

**6 NATION**

- Govt mulling expansion of BSF's operational mandate: Amit Shah
- Part of under-construction bridge collapses in UP following storm, six labourers killed

**7 NORTHEAST**

- Security forces fire tear gas shells to disperse protesters in Manipur's Ukhrul
- Manipur Police museum a tribute to dedication, sacrifices of police personnel: CM

## Assam, Meghalaya CMs' talks focus on enhancing cooperation in infra devp, connectivity

# Himanta, Conrad agree to end border dispute

**HT Bureau**  
**GUWAHATI, May 29:** Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma and Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma on Friday agreed to expedite the ongoing boundary demarcation process and work towards a lasting solution to the decades-old inter-state border dispute between the two neighbouring states.

The decision was taken during a meeting held at Lok Sewa Bhawan in Guwahati, where a Meghalaya delegation led by Sangma called on Sarma and discussed a range of inter-state issues.

Describing the meeting as productive, Sarma said the two leaders made progress on several long-standing issues and reaffirmed their commitment to resolving the boundary dispute through continued dialogue and cooperation.

"It was an honour to welcome the enterprising Chief Minister of Meghalaya and my dear brother Conrad Sangma to Lok Sewa Bhawan today. We had an excellent discussion and have made some good progress on long-standing legacy issues. On the boundary



demarcation process, we agreed to expedite the ongoing process and bring a lasting solution to this matter," Sarma said in a post on X.

According to the Chief Minister's Office, the discussions focused on key inter-state matters, including the Assam-Meghalaya boundary issue, with both sides reiterating their commitment to mutual respect, friendship and constructive engagement.

Narendra Modi as the "Ashtalakshmi" region.

Assam and Meghalaya share an 884.9-km-long border and have a longstanding dispute in 12 sectors along the boundary.

In March 2022, the two states signed a historic agreement in the presence of Union Home Minister Amit Shah to resolve disputes in six of the 12 contested areas.

Under the first-phase settlement, Assam received 18.46 sq km and Meghalaya 18.33 sq km of the disputed 36.79 sq km area.

The remaining six sectors, considered more complex, are currently being addressed under the second phase of negotiations.

Meghalaya, which was carved out of Assam in 1972, has long contested certain provisions of the Assam Reorganisation Act, 1971, which Assam recognises as the basis of the inter-state boundary.

The latest meeting is being viewed as a significant step towards resolving the remaining disputes while strengthening cooperation, peace and coordinated development between the two states. (With Inputs from PTI)

### Assam's economic growth, fiscal prudence reflect strong governance: Himanta

**Staff Reporter**  
**GUWAHATI, May 29:** Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Thursday highlighted the state's steady economic progress and fiscal discipline, asserting that Assam is moving towards the vision of a "Viksit Assam" through sustained growth and prudent financial management.

Sharing key economic indicators, the Chief Minister said Assam has successfully maintained a revenue surplus for five consecutive years from 2020 to 2025, reflecting stronger fiscal health and disciplined public finance management.

According to the data shared by the Chief Minister, Assam's contribution to the national Gross Domestic Product (GDP) has also witnessed a notable rise over the last five years.

The state's share in the national GDP increased from 1.71 per cent in 2020-21 to 1.95 per cent in 2024-25.

Describing the achievement as a sign of consistent economic expansion, Sarma said the state government's focus on infrastructure development, investment promotion, fiscal discipline and welfare-oriented governance has strengthened Assam's economic foundation.

"A Viksit Assam rests on the foundations of fiscal prudence and sustained economic expansion," the Chief Minister said in a statement shared on social media.

He further stated that maintaining a revenue surplus for five straight years demonstrates that Assam has managed to generate more income than expenditure while (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

### Cong begins constituency-wise review of poll defeat in Jorhat

**HT Correspondent**  
**JORHAT, May 29:** The Indian National Congress has launched a four-day constituency-wise review exercise in Jorhat district to analyse the reasons behind its defeat in all four Assembly constituencies during the recently concluded elections.

The review meetings, being held from May 29 to June 1 at the district party office in Jorhat, are being organised under the directive of Assam Pradesh Congress Committee (APCC) president and Jorhat MP Gaurav Gogoi.

The exercise began on Thursday with a review meeting for the Teok Legislative Assembly Constituency (LAC). Among those present were former Teok candidate Pallabi Saikia Gogoi, APCC vice-president Ghana Buragohain, general secretary Subhamitra Gogoi and secretary Abinash Gogoi. According to party sources, the review meetings aim to conduct a detailed assessment of the party's performance at the constituency and booth levels. Discussions will focus on the functioning of party organisations, the role of workers during the campaign,

voter response, election experiences and measures required to strengthen the organisational structure.

The review meetings for Titabar, Jorhat and Mariani constituencies are scheduled to be held on May 30, May 31 and June 1 respectively. Party leaders said the exercise is intended to identify shortcomings, evaluate ground-level performance and formulate strategies to improve the Congress organisation and outreach in the district ahead of future electoral contests.

### Three killed, one critical after inhaling toxic gas in Goalpara septic tank

*Army jawan, mason and labourer die during rescue attempt at Goraimari village; police launch investigation*

**HT Bureau**  
**GUWAHATI, May 29:** Three persons were killed and another critically injured after inhaling suspected poisonous gas inside a septic tank at Goraimari village under Agia Police Station in Goalpara district on Friday.

According to police, the incident occurred while a septic tank, constructed several months ago and kept sealed with an RCC cover, was being cleaned.

An army jawan on leave, Josek Rabha, had engaged mason Krishna Roy and labourer Dilip Das to remove bamboo materials left inside the tank.

As Dilip Das entered the tank, he reportedly experienced breathing difficulties and collapsed.

In an attempt to rescue him, Krishna Roy entered the tank but also lost consciousness within moments.

Seeing the two men collapse,

Josek Rabha climbed into the tank to save them.

However, he too succumbed to the suspected toxic fumes. Rabha's cousin, Bajpayee Rabha, also entered the tank during the rescue attempt and fell unconscious.

Local residents rushed to the spot, rescued the victims and took them to hospital.

Doctors later declared Josek Rabha, Krishna Roy and Dilip Das dead.

Bajpayee Rabha was admitted to the intensive care unit and remains in critical condition.

Goalpara West Co-District Superintendent of Police Abhilash Barua said the septic tank had remained closed for over three months and the victims are suspected to have inhaled poisonous gas accumulated inside it.

"The tank was closed for more than three months. As soon as one person (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

## Kaziranga National Park witnessed 15 pc rise in tourist footfall in FY'26: CM

**GUWAHATI, May 29:** Tourist footfall in Assam's famed Kaziranga National Park rose by over 15 per cent in 2025-26 to nearly five lakh visitors, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said on Friday.

In a series of posts on X, he said that the visit of Indian and Bhutanese prime ministers to the UNESCO world heritage site has emboldened the stature of the national park.

"FY 2025-26 was Kaziranga's best year on record. Tourist footfall rose to 4.68 lakh, up from 4.06 lakh the previous year. A decade ago, the figure stood at just 1.55 lakh. The transformation has been steady, deliberate and sustained," Sarma said.

During the last fiscal, foreign tourist arrivals increased from 17,693 to 30,474 in a single year, he said.

"When travellers from across the world choose Assam, it validates our efforts to build globally competitive tourism infrastructure...

What happens when conservation is treated not as a constraint on development, but as a catalyst for growth? @kaziranga may have the answer," the CM said.

With a "record-breaking" 5.48 lakh visitors since April 2025 till date, the national park is emerging as one of India's most compelling tourism success stories, he said.

"The visits of Adarniya @narendramodi Ji, the King of Bhutan and over 60 Heads of Mission have further strengthened Kaziranga's standing on the global stage. Assam is no longer a destination people discover by chance. It is increasingly becoming a destination they seek out," the chief minister said.

He asserted that Assam's conservation model rests on a simple principle - protect wildlife first.

"From battling rhino poaching to achieving years with ZERO RHINO POACHING in Kaziranga, Assam has shown that determined governance can reverse even the toughest challenges," he

said.

Sarma also said that the rare sightings of the Golden Tiger, growing populations of the one-horned rhino, Gangetic Dolphin tourism and the return of migratory species such as the Smew point toward a healthier ecosystem.

"This is the outcome of years of sustained conservation efforts. Kaziranga today offers far more than a safari. Boat Safaris in Panpur and Laokhowa-Burachapori, cycling trails, birding circuits, trekking routes and community-led tourism initiatives are opening new opportunities for local entrepreneurs and youth," he said.

The CM said that the upcoming Kaziranga Elevated Corridor reflects the government's vision for the future.

"It will enable safer wildlife movement across critical habitats while improving connectivity for residents and visitors. Development and conservation must move together. This project embodies that (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

### Drugs worth ₹ 18 crore seized in Cachar region

**GUWAHATI, May 29:** Narcotic substances worth ₹ 18 crore were seized from Cachar district of Assam, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said on Friday.

"In a major anti-narcotics operation, @cacharpolice intercepted a vehicle during naka checking and seized 60,000 YABA tablets worth ₹ 18 crore in the black market. The drug mafia may innovate, but so will (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

### Four dead as SUV hits stationary truck

**GUWAHATI, May 29:** Four people, including a woman, were killed when their SUV hit a truck from behind in the Kamrup Metropolitan district of Assam on Friday, police said.

According to an official, the incident occurred on National Highway-27 at Tetelia near Sonapur in the afternoon.

"The SUV, carrying an Arunachal (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

## Child vaccination rises to 87.1 percent, malnutrition indicators improve: NFHS-6

**NEW DELHI, May 29:** India has registered significant improvements in child health indicators, including immunisation coverage and nutritional outcomes, according to the sixth round of the National Family Health Survey (NFHS-6) released by the Union Health Ministry on Friday.

Full vaccination coverage among children aged 12-23 months increased from 83.8 per cent in 2019-21 to 87.1 per cent in 2023-24, while key child nutrition indicators such as stunting and severe wasting registered significant declines, according to the NFHS-6.

The NFHS-6 was conducted during 2023-24 by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare with the International Institute for Population Sciences (IIPS), Mumbai as the nodal agency.



Covering nearly 6.79 lakh households across 715 districts, the survey provides evidence on population, health, nutrition and family welfare indicators and supports programme implementation up to the district level.

India continues to make strong progress towards universal immunisation coverage, the ministry said in a statement.

Full vaccination coverage among children aged 12-23 months, based on vaccination

cards, increased from 83.8 per cent in NFHS-5 (2019-21) to 87.1 per cent in NFHS-6 (2023-24).

Reaffirming the trust of communities in the public healthcare system, 95.6 per cent of children received most vaccinations through public health facilities, up from 94.5 per cent in NFHS-5.

The survey found that receipt of any vaccine among children aged 12-23 months remained consistently high at above 96 per cent, while substantial improvements were recorded across major vaccines.

Rotavirus vaccination coverage rose sharply from 36.4 per cent to 85.4 per cent during the survey period, while coverage of the second dose of measles-containing vaccine increased significantly from 58.6 per cent to 71.8 per cent. The survey (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

## Gauhati HC tells WII to conduct ecological study of Guwahati Ring Road before start of construction work

**GUWAHATI, May 29:** The Gauhati High Court has ordered the Wildlife Institute of India (WII) to carry out an impact study for possible ecological damage to Amchang Wildlife Sanctuary before the start of the construction work of the ₹ 5,730 crore Guwahati Ring Road project.

A Divisional Bench of the Gauhati High Court, comprising Chief Justice Ashutosh Kumar and Justice Arun Dev Choudhury, in its order on Tuesday, noted that the Standing Committee of the National Board for Wildlife has given a conditional approval for the project, requiring a full impact study and certain proscriptions of night constructions.

The Assam government informed the Gauhati High Court about the decision to conduct a study now in response to a Public Interest Litigation, filed by Arka-

Chaliha and Mahesh Deka, questioning the manner of execution of the Guwahati Ring Road Project.

The government has also told the HC that the Divisional Forest Officer of Guwahati Wildlife Division had issued an e-tender for selecting a contractor for felling trees inside the Amchang Wildlife Sanctuary for widening of the road, but it was only for the purpose of selecting a contractor for the work.

The e-tender was not meant for starting the work immediately without taking into account the impact study by either Wildlife Institute of the country or any other specialised agency, the order stated.

In February this year, the Gauhati Wildlife Division, in a tender advertisement, sought bids for felling trees at Amchang Wildlife Sanctuary, considered the lungs of

the state capital, for the construction of a ring road.

The advertisement mentioned the project cost for "operation of trees in connection with diversion of forest land" is ₹ 65,15,654, and the completion period was fixed at 90 days.

"...the Wildlife Institute of India has been commended to conduct the study to assess the impact of the project and prescribed mitigation measures," the High Court order said.

The Detailed Project Report (DPR) and relevant file from the state government has been received by the Wildlife Institute, the technical and financial proposal for the study would be prepared within a period of two weeks, it added.

"...whereafter the study shall be conducted and a report shall be submitted (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

## Resilient Indian economy may face West Asia headwinds; El Nino impact likely on agri output: RBI

**MUMBAI, May 29:** India's economy could face headwinds due to higher energy prices and supply chain disruptions, while the likelihood of El Nino conditions could hit agriculture output, the RBI said in its annual report released on Friday.

However, healthy corporate and bank balance sheets, the government's continued thrust on capital expenditure and the implementation of trade agreements with key partners are expected to sustain investment and growth momentum.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) released its Annual Report for 2025-26, a statutory report of its Central Board of Directors, on Friday. It covers the working and functions of the Reserve Bank of India for the period April 2025 - March 2026.

Market volatility persisted due to geopolitical risks and valuation concerns but surged towards the end of March 2026 following the West Asia conflict.

The Indian economy exhibited resilience in 2025-26, amidst several external headwinds, supported by strong private consumption, sustained investment and sound macroeconomic fundamentals.

The report said that the outlook for the Indian economy in 2026-27 remains positive, supported by strong macroeconomic fundamentals, although a prolonged West Asia conflict may pose downside risk.

"Going forward, India's growth outlook remains positive, though the West Asia conflict and the attendant risks of elevated energy prices, supply chain disruptions, financial market volatility, uncertainty surrounding global trade policies and weather-related disruptions could pose headwinds to growth and inflation in the short run," it said.

The RBI also said the outlook for the agriculture sector in 2026-27 remains contingent upon the progress and distribution of the south-west monsoon.

The likelihood of El Nino conditions poses downside risks to agriculture output, it added. On Friday, the India Meteorological Depart-



ment said the June-September southwest monsoon seasonal rainfall over India is expected to be 90 per cent of the long-period average with a model error of 4 per cent.

On price situation, the report said inflation in 2026-27 is likely to remain aligned with the target on the back of adequate foodgrain stocks, sufficient reservoir levels and stable agricultural prospects despite possible El Niño conditions and above-normal summer temperatures.

"However, the evolving upside risks to inflation may emanate from multiple other factors such as spike in global fuel and commodity prices amid geopolitical tensions, potential spillovers to input and wage costs, and volatility in exchange rate," it said. Considering all these factors, consumer price index-based inflation for 2026-27 is projected at 4.6 per cent with risks tilted to the upside, the RBI said.

Reserve Bank's balance sheet swelled to ₹ 91.97 lakh crore at the end of March 2026, up 20.6 per cent year-on-year, due to a rise in domestic investments as well as gold and foreign investments.

The balance sheet size increased by ₹ 15,71,699.15 crore from ₹ 76,25,421.93 crore as on March 31, 2025, to ₹ 91,97,121.08 crore as on March 31, 2026, the Annual Report for 2025-26 said.

The increase on the assets side was due to a rise in domestic investments, gold and foreign investments by 44.9 per cent, 63.8 per cent and 7.9 per cent, respectively. As on March 31, 2026, the report said total gold held by the Reserve Bank was 880.52 metric tonnes as compared to 879.58 metric tonnes as on March 31,

2025, an increase of 0.94 metric tonnes of gold in the year.

"Of the 880.52 metric tonnes, 312.32 metric tonnes of gold is held as an asset of the Issue Department as compared to 311.38 metric tonnes as on March 31, 2025," it said. The remaining 568.20 metric tonnes, same as on March 31, 2025, is treated as an asset of the Banking Department, RBI said.

The report further said banks and financial institutions, taken together, reported 10,114 fraud cases involving ₹ 48,021 crore in 2025-26, against 23,722 cases involving ₹ 32,803 crore in 2024-25.

An assessment of bank group-wise fraud cases over the last three years indicates that although the number of frauds for public and private sectors banks has reduced, the amount involved has increased over the years, said the RBI Annual Report for 2025-26.

While the number of frauds was the highest under card/internet/digital payments category during 2023-24 and 2024-25, advances category accounted for the largest share in 2025-26.

In value terms, frauds were concentrated in the advances category across three years. Detection of counterfeit currency notes in the banking system also rose 5.7 per cent in 2025-26, led by a sharp increase in fakes found in ₹ 500 and ₹ 200 denominations.

The total number of counterfeit notes detected increased to 2,29,746 pieces in 2025-26, up from 2,17,396 in the preceding financial year.

Fake ₹ 500 notes remained the most detected denomination, rising 20.5 per cent to 1,41,907 pieces during the year from 1,17,722 in 2024-25.

Meanwhile, the volume of ₹ 500 denomination banknotes in circulation increased about 11.2 per cent in FY26. The volume of ₹ 500 notes increased to 7,05,482 lakh pieces at end-March 2026, from 6,34,458 lakh pieces a year ago. In value terms, ₹ 500 notes in circulation increased to ₹ 35.27 lakh crore in FY26, from ₹ 31.72 lakh crore in FY25. (PTI)

## Stock markets decline for 3<sup>rd</sup> day

**MUMBAI, May 29:** Benchmark Sensex tumbled 1,092 points and Nifty closed below 24,550 on Friday due to last-minute profit booking in financials and oil & gas shares amid reports of a below-normal monsoon season rainfall. Dragged by late selling, the 30-share BSE Sensex declined by 1,092.06 points, or 1.44 per cent, to settle at 74,775.74. The index opened higher and moved in a tight range for most of the session. However, heavy profit booking in Reliance Industries, HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank, M&M and Bajaj Finance dragged the benchmark down by 1,278.69 points, or 1.68 per cent, to 74,589.11 in the

pre-close session. Falling for the third consecutive session, the 50-share NSE Nifty dived 359.40 points, or 1.50 per cent, to end at 23,547.75. Among 30 Sensex firms, Power Grid, InterGlobe Aviation, NTPC, Mahindra & Mahindra, Tata Steel and Bajaj Finance were the major laggards.

Tech Mahindra, HCL Tech, Larsen & Toubro and Infosys were the gainers. "Markets witnessed a sharp bout of volatility in the final hour of trade on Friday, with benchmark indices erasing most of their intraday gains amid heavy institutional selling," Ajit Mishra, SVP, Research, Religare Broking Ltd, said. (PTI)

Contd. from Page 1...

## Zubeen case: HC

that Mahanta had prepared dictated notes for co-accused and singer Amrit Prabha Mahanta regarding statements to be made during the investigation, prompting concerns about witness influence and interference in the probe.

The case relates to the death of Zubeen Garg, who died on September 19 last year while swimming near Lazarus Island in Singapore, a day before he was scheduled to perform at the North East India Festival (NEIF). Following widespread public outrage and more than 60 FIRs lodged across Assam, a Special Investigation Team (SIT) of the CID conducted an extensive probe and filed a chargesheet naming seven accused, including Mahanta.

On May 26, the Special Fast-Track Court framed charges against all seven accused.

Apart from Mahanta, those facing trial include Siddharth Sharma, Shekhar Jyoti Goswami, Amrit Prabha Mahanta, DSP Sandipan Garg, and personal security officers Nandeswar Bora and Prabir Baishya.

They have been charged under various provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), including murder, culpable homicide not amounting to murder, criminal conspiracy and causing death by negligence.

Mahanta, chief organiser of the NEIF, faces eight charges, while the remaining accused face varying numbers of charges.

Amrit Prabha Mahanta, who had travelled to Singapore with the singer, remains in judicial custody.

The case has attracted intense public attention, with social media campaigns demanding justice for the late singer.

Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma had earlier described the case as a "plain and simple murder" in the State Assembly.

Meanwhile, a separate investigation by the Singapore Police Force concluded that there was no evidence of foul play.

A Singapore Coroner's Court also observed that Garg had drowned near Lazarus Island after declining a life jacket and while under severe intoxication.

However, Assam authorities have maintained that the findings of the Singapore investigation will not affect the ongoing trial in the state. (With inputs from PTI)

## Assam's economic growth

ensuring better discipline in public finance. The Chief Minister also termed the improving GDP contribution as evidence of Assam's growing role in the national economy.

He said the state's developmental trajectory reflects the government's commitment towards building an "Atal, Avichal, Agramami Assam".

Officials said the government has been focusing on expanding infrastructure, improving connectivity, encouraging industrial investment and strengthening financial management systems to maintain long-term economic stability.

The state government has repeatedly emphasised that fiscal prudence remains a key priority while implementing welfare schemes and development projects across sectors.

The latest figures come at a time when Assam is projecting itself as an emerging economic and investment hub in the Northeast, with the government aiming to accelerate growth across industries, agriculture, tourism and services sectors.

## Three killed, one

entered, he fainted. Others entered in an attempt to rescue him and met the same fate," Barua said. The bodies were sent to the SNRR Civil Hospital for post-mortem examination in the presence of a magistrate and police officials. The post-mortem report is awaited. Police have launched an investigation into the incident.

## Kaziranga National Park

principle," he said. The tourism sector of Assam is being developed with three objectives - protect nature, create livelihoods and build destinations that the world wishes to experience, Sarma added. (PTI)

## Drugs worth ₹ 18

@assampolice," Sarma said in a post on X. Yaba tablets, also called 'crazy drug', contain a mixture of methamphetamine and caffeine and are banned in India. (PTI)

## Four dead as

Pradesh number plate, was travelling to Guwahati when it hit a stationary truck from behind. The vehicle was being driven at a high speed, and the driver probably lost control," he added.

All four occupants of the SUV died on the spot, the official said, adding the identity of the deceased was being ascertained. (PTI)

## Gauhati HC tells

within 90 days of receipt of the funds in that regard, which fund shall be made available by the NHAI," the HC said.

The NHAI counsel has assured the High Court that there shall be no delay in the release of the funds for conducting such an impact study.

The government counsel also informed the High Court that no trees shall be felled before the impact study is made available, and every effort shall be made to maintain and preserve the wildlife while executing the project.

"All the proscriptions and advisories shall be followed. With such disclosure and undertaking by the State and the NHAI, the executing agency, we do not consider it necessary to continue with this Public Interest Litigation any further," the Bench said while disposing off the petition.

The order highlighted that the petitioners are not opposed to the project, considering the necessity of the by-pass road for traffic management and also for saving the animal corridor.

"It was reiterated by the petitioners that there is a strong necessity for the construction of the Ring Road, but at the same time, the importance of preservation of the Sanctuary would be necessary as it is home to many species of animals," it added.

The area, which would be affected for implementation of the project, would also cover forests and the neighbouring elephant corridor, the High Court said.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in September last year, had laid the foundation stone for the Guwahati Ring Road project, entailing a total expenditure of ₹ 5,730 crore.

Of this, ₹ 4,530 crore will be spent on developing the roads, while ₹ 1,200 crore will be the cost of the bridge over the Brahmaputra connecting Narengi on the southern bank in the capital city and Kuruwa on the northern bank.

The 121.43 km Guwahati Ring Road, divided into three sections, is proposed to decongest the capital city and ease the movement of vehicles, including trucks from West Bengal, Bihar and other states.

The 55 km-long first section will stretch from Baihata Chariali to Sonapur via Kuruwa and Chandrapur. It will include a four-lane road along with several six-lane bridges, including the 2.9 km Kuruwa-Narengi bridge over the Brahmaputra, as well as five other bridges, three flyovers and three road over-bridges.

The second section will see the upgrade of the existing four-lane road into a six-lane stretch from Jayanagar underpass on NH-27 to Jorabat and will feature two flyovers.

The third section will upgrade the four and six-lane road on National Highway 27 from Baihata Chariali to Sonapur. (PTI)

## Child vaccination rises

also recorded improvements in key child health indicators. The prevalence of symptoms of acute respiratory infection (ARI) among children declined from 2.8 per cent to 1.9 per cent, while the prevalence of severe diarrhoea declined to 0.5 per cent.

NFHS-6 also indicated encouraging progress in child nutrition outcomes.

Stunting (low height for age) among children under five years declined substantially from 35.5 per cent to 29.3 per cent, a reduction of around 17 per cent, reflecting improvement in long-term nutritional outcomes.

Severe wasting (too thin for one's height) declined sharply from 7.7 per cent to 5.2 per cent, a reduction of around 32 per cent, while underweight prevalence among children under five years registered a marginal decline from 32.1 per cent to 31.8 per cent.

The survey found that 95.6 per cent of children under six months of age were breast-fed during the survey period. The proportion of children under three years who were breast-fed within one hour of birth increased from 41.8 per cent to 50.1 per cent.

Improvement was also observed in infant and young child feeding practices, with children aged six to eight months receiving solid or semi-solid food along with breastmilk increasing from 45.9 per cent to 59.5 per cent. "These gains reflect strengthened last-mile service delivery by dedicated frontline health workers, enhanced cold chain infrastructure, digital tracking systems such as U-WIN and active community engagement under India's Universal Immunisation Programme and other public health programmes," the ministry said.

The ministry said the gains in child nutrition outcomes were driven by convergent efforts across ministries through flagship initiatives such as POSHAN Abhiyaan and Saksham Anganwadi and POSHAN 2.0, supported by strengthened service delivery under ICDS.

Complementary interventions under the National Health Mission, including maternal and child health services, Nutrition Rehabilitation Centres, Mother's Absolute Affection, infant and young child feeding initiatives, iron and folic acid supplementation and growth monitoring, have further contributed to improved outcomes, it said. (PTI)

## ARKA opens as Guwahati's newest high-rise dining destination

HT Bureau

**GUWAHATI, May 29:** A new high-rise restaurant, ARKA, has opened its doors in Guwahati, promising a premium dining experience with panoramic views of the city skyline, global cuisine and world-class hospitality. Located on the 10th floor of Achyut Express Tower near Royal Arcade, the restaurant is owned by Shova Jalan and was inaugurated by Assamese film actress Yankee Parashar in the presence of guests and well-wishers. Spread across 8,000 square feet with a seating capacity of 230 guests, ARKA offers a range of international cuisines and aims to combine fine dining with a luxurious ambience. The restaurant has separate vegetarian and non-vegetarian kitchens to maintain high standards of hygiene, quality and food preparation. According to the manage-

ment, ARKA follows a strict commitment to food quality, using premium ingredients and focusing on authentic flavours.

The restaurant also serves a variety of handcrafted mocktails prepared with exclusive in-house syrups and ingredients. One of the major attractions of the restaurant is its elevated location, offering sunset views over the city. Elegant interiors, contemporary décor and occasional live music performances are expected to enhance the overall dining experience.

In addition to regular dining services, ARKA will cater to private events including corporate meetings, kitty parties, birthday celebrations, anniversary functions, roka ceremonies and other social gatherings through advance bookings.

## Morepen Labs Q4 profit jumps 69 pc; board recommends 10 pc dividend

HT Bureau

**GUWAHATI, May 29:** Morepen Laboratories Limited reported a strong financial performance for the fourth quarter of FY26, with net profit rising 69 per cent year-on-year to ₹ 20 crore and gross revenue increasing 22 per cent to ₹ 472 crore.

The company said revenue growth during the quarter was driven by strong export performance and continued expansion of its medical devices business.

For FY26, standalone gross revenue crossed ₹ 1,700 crore, registering an 8 per cent increase over the previous financial year.

The Board of Directors has also proposed a dividend of 10 per cent for shareholders for FY26.

During the quarter, the company's API business recorded a 17 per cent growth, while the medical devices segment grew by 31 per cent.

Morepen also successfully completed its fourth consecutive USFDA inspection without any Form 483 observations.

The company stated that commercial production has commenced under its long-term manufacturing partnership programme backed by a global CDMO mandate worth ₹ 825 crore (USD 91 million), secured in February 2026 from a leading multinational company. Validation batches have been completed and phased deliveries are expected to begin shortly.

Commenting on the company's growth strategy, Sushil Suri said Morepen has built strong manufacturing capabilities, regulatory credibility and global customer relationships over the years and is now entering a new phase focused on long-duration manufacturing partnerships, capacity expansion and improved operating leverage.

Sanjay Suri said the company is expanding its manufacturing capacity from around 500 KL to 800 KL, with a long-term target of reaching 1,000 KL. He added that higher scale, a better product mix and long-duration supply programmes are expected to improve margins and earnings visibility. The company also announced completion of a pivotal bioequivalence study for Resmetrom 100 mg, a drug used in the treatment of moderate to advanced liver fibrosis associated with metabolic dysfunction-associated steatohepatitis (MASHD), covering major regulated markets outside the United States.

Meanwhile, Morepen's medical devices business continued its growth momentum, with FY26 revenue rising 21 per cent to ₹ 598 crore and an installed base of nearly 17 million repeat users.

The company said it is positioning the segment as a standalone high-growth healthcare platform focused on chronic care, consumer diagnostics, continuous glucose monitoring and connected healthcare solutions.

Morepen said strategic investments in manufacturing expansion, healthcare technology, customer acquisition and medical devices affected short-term profitability but are expected to support stronger operating leverage and long-term earnings growth.

## PBPartners reports 35 pc growth in Assam



HT Bureau

**GUWAHATI, May 29:** PBPartners, the PoSP arm of Policybazaar, has reported a 35 per cent growth in its Health and Life Insurance business in Assam during FY 2025-26, driven by increasing insurance awareness, stronger partner engagement and growing demand for protection products.

Addressing a press meet in Guwahati, Neeraj Adhana, National Sales Head - Life & Health, PBPartners, highlighted Assam's emergence as a key growth market for the company.

He said PBPartners currently operates across 562 of Assam's 598 pincodes through a network of more than 1,500 Health and Life Insurance partners and plans to expand this network to 4,000 partners by FY 2026-27.

According to the company, Bongaigaon has emerged as its top-performing market in Assam in terms of partner activity and business generation.

"The growth we are witnessing in Assam reflects increasing awareness

about financial protection and the entrepreneurial opportunities emerging in insurance distribution. Our focus remains on empowering partners through technology, training, support and earning opportunities," Adhana said.

The company noted a growing preference among customers in Assam for comprehensive health coverage, with rising demand for super top-up plans and riders such as OPD, critical illness and Day-1 pre-existing disease benefits.

To strengthen its partner ecosystem, PBPartners announced several initiatives, including a 100 per cent renewal commission guarantee, enhanced health claims support, the PBPartners One loyalty programme for top-performing partners, a dedicated support helpline called PBP Mitra, and quarterly contests offering domestic and international travel rewards.

The company said these measures are aimed at improving partner earnings, simplifying operations and expanding insurance accessibility across the state.

## Govt launches common landing portal for unclaimed financial assets

**NEW DELHI, May 29:** The finance ministry on Friday launched a single unified online platform for citizens to search and trace unclaimed bank deposits, insurance claims, shares and mutual funds across the financial ecosystem.

The initiative is expected to enhance public awareness, improve ease of access to information and contribute to the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047 through greater financial empowerment, inclusion and trust in the financial system, the finance ministry said in a statement. The portal has been launched in collaboration with PSB Alliance to facilitate easier access to information relating to unclaimed financial assets.

The portal, accessible at <https://www.unclaimedassetsportal.in>, serves as a unified platform providing access to search facilities relating to unclaimed bank deposits, insurance claims, shares, dividends and mutual funds available across the financial ecosystem," it said. (PTI)

### AFFIDAVIT

I, RAMAKANTA SHOME, son of RAMANI MOHAN SHOME, resident of Lahorijan Natun Basti, PO: Lahorijan, PS: Khatkhathi, Dist. Karbi Anglong, Assam, do hereby declare that my name has been wrongly mentioned in my Passport No. E7634788 as "RAMAKANTHA SHOME". My correct name is "RAMAKANTA SHOME", which appears in my Aadhaar Card, PAN Card and Voter ID Card. Both "RAMAKANTHA SHOME" and "RAMAKANTA SHOME" refer to one and the same person, i.e., myself. This statement was made by an affidavit in the Court of SDM, Bokajan on 12 May, 2026. Hence, all concerned are requested to treat "RAMAKANTHA SHOME" as my correct name for all purposes. RAMAKANTA SHOME Son of RAMANI MOHAN SHOME Lahorijan Natun Basti PO: Lahorijan, PS: Khatkhathi Dist: Karbi Anglong, Assam PIN: 782480

### AFFIDAVIT

I, Sarmindar Tisso, S/o Harsing Tisso, a resident of village Rongehingdon, P.O. & P.S., Diphu, district Karbi Anglong, Assam, do hereby state and declare through an affidavit before the Notary Public, District Judiciary Court, Diphu, dated 11th May, 2026, that my actual and correct name is 'Sarmindar Tisso', whereas in my Aadhaar Card vide No.3726 5866 7571 my name has been wrongly recorded as 'Sarmindar Tisso' instead of 'Sarmindar Tisso'. The names Sarmindar Tisso and Sarmindar Tisso refer to the same person and single individual.

### E-AUCTION FOR OPERATION AND MANAGEMENT OF PAY & USE TOILETS

E-Auction for the contract of Operation and Management of Pay & Use Toilets over Lumding Division. Details are as under: Auction Catalogue No.: PNU-LMG-06-2026; Auction Start Date & Time (All Lots): 12:00 hrs. on 10-06-2026; Auction Close Date & Time: 12:50 hrs. on 10-06-2026; Rate Unit: Annual Licensing Fee; Trips/Days: 1096.

Sq. No.	Lot No./Category	Description
AA/1	PrU-LMG-NGAN-TOI-39-26-1 (Pay and Use - Toilets)	E- auction for awarding of rights for operation and maintenance of Pay & use toilet at Nagaon station.
AA/2	PrU-LMG-BXJ-TOI-62-26-1 (Pay and Use - Toilets)	Provision of Pay and Use Toilet at Bokajan Railway Station for a 03 years.
AA/3	PrU-LMG-KWM-TOI-45-26-1 (Pay and Use - Toilets)	E- auction for awarding of rights for operation and maintenance of Pay & use toilet at Kamrup station

Prospective bidders are requested to visit e-Auction leasing Module of IREPS website [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in).

Divisional Railway Manager (C), Lumding  
**NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY**  
"SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE"

## Youth found dead in Diphu lake; police probe murder angle

HT Bureau

**DIPHU, May 29:** In a shocking incident, a 30-year-old youth identified as Lobson Kathar Mech was allegedly brutally murdered on Thursday night. His body was recovered from the DAV Lake, a pond belonging to the Fishery Department, located in Lorlangso in Karbi Anglong. The deceased, a resident of Rongthe-ang A, Ward No 7 of Diphu town was the son of Biswajit Mech.

According to statements given by the deceased's wife, Mili Tokbipi at the Diphu Medical College & Hospital (DMC&H) on Friday morning, the events unfolded at 3 PM on Thursday when Mech left for the Longsokangthu (Siloni) picnic spot with his friends. After returning from the picnic spot, he did not return to his residence. At around 7 PM, Tokbipi managed to contact her husband over the phone. However, at around 2 AM on Friday, she received a distressing phone call informing her that her husband had been murdered.

The deceased's body was reportedly discovered by his friends at the DAV Lake site in Lorlangso and was subsequently rushed to DMC&H.

Speaking to reporters, a devastated Tokbipi pointed out clear signs of physical torture on the body, asserting that it was a cold-blooded murder.

"There was a severe injury on his head and his hair had been violently pulled out. There were distinct marks indicating his hands had been tightly bound, alongside multiple other injury marks across his body," she stated.

The grieving wife has appealed to the authorities for immediate intervention and strict punishment for the culprits.

"The same torture and agony faced by my husband before being murdered should be inflicted upon the perpetrators. Capital punishment should be awarded to them," Tokbipi demanded.

Police investigation into the matter is awaited to unearth the exact motive and identity of those involved.

## Youth found hanging in forest area in West Karbi Anglong

HT Correspondent

**KHERONI, May 29:** A sensational incident has come to light in Mandap, near Dayangmukh in West Karbi Anglong, where the body of a young man was found hanging from a tree on Thursday.

The deceased has been identified as Rajendra Chauhan, a resident of No 2 Bagisadubi. According to reports, Chauhan had been missing since last Sunday.

His body was discovered inside a reserved forest area under the Forest Department. The discovery has sparked widespread suspicion of foul play among locals and eyewitnesses due to the highly unusual position of the body.

Witnesses noted that while the youth's neck was tied to a tree with a rope, both of his feet were touching the ground and his back was heavily smeared with mud.

Upon receiving information, the Kheroni Police rushed to the spot, recovered the body and initiated a thorough investigation into the matter to determine whether it is a case of suicide or murder.

# GMC removes mandatory NGO agreement for trade licence applicants

Move aims to simplify licensing process and ease compliance burden

HT Bureau

**GUWAHATI, May 29:** The Guwahati Municipal Corporation (GMC) has accepted the proposal submitted by Saurav Jhunjhunwala, Ward Councillor of Ward No 15, seeking removal of the mandatory NGO agreement requirement for issuance of new trade licences.

Previously, applicants applying for new trade licences were required to enter into agreements with NGOs engaged in primary garbage collection as a compulsory condition for obtaining licences. The matter was raised before GMC authorities, highlighting that the existing requirement was creating unnecessary procedural hurdles, especially for



small businesses, startups and aspiring entrepreneurs. Following detailed consideration, the proposal was accepted by the GMC. The mandatory agreement requirement with authorised garbage collection agencies has been withdrawn. However, GMC will continue to ensure proper waste management through ran-

dom checking and monitoring of waste disposal plans of business establishments.

Speaking on the development, Saurav Jhunjhunwala stated that the decision would greatly benefit small traders and new entrepreneurs by reducing avoidable compliance burdens and simplifying the trade licence process. He further added that the move reflects a progressive and business-friendly approach towards governance and urban administration.

The decision is expected to provide relief to thousands of business applicants across Guwahati and strengthen the city's business ecosystem while maintaining civic responsibility and cleanliness standards.

## Savarkar birth anniversary observed in Diphu



**DIPHU, May 29:** The birth anniversary of legendary freedom fighter and revolutionary Veer Vinayak Damodar

Savarkar was observed on Friday with great enthusiasm by MY Bharat (Mera Yuva Bharat) Kendra, Diphu under the Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports, Government of India. The event was organised in collaboration with the Chesong Youth Club (CYC), Matipung, at the club's premises in Matipung Rajen Ronghang Village under Lumbajong Block in Diphu.

The commemorative programme was graced by Jiten Bey, State vice-president of the Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha (BJYM), Assam Pradesh, who attended as the key resource person.

Addressing the gathering, Bey delivered a speech highlighting the extraordinary life, immense sacrifices and literary contributions of Veer Savarkar

to India's freedom movement. He spoke about Savarkar's unwavering grit during his revolutionary days and urged local youth to draw inspiration from his patriotism, courage and dedication towards nation-building.

The programme was presided over by Dosoroth Kro, president of the Chesong Youth Club. The event witnessed active participation from local youths, women, students and village elders of the Matipung area.

Concluding the event, the organisers expressed gratitude to all attendees. They also reaffirmed their commitment to conducting more such programmes in the future to instil strong nationalistic values and deepen awareness of India's freedom struggle among the youth of Karbi Anglong.

## New Bongaigaon workshop boosts modern coach rehabilitation

HT Bureau

**GUWAHATI, May 29:** Northeast Frontier Railway has achieved significant milestones at the Carriage & Wagon Workshop, New Bongaigaon, reflecting its continued focus on modernisation, safety enhancement and operational excellence.

One of the key achievements of Northeast Frontier Railway is the successful initiation of Mid-Life Rehabilitation (MLR) work for Linke-Hofmann-Busch (LHB) coaches at the New Bongaigaon Workshop. This development marks an important step towards enhancing passenger comfort, operational safety and the reliability of modern coaching stock. The first MLR coach is presently in the final stage of completion and is expected to be turned out shortly, marking a significant milestone for the workshop.

In another notable achievement, NBQS

has successfully installed and commissioned the LHB Bogie Load Testing facility. With this facility, all critical bogie parameters under load conditions are now being checked and verified before dispatch, ensuring higher reliability, quality assurance and enhanced safety standards for overhauled LHB bogies.

Additionally, the workshop has also operationalised the shot blasting machine for LHB bogie frames and bolsters. This initiative has enabled mechanised shot blasting with improved surface finish quality, contributing to better maintenance standards and operational efficiency.

These initiatives highlight Northeast Frontier Railway's commitment towards adopting advanced technologies, improving maintenance practices and strengthening railway infrastructure across the zone.

## NTPC Bongaigaon earns two national recognitions

HT Correspondent

**KOKRAJHAR, May 29:** NTPC Bongaigaon, Salakati has earned two prestigious national recognitions, reaffirming its commitment to operational excellence, workplace safety, environmental stewardship and community development.

The station was conferred the Gold Category in the OHS&E Excellence Award 2026 by the International Business Conference (IBC) in recognition of its exemplary performance in Occupational Health, Safety and Environment (OHS&E) management. The award was received by Rajiv Ranjan, AGM (Safety), on behalf of the station. Further strengthening its credentials in social responsibility, NTPC Bongaigaon was also honoured with the 12th Greentech CSR Award 2026 in the category of Healthcare Promotion (Rural). The award recognises the station's sustained efforts to improve healthcare accessibility and promote community well-being through impactful CSR initiatives. The award was received by Smriti Das, Executive (CSR, LA & R&R). The awards were subsequently handed over to Aramb Maitra, Head of Project, NTPC Bongaigaon, who congratulated the safety and CSR teams for their dedication and collective efforts that led to these achievements.

## Savarkar birth anniversary observed in Nagaon

HT Bureau

**NAGAON, May 29:** The My Bharat Kendra, Nagaon, under the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India, celebrated the birth anniversary of Vinayak Damodar Savarkar at Chaubori Mancha in Raha Development Block. The programme was organised in collaboration with Mikir Aiti Jyoti Sangha.

The events began in the morning with a cleanliness drive followed by a tree plantation programme. Ananta Khelma, Head Teacher of Chaubori Primary School, garlanded the portrait of Vinayak Damodar Savarkar. The ceremonial lamp was lit by local Panchayat

President Amar Jyoti Nath and Gaon Pradhan Robin Senapati. The open meeting, conducted by Bipul Patar, president of the school's management committee, was formally inaugurated by Laksheswar Deka, Editor of 'Rodali Darshan'. The welcome address was delivered by Anita Biswas. Youth leader Pradeep Deka led the reading of the Preamble to the Constitution of India. Tulsi Deka, president of the All Assam Krishak Sangha, spoke on the life and philosophy of Vinayak Damodar Savarkar. A quiz competition was held for students, followed by a prize distribution ceremony. The event concluded with the National Anthem.

## 'Ashar Alok' extends aid to cancer patient's family

HT Correspondent

**MANGALDAI, May 29:** In a gesture of compassion, the Darrang-based humanitarian organisation 'Ashar Alok' has provided financial support to a family in Gerimari near Mangaldai that has endured multiple tragedies.

Ambika Bhuyan, a resident of Gerimari, lost her husband,



Debakanta Bhuyan, a police constable, to Japanese Encephalitis in 2022. Tragically, in the same year, her only married son, Pinkumoni Bhuyan, died in a road accident. Her only daughter, Momi Bhuyan, is married and resides in Path-sala.

Ambika Bhuyan had been sustaining the family — comprising her daughter-in-law and granddaughter — through her late husband's pension and

by operating a small clothing store named 'Deha Store' in front of Mangaldai Supahi. However, three months ago, she was diagnosed with cancer, plunging the family into severe financial hardship.

Although she is undergoing treatment at Dr B Borooah Cancer Institute, her Ayushman Card has reportedly provided little assistance, leaving the family in acute distress.

Responding to their plight, a delegation from 'Ashar Alok', led by General Secretary Ganesh Dutta, visited the cancer institute on Thursday. The team, which included Advisor

Miran Devi, Assistant Secretaries Pankaj Saharia and Dhruvajyoti Bora, member Trishna Hazarika and well-wishers Jaba Rani Sharma and Mahasweta Dutta, handed over financial assistance of ₹ 10,000 to Momi Bhuyan, daughter of the patient.

A grateful Ambika Bhuyan and her family expressed profound thanks to the organisation and sought blessings from its members.

## VCDC chairman, BPF leader arrested over illegal logging charges

HT Correspondent

**KOKRAJHAR, May 29:** Police have arrested Abul Sheikh, the chairman of Jalabila VCDC under Parbatjhora subdivision in Kokrajhar district and Central Organising Secretary of BPF and a person known to be close to BTC Executive Member Moon Moon Brahma.

Abul Sheikh was arrested on Thursday night for his alleged involvement in the illegal cutting of valuable sal trees in the Mahamaya forest area under Parbatjhora subdivision.

The arrested Abul Sheikh was brought from Bogoribari to Kokrajhar Sadar Police Station on Friday afternoon.

At present, the accused has been sent to Kokrajhar RNB Hospital for a medical examination and will soon be produced before the Kokrajhar court.

It may be mentioned that Abul Sheikh also faces allegations of being linked to illegal excavation and sale of red soil from hill areas.



## Self-employment training bazaar held at Sootea

HT Correspondent

**BISWANATH CHARIALI, May 29:** The Rural Self Employment Training Institute (RSETI) of Assam Gramin Bank in collaboration with the TRIBENI Sangam Cluster Level Federation, recently organised a 'RSETI Bazaar' in Sootea.

As a dedicated skill development institute, RSETI offers comprehensive training across

various sectors to foster self-reliance. Aligning with an ongoing 20-day papad and pickle-making course, the bazaar provided trainees with a practical platform to market and sell their handmade products alongside authentic Assamese cuisine.

The hands-on training for the course was conducted by Master Trainer Priyakshi Buragohain.

OFFICE OF THE LANKA MUNICIPAL BOARD				
LANKA :: HOJAI :: ASSAM				
LMB/531/UG/Tender/2025-26/146			Date 27/05/2026	
SHORT NOTICE INVITING TENDER				
The Lanka Municipal Board, Assam Invites sealed tenders in the prescribed form eventually to be drawn in the PWD F-2 Form/ Departmental Form affixing court fee stamp of Rs. 8.25 (Rupees eight and paise twenty-five) from the Contractors of any Classes under Govt. Department having experience of executing similar nature of work and will be received by the office of the undersigned at his office up to 12:00 P.M. of 12/06/2026 for the works. Detailed tender notice and Tender Document may be obtained from office of the undersigned during the office hours on all working days up to 12:00 PM on 12/06/2026.				
The details of works under 1 <sup>st</sup> Installment 2025-26 and 2 <sup>nd</sup> Installment 2024-25 of 15 <sup>th</sup> FC (Untied):				
Sl No.	Name of Work	Amount	Earnest Money	Completion Time of Work
1	Construction of R.C.C. box culvert at Ramthakar road at Ward No.1	₹1,43,000.00	₹2,860.00	60 Days
2	Construction of interlocking road at Subway No.1 of Ramthakar path of Ward No.1	₹2,20,800.00	₹4,416.00	60 Days
3	Construction of interlocking road and RCC Drain at Subway of Ramballave Agarwala path of Ward No.1	₹5,52,200.00	₹11,044.00	60 Days
4	Construction of interlocking road at Sub Way No.1 of Khargeswar Talukdar path of Ward No.1	₹2,78,000.00	₹5,560.00	60 Days
5	Construction of interlocking road at Sub Way Kalibari path of Ward No. 1	₹1,08,900.00	₹2,178.00	60 Days
6	Construction of interlocking road at Sub Way of Shillong road of Ward No. 1	₹3,98,600.00	₹7,972.00	60 Days
7	Construction of Interlocking Road and RCC Drain at Subway No.2 of Ramthakar path of Ward No.1	₹10,73,280.00	₹21,465.60	60 Days
8	Construction of Interlocking Road at Subway of Idgah Path	₹1,08,900.00	₹2,178.00	60 Days
9	Construction of interlocking road at Sub Way Gohain Colony path of Ward No.2	₹10,31,800.00	₹20,636.00	60 Days
10	Construction of interlocking road at Sub Way No. 7 of Rupnagar path of Ward No.2	₹7,82,800.00	₹15,656.00	60 Days
11	Construction of interlocking road at subway of Sukanta path of Ward No. 2	₹1,91,300.00	₹3,826.00	60 Days
12	Construction of R.C.C. Drain at Samir Haji Path (On both side) of Ward No.3	₹10,95,000.00	₹21,900.00	60 Days
13	Construction of interlocking road at Charan Singh path of Ward No. 3	₹7,83,000.00	₹15,660.00	60 Days
14	Construction of Interlocking Road and RCC Box Culvert at Subway No.1 of Petal Patty Path, Ward No.3	₹11,16,200.00	₹22,324.00	60 Days
15	Construction of interlocking road at last part of Pawan Singh path of Ward No. 4	₹3,48,500.00	₹6,970.00	60 Days
16	Construction of interlocking road at Satrupa path of Ward No. 4	₹5,87,700.00	₹11,754.00	60 Days
17	Construction of interlocking road at subway of Pub Lanka Adarsha path of Ward No. 4	₹2,21,900.00	₹4,438.00	60 Days
18	Construction of interlocking road at Tara Singh path of Ward No. 4	₹2,39,600.00	₹4,792.00	60 Days
19	Construction of interlocking road at Shyama Prasad path and its Subway of Ward No.5	₹16,49,700.00	₹32,994.00	60 Days
20	Construction of interlocking road at Sub Way No.1 of Pauna road of Ward No. 6	₹10,89,300.00	₹21,786.00	60 Days
21	Construction of interlocking road at Swamiji Path of Ward No.7	₹14,69,200.00	₹29,384.00	60 Days
22	Construction of interlocking road at Satsanga path of Ward No.07	₹11,49,500.00	₹22,990.00	60 Days
23	Construction of R.C.C. Box Culvert (In two sides) at Swamiji path of Ward No. 7	₹89,300.00	₹1,786.00	60 Days
24	Construction of interlocking road at Ohm Santi Ohm path of Ward No.8	₹7,03,500.00	₹14,070.00	60 Days
25	Construction of R.C.C. Drain at Gobindra Pally path of Ward No. 8	₹12,98,000.00	₹25,960.00	60 Days
26	Construction of interlocking road at Shyama Prasad Mukharjee path of Ward No. 8	₹7,92,600.00	₹15,852.00	60 Days
27	Construction of R.C.C. Drain(Left side) at Nivedita Lane of Ward No.9	₹7,72,600.00	₹15,452.00	60 Days
28	Construction of interlocking road at Lalrambi Lerak path of Ward No.9	₹12,05,000.00	₹24,100.00	60 Days
29	Construction of interlocking road at Radha Gobinda path (PART 1) of Ward No.10	₹12,83,600.00	₹25,672.00	60 Days
30	Construction of interlocking road at Thakur Bari path of Ward No.10	₹9,49,000.00	₹18,980.00	60 Days
31	Construction of interlocking road at Gopinath Bordoloi path (PART 1) of Ward No.11	₹12,64,800.00	₹25,296.00	60 Days
32	Construction of interlocking road at Gopinath Bordoloi path (PART 2) of Ward No.11	₹10,91,000.00	₹21,820.00	60 Days
33	Construction of R.C.C. Drain(Left side) at N.T. Colony path of Ward No.11	₹6,92,000.00	₹13,840.00	60 Days
34	Construction of interlocking road at N.T. Colony path of Ward No.11	₹7,18,700.00	₹14,374.00	60 Days

OFFICE OF THE LANKA MUNICIPAL BOARD				
LANKA :: HOJAI :: ASSAM				
LMB/531/TG/Tender/2025-26/134			Date 27/05/2026	
SHORT NOTICE INVITING TENDER				
The Lanka Municipal Board, Assam Invites sealed tenders in the prescribed form eventually to be drawn in the PWD F-2 Form/ Departmental Form affixing court fee stamp of Rs. 8.25 (Rupees eight and paise twenty-five) from the Contractors of any Classes under Govt. Department having experience of executing similar nature of work and will be received by the office of the undersigned at his office up to 12:00 P.M. of 12/06/2026 for the works. Detailed tender notice and Tender Document may be obtained from office of the undersigned during the office hours on all working days up to 12:00 PM on 12/06/2026.				
The details of works under 1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup> Installment 2020-21 of 15 <sup>th</sup> FC (Tied):				
Sl No.	Name of Work	Amount	Earnest Money	Completion Time of Work
1	Construction of Approach Road (Part 1) at entry of Solid Waste Management Project of Lanka Municipal Board at Lankajan KISSAM under Hojai Mouza Dag No.179	₹16,47,000.00	₹32,940.00	45 Days
2	Construction of Approach Road (Part 2) along with Boulder Retaining wall at entry of Solid Waste Management Project of Lanka Municipal Board at Lankajan KISSAM under Hojai Mouza Dag No.179	₹13,82,680.00	₹27,654.00	45 Days
3	Construction of Entry Gate at Solid Waste Management Project of Lanka Municipal Board at Lankajan KISSAM under Hojai Mouza Dag No.179	₹1,01,800.00	₹2,036.00	45 Days
4	Construction of RCC Boundary Wall at Solid Waste Management Plant of Lanka Municipal Board at Lankajan KISSAM under Hojai Mouza, Dag No.179	₹16,27,300.00	₹32,546.00	45 Days
5	Construction of Garbage Transfer Station Shed at Lanka Municipal Board under 15 <sup>th</sup> FC Tied for the year 2020-21	₹19,59,448.00	₹39,189.00	45 Days

Sd/-  
Chairperson/ Executive Officer  
Lanka Municipal Board: Lanka

Sd/-  
Chairperson/ Executive Officer  
Lanka Municipal Board: Lanka

QUOTE OF THE DAY

Avoid popularity; it has many snares, and no real benefit -William Penn

Outcome of QUAD meeting?

With the US President Donald Trump himself downgrading the status of the four-nation Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QUAD), why is the Indian government spending so much of its precious time on QUAD meetings? It is sheer wastage of time for Prime Minister Narendra Modi as also Foreign Minister Dr. S Jaishankar. The US state secretary Marco Rubio came to India on a four-day visit on May 23. The only important outcome of the QUAD meeting on Tuesday was the signing of the India-US critical minerals framework. The US, which is desperately looking for supremacy in the domain of critical minerals after being cornered by China, is seeking such agreements with the concerned countries. Such agreements will be signed by QUAD also with other like minded countries. India has good deposits of critical minerals. India will be in a better position if the officials can do a hard bargain with the USA about the development of the critical minerals and its use. India can make use of this as a bargain for getting new technology. QUAD consists of big brother USA, India, Japan and Australia. The QUAD nations agreed on the Indo-Pacific Maritime Surveillance Initiative and on a Common Operating Picture in the maritime domain. This is intended against China, though China's name has not been mentioned.

Now in the context of Trump's summit with Xi Jinping in Beijing on May 14 and 15, this Indo-Pacific security issue also is not a big issue for Trump. In the Beijing summit, Indo-Pacific region security did not get any priority from Trump. This was mentioned in general, but no special emphasis was there from the US President's side. Trump was more interested in major economic issues as well as big political issues like the Iran war and Taiwan. The Japanese Prime Minister wanted Trump to take up the issue in a big way but Trump just ignored Japanese advice. That way, even if this surveillance mechanism will be used by the USA only, India cannot expect any real help from the USA if any such eventuality in maritime waters against China arises. India has to depend more on the country's own experts to acquire maximum info on maritime situations.

The moot question is in the changed geo political situation and the bilateral relationship between China and USA, the earlier equations are not working. India will have to reassess the situation in the Indo-Pacific from its own perspective and deal with the USA in the region on the basis of strategic autonomy. In 2026, foreign ministers meeting was held on Tuesday, but there is no indication of the holding of any summit. What is the point of carrying on QUAD when the head of the group himself refuses to hold a summit.

Assam Assembly and the need for a healthier democratic culture

By: Mowsam Hazarika

Legislative assembly is often described as the temple of democracy. But that description holds meaning only when the institution functions with dignity, restraint, and a genuine commitment to public interest. The Assam Legislative Assembly, like any other elected forum, is expected to rise above partisan compulsions and reflect the collective will and wisdom of the people. Whether this expectation is fulfilled depends largely on how its members—both from the ruling side and the opposition—conduct themselves inside the House.

It is worth remembering that disagreement is not a weakness of democracy; it is its strength. However, the manner in which disagreement is expressed makes all the difference. When debates are reduced to noise, interruptions, or personal exchanges, the very purpose of the Assembly is defeated. People outside the House watch these proceedings closely, and their faith in democratic institutions is shaped by what they see. That is why maintaining a healthy environment in the Assembly is not merely a procedural necessity but a moral responsibility.

Those on the treasury benches carry a greater burden in this regard. By virtue of being in power, they set the tone of the proceedings. A government that is confident and secure in its mandate does not feel threatened by criticism. On the contrary, it welcomes scrutiny as an opportunity to improve. Unfortunately, there are times when the ruling side appears impatient with dissent, treating every criticism as obstruction rather than engagement. Such an approach may secure short-term political advantage, but it does little to strengthen governance. A more constructive approach would be to allow discussions to unfold fully, especially on matters of public importance. When opposition members raise issues—be it on floods, erosion, unemployment, or agriculture—they are often echoing concerns from the ground. Listening to these voices does not weaken authority; it enhances credibility. The willingness to respond thoughtfully, rather than defensively, can go a long way in building public trust.

At the same time, the opposition must also reflect on its own role. It is easy to disrupt proceedings, walk out in protest, or resort to slogan-shouting. Such actions may create headlines, but they rarely contribute to meaningful outcomes. The real strength of an opposition lies in its ability to question with clarity, argue with facts, and offer alternatives that are both practical and forward-looking. In a state like Assam, where challenges are many and often complex, the Assembly cannot afford to lose time to avoidable disruptions. Every session carries with it the opportunity to address pressing issues—recurring floods that displace thousands, erosion that eats away valuable land, the persistent struggle for employment among the youth, and the need to balance development with environmental protection. These are not matters that can be settled through confrontation; they require careful deliberation and, often, a degree of consensus.

The role of the Speaker is, of course, crucial in maintaining order. But even the most capable presiding officer can do little if members themselves are unwilling to cooperate. Respect for the Chair is not just a rule; it is a reflection of respect for the institution itself. When members ignore directions, speak out of turn, or create disorder, they are not merely challenging authority—they are undermining the very platform that gives them a voice.

There is also a quieter, less visible side to legislative work that deserves greater attention. Committee meetings, for instance, provide space for detailed discussion away from the glare of public confrontation. Here, members from different parties often engage more constructively, examining policies and proposals with a degree of seriousness that is sometimes missing in the main House. Strengthening this aspect of legislative functioning could help improve overall outcomes.

Another issue that merits consideration is the preparedness of members. Effective participation in debates requires not only political awareness but also a certain level of familiarity with procedures, policies, and data. Investing in regular orientation and training programmes for MLAs could enhance the quality of discussions and reduce reliance on rhetoric.

Beyond formal mechanisms, there is also a need to rebuild a culture of informal dialogue. Political differences need not translate into personal hostility. When members interact outside the Assembly in a spirit of mutual respect, it often reflects positively inside the House as well. After all, democracy is not just about contestation; it is equally about cooperation where necessary. Ultimately, the conduct of MLAs sends a powerful message. When the Assembly functions smoothly, with debates that are sharp yet respectful, it reassures citizens that their concerns are being addressed seriously. When it descends into disorder, it creates frustration and disillusionment. In a time when public trust in institutions is increasingly fragile, this distinction matters more than ever. The Assam Assembly has, over the years, witnessed both exemplary debates and regrettable disruptions. The challenge now is to ensure that the former becomes the norm rather than the exception. This requires a conscious effort from all sides to place public interest above political expediency.

A healthy democratic environment does not emerge on its own; it has to be nurtured. It demands restraint in moments of provocation, patience in the face of disagreement, and a shared understanding that the Assembly is larger than any individual or party. If MLAs can keep this perspective in mind, the institution will not only function better but also command the respect it truly deserves. In the end, democracy is judged not by the absence of conflict, but by the quality of its conversation. The Assam Assembly must strive to ensure that this conversation remains meaningful, responsible, and, above all, worthy of the people it represents.

Middle class dreams under economic pressure

The middle class lives between hope and fear. It carries ambition in one hand and anxiety in the other. In cities crowded with glass buildings, in small towns where new shopping complexes rise beside old markets, and even in villages where education and mobile technology have changed social expectations, the middle class continues to believe that hard work will eventually create stability. That belief still survives, but it no longer feels as strong or as certain as before. A growing number of families now spend more time calculating expenses than planning the future. They work longer hours, save less money, and remain constantly worried about medical emergencies, school fees, housing costs, and job security. The dream of living with dignity has not disappeared, yet it has become heavier to carry. Economic pressure has slowly entered daily life in such a deep manner that even ordinary decisions now feel complicated. Buying a house, raising children, supporting elderly parents, paying for higher education, or maintaining a decent lifestyle has become a continuous struggle for millions of middle-class families across the world. The pressure is not limited to poor nations alone. Even developed economies are witnessing frustration among citizens who once believed that education and employment guaranteed a stable future. The middle class stands at the center of this changing reality. It is neither poor enough to receive major state support nor rich enough to remain protected from inflation and economic uncertainty. It survives by adjusting, sacrificing, postponing, and enduring. Yet every sacrifice leaves behind emotional exhaustion that rarely becomes visible in economic reports or political speeches. Behind the appearance of normal life, countless families are silently fighting financial insecurity every single month.

The modern economy has transformed the meaning of success. Earlier, many middle-class families measured progress through stability. A secure job, modest savings, affordable education, and gradual improvement in living conditions were considered signs of a respectable life. Today the definition of success has become more aggressive and expensive. Social media, consumer culture, advertising, and public comparison have created unrealistic expectations about how people should live. Individuals are constantly exposed to images of luxury lifestyles, international travel, expensive gadgets, fashionable homes, and endless consumption. This environment creates invisible psychological pressure. Even when families understand that much of this public display is artificial, they still feel left behind. The middle class now faces two battles at the same time. One battle is economic, involving rising costs and uncertain income. The other battle is emotional, involving comparison, insecurity, and fear of failure. Parents feel guilty when they cannot provide every opportunity for their children. Young professionals feel unsuccessful if they cannot achieve financial independence quickly. Students feel pressure to enter highly paid careers even when their interests lie elsewhere. Society has slowly connected personal worth with economic achievement. As a result, financial difficulty is no longer viewed merely as a temporary challenge. It often becomes a source of shame and emotional stress. Many people continue smiling publicly while privately dealing with anxiety, sleeplessness, and depression related to money. The middle class rarely speaks openly about these struggles because social respectability depends heavily on maintaining the appearance of control. This silent suffering has become one of the defining realities of contemporary society.

Inflation has emerged as one of the strongest forces weakening middle-class confidence. Prices increase gradually, but salaries rarely rise at the same pace. The impact becomes visible in everyday life. Grocery bills grow larger. Fuel prices affect transportation costs. Electricity charges rise. Healthcare becomes more expensive. School and college fees continue climbing every year. Rent consumes a major portion of monthly income in urban areas. Families that once managed expenses comfortably now live from one salary cycle to another. Savings accounts shrink because emergencies arrive more frequently than financial growth. Inflation does not only reduce purchasing power; it also destroys psychological comfort. A family may still survive economically, but the constant fear of future instability changes its emotional condition. The middle class is deeply vulnerable because it depends heavily on planning. It survives through budgeting, disciplined spending, and long-term expectations. Inflation disrupts all these calculations. Retirement plans become uncertain. Educational goals become difficult. Housing loans feel unbearable over time. Medical costs create panic. Even leisure activities begin to appear irresponsible. Gradually, life becomes centered entirely around financial survival rather than personal growth or happiness. This transformation damages social relationships as well. Couples argue over money. Parents become emotionally unavailable due to stress. Children grow up watching constant financial tension inside the home. The emotional atmosphere of economic pressure slowly enters every corner of family life. Many households now function with continuous exhaustion because both parents work long hours while still struggling to maintain stability. The middle class often appears economically functional from the outside, but internally it is increasingly fragile.



Employment insecurity has intensified these pressures further. Modern economies celebrate flexibility, competition, and innovation, but workers often experience these changes as instability. Permanent jobs have reduced in many sectors. Contract work, temporary employment, freelancing, and performance-based systems are becoming more common. Technology has created opportunities, yet it has also created fear. Employees constantly worry that automation, artificial intelligence, corporate restructuring, or economic slowdown may suddenly affect their livelihood. Even highly educated professionals feel insecure. Degrees no longer guarantee stable employment. Skill requirements change rapidly, forcing workers to continuously adapt simply to remain relevant. The middle class once trusted education as the safest path toward economic security. Today that trust has weakened. Students complete expensive professional courses only to enter uncertain job markets filled with competition and limited opportunities. Many young people remain unemployed or underpaid despite years of education. Others migrate far from home searching for better prospects, often sacrificing emotional stability and family relationships in the process. The pressure to succeed economically begins early and continues endlessly. Individuals rarely feel settled because modern professional culture rewards constant productivity rather than balance. Long working hours, fear of replacement, and unrealistic expectations have become normalized in many industries. Workers are expected to remain available even outside office hours. Personal life gradually disappears beneath professional pressure. The middle class continues chasing stability, but the structure of the modern economy keeps shifting beneath its feet.

Housing represents another major source of anxiety. Owning a home remains one of the strongest middle-class dreams across societies. A house symbolizes dignity, security, and long-term achievement. Yet property prices in many urban regions have increased far beyond the reach of ordinary salaried families. People spend decades repaying housing loans while sacrificing other aspects of life. Young adults delay marriage or parenthood because they cannot afford stable housing. Renters face constant insecurity due to rising rents and urban displacement. Smaller living spaces, overcrowded cities, and long commuting hours affect both physical and mental well-being. Real estate markets increasingly favor wealthy investors while ordinary families struggle to secure basic comfort. The dream of home ownership, once considered realistic through disciplined saving, now appears distant for many people. This situation creates frustration because housing is not simply an economic issue. It shapes identity, belonging, and emotional stability. Families want children to grow up in secure environments. Elderly parents seek comfort during old age. Young couples desire independence and privacy. When housing becomes financially unreachable, emotional dissatisfaction follows naturally. Many middle-class individuals spend their most productive years trapped between rent payments and loan repayments without experiencing genuine financial freedom. Economic growth may continue at the national level, but ordinary citizens often feel excluded from its benefits.

Education, which was once viewed as the strongest tool for social mobility, has itself become a financial burden. Parents now invest enormous amounts of money in schooling, coaching centers, private tuition, digital devices, and higher education because they fear their children may otherwise fall behind. Competition begins at a very young age. Children are pushed toward academic excellence not only for personal development but for economic survival. Families often reduce personal expenses to fund education because they see it as the only hope for future stability. However, the rising cost of education has created deep inequality within the middle class itself. Wealthier families can access better schools, global exposure, and advanced opportunities, while lower middle-class households struggle to keep pace despite equal ambition. Educational pressure also affects mental health. Students grow up inside systems focused heavily on performance and rankings. Failure becomes emotionally devastating because the stakes appear extremely high. Parents carry guilt when financial limitations restrict educational opportunities. Many graduates eventually enter job mar-

kets where salaries do not justify the enormous educational expenses incurred over the years. Student debt has become a serious problem in many countries. Education still matters deeply, but its relationship with economic security no longer feels guaranteed. The middle class continues investing in learning because it has few alternatives, yet increasing uncertainty surrounds the return on that investment.

Healthcare costs have also become a major source of fear. A single medical emergency can destroy years of savings for an ordinary family. Even those with insurance often struggle with hidden expenses, expensive medicines, long-term treatment costs, and inadequate healthcare infrastructure. Modern societies have achieved remarkable medical progress, yet quality healthcare remains inaccessible or financially exhausting for large sections of the population. The middle class faces a painful contradiction. It usually earns too much to qualify for welfare support but too little to comfortably manage major health crises. Families therefore live with continuous anxiety regarding illness and aging. Elderly parents require care. Chronic diseases demand long-term treatment. Mental health concerns are increasing rapidly due to stress and modern lifestyles. Medical inflation continues rising faster than income growth in many regions. As a result, healthcare planning has become central to financial survival. Families delay vacations, postpone purchases, and reduce leisure activities in order to maintain emergency funds for possible medical situations. This constant preparation for crisis changes how people experience life itself. Economic pressure transforms ordinary existence into a state of permanent caution.

The emotional condition of the middle class deserves greater attention because financial discussions often ignore psychological consequences. Economic pressure does not remain confined to bank accounts. It affects confidence, relationships, self-worth, and social behavior. Many individuals now experience chronic stress connected to money. They feel trapped between responsibility and limitation. Parents worry about children's futures. Young adults fear unemployment. Elderly individuals fear dependency during retirement. Social expectations continue increasing even when economic opportunities remain unstable. People hesitate to discuss financial difficulties openly because middle-class culture values respectability and self-reliance. As a result, emotional suffering becomes private and invisible. Mental health problems linked to economic insecurity are growing across societies. Anxiety disorders, depression, burnout, and emotional fatigue are becoming common among working populations. Yet many continue functioning normally because survival requires endurance. Contemporary society often celebrates resilience without questioning why people are forced to remain resilient all the time. The glorification of struggle sometimes hides deeper structural failures within the economy. Individuals blame themselves for financial difficulties even when larger economic systems contribute significantly to instability. This emotional isolation intensifies suffering further.

Technology has complicated middle-class life in unexpected ways. Digital platforms have created convenience, access, and opportunity, but they have also accelerated consumer pressure and economic comparison. Online shopping encourages impulsive spending. Social media promotes unrealistic lifestyles. Influencer culture transforms luxury into aspiration for ordinary people. The constant visibility of wealth affects psychological satisfaction. People begin measuring success publicly rather than personally. Technology has also blurred boundaries between work and private life. Employees remain connected to professional responsibilities through phones and digital communication platforms throughout the day. Productivity expectations have increased significantly. Even relaxation now feels incomplete because individuals remain mentally connected to work pressures. Children too are affected by digital consumer culture. Brand consciousness develops early. Educational competition intensifies through online comparison. Families spend heavily on gadgets and digital services because modern social participation increasingly depends on technology access. Digital inequality creates new forms of exclusion within society. The middle class therefore faces continuous financial and emotional adjust-

ment in order to remain socially relevant in a rapidly changing technological environment.

Economic pressure has also influenced social relationships and cultural values. Marriage patterns are changing because financial insecurity affects personal decisions. Many young people delay marriage due to unstable careers and high living costs. Family structures are becoming smaller as raising children becomes more expensive. Migration for employment separates families across cities and countries. Elderly parents often experience loneliness while younger generations struggle with urban survival. Traditional support systems weaken under economic strain. Community relationships become less meaningful when life revolves entirely around professional competition and financial survival. At the same time, frustration within the middle class can create social anger and political instability. Citizens who feel economically trapped often lose trust in institutions and leadership. They become vulnerable to emotional political narratives promising quick solutions. Economic disappointment can therefore influence democratic culture, social harmony, and public discourse. Contemporary society cannot ignore the connection between middle-class insecurity and wider social tension.

The idea of upward mobility has weakened considerably in recent years. Earlier generations often believed that each generation would live better than the previous one through education and hard work. That confidence is now fading in many societies. Young people increasingly fear that they may never achieve the same level of stability their parents once enjoyed. Stable jobs, affordable housing, quality education, and secure retirement appear more difficult to attain despite technological and economic advancement. This contradiction creates deep frustration because economic growth statistics often fail to reflect lived reality. Nations may celebrate rising markets and increasing national wealth while ordinary families experience declining financial comfort. Wealth concentration has become one of the defining features of contemporary capitalism. A small section accumulates extraordinary financial power while large sections struggle with ordinary expenses. The middle class feels squeezed from both directions. It fears downward mobility while watching wealth become increasingly concentrated elsewhere. This imbalance weakens social trust because citizens begin questioning whether economic systems truly reward effort fairly.

Despite these challenges, the middle class continues carrying enormous responsibility within society. It drives education, professional services, small businesses, administration, healthcare, and cultural life. It pays taxes, supports local economies, and maintains institutional structures. Yet its contribution often receives limited protection during economic crises. Policymakers frequently speak about growth, investment, and development, but middle-class realities require deeper attention. Affordable healthcare, quality public education, fair wages, employment security, housing accessibility, and inflation control are not merely economic issues; they are essential for social stability and human dignity. A society where the middle class continuously lives under pressure eventually develops widespread emotional exhaustion and declining trust in the future. Economic systems cannot remain healthy if ordinary citizens permanently feel insecure despite continuous labor.

The future of the middle class will depend greatly on how societies respond to these pressures. Economic policy alone cannot solve every problem because cultural expectations and social structures also require reflection. Contemporary society must reconsider its understanding of success, productivity, and human value. Endless consumption cannot become the only measure of achievement. Human life requires stability, dignity, relationships, leisure, and emotional peace in addition to economic survival. Governments, institutions, employers, and communities all carry responsibility in creating systems where ordinary families can live without constant fear. Public investment in healthcare, education, transport, and housing can reduce financial pressure significantly. Work culture must also become more humane. Economic growth should improve collective well-being rather than deepen inequality and exhaustion.

The middle class still dreams. Parents continue sacrificing for children. Students continue studying with hope. Workers continue waking early every morning believing that effort matters. Families continue saving patiently for a better future. That persistence deserves recognition because it reflects the enduring human desire for dignity and stability even under pressure. Yet dreams alone cannot sustain society indefinitely. If economic structures continue weakening ordinary life while rewarding only extreme wealth and relentless competition, frustration will deepen further across generations. Contemporary society stands at an important moment where economic success must be measured not only through national statistics but through the lived condition of ordinary citizens. The true strength of a society becomes visible not in the luxury of a few but in the security and confidence of its middle class. When ordinary people can plan their future without constant fear, society becomes healthier, calmer, and more humane. When they cannot, economic pressure slowly enters every home, every relationship, and every

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# Gift the Book 'Career Haatputhi'

Dr. Buljit Buragohain

Students who achieve outstanding success in the High School Leaving Certificate and Higher Secondary Final Examinations are often formally congratulated by various institutions, organizations, associations, and individuals through different ceremonies and gifts. Congratulating and presenting gifts to meritorious students is indeed a commendable practice. However, we believe that gifting a selected collection of books would be even more meaningful, as such books can contribute to the intellectual and mental development of students while also inspiring a sense of social responsibility. In this context, it is worth mentioning that after passing the High School and Higher Secondary Final Examinations, many students remain uncertain about the different academic streams, the subjects included in those

streams, and the career opportunities available after studying them. To help students gain a clear understanding of these matters, the book "Career Haatputhi" written by Dr. Buljit Buragohain and published by "Banalata" can be presented to students as a valuable gift.

Another important point is that even three months after the declaration of examination results, many felicitation programs continue to be organized. In our opinion, if possible, such programs should ideally be completed within one month of the declaration of results and



conducted in three phases over three days — at the subdivision, district, and state levels. During these phases, all institutions, organizations, and associations wishing to felicitate students may do so. This would help reduce the expenditure of time, money, and resources.

Immediately after the announcement of examination results, the media is filled with news about successful students. However, as time passes, little is usually known about where these students go, what they do, whether they achieve their goals, or whether they

contribute in any meaningful way to their colleges, localities, or motherland. Therefore, it would be beneficial if local journalists prepared area-wise or district-wise reports on the later achievements and contributions of meritorious students.

In addition, voluntary organizations, government bodies, and non-government organizations may also conduct field-based studies on this matter. Students who have passed out from schools in different regions and later established themselves in various professions while contributing positively to society may be invited back to their former schools for interactive sessions with current students. Such interactions would greatly help in the intellectual and mental development of students and also encourage them to develop a sense of social responsibility. It is hoped that school authorities will organize such interactive sessions from time to time.

## Sunbeam World School Recruitment – 8 Accountant, HR Manager & Other Posts

Name of Post: Accountant, HR Manager, Admission Counsellor and others  
 No of Posts: 8 posts  
 Qualification: Graduate  
 Age Limit: 25-35 Years  
 Application Fee: Nil  
 Start Date: 28th May 2026  
 Last Date: 5th June 2026

Sunbeam World School, Delhi, a progressive educational institution committed to providing quality education has released an employment notification for the recruitment of 8 Accountant, HR Manager, Admission Counsellor and Marketing & Public Relations Executive posts. Interested and eligible candidates may apply online here.

Minimum educational qualification for these posts are Graduate and last date of submission of online application is 5th June 2026.

### Sunbeam World School Recruitment Details

1. Accountant  
 No of posts: 02  
 Pay/ month: 30,000-40,000 (negotiable) + Accommodation  
 Age Limit: 23-35

Educational Qualification & Experience:  
 Preferred Qualification:

- Bachelor's Degree in Commerce (B. Com) or related field
- Knowledge of accounting principles, taxation, and payroll processing
- Proficiency in Tally ERP / Tally Prime and MS Excel
- Familiarity with school accounting procedures will be an advantage

Preferred Experience:

- Minimum 2-5 years of experience in accounting and finance
- Experience in handling school or educational institution accounts preferred
- Experience in:
  - Fee management and reconciliation
  - Payroll preparation
  - GST/TDS compliance
  - Bank reconciliation
  - Vendor payments and record maintenance
  - Preparation of financial reports and vouchers

Skills Required:

- Strong knowledge of accounting and bookkeeping
- Good command over MS Excel and accounting software
- Accuracy and attention to detail
- Ability to maintain confidential financial records
- Good communication and coordination skills
- Time management and organizational skills
- Ability to work independently and meet deadlines
- Problem-solving and analytical skills
- Professional and ethical work approach

Additional Preferred Skills:

- Knowledge of PF, ESI, and salary structure preparation
- Ability to prepare monthly financial statements and audit documents
- Basic understanding of school administration and office coordination
- Email drafting and documentation skills

2. HR Manager

No of posts: 02  
 Pay/ month: 35,000-48,000 (negotiable) + Accommodation  
 Age Limit: 23-35

Educational Qualification & Experience:  
 Preferred Qualification:

- Bachelor's Degree in Human Resource Management/ Business Administration/ Commerce, or related field
- Knowledge of HR practices, labour laws, recruitment, and employee management
- Proficiency in MS Office (especially MS Excel and Word) and HR software/tools
- Familiarity with school HR operations and educational institution procedures will be an advantage

Preferred Experience:

- Minimum 2-5 years of experience in Human Resources and administration
  - Experience in handling HR operations in schools or educational institutions preferred
  - Experience in:
    - Recruitment and onboarding processes
    - Employee record management and documentation
    - Attendance and leave management
    - Payroll coordination and salary processing support
    - Preparation of HR letters, contracts, and reports
- Join Our WhatsApp Channel  
 Join Here for Daily Job Updates
- Staff grievance handling and employee coordination
  - Compliance with labour laws and HR policies
  - Performance monitoring and staff communication

Skills Required:

- Strong knowledge of HR processes and employee management
- Good command over MS Excel, Word, and HR software
- Strong communication and interpersonal skills
- Ability to maintain confidential employee records and information
- Accuracy and attention to detail
- Time management and organizational skills
- Ability to work independently and handle multiple responsibilities
- Problem-solving and coordination skills
- Professional and ethical work approach

Additional Preferred Skills:

- Knowledge of PF, ESI, employee benefits, and salary structure coordination
- Ability to prepare HR reports and maintain compliance documents
- Basic understanding of school administration and office coordination
- Email drafting, documentation, and report preparation skills
- Ability to coordinate staff meetings, training sessions, and employee engagement activities

3. Admission Counsellor

No of posts: 02  
 Pay/ month: 22,500-32,500 (negotiable) + Accommodation

Age Limit: 23-35

Educational Qualification & Experience:  
 Preferred Qualification:

- Bachelor's Degree in any discipline; preference will be given to candidates from Education, Business Administration, Marketing, or related fields
- Strong command over spoken and written English is mandatory
- Knowledge of admission procedures, parent counselling, and customer relationship management
- Proficiency in MS Office (especially MS Excel and Word) and email communication
- Familiarity with school admission processes and educational institution procedures will be an advantage

Preferred Experience:

- Minimum 2-5 years of experience in admissions, counselling, customer relations, or front office operations
- Experience in handling school or educational institution admissions preferred
- Experience in:
  - Parent counselling and admission guidance
  - Handling admission enquiries and follow-ups
  - Student registration and documentation processes
  - Fee explanation and admission coordination
  - Tele-calling and lead management
  - Maintaining admission records and reports
  - Conducting campus tours and interaction sessions
  - Coordination with academic and administrative departments

Skills Required:

- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills
- Strong command over spoken and written English is mandatory
- Confident personality with counselling and convincing ability
- Good command over MS Excel, Word, and email drafting
- Ability to handle parents and students professionally
- Strong organizational and time management skills
- Accuracy in documentation and record maintenance
- Ability to work independently and achieve admission targets
- Professional appearance and positive attitude
- Problem-solving and coordination skills

Additional Preferred Skills:

- Experience in CRM software or admission management systems
- Ability to manage social media or digital admission enquiries will be an advantage
- Basic understanding of school administration and office coordination
- Report preparation and data management skills
- Ability to coordinate admission events, orientations, and promotional activities

4. Marketing & Public Relations Executive

No of posts: 02  
 Pay/ month: 30,000-40,000 (negotiable) + Accommodation  
 Age Limit: 23-35

Educational Qualification & Experience:  
 Preferred Qualification:

- Bachelor's Degree in Marketing, Public Relations, Business Administration, Mass Communication, or related field
- Strong command over spoken and written English is mandatory
- Knowledge of marketing strategies, public relations, branding, and communication management
- Proficiency in MS Office (especially MS Excel, Word, and PowerPoint) and email communication
- Familiarity with school branding, admissions marketing, and educational institution operations will be an advantage

Preferred Experience:

- Minimum 2-5 years of experience in marketing, public relations, communications, or branding
- Experience in handling school or educational institution marketing activities preferred
- Experience in:
  - School branding and promotional activities
  - Parent and public relationship management
  - Social media handling and digital marketing coordination
  - Admission promotion campaigns and lead generation
  - Event planning and coordination
  - Handling enquiries, public communication, and follow-ups
  - Vendor coordination for promotional materials and events
  - Preparing reports, presentations, and marketing content

Skills Required:

- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills
- Strong command over spoken and written English is mandatory
- Confident personality with strong presentation and convincing ability
- Good command over MS Excel, Word, PowerPoint, and email drafting
- Creativity and marketing-oriented thinking
- Ability to professionally interact with parents, students, and external stakeholders
- Strong organizational and time management skills
- Ability to work independently and handle multiple responsibilities
- Problem-solving, coordination, and networking skills
- Professional appearance and positive attitude

Additional Preferred Skills:

- Experience in social media management and digital marketing tools
- Basic knowledge of graphic designing or content creation will be an advantage
- Ability to coordinate school events, campaigns, and public outreach activities
- Basic understanding of school administration and admission procedures
- Photography, videography, or promotional content management skills will be an added advantage
- Report preparation, documentation, and presentation skills

Application Fee: Nil.

Selection Process

The selection process will be conducted online via Google Meet. Candidates short-listed in the first-round interview will be required to appear for a second-round discussion or practical assessment through Google Meet. During the session, candidates may be asked to share their screen to demonstrate their accounting knowledge, software handling skills, or related work processes. This is a Work from Office (WFO) position.

The office location is Delhi – 110026. Only candidates who are comfortable relocating or working from the mentioned location should apply.

How to Apply for Sunbeam World School Recruitment?

Interested and eligible candidates may apply and send their CV/ resume through email to hr@sunbeamworldschool.com mentioning their applied post as subject line

Last date of submission of application: 5th June 2026.

## SSC CGL Recruitment 2026 – Online Apply for 12256 Posts

Staff Selection Commission (SSC) has released the official notification of Combined Graduate Level (CGL) Examination 2026 for the recruitment of approximately 12256 Group B and Group C posts in different Ministries/ Departments/ Organizations of Government of India and various Constitutional Bodies/ Statutory Bodies/ Tribunals, etc.

SSC CGL Recruitment Details

Name of examination: Combined Graduate Level Examination, 2026  
 Name of posts: Various Group B and Group C Posts (Assistant Audit Officer, Assistant Accounts Officer, Assistant Section Officer, Inspector, Sub Inspector, Inspector of Posts, Statistical Investigator, Office Superintendent, Auditor, Accountant, Tax Assistant, Postal Assistant/ Sorting Assistant, etc.)

No of posts: 12,256 posts (approximately)  
 Pay Scale: Pay Level 4 to Pay Level 8 (Pay Scale of ₹ 25500 to 81100 till ₹ 47600 to 151100, as per level of posts)  
 Helpline No: 1800 309 3063 (Toll Free)

Eligibility Criteria of SSC CGL Recruitment

Age Limit: There are four categories of age ranges: 18 to 27 years, 20 to 30 years, 18 to 30 years and 18 to 30 years.

Age Relaxation: Category-wise age relaxation is as mentioned below

- # SC/ST: 5 years
- # OBC: 3 years
- # PwD (Unreserved): 10 years
- # PwD (OBC): 13 years
- # PwD (SC/ST): 15 years

Educational Qualification:

Junior Statistical Officer:

Bachelor's Degree in any subject from a recognized University or Institute with at least 60% Marks in Mathematics at 12th standard level;  
 Or  
 Bachelor's Degree in any subject with Statistics as one of the subjects at degree level.

Statistical Investigator Grade-II:

Bachelor degree in Statistics or Mathematics or Economics or Demography or Population Studies or Operation Research or Information Technology or Computer Science or Computer Engineering or Computer Technology or Computer Application or Data Science or Artificial Intelligence from a recognized University or recognized Institute.

All Other Posts:

Bachelor's Degree from a recognized University or Institute.

### The candidates who have appeared in their final year of their graduation can also apply, however they must possess Essential qualification as on 01.08.2026.

Application Fee of SSC CGL Exam

- # General/ OBC: Rs. 100/-
- # SC/ ST/ Women/Ex-Servicemen: Nil
- # Payment Mode: Through Debit/ Credit Card/SBI Chalan/SBI Net Banking

Exam Centres in North Eastern Region (NER)

Here is the list of examination centres in North Eastern Region states:

- # Itanagar (5001)
- # Dibrugarh (5102)
- # Guwahati (Dispur) (5105)
- # Jorhat (5107)
- # Silchar (5111)
- # Tezpur (5112)
- # Dimapur (5301)
- # Kohima (5302)
- # Shillong (5401)
- # Imphal (5501)
- # Churachandpur (5502)
- # Ukhrul (5503)
- # Agartala (5601)
- # Aizwal (5701)

How to Apply for SSC Recruitment?

Interested and eligible candidates may apply online for these vacancy by visiting official SSC Recruitment Portal. Candidates 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.
- # At the end, pay the application fee as per your category and submit the form.
- # Don't forget to take a print out of the application form.

Important Dates of SSC CGL Recruitment 2026

Starting date of submission of online application: 21st May 2026  
 Last date of submission of online application: 22nd June 2026  
 Date of SSC CGL Tier I Examination: August-September, 2026  
 Dates of Tier-II Examination (CBE): December, 2026

## BJP alleges Cong-led Kerala govt insulted Vande Mataram, Gov under IUML's pressure

**NEW DELHI, May 29:** The BJP on Friday slammed the Congress-led Kerala government for allegedly insulting Vande Mataram and the governor by playing only the opening stanzas of the national song during a function at the state assembly.

The remarks came after Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar expressed displeasure over Vande Mataram not being sung in full in the assembly when he was present for the United Democratic Front (UDF) government's policy address.

Before and after the governor's policy address in the Kerala Assembly, a band team performed the opening stanzas of Vande Mataram.

In a video message posted on X, BJP national spokesperson Shehzad Poonawalla alleged that the Congress-led government violated constitutional protocol by not ensuring that the full version of Vande Mataram was sung.

"During the governor's address in the Kerala Assembly, the full version of Vande Mataram was not sung. The official protocol is that the original version should be sung in full and not shortened to two stanzas. But the Congress government violated this protocol," he said.

Poonawalla alleged that it was done under pressure from the Indian Union Muslim League (IUML), an ally of the ruling UDF in Kerala.

"To appease the Muslim League, the Congress has done this because it is in alliance with the party and cannot go against it. The Muslim League hates Vande Mataram. Under its pressure, they have cut short Vande Mataram and insulted the governor," he claimed.

He also accused the Left of supporting the move.

"Only two stanzas were played and former chief minister Pinarayi Vijayan also justified it. Both the Congress and the Left have no respect for the country and the Constitution," Poonawalla further alleged.

"They give a platform to Hamas, Jamaat and the PFI, but have a problem with Vande Mataram," he said. (PTI)

# Govt mulling expansion of BSF's operational mandate: Amit Shah

**BHUI, May 29:** Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday said that the government was considering expansion of the BSF's operational mandate by assigning it new sectors, and announced that a new paradigm of "territorial security" will be added to complement conventional border security.

Addressing BSF personnel on a visit to Gujarat's Kutch district to review border security, he also said the ongoing work to secure the vulnerable sections of the Harami Nala and Sir Creek areas along the border with Pakistan was almost 70 per cent complete.

The Union government has decided to transform the BSF's concept of border security, he said. The BSF currently guards India's borders with Pakistan and Bangladesh.

"When I assumed office as the country's Home Minister, during my first review of the BSF's operations, the Harami Nala and Sir Creek areas appeared somewhat lacking in terms of security preparedness," Shah said.

The government formulated an action plan aimed at establishing a

"leak proof" security grid in every respect, with the measures ranging from construction of watchtowers and connecting roads to the provision of drinking water, medical services, residential facilities, and new fencing, he said.

"I can state that approximately 70 per cent of this work has now been completed. It gives me and the Ministry of Home Affairs immense satisfaction to know that within the next two years, this vulnerable sector will be permanently secured against the malevolent gaze of the enemy," Shah said.

The government has decided to mark the 60th year of the BSF by completely transforming its concept of border security, the Union home minister said.

"In the coming days, we will establish a security grid based on a four-pronged concept, and we will also launch a new paradigm of 'territorial security' to complement traditional border security. This will involve the participation of the general public, civil administration, local police, and the military; naturally, BSF personnel will continue to play a pivotal role in this



endeavor," Shah said.

Through this collaborative effort undertaken as part of the 'Smart Border Security' project, the government is working to fortify the security grid across India's entire border, encompassing both the Bangladesh and Pakistan fronts, he said.

"This project entails an investment running into thousands of crores of rupees. The planning phase for this initiative is currently underway. While some presentations have already been delivered,

others are still pending," he said.

By integrating various robust components including drones, radars, watchtowers, state-of-the-art technology and the brave BSF personnel, an impregnable security grid will be established, the Union minister said.

"We are also contemplating expansion of your operational mandate to include additional areas of responsibility. We are actively considering assigning new sectors and operational domains to the BSF in the near future," he said.

Talking about the Bangladesh border with West Bengal, Shah said the most significant vulnerability in India's border security grid lies in the area.

"A BJP government has now been established in Bengal, and the Chief Minister has, within just one week, taken a principled decision to allocate all the necessary land for fencing purposes, and the process of handing over some of this land has already commenced," Shah said.

Once the fencing is completed, the government will succeed in curbing infiltration on a massive scale. The only routes left for infiltrators will be through forests, mountains, and riverine channels, and work is underway to implement technical fencing solutions in these areas, Shah said.

The union minister is on an extended tour to the country's border areas for security review and interactions with local officials and senior BSF officers.

In the morning, he inaugurated the border outpost G-7, inspected a control room at OP tower 1170 and visited the Harami Nalla creek

where he planted a sapling.

The government has never hesitated to allocate necessary funds and utilise the latest technological advancement for alleviating hardships faced by BSF personnel in harsh weather conditions, the Union minister said.

"I am well aware of the technical challenges involved in the installation of the watchtower that has been erected here. But our personnel devised technical solutions and successfully constructed this tower," he said.

Shah was slated to chair a meeting to review security arrangements and interact with BSF personnel later in the day.

He started his tour from Bikaner in Rajasthan where he visited the BSF outpost at Sanchu, attended the 'Prahari Sammelan' and virtually inaugurated barracks for women personnel before reviewing the border security with senior BSF officers.

He is also likely to visit the border with Bangladesh, starting with a visit to Tripura on June 5, followed by a visit to West Bengal, officials said. (PTI)

## Part of under-construction bridge collapses in UP following storm, six labourers killed

**HAMIRPUR (UP), May 29:** Six labourers were killed and three others injured after part of a bridge under construction collapsed following a storm over the Betwa river in Uttar Pradesh's Hamirpur district early Friday, officials said.

The incident occurred around 3 am between Parsani and Kanda villages under the Lalpura police station area, around 25 km from the district headquarters. Several labourers engaged in the bridge construction work were sleeping on the upper portion of a slab when it suddenly gave way, they said.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath expressed grief over the incident and directed officials to ensure proper treatment of the injured.

Hamirpur District Magistrate Abhishek Goyal and Superintendent of Police Mrigank Shekhar Pathak reached the spot and inspected the rescue operation being carried out by SDRF teams.



Goyal told reporters that the work was being carried out by a private company and the project had been underway for the last two years.

He said all safety arrangements for labourers had been made at the site.

Goyal said the India Meteorological Department (IMD) and the dis-

trict administration had issued warnings on Thursday evening regarding strong winds, storms and rainfall.

Announcements were made in villages to alert residents and workers about the adverse weather conditions, he said.

The deceased were identified as Lokendra (22), Kuldeep Nishad

(19), Sawant Yadav (28) and Sabhajeet (30), Pushendra Chauhan (34), and Rajesh Pal (42), police said.

Three labourers were trapped under a pillar and later rescued. The injured were admitted to the district hospital in Hamirpur.

While describing the loss of lives as "extremely heartbreaking and heart-rending," Adityanath said on X that instructions had been issued to the district administration to carry out relief and rescue operations swiftly.

According to government officials, the chief minister also announced financial assistance of Rs 5 lakh each for the families of the deceased and Rs 50,000 for the injured.

Station House Officer (SHO) of Lalpura police station Rajesh Kumar Saroj said the bodies have been sent for postmortem and debris removal work was underway to ensure no other worker remained trapped under the rubble. (PTI)

## Day after resigning as Karnataka CM, Siddaramaiah meets Rahul, Kharge in Delhi



**NEW DELHI, May 29:** A day after resigning as the chief minister of Karnataka, Congress leader Siddaramaiah on Friday met Rahul Gandhi and Mallikarjun Kharge in the national capital, officials said.

Siddaramaiah was accompanied by his son Yathindra.

The meeting with Rahul Gandhi at Sonia Gandhi's 10, Janpath residence is seen as significant because Siddaramaiah is learnt to have told the former party chief that he has fulfilled his promise of resigning from the chief minister's post, paving the way for a transition in Karnataka.

He is also learnt to have discussed his future plans and the new government formation in the southern state with Rahul Gandhi.

Siddaramaiah has already declined a Rajya Sabha nomination, offered by the party leadership. He also said that he wants to remain in Karnataka and is not keen on a central role, which the party high command had suggested to him.

Sources said Siddaramaiah only met Rahul Gandhi, as Sonia Gandhi was not present during the meeting.

He thanked Rahul Gandhi for giving him an opportunity to serve the state and informed him that he had resigned from the chief minister's post as asked, the sources said.

Siddaramaiah is seeking a berth for his son and loyalists in the new Karnataka Cabinet, including the post of deputy chief minister, they said. Congress general secretary Randeep Surjewala, who was present during Siddaramaiah's hour-long meeting with Rahul Gandhi, said, "It was a very pleasant meeting. They discussed multiple political issues."

Asked if the transition will be smooth in Karnataka, he said, "Ab-

solutely. There is no hurdle in the smooth tradition of power in the state." The outgoing chief minister later met Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge and discussed the new government formation in Karnataka and his future role in the party.

"Shri Siddaramaiah's public life has consistently reflected dignity, compassion and a deep commitment to social justice. From humble beginnings to serving Karnataka twice as chief minister, he remained steadfast in his commitment to equity, harmony and the welfare of the marginalised."

"Karnataka and the Congress remain grateful for his contributions to public life. Wishing him good health and the very best in his continued service to people," Kharge said in a post on X, sharing his photographs with Siddaramaiah.

Siddaramaiah also met Congress general secretary in charge of organisation, K C Venugopal, at the latter's residence and discussed the new government formation in Karnataka.

The Congress veteran later had lunch with Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar and senior Karnataka minister K J George.

Shivakumar also held separate meetings with Kharge and Venugopal during the day and later told the media that a meeting of the Congress Legislature Party (CLP) in Karnataka will be held after confirming the timing with the party high command.

"We will hold the CLP meeting tomorrow. The timing will be decided after confirming with the high command because our central leaders will also have to come for the meeting. We have asked all our MLAs to be present in Bengaluru on Saturday," Shivakumar said. (PTI)

## Amid dissent in TMC ranks, Mamata's 'Girgiti' poem takes swipe at political turncoats



**KOLKATA, May 29:** Amid a growing chorus of dissent within the TMC after its loss of power in West Bengal, party supremo Mamata Banerjee has penned a new poem titled 'Girgiti', which political observers believe carries a veiled message for leaders who have recently turned critical of the organisation.

The poem 'Girgiti' (Chameleon), shared on social media on Thursday, apparently aims at people who frequently change their loyalties, beliefs and positions for personal gain, drawing a parallel with a chameleon known for changing colours.

In the poem, Banerjee, the former chief minister, wrote that some people are "more dangerous than a chameleon" as they alter their character and allegiances within hours to serve their financial interests and personal

ambitions.

"How much more do you want to change your character? How much bribery at your feet? How much more do you want to change yourselves?" the poem asks, in what many within political circles interpreted as a swipe at leaders who have recently distanced themselves from the TMC.

The poem comes at a time when several party leaders have publicly expressed dissatisfaction with the organisation, raised allegations related to corruption and questioned internal functioning. The discontent has also been accompanied by a series of resignations from party posts in recent weeks.

Without naming anyone, Banerjee's poem laments what it describes as the erosion of gratitude, moral values and human sensitivity in public life. It suggests that some indi-

viduals conveniently alter relationships, ideologies and convictions whenever circumstances change.

The poem further argues that expressions of loyalty and hostility are often dictated by self-interest, and questions whether such individuals ever introspect their actions.

At the same time, the poem asserts that there are still people in society who remain committed to their principles, though their voices are often drowned out by those who constantly change colours to suit their interests.

The latest poem follows Banerjee's earlier composition, "Dokhol" (Occupation), which had also sparked political discussion. That poem was widely seen as a critique of the BJP government that assumed office in the state earlier this month. (PTI)

## Will not hesitate to demand CBI enquiry into 'horse trading' by TVK: AIADMK whip

**TIRUVANNAMALAI (TAMIL NADU), May 29:** AIADMK whip Agri S S Krishnamurthy on Friday said that the party will demand a CBI investigation if the alleged poaching of lawmakers via "multi-crore cash" transfers by the ruling TVK continues.

Four AIADMK legislators -- K Maragatham Kumaravel (Maduranthakam Assembly constituency), S Jayakumar (Perundurai), P Sathyabama (Dharapuram) and Esakki Subaya (Ambasamudram) resigned as MLAs and joined the TVK, triggering an intense debate among political parties in the state. They were among the rebel AIADMK MLAs who voted in favour of the TVK government in the Assembly during the floor test on May 13.

Accusing that TVK had forced four AIADMK MLAs to resign through horse-trading involving "crores of rupees", Krishnamurthy said, "If they continue to commit such wrongdoings, I am duty-bound to firmly state at this moment that we will not hesitate to place a demand for a CBI enquiry into this, with the approval of party's general secretary Edapaddi K Palaniswami."

Targeting TVK leader and Minister Aadhav Arjuna, Krishnamurthy claimed that he was focusing entirely on poaching AIADMK functionaries rather than serving the public.

He further alleged that Arjuna was utilising his ministerial chamber in the Secretariat to induct members from other political parties.

"Is that a government Secretariat or TVK office? The public and neutral observers are asking this question," Krishnamurthy said.

The AIADMK whip claimed that Arjuna had previously approached Palaniswami, seeking to join the party and secure a deputy general secretary

post.

"Palaniswami flatly refused to admit him into the AIADMK, citing his track record of being expelled or suspended from previous parties, including the DMK and the VCK, for wrongdoings," Krishnamurthy said, adding that Arjuna joined TVK only after being rejected by the AIADMK.

Brushing aside the impact of recent defections, Krishnamurthy cited the late Chief Minister J Jayalalitha's 1996 remarks, characterising those who betray the party as "shed hair" that does not affect the core strength of the organisation.

He emphasised that while top-level leaders can be replaced by creating hundreds of new ones, the real strength lies in the party's 2.16 crore grassroots workers who remain fiercely loyal to Palaniswami's leadership.

He also categorically rejected rumours of a covert understanding or coalition talks between the AIADMK and the DMK, asserting that the AIADMK was founded by M G Ramachandran specifically to oppose the DMK.

"Oil and water can never mix. Our general secretary has never spoken to anyone about a coalition government with the DMK," he clarified.

Taking a swipe at Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay's promise of providing a "clean administration", the AIADMK leader claimed that the state's law and order situation had completely collapsed.

He alleged that more than 20 murders, an equal number of sexual assaults, and rampant instances of robbery and ganja smuggling have gripped Tamil Nadu recently.

He further cited recent violent clashes between VCK and DMK workers in the Ponnamp area as proof of public distress. (PTI)

## NEET-UG to shift to CBT mode from 2027: NTA to SC

**NEW DELHI, May 29:** The National Testing Agency on Friday told the Supreme Court that it is all set to conduct NEET-UG in the computer-based test (CBT) mode from next year instead of the pen and paper mode after consulting the Centre.

The National Testing Agency (NTA), responsible for conducting the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET), made the statement before the apex court, which is hearing a batch of petitions related to the sensational paper "leak" this year that led to the cancellation of the May 3 exam.

In an affidavit filed before a bench of Justices P S Narasimha and Alok Aradhe, the NTA said a high-level committee of experts (HLCE) has recommended transition of NEET-UG to the CBT mode.

## India may see 90% of long-period average rainfall this monsoon: IMD

**NEW DELHI, May 29:** The June-September southwest monsoon seasonal rainfall over India is expected to be 90 per cent of the long-period average with a model error of 4 per cent, the India Meteorological Department said on Friday.

While the Northeast is likely to witness normal rainfall this monsoon season, the remaining parts of the country may see below normal rainfall, the weather office said.

The long-period average (LPA) of seasonal rainfall over the country as a whole, based on data from 1971 to 2020, is 87 cm.

LPA refers to the rainfall recorded over a particular region for a given interval, such as a month or season, averaged over a long period of time, typically 30 to 50 years.

Mrutyunjay Mohapatra, Director General of Meteorology at the India Meteorological Department (IMD), said in a statement, "The southwest monsoon seasonal rainfall over the monsoon core zone consisting of most of the rainfed agriculture areas



in the country is most likely to be below normal (less than 94 pc of LPA)."

The average rainfall for the country as a whole in June is most likely to be below normal -- less than 92 pc of the LPA, he said.

If the monsoon season sees less than 90 pc of LPA rainfall, the IMD classifies it as 'deficient'.

Speaking about the monsoon's onset over Kerala, Mohapatra said

it is expected to happen in the next seven days.

Typically, Kerala witnesses the onset of southwest monsoon around June 1, which marks the beginning of the southwest monsoon season in the country.

The IMD made the observations during its second forecast for the southwest monsoon. On April 13, the weather office had said that India might witness 92 per

cent of LPA rainfall this monsoon season.

On Friday, the IMD also said that El Nino conditions are likely to be weak in June, and moderate to strong in September.

Currently, neutral El Nino-Southern Oscillation conditions are transitioning towards El Nino conditions over the equatorial Pacific region. The emergence of El Nino conditions leads to less monsoon rainfall in the country.

The weather department also highlighted that in June, above normal monthly maximum temperatures are likely over most parts of the country.

"During June, above normal heatwave days are expected over many parts of Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Punjab, Bihar, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, and Andhra Pradesh and isolated regions of Maharashtra," Mohapatra said.

He added that below-normal heatwave days are likely over Rajasthan and Jharkhand. (PTI)

## Cong adopting 'narrow-minded' stand on ED action against oppn parties: Vijayan

**THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, May 29:** Former Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan on Friday accused the Congress of taking a "narrow-minded" stand on ED actions against leaders of parties opposed to the BJP, claiming that the grand old party objects only when its own leaders are targeted.

Vijayan, responding to queries from reporters at a press conference about the Enforcement Directorate searches at his residences, said that ever since the BJP came to power at the Centre, it has been adopting a tough stance towards parties opposed to it.

"As part of that, it uses the ED in a biased manner against many opposition parties and their leaders. However, the Congress objects to it only when action is taken against its own leaders," the Leader of Opposition in the state Assembly contended. On why Chief Minister V D Satheesan was silent on the issue, Vijayan said that was a question that should be put to the Kerala CM. (PTI)

Intervene as shutdown over alleged hostage issue disrupts NH-202 movement

## Security forces fire tear gas shells to disperse protesters in Manipur's Ukhrul

**IMPHAL, May 29:** Security forces fired several rounds of tear gas shells to disperse protesters who had blocked National Highway 202 in Manipur's Ukhrul district on Friday, officials said.

People from Shangkai village, who were enforcing a shutdown in their area to protest the alleged holding of 14 community members hostage by Naga groups, had blocked part of the vital highway from Imphal to Ukhrul district headquarters.

At least five women sustained minor injuries during the incident and were given first aid treatment by security forces, they said.

Protesters staged heavy stone boulders, tree trunks and gathered



in the middle of the road, disrupting the movement of essential supplies and security forces towards the Ukhrul district headquarters.

Kuki Inpi Manipur, the apex body of the Kuki tribes in the state, had announced an indefinite total shutdown in all areas inhabited by the

tribal community to protest the abduction of 14 individuals allegedly by Naga groups.

More than 38 people were abducted and held hostage by armed groups in Kangpokpi and Senapati districts on May 13, hours after three church leaders were killed in an ambush in Kangpokpi district.

Of them, 31 people have been released, including 12 Naga women and 16 Kukis. Six Naga men, however, continued to be held hostage and their whereabouts are not yet known.

Kuki Inpi Manipur, the apex body of the Kuki tribes in the state, also claimed that 14 people from the community continued to be held hostage by Naga groups. (PTI)

## Manipur Police museum a tribute to dedication, sacrifices of police personnel: CM

Museum highlights history, sacrifices and evolution of Manipur Police

**IMPHAL, May 29:** Manipur Chief Minister Y Khemchand Singh on Friday said that the newly inaugurated police museum will stand as a tribute to the dedication, courage and sacrifices of generations of police personnel.

In a social media post, Singh said, "It was a privilege to inaugurate the Manipur Police Museum today at the 1st Manipur Rifles Battalion Complex in the presence of the Director General of Police, Manipur, Rajiv Singh and other senior police officials."

He also said, "The Museum preserves the rich legacy, evolution and service of the Manipur Police through a remarkable collection of antique arms, historical uniforms, rare photographs and archival documents" and "stands as a tribute to the dedication, courage and sacrifices of generations of police personnel."

Singh was also briefed by the DGP and Commanding Officer (CO), 1st Manipur Rifles, Khoisnam Sarma Devi, on the displayed antique weapons, which were used during the Second World War, old archived photographs of the Manipur Police and radio trans-



mitters of very high frequency used by the Manipur Police in the late 1990s.

Later, Singh paid a visit to the Manipur Police Headquarters located at Mantripukhri and inaugurated a creche room located on the ground floor. (PTI)

### Northeast's first 'New Age Tech Skills Centre' inaugurated in Mizoram capital Aizawl

**AIZAWL, May 29:** Mizoram school education minister Vanlalhlana on Friday inaugurated the northeast region's first-ever 'New Age Tech Skills Centre' at the Government Comprehensive Model School here, an official said.

The centre has been set up under the corporate social responsibility initiative of Bharat Forge Limited, with technical support from SimuSoft Technologies in collaboration with the School Education Department.

The centre will provide students training in advanced technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), robotics, Internet of Things (IoT), 3D printing, computer-aided design (CAD), CNC simulation and drone technology.

The initiative aligns with the objectives of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 by integrating classroom learning with practical, industry-oriented technical skills, they said. (PTI)

## Arunachal: CEO reviews preparedness for June 18 RS polls

**ITANAGAR, May 29:** Arunachal Pradesh Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Pawan Kumar Sain on Friday reviewed preparations for the upcoming biennial election to the Rajya Sabha and directed officials to ensure all arrangements are in place for a smooth, transparent and efficient electoral process.

Chairing a coordination meeting at Nirvachan Bhawan here, with officials of the Arunachal Pradesh Legislative Assembly, Information and Public Relations (IPR) department, Sain outlined the election schedule and key responsibilities of various departments, an official statement said.

He said that polling for the lone Rajya Sabha seat from the state will be held on June 18 and the election process will be completed by June 20. The CEO said the election is being conducted as the term of one Rajya Sabha member representing Arunachal Pradesh is due to expire on June 23.

Sain said that the notification for the election will be issued on June 1, while the last date for filing nominations is June 8. Scrutiny of nominations will take place on June 9 and candidates can withdraw their nominations till June 11.

Polling will be conducted from 9 am to 4 pm on June 18, followed by counting of votes at 5 pm on the



same day, he said.

Sain said that the secretary of the Legislative Assembly has been appointed as the Returning Officer and the Deputy Secretary as the Assistant Returning Officer. The relevant notifications will be published in the Extraordinary Gazette of the state on June 1.

During the meeting, officials finalised a series of measures to ensure the smooth conduct of the election.

The Returning Officer was directed to ensure proper maintenance of the electoral college list, make arrangements for polling and counting personnel and coordinate logistics, accommodation and security for election observers.

The CEO also reviewed arrangements for ballot boxes, printing of ballot papers, voting

compartments and custody of election materials. Officials were told that only prescribed violet sheet pens supplied by the Returning Officer would be used for marking preferences on ballot papers. To ensure officials are fully prepared, the CEO's office will organise a training programme for the Returning Officer, Assistant Returning Officer and polling and counting personnel on June 5.

A mock drill at the state Legislative Assembly will also be conducted to familiarise polling teams with election-day procedures.

As part of measures to enhance transparency, live webcasting of the polling process will be carried out and video footage of the proceedings will be submitted to the Election Commission within the

prescribed timeline.

The meeting further decided that the IPR Department would coordinate publicity related to candidates' criminal antecedents and political parties, while Doordarshan Kendra would assist in disseminating election-related information and publicity in accordance with Election Commission guidelines.

The Returning Officer will also coordinate with police authorities to ensure adequate security arrangements at polling and counting venues.

The meeting was attended by Joint Chief Electoral Officer Liken Koyu, Deputy Chief Electoral Officer Shania Kayem Mize and officials from the Legislative Assembly, IPR Department and Doordarshan Kendra.

During the interaction, Sain also briefed participants on the ongoing Special Intensive Revision of Electoral Rolls aimed at including all eligible voters while removing ineligible entries from the rolls.

He described the IPR department, Doordarshan and All India Radio as key partners in promoting transparency, voter awareness and public confidence in the electoral process and urged them to designate nodal officers for effective coordination with the CEO's office. (PTI)

## Truck driver dies in militant firing in Manipur's Ukhrul, CM condemns killing

**IMPHAL, May 29:** A truck driver was killed and a police constable was injured when suspected militants fired at a convoy of goods vehicles in Manipur's Ukhrul district on Friday, an officer said. "A joint team of security forces, including BSF, CRPF and police were escorting some 15 to 20 trucks towards Ukhrul district when they came under attack near TM Kasom from suspected militants, killing a truck driver at the spot", the officer said. Manipur Chief Minister Yumnam Khemchand Singh on Friday strongly condemned the firing of militants on a goods vehicle convoy in Ukhrul district in which a truck driver from West Bengal was killed, an official statement said.

Expressing deepest condolences on the loss of life, Singh said ambushing goods vehicle and taking the life of a driver, who plays a crucial role in ensuring the uninterrupted supply of essential items across the state is one of the most cowardly acts and intends to further aggravate the tense situation prevailing in the area.

He further stated that the ambush seemed to be carried out by vested interest groups with ill motives to derail the initiatives of the state government to restore peace and normalcy in the state.

Singh also prayed for the speedy recovery of the police constable, who sustained a bullet injury on his knee in the ambush, and that the search and cordon operation is underway in nearby areas to nab and punish the culprits as per the law of the land. The security forces also fired back, leading to a brief exchange of fire, said the officer. The deceased truck driver has been identified as Nitish Kumar, 57, the officer said.

The incident happened some 6 km from Shangkai village, where protesters blocked roads, forcing security forces to fire several tear gas shells to disperse the agitators on Friday morning.

The CM on Wednesday had met representatives of the Manipur Truck Owners' Welfare Association, to discuss the law and order situation on the National Highways and the movement of goods transport.

The CM had said that "The government is committed to ensuring the safe and smooth movement of transport vehicles and keeping the National Highways free from all hindrances." Two civilians, including a retired Army soldier, were shot dead by suspected militants on April 18 last in an ambush near TM Kasom village. (PTI)

## NCW chief calls for coordinated action to strengthen women's safety in Arunachal

**ITANAGAR, May 29:** NCW chairperson Vijaya Rahatkar on Friday urged greater awareness, sensitivity and coordinated action among stakeholders to strengthen women's safety and access to justice in Arunachal Pradesh.

Addressing a two-day awareness and training programme for protection officers, one-stop centre (OSC) personnel, counsellors and other officials here, Rahatkar said many women continue to suffer in silence due to social pressure, financial dependency and lack of awareness about their rights.

"Incidents of domestic violence often remain hidden within homes, making the role of protection officers and support systems even more critical," she said, stressing that frontline institutions must be equipped to provide timely support and relief.

The National Commission for Women (NCW) chief underlined the importance of legal literacy for officials engaged in women-centric services and urged comprehensive knowledge of the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, the POCSO Act and other related laws.

"Without adequate understanding of these laws, it will be difficult to provide effective relief and justice to women in distress," she said.

Pointing to the geographical challenges of the state, the NCW chief said Arunachal Pradesh's remote and hilly terrain requires stronger institutional mechanisms and better-trained personnel so that women in every corner of the state can access justice and support services.

Describing the training as more than a formal event, she said it aimed to strengthen the capacity, knowledge and effectiveness of OSCs, protection officers and associated departments.

She called for stronger coordination among the women and child development department, state commission for women, police, legal services authorities, district administrations and all related institutions to ensure a comprehensive and timely response to women in crisis.

Rahatkar stressed the need for an improved crisis response mechanism, warning that delays in handling cases can lead to severe consequences.

She encouraged the sharing of practical experiences and best practices among officials and suggested forming dedicated communication groups for counsellors, case workers, medical support staff and protection officers to facilitate better coordination and learning.

Reaffirming the commitment of the state women's commission towards safety, protection, rehabilitation and empowerment of women, she urged institutions to become more sensitive, responsive and accountable so that survivors can approach the justice system with confidence.

The programme, organised by the Arunachal Pradesh State Commission for Women in collaboration with the NCW, covered legal provisions, protection mechanisms, mental health and inter-departmental coordination.

Technical sessions included a presentation by Yakang Nani, State Mission Coordinator, SHEW, WCD department, on OSC objectives, functions and responsibilities.

APSCW counsellor Dr Leeyir Ete spoke on mental health and the importance of counselling support, while additional SP and SDPO Naharlagun Rishi Longdo highlighted the role of police in supporting survivors and coordinating with OSCs.

Techi Nech, panel advocate of Arunachal Pradesh State Legal Services Authority, elaborated on legal aspects, including domestic violence and the POCSO Act.

Dr Pallavi Boro, associate professor, conducted a session on reproductive health and menstrual hygiene.

The two-day programme concluded with active participation from stakeholders, officials and OSC personnel, reaffirming collective commitment towards women's safety and welfare in the state. (PTI)

## Arunachal Pradesh State Transport Services backbone of connectivity: Deputy CM Mein

**ITANAGAR, May 29:** Deputy Chief Minister Chowna Mein on Friday described the Arunachal Pradesh State Transport Services (APSTS) as a lifeline of the state that has played a crucial role in connecting remote communities and driving socio-economic development over the past five decades.

Addressing the inaugural function of the three-day APSTS Golden Jubilee celebrations at Khonsa in Tirap district, Mein said the growth of APSTS from a modest beginning with just two buses in 1975 to a major public transport institution today mirrors the development journey of the state itself.

Congratulating former and serving officials, employees and stakeholders of the department, he recalled his own experiences of travelling in APSTS buses and acknowledged the role played by the transport service in transforming lives across the state, an official release stated.

Describing APSTS as an institution that has grown "from a small seed into a large tree", Mein said the depart-

ment's story is inseparable from the state's progress.

He also observed the transformation of Khonsa over the years and appreciated the support extended by traditional chiefs during the formative years of APSTS.

The deputy chief minister lauded the department's adoption of modern technologies such as GPS tracking systems, panic buttons, CCTV cameras, air-conditioned coaches and electric buses, saying these initiatives reflected APSTS's commitment to safety, innovation and passenger convenience.

Transport Minister Ojing Tasing termed the celebrations a tribute to the pioneers, former employees, drivers, conductors, mechanics and officers who helped build APSTS into one of the state's most important public service institutions.

He said the occasion was not merely a celebration of 50 years of service but a recognition of generations of individuals who worked under difficult conditions to connect people, villages and opportunities across the state.

The minister highlighted the department's ongoing modernisation efforts, passenger-centric initiatives and road safety programmes, while reaffirming the government's commitment to strengthening public transportation for inclusive development.

Responding to demands raised by local legislators Wanglin Lowangdong and Wanglam Sawin, he assured development of transport infrastructure in Khonsa.

Education, Tourism, RWD, Parliamentary Affairs and Public Libraries Minister Pasang Dorjee Sonu stressed the importance of the transport sector in economic growth and congratulated APSTS on completing 50 years of service.

Earlier in the day, Mein flagged off the state's first 'restaurant bus', a road safety awareness bus and a fleet of new luxury buses.

The initiative aims to redefine public transportation in the state, strengthen road safety awareness and improve passenger comfort and travel experience, officials said. (PTI)

## Committees to review key tribal and ILP concerns, says Khandu

### Arunachal to set up four panels on ST status, ILP and infiltration

**ITANAGAR, May 29:** Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu on Friday said the state government has decided to constitute four high-powered committees to re-verify APST certificates, examine the non-APST offspring issue, strengthen the ILP framework and check infiltration.

The decision was taken after discussions with the Arunachal Indigenous Tribes Forum (AITF), community-based organisations (CBOs), the All Arunachal Pradesh Students' Union (AAPSU), the ST Bachao Andolan Committee, government officials and legal experts on the four key demands raised by the ST Bachao Andolan, Khandu said after the meeting.

"Formation of four high-powered committees has been agreed upon today," the chief minister said in a post on X.

He added that the panels would examine the issues and recommend suitable measures.

The CM further informed that official notifications constituting the committees would be issued by Monday.

The decision follows a series of consulta-



tions between the state government and various stakeholders, including an eight-hour-long meeting chaired by Khandu on May 27 and another consultative session held at the civil secretariat here on Friday.

Khandu said each committee would be led by a cabinet minister and include represen-

tatives from AITF, AAPSU, the ST Bachao Andolan Committee, legal experts, research scholars and women representatives to ensure a balanced, inclusive and action-oriented process.

The four committees will separately re-verify the Arunachal Pradesh Scheduled

Tribe (APST) certificates, issues concerning non-APST offspring, strengthening of the Inner Line Permit (ILP) framework, including a review of the ILP Guidelines 2026, and concerns relating to infiltration.

During the meeting, stakeholders and government representatives agreed to continue the dialogue process, with another round of discussions scheduled for Monday.

The committees have been given an initial timeframe of six months to submit their recommendations, though the period may be extended depending on the outcome of field studies and stakeholder consultations, officials said.

To ensure regular monitoring of the exercise, three review meetings will be held under the chairmanship of the chief minister during the course of the committees' work.

The move comes amid sustained demands from indigenous groups for stronger implementation of the ILP regime and resolution of long-pending concerns related to tribal identity, demographic changes and the status of different communities in the state. (PTI)

### Rishabh Pant steps down from LSG captaincy



**NEW DELHI, May 29:** Dashing keeper-batter Rishabh Pant has been relieved from Lucknow Super Giants' captaincy after a disastrous 2026 IPL season where they finished last among 10 teams.

As a batter, it turned out to be a woeful season where he got only 312 runs in 14 innings. On May 14, the PTI had reported that Pant was set to lose captaincy, something which was reiterated by LSG's Director of Cricket Tom Moody.

"Lucknow Super Giants (LSG) wish to formally announce that Rishabh Pant has requested to be relieved of his captaincy duties with the franchise, and the franchise has accepted his request with immediate effect," the franchise said in an official statement.

"Rishabh approached the franchise with this request and we have respectfully accepted it," Moody was quoted as saying in the media release.

"These decisions are never easy. We are grateful for everything Rishabh has brought to this dressing room as captain. Our focus now is on the collective rebuilding and restructuring to reach the best standards," the former Australian all-rounder added. (PTI)

## Rodrigues, Yastika and debutant Nandani power India to 38-run win over England

**CHELMSFORD (UK), May 29:** Jemimah Rodrigues and Yastika Bhatia struck fluent half-centuries before debutant pacer Nandani Sharma led India to a 38-run victory over England in the three-match women's T20I series here.

Playing without regular captain Harmanpreet Kaur, India recovered from a disastrous start to post 188 for seven and then restricted England to 150 for eight at the County Ground here on Thursday.

This is India's final series before next month's T20 World Cup that begins on June 12.

Stand-in skipper Smriti Mandhana got off to a golden duck, while her opening partner Shafali Verma capped a forgettable three-ball top with Lauren Bell (3/34) giving a fiery start to England after they opted to bowl.

But Rodrigues made 69 off 40 balls (1x6, 10x4s) and Yastika marked her return to the format after two years with a brisk 54 off 40 deliveries, her maiden T20I fifty. She smashed nine fours and one six.

Yastika and Rodrigues counter-attacked brilliantly, stitching together a 126-run stand for the third wicket off just 76 balls to turn the innings around.

Yastika, returning after knee sur-



gery and playing her first T20I since April 2024, raced to her fifty in 31 balls with nine fours and a six.

Rodrigues was equally aggressive, striking 10 boundaries and a six while bringing up her half-century off 31 deliveries.

England's sloppy fielding compounded their problems before Charlie Dean provided some relief by effecting Yastika's run out and then dismissing Rodrigues in the same over.

India briefly lost momentum as Richa Ghosh and Bharti Fulmali fell cheaply, but Deepti Sharma's unbeaten 22 off 13 balls and Arund-

hati Reddy's late cameo ensured a strong finish.

In reply, England never quite recovered after losing Sophia Dunkley (16) and Alice Capsey (6) inside four overs.

Amy Jones kept the chase alive with a fighting 67 off 48 balls, sharing a 64-run stand with Heather Knight (21).

During her knock, Knight became England Women's most-capped player across formats with 310 appearances, overtaking Charlotte Edwards.

However, debutant Nandani turned the game decisively in India's favour.

The 24-year-old pacer scalped Jones in the 16th over before removing Dani Gibson off the next ball and then dismissing Wong to finish with impressive figures of 3/34.

Kranti Gaud claimed two wickets, while Shree Charani and Deepti chipped in with one wicket apiece as England fell well short of the target.

"Lot of credit to Yastika. She took load off me and that partnership was crucial. We assessed the conditions well," player-of-the-match Rodrigues said after the game.

"Playing square of the wicket helped. My game is more about picking gaps. I trust my instincts and play my game. I enjoy fielding. Today, felt like a yo-yo session. I love fielding in the hot spots."

The three-match series assumes significance for India as they look to finalise combinations ahead of the T20 World Cup. India open their campaign against Pakistan on June 14.

**Brief Scores:** India: 188 for 7 in 20 overs (Jemimah Rodrigues 69, Yastika Bhatia 54; Lauren Bell 3/34) beat England 150; 20 overs (Amy Jones 67, Heather Knight 21; Nandani Sharma 3/34, Kranti Gaud 2/24) by 38 runs. (PTI)

## Sindhu falls to nemesis An Se Young; Satwik-Chirag in semis



**SINGAPORE, May 29:** India's PV Sindhu lacked the consistency required to trouble world No. 1 An Se Young for sustained periods, going down in the quarterfinals but ace men's doubles pair of Satwik-Sairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty moved into the semifinals with a hard-fought win at the Singapore Open Super 750 badminton tournament here on Friday.

The two-time Olympic medallist showed flashes of her attacking best and managed to put the Korean under pressure in phases, but An's superior control, movement and ability to win the crucial points ensured another comfortable 21-17 21-14 victory in their lopsided rivalry.

The loss extended Sindhu's winless run against the reigning Olympic champion to nine matches. Across those meetings, the Indian has managed to take a game off An only once, at the 2023 Badminton Asia Championships.

Satwik and Chirag, the Asian Games champion and fourth seeds here, came from a game down to get the better of Malaysia's Khai Xing Kang and Aaron Tai 19-21 21-17 21-13 in a gruelling contest that lasted one hour and five minutes.

The Indian pair will now be up against top seeds Kim Won Ho and Seo Seung Jae of Korea, who defeated seventh seeded Japanese combination of Takuro Hoki and Yugo Kobayashi 21-19 21-18.

**Sindhu vs An Se Young**  
The challenge was always for-

midable for Sindhu against an opponent who has lost just one match this year after suffering only four defeats in the whole of 2025, underlining the Korean's remarkable dominance on the world circuit.

Sindhu looked intent on taking the attack to An from the outset, using her powerful smashes and early interceptions to dictate rallies whenever possible.

However, the Indian trailed 7-11 at the mid-game interval in the opening game before clawing her way back to 13-14 with a series of aggressive returns and attacking strokes.

While Sindhu's proactive approach helped her stay in contention, An's command at the net and ability to absorb pressure allowed her to regain control. A body smash and a round-the-head winner helped Sindhu narrow the gap to 16-18 before she won the longest rally of the match to make it 17-19.

But an untimely wide shot handed An three game points, and the Korean wrapped up the opener when Sindhu sent another return long.

The second game began disastrously for Sindhu as An stormed to a 6-0 lead. The Indian gradually found her rhythm, reducing the deficit to 6-8 with a smash winner, a long return from An and a net-touch fault by the Korean.

An soon restored her advantage and led 11-7 at the break after producing a precise cross-court winner that left Sindhu stranded.

The Indian made an aggressive start after the interval and stayed within striking distance at 11-14 before winning a gruelling 30-shot rally to close the gap to 12-14.

However, a few unforced errors at crucial moments halted her momentum. As her attacking accuracy dipped, Sindhu slipped to 13-18 and struggled to contain An's relentless precision.

The Korean repeatedly moved Sindhu around the court with her deft placement and exceptional retrieval skills before earning seven match points. An converted on her second opportunity when Sindhu's return sailed long, sealing her place in the semifinals after a 48-minute contest. (PTI)

## BCCI bans smart sunglasses in PMOA, warns of action in case of violation



**NEW DELHI, May 29:** The BCCI's Anti-Corruption Unit has barred the usage of smart sunglasses by players and match officials in the ongoing IPL, citing its advanced communication features which allow live streaming and video calling through mobile data or Wi-Fi networks.

In an advisory to the league's franchises, the BCCI ACSU has stated that it has been noticed that some companies are marketing and selling smart sunglasses to players and support staff.

"Kindly note that these devices are equipped with advanced communication features, including live streaming, sending and receiving text messages, as well as audio and video calling capabilities through mobile data or Wi-Fi networks," the Board said.

"Accordingly, under the PMOA Minimum Standards, such goggles/glasses are classified both as an 'Audio/Video Recording Device' and a 'Communication Device'.

"It is hereby notified that the possession and/or use of 'Smart Goggles' is strictly prohibited within the Players and Match Officials Area (PMOA)," it added.

Players are prohibited from using communication devices in the designated PMOAs and in

the ongoing edition Rajasthan Royals Romi Bhinder copped a Rs one lakh fine and a warning after being caught on camera using a phone in the team dugout during a match.

In its latest advisory, the Board urged players and officials to deposit smart sunglasses as well before entering the PMOA and warned of action in case of non-compliance.

"All players and support staff are directed to deposit such devices with the Security Liaison Officer (SLO), along with their mobile phones and smart-watches, upon entering the PMOA on match days," the Board said.

"Failure to deposit such devices shall be deemed a breach of the PMOA protocols and may result in penalties under the PMOA Minimum Standards for IPL 2026," it added.

The IPL this year has been rocked by incidents of code of conduct violations, prompting the BCCI to earlier issue a strict protocol which banned late night outings for players without permission from the security team.

The Board has also disallowed guests in the players and support staff's hotel rooms due to security concerns and fears of honey-trapping. (PTI)

## Kumble lauds Vaibhav Sooryavanshi's consistency

**MULLANPUR, May 29:** In awe of Vaibhav Sooryavanshi's power-hitting, Indian spin legend Anil Kumble said he is also very impressed with the consistency that the fearless youngster has exhibited in the ongoing IPL. Sooryavanshi made history by smashing 65 sixes in a single IPL season. This extraordinary feat shattered the previous all-time IPL record of 59 sixes, which was held by West Indian marauder Chris Gayle since 2012.

The 15-year-old is the highest run-scorer and Orange Cap holder of the ongoing IPL, amassing 680 runs in just 15 innings for Rajasthan Royals. He also recently broke the world record for scoring the most runs in a single T20 series by a teenager.

"Vaibhav Sooryavanshi is the Orange Cap holder, and that doesn't come from doing it just once or against a couple of teams. He's done it consistently over the last two months, and that says a lot about the

youngster.

"It's not just about going out there and bashing a few sixes, even though he is the highest six-hitter now," Kumble told JioHotstar's 'Game Plan'.

Kumble said Sooryavanshi's breath-taking season has put some pressure on his opening partner Yashasvi Jaiswal, who has had a subdued run by his standards. Jaiswal has scored 426 runs in 15 matches at an average of 32.77 and a strike rate of 153.24.

"The bowlers have bowled well at him, but he will still be under pressure. The whole limelight that was on Yashasvi Jaiswal a couple of years ago is still there, but now someone who is just 15 years old has gone ahead and taken the world by storm," Kumble said.

"Even in the game against SRH, the partnership was fantastic. They scored almost 120 runs in about eight overs, but the bulk of the scoring was done by Sooryavanshi. (PTI)

## Need full term to transform Indian tennis ecosystem, says AITA leadership

**NEW DELHI, May 29:** Player welfare, transparent governance and athlete representation will be the cornerstone of the AITA's functioning if the current office-bearers get a full term, President Chintan Parikh and Secretary General Sunder Iyer said on Friday, asserting that the leadership remains united in its vision to transform Indian tennis.

The AITA has been embroiled in administrative turmoil over the last two years, with a petition challenging the validity of the federation's elections and the functioning of the Executive Committee.

Parikh and Iyer were elected in the 2024 All India Tennis Association (AITA) elections, the results of which were later withheld. The players alleged that AITA was not transparent, accountable and there was not much support to the players. The petition had led to the appointment of former Jammu and Kashmir High Court Justice Geeta Mittal as administrator to oversee the federation's functioning and align its constitution with the National Sports Governance Act, 2025 before conducting fresh elections.

Parikh said "there is no factionalism within the present administration". "The team remains united. In the last EC meetings, all the decisions were taken unanimously. Players representation will be exactly as envisaged in the National Sports Governance Act and we are determined to support the same," Parikh said.

"Sportspersons of Outstanding Merit and Athletes Committee will have their seats on the executive committee. We are committed to transparent and clean financial operations within AITA," he added.

Iyer said the current office-bearers inherited a "broken system" and should not be blamed for decisions taken in the past.

"People should judge us after we get a full-fledged term to prove our worth as sports administrators. We cannot be held responsible for decisions taken earlier. Give us the opportunity to work properly and then evaluate us," Iyer said. Promising sweeping reforms in Indian tennis administration, he said the current leadership was determined to create a more player-centric and transparent structure.

"Player welfare and support will be the mantra of our tenure. Indian tennis has been waiting for change for decades and we are fully committed to bringing that change. Our focus will be on players' development, grassroots strengthening and creating a transparent, accountable system," he said. (PTI)

## Bhuvneshwar Kumar combines old-school virtues with new-age variations to ace power-hitters

**AHMEDABAD, May 29:** Shubman Gill pressed forward to swat Bhuvneshwar Kumar across the line, but the ball came woe bit in from good length to rattle the stumps of Gujarat Titans' captain.

It was an unremarkable a dismissal as one would see across this season of the IPL.

But that 10-second moment in the Qualifier 1 at Dharamsala carried the essence of Bhuvneshwar's bowling — old-school, minimal but highly effective.

The 36-year-old pacer is now a frontrunner for this year's Purple Cap, having taken 26 wickets at an impressive economy rate of 8, and only Jason Holder (7.63) has been thrifter among the top 20 bowlers than Bhuvneshwar.

In that, 12 wickets have come inside the Power Play segment at an astounding economy of around 7, fuelling Royal Challengers Bengaluru's march to a second successive IPL final.

It has been a remarkable transition by Bhuvneshwar — once deemed unsuitable for T20 format because of his lack of pace to the second highest wicket-taker in the league with 222 wickets.

So, how does he manage to keep himself relevant in the age of range-hitting and flat tracks? After

all, some of the more revered names have withered in this unforgiving league.

Omkar Salvi, the RCB bowling coach, offered some insight.

"Everyone knows what a world-class bowler he is and the skills he possesses. Every bowler has their own strengths and teams plan according to that. Bhuvni is bowling with the new ball, so naturally he wants to explore the swing.

"At the death as well, he has been using his variations effectively. It depends on which phase he is operating in," said Salvi.

Bhuvneshwar has an abundance of variations, and he has also added a very handy yorker to his repertoire of late, helping him to be tougher to ward off in the death overs.

But none of it is as deceiving as his knuckle ball, something he has developed while watching former India pacer Zaheer Khan.

The Meerut man grips the ball's seam with the tip of his index and middle fingers, curling the knuckles in.

It is an awkward grip and release but also causes extreme wobble and rather sudden dip to leave the batter in a shambles, particularly while lining him up for a big hit. Rohit Sharma will vouch for

that. The veteran Mumbai Indians batter wanted to execute a trademark thump through the covers, but a 116 kmph wider knuckle ball took the edge of his bat before nestling in the safe mitts of Jitesh Sharma.

"A lot of planning goes into it, when to use it, it's not random, and it depends on how the wicket is behaving. When there's a bit of seam or swing in the first six, I try to extract that.

"So, it's about being proactive, like batters are these days. If it's a slow wicket, where the ball might stop on the surface, I may use the knuckle ball," Bhuvneshwar had told JioHotstar.

But this whole bunch of clever variations act as a booster to his inherent ability to swing the ball both ways, which in itself can keep a batter guessing all the time.

If anything, the willingness to add more contours to his bowling shows the pacer's insatiable desire to work on his craft.

"He can outthink a batsman easily. He has been bowling for so many years now and has developed this ability to judge a batter's mindset and he can plot the dismissal while adjusting the field to his strengths. (PTI)

## I worked hard on fitness and strike rate for two years: Sarfaraz Khan

**MUMBAI, May 29:** India and Chennai Super Kings batter Sarfaraz Khan on Friday said he worked on his fitness and strike rate in white ball cricket during the two years he missed playing in the Indian Premier League.

The right-handed Mumbai batter was not picked by any side in the IPL editions of 2024 and 2025, before he made a comeback with Chennai Super Kings this year.

"The biggest challenge for me in the IPL was to make a comeback and to play with a good strike rate," Sarfaraz told reporters during the jersey launch of Mumbai Western Suburbs Aakash Tigers here ahead of the fourth edition of the T20 Mumbai League.

"There was some issue with the strike rate in between, and also due to fitness, I was not there in the IPL for two years. The biggest challenge for me was making a comeback.

"I needed to improve my strike rate and



fitness. That's one reason I was out of the IPL for two years. I worked hard on fitness, fielding, and batting, and I got good results. I'll continue to improve," he added.

Talking about his performance this year,

Sarfaraz said, "You can never be fully satisfied in cricket. You have to wake up each day, work hard and learn something new everyday.

"I spent two months there (at CSK) and learnt a lot. Everyone knows that his

(room) doors are never closed, so whenever needed, we used to sit together, discuss cricket, and always try to learn new things," he said, talking about the time he spent with MS Dhoni.

"One thing I learnt is to keep things simple," Sarfaraz added.

The 28-year-old said he wants to keep working hard on his game and he is someone who cannot sit idle.

"I enjoy working hard. I don't like sitting idle. I felt I needed to improve my white-ball game, so I worked on it and also focused on my fitness. The results have been positive.

"As long as I am playing cricket, I want to keep learning. I want to improve in red-ball cricket, white-ball cricket... Every day is a new challenge," he added.

Sarfaraz, like the rest in the cricket fraternity, is in awe of the 15-year-old Vaibhav Sooryavanshi.

"What can I even say to him to do better? He has made life tough for the others, whenever he takes the field he deals only in sixes," Sarfaraz quipped.

"He had made his Ranji Trophy debut against us (versus Mumbai in Patna, 2024-2025 season) and I felt he had the game to play red-ball cricket like he plays white ball.

"His practice and mindset are different, and it is not that others cannot do what he is doing. But he has worked hard on it and if you work hard on something, you can be successful in it."

Sarfaraz said a player's job is only to keep working hard.

"Whether it's the IPL or any other tournament, your job is to perform. Selectors will do their job; players have to focus on theirs," he said when asked if IPL performances matter a lot for selectors in picking national teams. (PTI)

## MSA to organise Darrang district inter-club athletics meet

**HT Correspondent**  
**MANGALDAI, May 29:** The Mangaldai Sports Association (MSA) will organise a one-day Inter-Club Athletics Competition for athletes from across Darrang district on May 31.

The meet will be held at the Dharmanarayan Sports Project and will feature events in three age categories — Under-16, Under-18 and Open — for both boys and girls.

According to Pranab Baruah, officiating General Secretary of the Mangaldai Sports Association, all interested athletes have been requested to report at the venue by 9 am on the day of the competition.

The event aims to provide a platform for young athletes across the district to showcase their talent and promote athletics at the grassroots level. (PTI)