

Green trapped Pope lbw and again England reviewed the decision, which was upheld by the TV umpire using tracking technology.

England's attacking intent kept with the "Bazball" method under Brendon McCullum's coaching, aiming to score quickly and make the bowlers wilt.

The team batting first has won all five tests played at Perth Stadium — which replaced the WACA as the Western Australian capital's test venue — and that was a heavy factor in Stokes deciding to go against his preferred option of bowling first and chasing.

The English, trying to win a test in Australia for the first time since 2010-11, opted for an all-pace attack led by Jofra Archer and 35-year-old Mark Wood.

Australia has won 13 and drawn two of its last 15 Ashes tests in Australia.

Regular skipper Pat Cummins and Josh Hazlewood are missing the first test because of injuries, opening the way for Brendan Doggett to make his test debut and become the third Indigenous Australian man to play test cricket.

Doggett bowled alongside Boland, making it the first time two Indigenous Australians have played in the same test lineup. He troubled Pope in his first over and made a vital breakthrough in his sixth to have Brook caught behind, cramped for room and gloving a short-pitch ball down legside.

Doggett also troubled Brydon Carse (6) with short-pitch bowling before getting his wicket, caught in the outfield by Marnus Labuschagne.

Starc, who picked up his fifth five-wicket haul in the Ashes when he had Gus Atkinson caught at slip by Steve Smith, picked off the last two wickets on consecutive balls to remove Jamie Smith (33) and Mark Wood (0).

He'll start the next innings on a hat-trick.

"Nice way to start a series," Starc said. "There's been a lot made about the (Cummins and Hazlewood) being not here and I guess me being an experienced one, so nice to lead that way." (AP)

England wins toss and will bat to start Ashes series against Australia

PERTH, Nov 21: England skipper Ben Stokes won the toss and decided to bat first Friday in the Ashes series — opening cricket Test against Australia. The English, trying to win a Test in Australia for the first time since 2010-11, opted for an all-pace attack led by Jofra Archer and 35-year-old Mark Wood and left spinner Shoib Bashir out of the XI.

Australia has won 13 and drawn two of its last 15 Ashes Tests in Australia. Regular skipper Pat Cummins and Josh Hazlewood are missing the first test because of injuries, opening the way for Brendan Doggett to make his test debut and become the third Indigenous Australian man to play test cricket.

Doggett will be bowling alongside Scott Boland, making it the first time two Indigenous Australians have played in the same test lineup.

The team batting first has won all five Tests played at Perth Stadium — which replaced the WACA as the Western Australian capital's test venue — and that was a heavy factor in Stokes going against his preferred option of bowling first and chasing.

"It's been a long building for the Ashes series. Now we're finally here," Stokes said.

"We can't wait to get going."

Opening batter Jake Weatherald was also making his debut for Australia. Steve Smith, leading Australia in the absence of Cummins, said the replacement bowlers were "quality performers." "Brendan Doggett has been amazing in Shield cricket and deserves an opportunity," Smith said.

Lineups:

Australia: Jake Weatherald, Usman Khawaja, Marnus Labuschagne, Steve Smith (captain), Travis Head, Cameron Green, Alex Carey, Mitchell Starc, Nathan Lyon, Brendan Doggett, Scott Boland.

England: Zak Crawley, Ben Duckett, Ollie Pope, Joe Root, Harry Brook, Ben Stokes (captain), Jamie Smith, Brydon Carse, Gus Atkinson, Jofra Archer, Mark Wood. (AP)

Shourya Saini shoots down silver in 50m rifle 3P at Deaflympics

TOKYO, Nov 21: Young marksman Shourya Saini clinched the men's 50m rifle 3-positions silver medal as India's dominance in the shooting competition of Deaflympics continued here on Friday.

Following Saini's second-place finish, India have taken their medal tally in shooting to 13, including four gold, six silver and three bronze.

The 22-year-old Saini, who had competed in the ISSF World Championships in Peru last year and had also qualified for the finals in the junior category before finishing seventh, aggregated 450.6 in the final on Friday to finish behind Germany's Matthias Erik Hess.

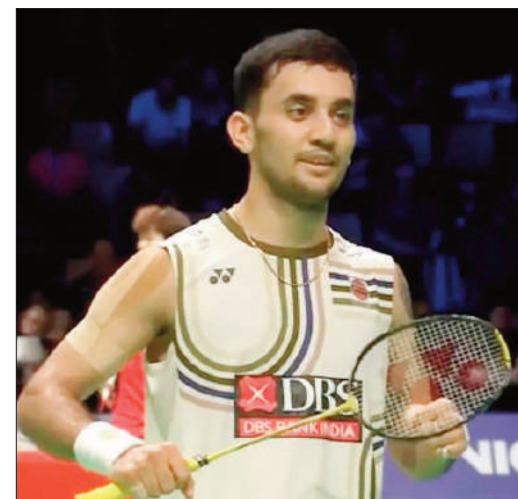
Hess set a new deaf world record by scoring 459.8.

The other Indian marksman in the finals, Kushagra Singh Rajawat, who had earlier event won bronze in 50m rifle prone, finished eighth.

A dominant Saini came into the final on the back of a deaf world record qualification score of 584.

He had series of 96, 100, 96, 98, 97, 97 on way to topping the qualification. Rajawat shot 575 to also make the finals placed sixth. (PTI)

Lakshya overcomes Ayush to enter Australian Open semis, Satwik-Chirag out



SYDNEY, Nov 21: Lakshya Sen overcame a resolute Ayush Shetty to secure a place in the men's singles semifinals but it was curtains for top seeded Indian men's doubles pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty at the Australian Open Super 500 tournament here on Friday.

Lakshya, seeded seventh, who had beaten the 20-year-old Shetty at the same stage in the Hong Kong Open earlier this year, won 23-21, 21-11 to set up a

last-four clash against Chinese-Taipei's Chou Tien Chen, the second seed in the event.

Chou, ranked No. 9 in the world and a 2018 Asian Games silver medalist, overcame Farhan Alwi 13-21, 23-21, 21-16 in a match lasting a marathon 1 hour, 23 minutes.

However, Satwik and Chirag, who had reached the finals of Hong Kong Open and China Masters, were shown the door by fifth seeded Indonesian pair of Fajar Alfian and Muhammad Shohibul Fikri with a 21-19 21-15 win.

Sen, the 2021 World Championship bronze-medallist, who had made it to the Hong Kong Open final but has gone without a title this year, had a tough time beating Shetty in the opening game with the higher-ranked Indian trailing 6-9.

However, Lakshya fought his way back to take a 11-10 lead at the break. Following a seesaw battle, the Almor shuttler managed a 19-17 advantage.

However, Ayush was the first one to take a game point before squandering it as Lakshya finally closing out the opener after a few tense moments.

The second game of the 53-minute contest turned out to be a one-sided one with Sen taking an early 6-1 lead, which swelled to 15-7 in no time as Ayush's challenge wilted.

Sen is the only Indian remaining in men's singles after senior pros Prannoy and Kidambi Srikanth had made early exits on Thursday. (PTI)

Deepti, Renuka among 277 players in fray for 73 slots in WPL auction on Nov 27

NEW DELHI, Nov 21: As many as 277 players from across the world, including India's World Cup star Deepti Sharma, will vie for 73 slots during the upcoming Women's Premier League auction, scheduled here for November 27.

Announcing the list of players who have entered the auction pool, a WPL media advisory said a total of 19 players had registered in the highest base-price bracket of Rs 50 lakh, 11 players in the Rs 40 lakh bracket, and 88 players in the Rs 30 lakh bracket.

"The auction list includes 194 Indian players, comprising 52 capped and 142 uncapped players, who will go under the hammer for 50 slots, while 66 overseas capped players and 17 overseas uncapped players will look to fill the 23 available slots," said the release. India's charismatic all-rounder Deepti, Harleen Deol, Pratika Rawal, Pooja Vastrakar, Usha Chetry and Kranti Goud are in the highest base-price bracket of Rs 50 lakh.

New Zealand's Sophie Devine and Amelia Kerr, England's Sophie Ecclestone, Australia's Alyssa Healy and Meg Lanning, among others, have also registered in the Rs 50-lakh bracket. (PTI)

It's official! Mandhana confirms engagement with musician Palash Mucchal; PM sends good wishes



NEW DELHI, Nov 21: World Cup-winning Indian women's cricket team star Smriti Mandhana has made her engagement with music composer Palash Mucchal official, triggering an avalanche of congratulatory messages, including one from Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The swashbuckling batter turned on the fun quotient in a rare video of her dancing with her teammates -- Radha Yadav, Jemimah Rodrigues, Shreyanka Patil and Arundhati Reddy -- while flashing

her engagement ring and a wide smile to the tune of "Samjho ho hi gaya" from Bollywood movie 'Lage Raho Munnabhai'.

The clip has already drawn more than 1.9 million likes and over 12,000 comments on Instagram since being shared by Jemimah. Mandhana and Mucchal will tie the knot on November 23.

The Prime Minister sent a note congratulating the couple, saying that he expects the grace of Mandhana's cover drive to form a wonderful partnership with "the lilting

musical symphony" of Mucchal.

"Walking hand in hand through every season of life, may the couple find strength in each other's presence and their hearts, minds and souls be in harmony. May their dreams intertwine and grow together, guiding them toward a future filled with joy and deep understanding," he wrote.

"May Smriti and Palaash build a shared life rooted in trust, standing by each other always, embracing responsibilities with love and growing together through each other's strengths and imperfections."

"As they start a new, beautiful life together, the grace of Smriti's cover drive meets the lilting musical symphony of Palaash in a wonderful partnership," he added.

The PM revealed that a Celebration Cricket Match has been scheduled between Team Groom and Team Bride as part of the wedding festivities.

"May both these teams win in the game of life. I send my blessings to the couple for the momentous occasion," he said. (PTI)

Confident of India winning 2030 CWG hosting rights: IOA chief Usha

NEW DELHI, Nov 21: Indian Olympic Association president P T Usha is confident about securing the hosting rights of the 2030 Centenary Commonwealth Games during the Commonwealth Sport General Assembly in Glasgow on November 26.

"Tomorrow we are leaving for Glasgow. I am confident that people's hope will be fulfilled. I am positive. Just wait for 2-3 days," Usha said here on Friday.

Last month, the Executive Board of Commonwealth Sport recommended Ahmedabad as the host city for the centenary edition of the Games, pending final approval at the Glasgow meeting.

Both Ahmedabad and Abuja (Nigeria) were part of the final shortlist under the organisation's "Games Reset" principles, aimed at fostering innovation and long-term sustainability. The 2030 Games will mark 100 years since the inaugural CWG was held in Hamilton, Canada.

The Commonwealth Sport Executive Board has also agreed to work with Nigeria to strengthen its future hosting prospects, including a potential bid for the 2034 Games.

Usha was on Friday honoured

with the FIICI Lifetime Achievement Award for her extraordinary contribution to Indian sport, inspiring generations of athletes during FICCI TURF 2025 - 15th Global Sports Summit here.

"I am so happy to get the Lifetime Achievement award. These small, small things motivate us. I was not expecting to get the Lifetime Achievement award," the legendary athlete said.

"Indian sport rises when we rise together. Talent exists in every corner of the country, but opportunity must reach every child. Our focus must remain on the athlete: clear pathways, strong systems, fair selections and support rooted in science, nutrition and mental strength. India is full of young dreamers, and it is our responsibility to ensure their dreams matter."

The event was also attended by Sports Secretary, Government of India Hari Ranjan Rao.

"India's sporting progress depends on one principle: an athlete-focused, coach-led ecosystem supported by every stakeholder. Collaboration between the Centre, states, industry and federations is essential," Rao said. (PTI)

'Pitched battle' on cards as India aim to draw level

GUWAHATI, Nov 21: Rishabh Pant will walk into an immensely challenging leadership exam in the absence of Shubman Gill as India face the uphill task of restoring parity against a well-prepared South Africa on a surface that is expected to offer appreciable turn in the second and final Test starting here on Saturday.

An even tougher test looms for head coach Gautam Gambhir, whose often perplexing calls have left the dressing room and think-tank grappling for clarity.

The aura of invincibility while playing at home that accompanied the Indian teams of last three decades has vanished when it comes to the current one, which is looking vulnerable. For the first time in many years, India are going into a home Test match as underdogs and not favourites. Ask any player worth his salt and he would tell that it is not a happy place to be.

If the New Zealand spin duo of Ajaz Patel and Mitchell Santner tore the perception of invincibility to shreds in 2024, Simon Harmer and his other colleagues are making a young Indian side look even more vulnerable. The lack of a proper technique to handle spinners is apparent and jarring.

Add to it, a massive shift in mindset on tracks that implore, has made matters worse.

While Gambhir, with support of men who matter in the BCCI, is perfectly safe when it comes to his job but a 0-5 home record against two SENA countries will damage his coaching legacy forever and no amount of ICC Trophies would be enough to paper over that aspect.

And in these trying circumstances, Pant will take up leadership in the absence of Gill. He would know quite well that his batting on a red soil Barsapara track will be as important as his decision-making.

That Gill was never in contention to play the second Test after suffering from neck spasms was always clear but the Indian team management and the BCCI, true to their nature of avoiding clarity till the last minute, denied the inevitable till it became undeniable. According to reliable sources, the 26-year-old has left the city to rest and recuperate.

Sai Sudharsan looks to be the most likely candidate to take



2ND TEST

Gill's place although whether he bats at No.3 or Washington Sundar is allowed to continue remains to be seen.

When it comes to captaincy experience, Pant led an Indian T20 team against the same opponents few years back when Rohit Sharma was rested.

But there isn't enough data on his red-ball decision-making skills.

Pant did lead a Delhi side to a Ranji Trophy final back in 2017 losing to eventual champions Vidarbha.

However, what would keep experts more interested is the calls he took on the second evening and third morning of the opening Test in Kolkata.

By stumps on second evening, India had reduced to South

Africa to 93 for 7 with help of spinners. What left a lot to be desired was Pant's eternal wait before handing the ball to Mohammed Siraj and Jasprit Bumrah on the third morning.

By that time, Temba Bavuma had added those additional 60 runs which became decisive.

While Pant, the lively chatter box behind the stumps, is an incentive for the bowlers, it is Pant the skipper, who will have to convince his coach to make some prudent calls when it comes to team selection.

With too many left-handers in the line-up, as many as seven, off-spinner Simon Harmer might just have a field day if the covering of grass that was seen on the track on Thursday, is shaved off by BCCI curators Taposh Chatterjee and Ashish Bhowmick.

In any case, BCCI secretary Devajit Saikia wouldn't want this venue's first ever Test to be remembered for all the wrong reasons.

Hence, one of the spinners -- Axar Patel or Kuldeep Yadav -- could make way for all-rounder Nitish Kumar Reddy, which can help India exploit any underlying moisture if a third seamer comes into play.

In case his bowling isn't required, being a right hander with a cavalier approach to batting might just help on these kind of surfaces. But in the end, it all boils down to faith in players instead of being a slave of the surface.

When it comes to trust, the head coach, for once, would like to walk the talk before another lost home series which will have way more implications than he can ever think of.

Teams:
India: Rishabh Pant (captain and wk), KL Rahul, Yashasvi Jaiswal, B Sai Sudharsan, Dhruv Jurel, Ravindra Jadeja, Washington Sundar, Nitish Kumar Reddy, Kuldeep Yadav, Axar Patel, Jasprit Bumrah, Mohammed Siraj, Devdutt Padikkal, Akash Deep.

South Africa: Temba Bavuma (C), Corbin Bosch, De-

wald Brevis, Tony de Zorzi, Zubayr Hamza, Simon Harmer, Marco Jansen, Keshav Maharaj, Aiden Markram, Wiaan Mulder, Senuran Muthusamy, Lungi Ngidi, Ryan Rickelton, Tristan Stubbs and Kyle Verreynne.

Match Starts at 9 am. (PTI)

Watching Ashes made me jealous, hope we also get to play 4-Test series: Bavuma

GUWAHATI, Nov 21: A 'jealous' Temba Bavuma watched the Ashes action unfold in Perth on Friday morning and wondered why South Africa get to play just a two-Test series against India despite being the reigning World Champions in the traditional format.

Bavuma, who led South Africa to the WTC title earlier this year, said the brief series does little justice to the contest between two of the strongest red-ball sides in world cricket.

"We woke up this morning to watch the Ashes. We watched with a bit of jealousy, knowing that they were playing five Tests. They'll be going at each other," Bavuma said, clearly unimpressed that a champion team gets to play a short series. "Hopefully, not too far in the future, but more in the near future, we'll go back to play four tests against India."

The South African skipper has been in the business long enough to know that players hardly have any say in the "mapping of schedules". The number of Tests in a series is directly proportional to financial health of a cricket nation. Hence the Ashes, the Border-Gavaskar Trophy (India vs Australia) and the Anderson-Tendulkar Trophy (India vs England) are five-match series because of their commercial viability.

But all other nations that India play against are generally two-Test series, whether it is South Africa, New Zealand, West Indies or Bangladesh.

"Players are not involved when it comes to mapping out the schedule. I think every of our players who have had the opportunity to interact with the media, have had that question in front of them. They have voiced out their frustration," the Proteas skipper said.

India stand-in skipper Rishabh Pant echoed the sentiment, acknowledging that scheduling is beyond the team's control, but admitted that a two-Test series has a two-match after an early loss.

"When you have a two-match series, it's harder because the pressure becomes more if you lose the first match. But at the same time, you know, these are the things which we can't control as a team," he said.

What makes a two-Test series less entertaining is that the probability of a drawn series is way more compared to a result that three-game series can yield. (PTI)

Guwahati set to debut as Test centre putting northeast on cricket's oldest format's map

GUWAHATI, Nov 21: Assam's largest city Guwahati is set to make its debut as the newest Test centre on Saturday when India take on South Africa in the second and final game of the two-match series.

The only international cricket venue in the region, Guwahati, known as the 'Gateway to the Northeast', had earned the distinction of hosting ICC World Cup matches for the first time earlier this year.

The traditional red-ball format will be played at the Assam Cricket Association (ACA) Stadium at Barsapara area of the city and the enthusiasm among organisers, cricket fans, journalists and general public was palpable on the eve of the game.

"It will be a historic day for all of us. To be recognised as a Test venue is a dream for every cricket-loving region. And it is happening tomorrow," BCCI secretary Devajit Saikia, a former first-class cricketer from Assam, told PTI on Friday.

"Guwahati has been hosting ODIs since 1983. World Cup matches were also held here this year during the ICC Women's World Cup. The successful hosting of the matches over the years and



development of top-class facilities have ensured this proud moment for Guwahati," Saikia added.

International cricket matches were earlier played at the Nehru Stadium, and the ACA shifted base to Barsapara in 2017.

The match will begin at 9 am instead of the standard 9.30 am start for other venues in India to compensate for the early sunrise and sunset in the region. It will also see a reversal of the traditional lunch and tea break timings due to the early start.

"Change in timings and the breaks have been necessitated due to local daylight conditions. The tra-

dition of ringing of bell to mark the start of each day's play is being followed," Saikia said.

For veteran cricketer Bimal Bharali, who represented the state in the 1970s and 80s, it is a dream come true to be able to watch a Test being played in Guwahati in his lifetime.

"It was nearly unimaginable during our time that Guwahati will be hosting Tests. Facilities were very basic. It is wonderful that not just ODIs and T20is, but Test has also come to our city," Bharali, who was also part of the East Zone team which played against a visiting England side in 1976, said. (PTI)

Ben Stokes shines with five-wicket haul as England gains first-innings advantage in Ashes opener

PERTH, Nov 21: In a chaotic opening day of the Ashes, Ben Stokes won the toss and watched his team skittled for 172 before taking a five-wicket haul to give England a first-innings advantage Friday in the first cricket test.

Day 1 lived up to the pre-series hype, with pace bowlers dominating on a sunny day in front of more than 51,000 spectators at Perth Stadium.

Mitchell Starc took a career-best 7-58 as Australia bundled England out by the second session. Jofra Archer took a wicket in the first over of Australia's reply to show the five-man England pace arsenal wasn't to be outdone. The home team was 123-9 at stumps, still 49 runs behind.

In terms of wickets — 19 tumbled in 72 overs — the test is almost half over with four days remaining.

England lost wickets at regular intervals but batted with intent, scoring at 5.23 runs per over.

The disjointed Australian batting lineup went in defensively and lost wickets at even more regular intervals, without the flow of runs.

Batters from both teams were hit in the grill by sharply rising short-pitch deliveries, with Cameron Green struck by a 147 kph (91 mph) Mark Wood bouncer that knocked him off balance and almost had him tripping on his stumps in the 24th over of Australia's innings.

England's attack was bowling with the kind of menace that the Australian pacemen usually dish out to visiting teams Down Under.

Bad timing
England's late batting collapse caught Usman Khawaja by surprise, the veteran Australia opener



in the dressing rooms at the time.

Because he was off for more than eight minutes and hadn't spent an equivalent amount of time back in the field before England's innings ended, he wasn't allowed to open the Australian innings. Mamus Labuschagne had to move up the order to fill in.

Khawaja also wasn't allowed to go in at No. 3 when Jake Weatherald was trapped lbw to Archer on the second ball of the innings on his test debut, meaning Steve Smith had to go to the crease in the first over.

The Ben Stokes show
Archer took the first two wickets and Brydon Carse took the next two to have Australia reeling at 31-4.

Travis head and Green combined in a 45-run fourth-wicket stand to revive Australia's innings before Stokes broke through. He

dismissed Head (21), Green (24), Alex Carey (26) and Starc (12) to rip through the middle order before getting Scott Boland (0) in the next-to-last over to return 5-23 in six overs for the day.

Stokes entered the series saying he was desperate to end England's 15-test winless streak in Australia. So far, it's advantage England.

Starc's career best
The 35-year-old Starc took a wicket in the first over of a test for the 24th time to set the tone, having Zac Crawley caught at slip by Khawaja on the sixth delivery before England had scored a run.

He snared three wickets in his first five overs, including Ben Duckett (21) and Joe Root (0) as England slipped to 39-3.

He took four more after lunch, including the key wicket of Stokes, as England lost six wickets for 67 runs after lunch, including the last

five for 12 runs.

Starc picked off the last two wickets on consecutive balls to remove Jamie Smith (33) and Mark Wood (0), and will start the next innings on a hat-trick.

"Nice way to start a series," Starc said. "There's been a lot made about (Pat Cummins and Josh Hazlewood) being not here and I guess me being an experienced one, so nice to lead that way."

The difference
A 55-run fourth-wicket stand between Ollie Pope (46) and Harry Brook (52) for England was the biggest partnership of Day 1.

England's attacking intent kept with the "Bazball" method under Brendon McCullum's coaching, aiming to score quickly and make the bowlers wilt.

The team batting first has won all five tests played at Perth Stadium and that was a heavy factor in Stokes deciding to go against his preferred option of bowling first and chasing.

Indigenous Australians
Regular skipper Cummins and Hazlewood are missing the first test because of injuries, opening the way for Brendan Doggett (2-27) to make his test debut and become the third Indigenous Australian man to play test cricket.

Doggett bowled alongside Scott Boland, making it the first time two Indigenous Australians have played in the same test lineup.

Doggett made a vital breakthrough in his sixth over to have Brook caught behind, cramped for room and gloving a short-pitch ball down legside. He also troubled Carse (6) with short-pitch bowling before getting his wicket, caught in the outfield. (AP)

Rabada ruled out of second Test Barsapara track better than Eden Gardens says Bavuma



GUWAHATI, Nov 21: South Africa pace spearhead Kagiso Rabada was on Friday ruled out of the second Test against India as he has not recovered from the rib injury he suffered during a training session ahead of the series-opener.

"Kagiso has been ruled out of the second Test," said Proteas skipper Temba Bavuma while giving an update on the pacer, who also missed the first Test in Kolkata, which the visitors won by 30 runs. Bavuma hinted that Lungi Ngidi, who has joined the team as a reinforcement, could feature in the Guwahati game, starting Saturday.

"Is there a temptation to play him? Yeah, definitely. That's why he's here. He can do what he can do with the new ball. If there is a bit of assistance with the new ball, especially with the early morning spots, he definitely comes into play."

"We'd like to make that decision early on in the morning, but with any player that comes into the squad, comes in with the backing of everyone."

Bavuma added that the Guwahati track looked like a typical sub-continental wicket, which aids batting in the first couple of days and then becomes conducive for the slow bowlers.

"This wicket looks a lot fresher and will be more consistent in terms of variability compared to Kolkata. We will have another look in the morning and decide on Kagiso's replacement," the skipper opined.

"This is a typical sub-continental wicket with the first two days good for batting before spinners come into play."

Guwahati is hosting a Test match for the first time and the pitch at the Barsapara Stadium is

an uncharted territory for both teams.

Having won a Test match on a difficult track in Kolkata, Bavuma can feel a spring in the stride of his teammates, who are on cusp of a series-win in India after 25 years.

The last time Proteas won a series in India, Sachin Tendulkar captained India for the last time and late Hansie Cronje also played his final series as leader of Proteas Men.

"The mood is buoyant amongst the boys. We're excited to try and replicate our performances as we did in the first Test. Also excited to be a part of the first Test here in Guwahati, that's being honest."

"Going into the first Test (in Guwahati), it should be an exciting, enthralling one. Everyone is looking forward to it."

Bavuma also feels that toss won't be an over-riding factor like it happened in Kolkata.

"Toss doesn't become too big a factor, comparatively to what a big factor would be like. But in saying that, you know what, you want to win the toss. You know the advantage of preparing on day one and day two, so that still becomes an advantage, but not such a deciding factor."

Even having tea before lunch won't make much of a difference. "In terms of the changes, it will be something new. Having tea before lunch, I don't think it really changes much. From a cricketer's point of view, I guess it's just us getting our mind around the fact that instead of the usual 40 minutes, we have 30 (20) minutes."

On this track, Bavuma's first choice will be bowling if they happen to win the toss.

"Whichever way, we'll be better in bowling first. I don't think it really changes much." (PTI)

India has multiple options: Rhodes on Gill's absence from second Test



NEW DELHI, Nov 21: Former South Africa cricketer Jonny Rhodes feels India will definitely miss Shubman Gill in the second Test against the Proteas but said the hosts have enough bench strength to fill the regular captain's void.

Gill was on Friday released from the Test squad ahead of the second match against South Africa starting Saturday in Guwahati after he could not fully recover from a neck spasm sustained while batting in the first innings of the opening Test in Kolkata.

"Sometimes India's strength is also a slight disadvantage. They have so many great cricket players. So, who to bring in, who to leave out is such a difficult call."

"It's a great problem to have and it just shows. Every time there is a gap to be filled, India has a multitude of options. It's more a case of whichever player gets the opportunity," Rhodes said when asked about Gill's absence from the second Test.

The 56-year-old South African, however, said whoever gets the chance will need to prove his worth instantly because of the stiff competition for places in the India team. "Are they grounded enough and are they focused enough to make the most of it? Because the big issue

with the Indian set-up is such a strong side that you might only get one opportunity.

"You're not going to leave him (Gill) out, so you've probably got one Test. And always psychologically, that's a tough thing to handle. So, whichever player they pick, they've got great talent," Rhodes said on the sidelines of FICCI TURF 2025 - 15th Global Sports Summit here on Friday.

"Someone's going to be there and disappointed. And the key there, if there's an injury, India has the opportunity to bring the talent. So, the difficulty always is choosing those 11." Rhodes lauded Indian cricket's succession plan and cited the examples MS Dhoni, Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma.

While Dhoni has retired from international cricket, Kohli and Rohit now only play one format -- ODIs.

"India has built on the capabilities of Dhoni, Kohli, and they've done exceptionally well. But there's always been a succession plan. India has built on that. So, India needs to ensure that they keep bringing in these younger players because they've got the talent. It's just given them the opportunity," Rhodes said.

"And absolutely, they are great stars. They are fantastic role models for cricket in India. It is great to see that people have this love for the guys. And, you know, that cricket is such a burning passion."

Rhodes also congratulated the Indian women's cricket team for lifting its maiden ODI World Cup recently.

"Hopefully, they (India) start having the love for the ladies too. Women's cricket in India is going to skyrocket. I want to see that same support for women's team." (PTI)

SAI organises 45-day coaching camp for karatekas aspiring for 2026 Asiad

NEW DELHI, Nov 21: The Sports Authority of India (SAI), through the Target Asian Games Group (TAGG) scheme, has organised a 45-day coaching camp for 48 karatekas in Lucknow as part of their build-up to the 2026 Asian Games in Japan.

The 45-day camp for karate got underway on November 17 and will continue till December 31 at the SAI Regional Centre in Lucknow. "The camp features 64 members, including 48 athletes, 12 coaches, and 4 support staff and the entire camp has been sanctioned with financial assistance of Rs 1.42 crore under the Assistance to National Sports Federations (ANSFs) Scheme," the SAI said in a statement.

It is to ensure that the core athletes -- 24 men and as many women -- get full access to training facilities and continue their high-performance training despite the de-recognition of their national federation. The Karate Association of India has been de-recognised after losing its affiliation with the world body owing to infighting and administrative irregularities.

The camp in Lucknow will identify the talent that will go through exposure opportunities abroad in the build-up to the Asian Games, scheduled from September 19 to October 4 next year. SAI had constituted an Organising Committee for Karate in July this year to manage all aspects of the sport, from athlete selection to coaching camps and foreign exposure. To ensure a transparent and fair selection pathway, the committee had conducted Open National Selection Trials in senior category from October 12-14 at the SAI Training Centre in NEHU Campus, Shillong. (PTI)