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- Centre launches '175-crore mission to make Meghalaya's Lakadong turmeric global brand

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Assam flood situation remains grim ● Relief & rescue operations on ● Train services remain affected for 2nd day

Death toll mounts to 11; over 3.10 lakh affected

GUWAHATI, July 21: The toll in Assam floods increased to 11 with one more fatality reported on Tuesday even as over 3.10 lakh people remained affected by the deluge in 11 districts, officials said.

Several major rivers, including the Brahmaputra, Dihow, Desang and Dhansiri, were flowing above the danger level in different parts of the state, with some of the water bodies having breached the "extreme flood" level.

Relief and rescue operations were being carried out by multiple agencies, including the Army, NDRF, SDRF and Fire and Emergency Services.

Train services remained affected for the second day as floodwaters inundated tracks in parts of Upper Assam, with the Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) cancelling, short-terminating or diverting several trains and also announcing special trains for stranded passengers.

An Assam State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA) statement said that one fatality was reported in Charaideo district, taking the toll in



this year's floods to 11.

More than 3,10,800 people remained affected in 758 villages in Biswanath, Charaideo, Dhemaji, Dibrugarh, Golaghat, Jorhat, Kamrup, Karbi Anglong, Nagaon, Sivasagar and Tinsukia districts.

In the worst-hit Sivasagar district, the Dihow and Desang rivers flowed above the "extreme flood level" in Sivsagar town and Nanglamoraghat, respectively, the ASDMA said.

The Dhansiri River was in "severe

flood situation" at Numaligarh in Golaghat district, it added.

Other rivers in spate were the Brahmaputra at Neamatighat (Jorhat) and Buridihing at Khowang (Dibrugarh). Over 3.63 lakh people were affected by floods in 15 dis-

tricts of the state on Monday.

More than 9,000 people have been evacuated from different areas by the rescue agencies using boats, the ASDMA said.

The National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) was deployed in Sivasagar, Charaideo and Jorhat districts, while SDRF teams were engaged in Lakhimpur, Tinsukia, Dhemaji, Dibrugarh, Sonitpur, Nagaon, Morigaon, Hojai, Kamrup Metro, Kamrup, Nalbari and Barpeta.

A total of 52 relief camps were operational, where 12,720 displaced people are currently taking shelter. A crop area of 14,41,267 hectares has also been submerged, the ASDMA release said.

Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma had said on Monday that cabinet ministers have been stationed in the affected districts to supervise relief measures, while MPs and MLAs from the flood-hit areas have also been asked to remain on the ground.

NFR Chief Public Relations Officer Kapinjal Kishore Sharma said that due to severe flooding in and around (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Apex court issues notice to Centre, others

SC takes up Assam State Jamiat Ulama plea on NRC



NEW DELHI, July 21: The Supreme Court on Tuesday sought responses from the Centre and others on a plea seeking a direction to authorities to initiate an appeal process for those excluded from the final National Register of Citizens (NRC) published in Assam.

The plea filed by the Assam State Jamiat Ulama came up for hearing before a bench of Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justices Joydip Bagchi and Vipul M Pancholi.

The petitioner's counsel argued that people were suffering.

"For those who have been excluded, there is a provision for appeal but nothing is happening," he said, adding that a separate petition raising a similar issue was already pending before the apex court.

"Issue notice," the bench said and tagged the plea with the pending petition. The top court has sought responses from the Centre and others, including the Assam government and the office of the state coordinator. The updated final NRC, which validates bonafide Indian citizens of Assam, was released on August 31, 2019. The exercise shut out the citizenship claims of over 19 lakh applicants.

A total of 3,30,27,661 (3.3 crore) people had applied to be included in the NRC. Of them, 3,11,21,004 (3.1 crore) were included in the document and 19,06,657 (19.06 lakh) excluded, a statement from the NRC State Coordinators office said.

In its plea, the Assam State Jamiat Ulama sought a direction to the concerned authorities to forthwith issue national identity cards under Section 14A of the Citizenship Act, 1955 read with Rule 13 of the 2003 Rules to all persons found included in the final NRC published in Assam.

It has also sought a direction to authorities to initiate an appeal process for the persons excluded from final NRC published in Assam. (PTI)

Over 500 workers from ASDC, APHLC and Cong join BJP in KA

HT Bureau

DIPHU, July 21: In a significant boost to the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in Karbi Anglong, approximately 550 workers and supporters from the Autonomous State Demand Committee and APHLC and the Indian National Congress formally joined the party during a mass joining ceremony at Atal Bihari Vajpayee Bhawan on Tuesday.

The new entrants, hailing from the Langhin, Dhansiri, Nilip, and Lumbajong MAC constituencies, were officially welcomed by Tuliram Ronghang: chief executive member (CEM) of KAAC and Ronghang MLA; Roland Killing, BJP East Karbi Anglong District Committee President, and Lunsing Teron, Bokajan MLA.

The joining drive was spearheaded by several key constituency and mandal leaders, including Johnwell Ronghang (APHLC Lumbajong Constituency Committee assistant secretary); Bikrom Phangcho (APHLC finance secretary); Akanta Basumatary (Langhin Mandal Congress Committee president); Dhorom Tokbi (Langhin Mandal Congress vice-president); Horen Bey (Nilip Mandal Congress Committee secretary), and Kengia Bey (APHLC Leader).

Welcoming the members, KAAC CEM Ronghang highlighted that meaningful regional development requires a stable government with a clear mandate. He outlined ongoing development projects driven by the BJP-led state and central governments and urged the new members to strengthen the party's grassroots presence.

Ronghang also criticised APHLC president JI Kathar over his public stance regarding the KAAC electoral roll and voting rights, asserting that the public (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Won't allow anyone to play with future of youth: PM Modi

NEW DELHI, July 21: In his first remarks on NEET irregularities after protesters stormed the heart of Delhi over the raging issue, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday asserted that strong action was taken against those involved in the "grave sin" of paper leaks so that no one plays with the future of the youth.

Modi said all state governments and the Centre must join hands on the issue as it is "not a matter of party politics but a matter of national interest". He also told NDA MPs that they should remain closely connected with the people with "warmth and affection" and the "trust of the youth" needed to be won.

The comments are seen as an apparent effort to assuage the youth after thousands converged to participate in a march to Parliament on Monday called by the Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) on the first day of the Monsoon session to push for the resignation of Education minister Dharmendra Pradhan over the NEET fiasco, only to be pushed back by lathis and teargas shells.

Briefing journalists after a meeting of the NDA Parliamentary Party, which was named 'Mangal Milan' since it is held mostly on Tuesdays, Union Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju said the prime minister told

the MPs that the government acted immediately after reports of the paper leak surfaced, and 13 people were arrested and sent to jail.

"At the same time, the prime minister noted, to ensure that students' future was not affected, the NEET re-examination was given priority, conducted successfully, and the results were declared without delay," Rijiju said after the hour-long meeting.

The prime minister termed as "ghor paap (grave sin)" the incident of paper leaks of the NEET examination, which was conducted for admission into undergraduate courses in medical colleges, sources said.

Rijiju told reporters the prime minister also said that strict steps have been taken to prevent such paper leaks in the future. "The prime minister said strong action has been taken to ensure that no one plays with the future of youth. The prime minister also said that to ensure that no future paper leaks take place, all state governments and the Centre must join hands irrespective of party. This is not a matter of party politics but a matter of national interest," Rijiju said. The sources said Modi suggested that there is a need to "win the trust of the youth" and also suggested a national (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

IIM-Guwahati launches MBA programme with first batch of 52 students



GUWAHATI, July 21: Classes of the first MBA batch of IIM-Guwahati began at its transit campus in Kamrup district on Tuesday.

The inaugural MBA batch comprises 52 students from 18 states. The institute commenced aca-

demical activities from its transit campus at Tech City, Bongora, under the mentorship of IIM Ahmedabad. It will shift to its permanent campus, coming up over 574 bighas at Morabhita and Dighalkuchi villages in Kamrup district, which is ex-

pected to be completed within three years.

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, who was present when the classes began, said the launch of the MBA programme makes IIM-Guwahati a proud member of the prestigious Indian Institutes of Management network and opens new opportunities for the youth of the region.

Expressing gratitude to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union education minister Dharmendra Pradhan, the CM said the number of IIMs in the country has increased from 13 in 2014 to 22, making quality management education more accessible. He said the state government developed the transit campus to ensure academic activities could begin without waiting for the permanent campus to be completed. (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

46 KCP-PWG cadres surrender in Manipur

IMPHAL, July 21: Forty-six cadres of the proscribed Kangleipak Communist Party—People's War Group (KCP-PWG) surrendered before Manipur Chief Minister N. N. Khemchand Singh by laying down their arms during a "homecoming ceremony" held at the Mantripukhri Garrison, Headquarters Inspector General Assam Rifles (South), in north Imphal on Tuesday.

Addressing the event, Khemchand Singh said Manipur had enjoyed a peaceful environment before the unfortunate incidents of May 3, 2023, with people in both the hills and the valley living together harmoniously.

He observed that the violence had led to the emergence of an alarming gun culture, which has adversely affected the state. The Chief Minister said sustained efforts by the Central and state security forces have resulted in the recovery of more than 8,000 weapons.

"Since the formation of the present government on February 4 this year, over 1,200 firearms have been recovered, including



around 600 weapons looted from government armouries," he added. He also appreciated citizens who voluntarily surrendered weapons, describing them as peace-loving individuals committed to restoring normalcy.

Stating that conflict and gun culture can

never bring peace, he welcomed the surrendered cadres for choosing the path of the mainstream and contributing to a peaceful future. Khemchand Singh also assured full support for the implementation of the Revised Scheme for (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

KSA celebrates 67th foundation day across Karbi Anglong

HT Bureau

DIPHU, July 21: The Karbi Students' Association (KSA) observed its 67th Foundation Day commemorated as Students' Day on Tuesday with separate events organised by various factions of the student body across Karbi Anglong.

In recognition of the historic significance of the day, the Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council (KAAC) declared July 21 a restricted holiday.

Diphu District Committee (Led by Thomson Rongpi) celebrated the occasion at the Sarsing Teron (Langkung Habe) Memorial Town Club in Matipung.

Attending as chief guest, KAAC executive member (Education) Richard Tokbi noted that chief executive member (CEM) Tuliram Ronghang declared the restricted holiday to honor KSA's historical contributions. Tokbi urged students, parents, teach-

ers, and KSA leadership to collaborate closely to elevate educational standards across the district.

KSA Diphu District Committee president William Tisso reaffirmed the association's commitment to demanding an Autonomous State under Article 244(A) of the Indian Constitution, while emphasising efforts to tackle urgent social challenges like youth drug abuse. Dignitaries in attendance included KAAC Executive Members Kache Rongpi and Kadam Terangpi; Dr. Phirni Bodosa, assistant Professor of Sociology at Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi.

The Central Celebration (Led by Jemson Timung) KSA faction headed by president Jemson Timung held its central celebration at Diphu Club, joined by prominent leaders from the Autonomous State Demand Committee (ASDC) (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

'India's solar manufacturing capacity has increased 75-fold since 2014'

India's clean energy growth like Tendulkar, Vaibhav Sooryavanshi rolled into one: UN climate chief

NEW DELHI, July 21: India has powerful competitive advantages in the global clean energy race, particularly its tech-savvy workforce, UN climate chief Simon Stiell said on Tuesday.

Stiell equated India's clean energy growth with the combined performance of the country's star cricketers Sachin Tendulkar and Vaibhav Sooryavanshi.

"India's clean energy growth is like Sachin Tendulkar and Vaibhav Sooryavanshi rolled into one: a stellar record, but the story is just getting started — and if India keeps doubling down on renewables and clean tech, the next chapters promise to be truly extraordinary," said Stiell, the executive secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).



"India's EV sales are growing — led by national champions like Tata Motors, Mahindra and Mahindra, and JSW MG Motor India and solar installed capacity has surged more

than 50 times since 2014. India is now a solar superpower that's turbocharged your economy, pushed up living standards and, along with other renewables, saved you USD 18

billion in fossil fuel purchases last year alone, according to the International Renewable Energy Agency," he said.

Appointed in August 2022 and reappointed in 2025, Stiell leads the UN agency responsible for global climate change negotiations and treaties. He said that India could seize the opportunity by becoming a clean tech manufacturing hub for the world, positioning itself as a leader in areas of comparative advantage such as green steel, and supercharging clean energy investment.

"UN-convened climate cooperation can help India bank these benefits... and together, through international cooperation, we must continue to accelerate the global shift to clean, resilient economies. India has (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Govt wasted our time: Dipke on talks between Nadda, CJP team

NEW DELHI, July 21: Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) founder Abhijeet Dipke on Tuesday questioned the government's design behind starting talks with his outfit, saying it was engaging in dialogue with CJP while simultaneously carrying out a police crackdown on protesters.

"The government wasted our time. They invited our delegation. They seized their mobiles. Ashutosh Ranka and Saurav Das were, in a way, under house arrest at J P Nadda's residence," Dipke said addressing supporters at Jantar Mantar, where the protest over the NEET paper leak issue entered its 32nd day.

"The whole plan was to scatter the team, so that when there is chaos, no one is there. That is why they kept them sitting for five hours and wasted our time. You call for talks on one hand, and unleash batons on students on the other hand," he alleged.

The Centre has not responded to the allegations. In the first direct contact between the Centre and agitating CJP, Union Health Minister JP Nadda on Monday held talks with two representatives of the outfit and assured that the government leadership will hold internal discussions on their demands, after thousands of protesters tried to march to Parliament but were prevented by police.

According to the CJP, the assurance came after its spokespersons Ashutosh Ranka and Saurav Das met Nadda, who acted as a government emissary, twice



within two hours at the minister's residence and submitted a memorandum citing their demands, including the resignation of Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan over alleged examination irregularities.

"The only assurance we got is that he will talk to the leadership and share the conclusions," Ranka had told PTI Videos after the meeting.

On Tuesday, the protest continued at the Jantar Mantar here under heavy security a day after the police action.

Dipke also said that activist Sonam Wangchuk had agreed to end his indefinite hunger strike after sustained persuasion by fellow protesters (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

The 50-share NSE Nifty dropped by 50.80 points, or 0.21 per cent, to end at 24,187.70

Stock markets fall for 2nd day, dragged by HDFC Bank, West Asia crisis; Sensex down 238 pts

MUMBAI, July 21: Benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty closed lower on Tuesday, dragged by selling in HDFC Bank for the second day alongside risk-off sentiment amid escalating West Asia crisis.

Falling for the second day, the 30-share BSE Sensex declined 238.41 points, or 0.31 per cent, to settle at 77,470.11 with nine of its constituents closing lower and 21 with gains. During the day, it dropped 371.19 points, or 0.47 per cent, to 77,337.33.

The 50-share NSE Nifty dropped by 50.80 points, or 0.21 per cent, to end at 24,187.70.

Escalating US-Iran conflict, uptick in crude oil prices and persistent foreign fund outflows reinforced a risk-off sentiment in stock markets, experts said.

From the Sensex pack, HDFC Bank declined for the second day, down 2 per cent, after the lender's quarterly earnings disappointed on the margin front.

Among others, Reliance Industries dropped 1.48 per cent, State Bank of India by 1.48 per cent, Tata Consultancy Services by 1.32 per cent, Infosys by 1.24 per cent and Trent by 1.1 per cent.

On the other hand, Bajaj Finserv emerged as the biggest gainer, rising by 2.07 per cent. InterGlobe Aviation, UltraTech Cement, HCL Tech, Mahindra &



Mahindra and Titan were also among the winners.

"Indian equity markets ended lower as investors remained risk-averse amid escalating geopolitical tensions in the Middle East. On the domestic front, losses in Banking & Financials, driven by HDFC Bank's post-earnings decline, outweighed stock-specific gains elsewhere, weighing on the benchmark indices," Ponnudi R, CEO of Enrich Money, an online trading and wealth tech firm, said.

Among sectors, PSU Bank declined by 0.82 per cent, followed by Focused IT (0.68 per cent), IT (0.66 per cent), Top 10 Banks (0.52 per cent), Energy (0.44 per cent) and Financial Services (0.22

per cent). Among gainers, MidCap Private Banks Quality Tilt surged 2.94 per cent, Realty jumped 1.08 per cent, Commodities (0.98 per cent), Telecommunication (0.97 per cent), Auto (0.88 per cent) and Services (0.45 per cent).

Broader markets maintained their positive bias, with the BSE MidCap Select index going up by 0.20 per cent and the SmallCap Select index edging higher by 0.16 per cent.

"Despite geopolitical challenges, midcaps are performing well in anticipation of strong corporate earnings, supported by demand-led business updates," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Investments

Limited, said.

"Investor sentiment improved following better-than-expected quarterly earnings from select large-cap companies, which helped offset concerns arising from weakness in the private banking space. However, renewed geopolitical tensions in the Middle East, elevated crude oil prices, and continued uncertainty over the global interest rate outlook kept participants cautious," Ajit Mishra – SVP, Research, Religare Broking Ltd, said.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 1,121.04 crore on Monday, according to exchange data.

Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, climbed 0.66 per cent to USD 90.03 per barrel.

In Asian markets, South Korea's KOSPI rebounded by 3.56 per cent, Japan's Nikkei 225 climbed 3.26 per cent and Shanghai's SSE Composite index went up by 1.79 per cent, while Hong Kong's Hang Seng index ended marginally lower.

Markets in Europe were trading higher. US markets ended lower on Monday.

On Monday, the Sensex declined 442.93 points, or 0.57 per cent, to settle at 77,708.52. The Nifty edged lower by 95.80 points, or 0.39 per cent, to end at 24,238.50. (PTI)

Maruti Suzuki to hike prices by up to ₹ 30,000 across models from Aug

NEW DELHI, July 21: Car market leader Maruti Suzuki India on Tuesday said it will hike prices of its vehicles across models by up to ₹ 30,000 from August to partially offset the sustained increase in input costs.

The exact quantum of change will vary from model to model, Maruti Suzuki India said in a regulatory filing.

"In view of the continuous sustained increase in input costs, the company has decided to increase the prices of its models across its portfolio by up to ₹ 30,000," it said.

The increase in prices will come into effect from August 2026.

"For the past few months, the company has been making continuous efforts to mitigate the cost impact to the extent possible



through cost reduction measures," it added.

However, with inflationary pressure at elevated levels and the adverse cost environment continuing, the company said it is constrained to pass on a portion of the increased costs to the market, while continuing to ensure that the impact on customers is kept to the minimum extent possible.

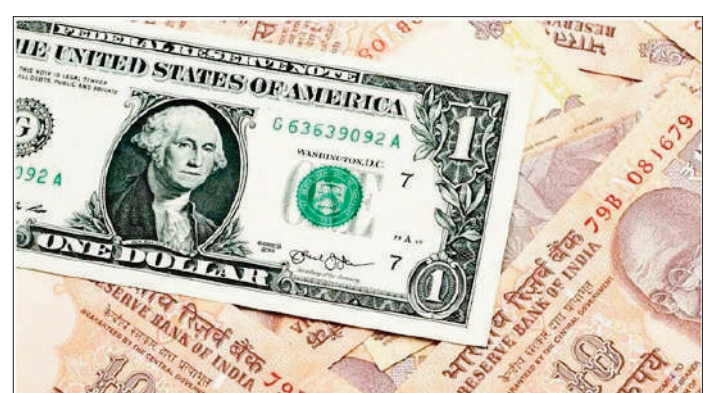
The company sells a range of cars and SUVs from entry-level S-Presso to premium utility vehicle Invicto priced between ₹ 3.5 lakh and ₹ 28.70 lakh (ex-showroom). (PTI)

Gold rises Rs 800 to ₹ 1.47 lakh/10g on firm local demand

NEW DELHI, July 21: Gold prices rallied ₹ 800 to ₹ 1.47 lakh per 10 grams in the national capital on Tuesday on strong physical demand and firm global trends. The yellow metal of 99.9 per cent purity rose by ₹ 800 to ₹ 1,47,700 per 10 grams (inclusive of all taxes), according to local traders. It had closed at ₹ 1,46,900 per 10 grams on Monday.

However, silver remained unchanged at ₹ 2,21,500 per kilogram (inclusive of all taxes). Traders said the domestic bullion market witnessed steady buying in gold, while silver remained flat after the recent correction. "Gold extended its gains on Tuesday as optimism over renewed US-Iran diplomatic efforts eased geopolitical tensions, prompting a pullback in crude oil prices and supporting bullion," said Saumil Gandhi, Senior Analyst, Commodities, at HDFC Securities. (PTI)

Rupee gains 12 paise to close at 96.24 against US dollar



MUMBAI, July 21: Rupee pared initial losses and settled for the day higher by 12 paise at 96.24 (provisional) against the US dollar on Tuesday, as traders assessed the strong inflows related to the Reserve Bank's initiatives to support foreign exchange liquidity amid global market uncertainties.

Forex traders said India attracted USD 20.72 billion in forex inflows under the swap facility since June, providing significant structural support to the country's balance of payments position.

At the interbank foreign exchange, the rupee opened at 96.41 against the US dollar and traded in the range of 96.13 to 96.42 during the day. The domestic unit finally settled for the day at 96.24 (provisional), higher by 12 paise from its previous close.

On Monday, the rupee fell 6 paise to 96.36 against the US dollar.

The Reserve Bank on Monday said its concessional swap facility, introduced to encourage foreign currency inflows, has attracted USD 20.72 billion till July 17. The swap facility has seen avid interest and attracted steady forex inflows since June 8, 2026.

A strong mobilisation was witnessed through Foreign Currency Non-Resident (Bank) or FCNR

(B) deposits.

Of the total inflows, FCNR (B) deposits accounted for USD 17.406 billion, while Overseas Foreign Currency Borrowings (OFCBs) contributed USD 1.97 billion and External Commercial Borrowings (ECBs) amounted to USD 1.342 billion, the central bank said in a statement on Monday.

Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading lower by 0.03 per cent at 100.91.

Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, was trading 0.25 per cent higher at USD 89.44 per barrel in futures trade.

The USD/INR pair continue to remain under pressure as the dollar index has touched 100.91 while oil prices were well bid at USD 89.44 per barrel, traders said, adding that the US-Iran conflict and the Houthi-Saudi blockade could again risk the Middle East oil supplies.

On the domestic equity market front, Sensex declined 238.41 points to settle at 77,470.11, while the Nifty dipped 50.80 points to 24,187.70.

Foreign Institutional Investors offloaded equities worth Rs 1,121.04 crore on a net basis on Monday, according to exchange data. (PTI)

Contd. from Page 1...

Death toll mounts to 11

Simaluguri town in Sivasagar district, train services on the Simaluguri-Namtiali and Simaluguri-Selenghat sections have been suspended. The NFR said additional special trains are being run to assist passengers affected by the disruptions.

"These special additional trains will run till Friday and are expected to provide significant relief to stranded passengers. Moreover, regular services of some other express trains between Mariani and Guwahati are also operational," the NFR official added. (PTI)

Won't allow anyone to play

outreach among students on the issue, led by the MPs. The prime minister pointed out that while the NEET re-examination incident created inconvenience for children, not only did the re-test take place without delay, but the government also engaged "dharanda" (expert) lawyers to ensure strict punishment for those involved, sources said.

Modi, sources said, conveyed clearly that there should be no injustice to students and suggested that it was easy to misguide them but difficult to show them the right path.

Rijiju said the prime minister told the NDA MPs that those found involved in the paper leak racket have been arrested and jailed.

The prime minister also told the ruling alliance's MPs that those guilty in paper leaks should be given the strictest possible punishment, with the support of the country's top lawyers, so that they face exemplary for the grave offence and such incidents do not recur, he said.

Modi also stressed the need to punish the guilty and collaboratively establish a foolproof system.

The parliamentary affairs minister said the prime minister gave guidance to everyone present at the meeting. He said that at the outset, the newly elected Rajya Sabha members, including BJP president Nitin Nabin, who was elected to the Upper House recently, were congratulated and wished success in Parliament.

Rijiju said the meeting was very productive as the prime minister spoke on several important issues.

The prime minister spoke about the achievements the country has made over the past few months and also briefed the NDA MPs on the free trade agreements (FTA) signed with several countries.

On the FTAs, Rijiju said, Modi assured the NDA members that the interests of farmers would be prioritised and emphasised that no harm would come to them. The prime minister stressed that the welfare of farmers remains paramount in any FTA signed with any country and the government is ensuring that these agreements serve the best interests of both the farmers and the nation, he said.

Rijiju said the NDA would play a constructive role during the ongoing Monsoon Session.

"We are united in our resolve to ensure the passage of all important bills brought forward for the nation's benefit. We also appeal to the opposition parties that while they may hold differing views, they should come forward to work together for the country, its future, and the youth," he said.

BJP national general secretary and Rajya Sabha MP Tarun Chugh said Modi stressed that the nation must always come first and called upon MPs to work for its progress and prosperity.

"The prime minister asked all NDA MPs to dedicate every moment of their lives to the welfare of the nation. The nation comes first, and we must work for its progress and prosperity," Chugh said.

BJP MP Shashank Mani Tripathi said the prime minister advised MPs to "go among the people and stay connected with them with warmth and affection". (PTI)

IIM-Guwahati launches MBA

PM Modi had inaugurated IIM-Guwahati's academic journey on February 14 this year with the launch of its Executive Education programmes. Sarma said the institute launched its flagship MBA programme within five months. He said the establishment of IIM-Guwahati as the 22nd IIM in the country and the second in the Northeast reflects the Centre's commitment to expanding institutions of national importance in the region.

He urged all stakeholders to build a competitive academic ecosystem so that, in the coming years, at least 50 per cent of seats in premier national institutions located in Assam are secured by students from the state.

Earlier in the day, Sarma inaugurated the Digital Design and 3D Printing Centre of Excellence at Tech City, Bongaigaon. Established under the PM-DeVINE scheme at ₹ 53.84 crore, the facility has been implemented by AMTRON in partnership with the North Eastern Council and will function as a regional common resource centre with one hub in Guwahati and 10 spokes across the Northeast. He also laid the foundation stone for the integrated office building of the Co-District Commissioner at Palashbari. (PTI)

Over 500 workers from ASDC

had been misled on the matter. The ceremony was chaired by Roland Killing and attended by KAAC executive members along with several senior district BJP leaders.

46 KCP-PWG cadres

Surrender-cum-Rehabilitation of Militants in the North Eastern States, 2018, including rehabilitation assistance and stipends for surrendered cadres.

The Chief Minister further lauded the concerted efforts of the Army, Assam Rifles, BSF, CRPF, Manipur Police and other security agencies in maintaining law and order and protecting civilians. He noted that during the crisis in May 2023, more than 47,000 displaced persons belonging to both the Meitei and Kuki communities were safely evacuated and provided protection in relief camps and other secure locations by the security forces.

He also interacted with the surrendered insurgents and thanked them for choosing the path of peace.

Later, the chief minister assured KCP-PWG chairman L. Ranjit of all possible assistance.

Speaking on the occasion, Manipur home minister Govindas Konhoujam said that under the Revised Surrender-cum-Rehabilitation Scheme, surrendered cadres would receive a monthly stipend of up to Rs 6,000 for three years and a rehabilitation grant of Rs 4 lakh in the form of a fixed deposit.

Konhoujam said Manipur had been blessed with natural beauty and stressed that restoring peace must now be the priority so that all communities could live together harmoniously. He also appealed to insurgents to return to the path of peace.

Director General of Police (DGP) Mukesh Singh said the "homecoming ceremony" reflected the growing confidence of misguided youth in the peace process. He expressed hope that the initiative would become a model for other insurgency-affected states and serve as an effective instrument for achieving lasting peace in Manipur.

Lieutenant General Girish Kalia, General Officer Commanding (GOC), 3 Corps, also addressed the gathering and remarked that no society can progress under the shadow of conflict. He expressed confidence that the surrender and rehabilitation initiatives would strengthen peace, stability and development in the state.

The surrendered cache comprised 28 firearms, including three AK-series rifles, four AK-56 rifles, one INSAS Excalibur rifle, one self-loading rifle (SLR), one 9 mm carbine, three .303 rifles, one rocket-propelled grenade (RPG) launcher, two 9 mm pistols, one 7.65 mm pistol, two double-barrel guns and nine single-barrel guns. The surrendered items also included 16 magazines, nine RPG shells, 23 hand grenades, 40 electric detonators, 27 detonators, 300 blasting caps, seven improvised explosive devices (IEDs) weighing approximately 15 kg, seven communication devices and 342 rounds of ammunition. (NNN)

KSA celebrates 67th foundation

and Karbi Nimso Chingthur Asong (KNCA). Speaking at the gathering, ASDC president Sonasing Terang recalled the joint movement launched by the ASDC, KSA, and KNCA during the 1990s. He emphasised the urgency of reviving a unified mass movement to achieve the long-pending goal of an Autonomous State under Article 244(A), while encouraging students to balance political activism with academic excellence. KSA president Jemson Timung highlighted this year's theme, "Students' Role in the Autonomous State Movement," emphasising KSA's unbroken dedication to the cause since 1986.

He voiced concern over declining awareness of Article 244(A) among today's youth and called on the younger generation to spearhead the movement. Other notable leaders present included ASDC: Daniel Teron (assistant general secretary), Singnot Kro (finance secretary), and KNCA Maikon Rongpharpi (president).

India's clean energy growth like

long been a strong partner in climate multilateralism. And it's entirely in your (India's) interests to continue engaging," he said. Stiell noted that clean energy, infrastructure and services are the next industrial revolution, and can help India cement itself as a global economic giant. "And it makes total economic sense to move even faster to clean energy – in India and around the world," he said.

The UN climate chief also highlighted that decarbonisation is central to India's development strategy, and fossil-fuel-free power now makes up half of the country's installed capacity.

"India's solar manufacturing capacity has increased 75-fold since 2014, and solar, along with other renewables, enabled the country to save \$18 billion in fossil fuel purchases last year. This is crucial as conflict has exacted a terrible human toll and sent fossil fuel cost chaos reverberating through the global economy.

"The brutal costs of fossil fuel imports have hit all nations hard, including India, which imports 90 pc of its crude oil. For all nations, oil and gas import vulnerability means supplies disrupted and prices rising when crises hit," he said. On Monday, Stiell met environment minister Bhupendra Yadav where the two had discussions on adaptation, technology transfer, climate finance, global stocktake and just transition. (PTI)

Govt wasted our time: Dipke

but decided to continue it after witnessing the police crackdown on the "Sansad Chalo" march. Protesters retained the stage at the site, placing a photograph of Wangchuk alongside a copy of the Constitution, the Ramcharitmanas, a charkha and a small Buddha statue.

Dipke said Wangchuk's continued fast had become a matter of serious concern.

Wangchuk has been on a hunger strike since June 28. He was forcibly shifted to Safdarjung Hospital by Delhi Police on July 18 and has continued his indefinite fast.

"Sonam Wangchuk was going to end his fast yesterday. We had convinced him with great difficulty. We urged him that his life is too precious for this country and he should end his fast. He had somehow agreed, but seeing police brutality, he has continued his fast and this is very serious," Dipke said.

"His body can tolerate a fast for 20-21 days. After that, his life is under threat. Doctors had said in three-four days his organs can be damaged. It's been four days since he was picked up. We didn't want him to prolong his fast," he added.

CJP leader Saurav Das, in a post on X, claimed that large numbers of supporters continued to gather at the protest venue.

"Huge crowd has gathered in and around Jantar Mantar... Dharmendra Pradhan has to go! We are also on the ground providing legal and medical help to our protesters. We shall overcome!" he wrote.

Earlier in the day, volunteers cleaned the protest site after police dismantled tents following Monday's crackdown. Protest leaders said they would continue the agitation despite the police action.

Thousands had gathered at Jantar Mantar on Monday for the CJP's proposed march to Parliament despite heavy security arrangements, multi-layered barricades and prohibitory orders under Section 163 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita.

Police used force, including lathicharge and tear gas shells, after protesters attempted to march towards Parliament, with both sides blaming each other for the violence. (PTI)

AFFIDAVIT

By an affidavit sworn before Executive Magistrate, Hojai District Court I have declared and affirmed that my actual name is Kamlawati Devi and Son's name is Akash Kumar Verma which is recorded in my all relevant documents. But in my Son's High School Leaving Certificate Examination 2018 vide Sl. No-C104468 Roll-B18-464 No-0510 where my name has been recorded as "Kamlawati Verma" instead of "Kamlawati Devi". The name of Kamlawati Devi and Kamlawati Verma are the name of one and single person.

Sd/-

Kamlawati Devi
Vill- Manduli
P.O.- Kharikhana
P.S- Lanka, Dist- Hojai

ELECTRICAL WORKS UNDER TINSUKIA DIVISION

E-Tender Notice No. TSK/Elect/249; dated: 15-07-2026. Works tender through E-Tendering System are invited by the undersigned for the following works: **SN-1. Brief Description of Item:** Electrical Work for Provision of new station building at Murkongselek, Silapathar, Dhemaji and North Lakhimpur under ABS (Tender No. LV-T-14-TSK-950). Tender Value: ₹1,30,39,411.40; Earnest Money: ₹2,60,800.00. E-tenders will be closed at 13:00 hrs. on 05-08-2026 and Opened at 15:00 hrs. on 05-08-2026. The complete information with the tender document of above e-tender will be available upto 13:00 hrs on 05-08-2026 in website <http://www.treps.gov.in>

DRM (Elect)/Tinsukia
NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY
"Serving Customers with a smile"

NAME CHANGE

I, SRI SORJU PRASAD UPADHYAY, S/o DHANADIRAJ UPADHYAY, R/o Vill. Har Ronghang, P.O. & P.S. Dokmoka, Karbi Anglong, Assam, declare my actual name is SORJU PRASAD UPADHYAY (Aadhaar No. 6438 7963 3934). In my minor son's Aadhaar Card (Aadhaar No. 8830 4208 0563), my name is incorrectly recorded as SARJU PRASAD UPADHYAY instead of correct name. Further, my minor son's actual name is PRITAM UPADHYAY, wrongly recorded as PRIYATAM RIZAL in his said Aadhaar Card. SORJU PRASAD UPADHYAY & SARJU PRASAD UPADHYAY refer to same single person, & PRITAM UPADHYAY & PRIYATAM RIZAL refer to same single person. Henceforth, we shall be known only by correct names, SORJU PRASAD UPADHYAY (Father) & PRITAM UPADHYAY (Son). Sworn vide affidavit dated 17-07-2026 before Judicial Magistrate 1st Class, Diphu.

AFFIDAVIT

I, Sunder Lal Bishnoi (earlier Sunder Lal Vishnoi), S/o Ganpat Ram Choudhary (earlier Ganpat Ram Vishnoi), R/o Jorhat, Assam, declare both names are same.

As per Affidavit dated 21/07/2026, henceforth known as Sunder Lal Bishnoi.

Sd/-

Sunder Lal Bishnoi

NAME CORRECTION

My name has been incorrectly recorded as "Kashmiri Sonowal Borah" instead of the correct "Kashmiri Sonowal" in my daughter's Nyra Mausum Borah's Birth Certificate (Regd. No-B-2022: 18-90250 issued on 06/07/2022).

The names "Kashmiri Sonowal Borah" and "Kashmiri Sonowal" both are my names, i.e., me.

Kashmiri Sonowal,
W/o- Dip Borah,
Vill- Haldhiati Senchowah,
PO- Senchowah, PS- Sadar,
Dist.- Nagaon, Assam

NAME CORRECTION

My name has been incorrectly recorded as "Smti Kashmiri Borah" instead of the correct "Kashmiri Sonowal" in my daughter's Raina Mausum Borah's Birth Certificate (27/06/08 Regd. No-707 issued on 01/07/08).

The names "Smti Kashmiri Borah" and "Kashmiri Sonowal" both are my names, i.e., me.

Kashmiri Sonowal,
W/o- Dip Borah,
Vill- Haldhiati Senchowah,
PO- Senchowah, PS- Sadar,
Dist.- Nagaon, Assam

The illegal collection of money is contributing to the rise in the prices of essential commodities

UPPL submits memo alleging illegal collections at Srirampur check gate



HT Correspondent
KOKRAJHAR, July 21: A delegation of the opposition United People's Party Liberal (UPPL) on Tuesday submitted a memorandum to the Sub-Divisional Officer (Civil), Gossaigaon, alleging that an organised syndicate is illegally collecting money from goods-carrying vehicles passing through the Srirampur Inter-State Check Gate

in Kokrajhar district.

The nine-member delegation included the party's general secretaries Raju Kumar Narzary and Madhab Chandra Chetry, BTC MCLA and party secretary Wilson Hasda, office secretary Brojo Kumar Basumatary, media cell chairman Hantigiri Narzary, Gorkha Cell general secretary Ashok Kumar Chetry, and the

president and general secretary of the UPPL's Gossaigaon district committee.

In the memorandum, the party alleged that commercial vehicles are being forced to pay illegal taxes at the check gate, increasing transportation costs and contributing to the rise in prices of essential commodities across the Bodoland Territorial Region, Assam and

other Northeastern states.

The party urged the district administration to conduct a thorough inquiry into the allegations and take stringent action against those responsible for the alleged illegal collection of money, claiming that the practice has adversely affected the prices of essential goods.

The SDO (Civil) received the memorandum and assured the delegation that the matter would be examined.

Addressing reporters, UPPL leaders appealed to the Assam government and the Kokrajhar district administration to intervene and put an end to the alleged illegal collection at the check gate.

"The illegal collection of money from goods-carrying vehicles is contributing to the rise in the prices of essential commodities. We urge the government to take immediate action to stop the practice in the interest of the people of Bodoland, Assam and the Northeast," the leaders said.

The allegations made by the party could not be independently verified, and there was no immediate response from the authorities or any other party named in connection with the claims.

NPHCE strengthens elderly healthcare in Sonitpur



HT Correspondent
TEZPUR, July 21: The National Programme for Health Care of the Elderly (NPHCE) has stepped up its outreach in Sonitpur district, with health officials reporting a significant increase in screening, treatment and follow-up services for senior citizens between April and June this year.

According to data released by the National Health Mission (NHM), Sonitpur, a total of 13,257 outpatient consultations were recorded for elderly beneficiaries across healthcare facilities in the district during the April-June quarter. Of these, Ayushman Arogya

Mandirs accounted for the largest share with 6,231 consultations, followed by Primary Health Facilities (4,123), the District Hospital (1,441), Urban Primary Health Centres (697) and Community Health Centres (534).

Officials said the programme

has played a key role in the early detection and management of hypertension and diabetes, two of the most common non-communicable diseases affecting the elderly population.

Beyond routine screening, beneficiaries also received specialised care during the period, including ophthalmic services for 53 per-

sons, hearing-related services for 12 and dental care for 26 elderly patients.

To ensure that elderly and vulnerable residents who face difficulty travelling to health facilities are not excluded from care, health teams conducted 212 household visits during the quarter.

These visits enabled follow-up consultations, health monitoring, counselling and referrals to appropriate healthcare services, officials said.

The programme also provides nutritional support alongside its year-round screening activities, aimed at ensuring early identification of health issues and continuous monitoring of chronic conditions among the elderly.

NHM officials attributed the progress to coordinated efforts by the District NCD Cell, health facilities, frontline health workers and community-level health teams, saying the collaboration has made elderly care services more accessible across both rural and urban parts of the district.

"By bringing screening, treatment, nutritional support and follow-up services closer to the community, the programme is making a meaningful difference in the lives of elderly persons across Sonitpur district," an official statement said.

It further added that the initiative reflects the health system's commitment to comprehensive, people-centred care for the ageing population.

Youth found dead at Dimaruguri; traders suspect foul play

HT Correspondent
NAGAON, July 21: Tension gripped the greater Barhampur area of Nagaon after a youth was found lying seriously injured on the old National Highway at Dimaruguri, near Nagaon town, on Sunday night.

Local residents rushed him to Nagaon Medical College and Hospital, where doctors declared him dead. The deceased was identified as Hiranya Sarma, a resident of Bherbheri village in the Barhampur area.

According to reports, Sarma ran a shop near the Maha Mrityunjay Temple in Barhampur. He had reportedly come to Nagaon town for shopping after closing his shop on Sunday evening. He was later found injured under mysterious circumstances.

Fellow traders, citing injury marks on his body, suspected foul play and demanded a thorough investigation into the incident. Traders near the temple and residents of Bherbheri village also urged the police to identify and arrest those responsible if any criminal involvement is established.

Family members said Sarma was scheduled to get married in November. His sudden death has cast a pall of gloom over Bherbheri village, leaving both his family and that of his fiancée in deep shock.

The body was handed over to the family after the post-mortem examination. Police have registered a case and launched an investigation into the incident.

Assam govt mounts swift response to flood crisis: BJP

HT Bureau
GUWAHATI, July 21: The Assam government has mounted a swift, coordinated and people-centric response to the recent flood situation triggered by exceptionally heavy monsoon rainfall across the state and neighbouring hill regions, BJP Assam Pradesh spokesperson Mita Nath Bora said on Monday.

In an official statement, Bora said the unprecedented rainfall over upstream catchments has caused a sharp rise in the water levels of the Brahmaputra and its tributaries, leading to floods in several districts. Citing India Meteorological Department (IMD) reports, she said many parts of Assam recorded very heavy rainfall (115.6-204.4 mm in 24 hours) to extremely heavy rainfall (over 204.4 mm in 24 hours), resulting in the current flood situation.

"The government, under the leadership of Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, activated its disaster response mechanism immediately after the situation escalated, mobilising all concerned departments and agencies," she added.

According to the statement, the chief minister directed ministers and MLAs to remain stationed in affected areas to oversee relief and rescue operations. The Assam State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA), district administrations, State Disaster Response Force



(SDRF), National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), Assam Police, Fire and Emergency Services and the Health Department have been working round the clock to tackle the crisis. Bora also said BJP Assam Pradesh president Dilip Saikia had appealed to party workers to remain on the ground to assist stranded people, support relief efforts and help restore normalcy in the affected areas.

"Relief and rehabilitation remain the government's top priority," she added.

As per the latest official update, 101 relief camps and relief distribution centres have been set up across flood-affected districts, providing shelter, cooked food, drinking water, medical care and other essential services. Among the worst-hit districts, Tinsukia has established 20 relief

camp and centres, Sivasagar 19, Jorhat 33, Charaideo four, Dibrugarh eight and Golaghat seven, while similar facilities have been opened in other affected districts based on local requirements.

A total of 9,606 people are currently taking shelter in government-operated relief camps and centres, while another 34,905 people are receiving assistance through relief distribution centres and direct outreach programmes, Bora avowed. She further added that medical teams have been deployed across affected districts to ensure the uninterrupted supply of essential medicines, sanitation facilities, safe drinking water and nutritional support, particularly for women, children, senior citizens and persons with disabilities.

APDCL issues electrical safety advisory amid Phuloni floods

HT Correspondent
HOWRAGHAT, July 21: In response to sudden flash floods that have caused widespread waterlogging across several areas under the Phuloni circle, the Assam Power Distribution Company Limited (APDCL) has initiated proactive safety measures to prevent electrical accidents and manage the power distribution network.

According to a press statement issued by the Assistant Executive Engineer (SDE), Howraghat Electrical Subdivision, APDCL teams are working round the clock to mitigate risks in the affected areas.

APDCL officials are closely monitoring flood levels and identifying severely waterlogged locations across the subdivision. To prevent electrocution hazards, distribution transformers in heavily inundated areas have been temporarily disconnected, while field crews are carrying out thorough ground inspections.

Power supply is being restored in a phased manner only in areas where floodwaters have receded to safe operational lev-

els. Public address systems and local announcements are also being used to disseminate critical electrical safety advisories to residents.

APDCL cautioned that household inverters pose a serious risk of electrocution even when the main power supply from the grid has been switched off. Residents have been advised to stay away from household inverters if their homes or compounds are waterlogged and not to operate, touch or attempt to switch off inverters or battery backup systems under such conditions.

The utility also urged people not to touch snapped electrical wires or broken conductors lying on the ground or submerged in floodwaters.

Residents have been requested to contact the local lineman, the subdivision control room or the APDCL toll-free helpline 1912 in case of any electrical emergency.

APDCL appealed to residents to cooperate with field personnel as restoration work continues and normal power supply is resumed in a safe and phased manner.

RPF of NFR extends timely medical aid to ailing passengers

HT Bureau
GUWAHATI, July 21: The Railway Protection Force (RPF) of Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) has continued to provide prompt medical assistance to passengers falling ill during train journeys, ensuring timely treatment through coordinated efforts with railway authorities and local healthcare facilities.

According to an official release, RPF personnel at New Jalpaiguri Railway Station on July 17 rushed to the aid of a woman travelling on Train No. 15607 Thiruvananthapuram Central-Silchar Aronai Express after she fell ill during the journey. She was shifted by ambulance to the Railway Hospital at New Jalpaiguri and later referred to a higher medical facility for

specialised treatment.

Later the same day, RPF personnel at the station extended medical assistance to another passenger travelling on Train No. 13174 Sabroom-Sealdah Kanchanjunga Express. The passenger was provided immediate assistance and shifted to the Railway Hospital at New Jalpaiguri for further treatment.

Social worker leads neem sapling distribution drive in Hojai

HT Correspondent
HOJAI, July 21: Noted social worker Jayanta Choudhury recently organised a neem sapling plantation and distribution programme at Rajbari in Hojai district as part of efforts to promote environmental conservation.

Neem saplings were distributed to students of PM Shri Narsingh Higher Secondary School, while prizes were presented to selected students who had participated in a plantation campaign. Speaking on the occasion, Choudhury said neem saplings had been

distributed among all students of the school in June under the Centre's "Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam" (One Sapling in Mother's Name) campaign.

Students who planted the saplings with their mothers were asked to submit photographs, following which winners were selected through a draw of lots and awarded prizes.

Choudhury said he has been undertaking plantation and sapling distribution drives in schools and other institutions across the district since 2008 and is actively implementing the campaign in Hojai.

The golden langur (Trachypithecus geei) is one of the world's rarest primates

NTPC Bongaigaon backs Golden Langur conservation

HT Correspondent
KOKRAJHAR, July 21: Strengthening its commitment to biodiversity conservation, NTPC Bongaigaon has supported the installation of artificial canopy bridges to protect the endangered golden langur in the Nandagiri-Baxamara-Amguri-Nayekgaon-Chakrashilla Forest Complex in Kokrajhar district.

The project, titled "Establishing Artificial Canopy Bridges as Road Overpass and Linking Populations of Endangered Golden Langur through Village Corridor in Nandagiri-Baxamara-Amguri-Nayekgaon-Chakrashilla Forest Complex, Kokrajhar, Assam, India," was implemented during FY 2025-26 with financial assistance of Rs 10 lakh from NTPC Bongaigaon under its Sustainable Development initiatives.

The initiative was carried out in collaboration with the Haltuagaon Forest Division and the Primate Research Centre, North-East India, bringing together institutional support, scientific expertise and on-ground conservation efforts for the long-term protection of the species.

The golden langur (*Trachypithecus geei*) is one of the world's rarest primates and is found mainly in western Assam and neighbouring Bhutan. The species faces growing threats from habitat fragmentation, shrinking forest corridors and expanding road networks. As forest canopies become disconnected, these tree-dwelling primates are often forced to descend to the ground to cross roads, exposing them to vehicular accidents and other human-induced risks.



To address the challenge, six artificial canopy bridges were installed at strategically identified locations across the forest landscape. The aerial bridges reconnect fragmented tree canopies, allowing golden langurs and other arboreal wildlife to move safely between forest patches without descending onto roads.

The intervention is expected to improve habitat connectivity, reduce road-related

mortality and facilitate the safe movement of langurs between isolated forest patches. Improved connectivity may also promote genetic exchange among separated populations, contributing to the long-term survival and ecological resilience of the species.

To scientifically monitor wildlife movement and assess the effectiveness of the canopy bridges, three camera traps have been installed at selected locations. The

monitoring system will help researchers document langur movement, study behavioural patterns and generate data to support future conservation planning.

The project also includes four wildlife-awareness signages along critical stretches of the corridor, urging motorists to slow down and exercise caution while passing through ecologically sensitive areas. The signages are intended to raise awareness among road users and local communities about the presence of golden langurs and the need to protect their habitat.

As part of the habitat restoration component, 2,000 saplings of native tree species have been planted across the project area to enhance green cover, improve habitat quality and strengthen natural canopy connectivity over time.

The project aims to achieve long-term conservation outcomes by combining wildlife-friendly infrastructure, scientific monitoring, habitat restoration and public awareness, while encouraging greater participation of local communities and other stakeholders in protecting the region's unique biodiversity.

NTPC Bongaigaon said the initiative forms part of its Sustainable Development programme aimed at supporting biodiversity conservation in Kokrajhar and the Bodoland Territorial Region. The project demonstrates how collaboration among a public-sector enterprise, the Forest Department and scientific institutions can contribute practical solutions to conserving one of Assam's most distinctive and endangered primate species.

Over 900 people affected as Diju river triggers floods in Nagaon

HT Correspondent
NAGAON, July 21: Continuous rainfall in the Karbi Hills over the past several days has led to a sharp rise in the water level of the Diju river, triggering floods in several villages across Nagaon district and affecting nearly 900 people, officials said.

According to the Kaliabor sub-divisional administration, the swollen Diju has inundated several areas, including Kalapani, Dijuveli Tea Garden and Langtang Tea Garden. More than 800 people in the Kaliabor Revenue Circle alone have been affected by the floods.

Nagaon Deputy Commissioner Devashish Sharma visited the flood-hit areas on Monday to assess the situation and review relief measures and facilities at the relief camps. Kaliabor Sub-Divisional Officer Raj Baruah and other senior officials accompanied him during the visit.

To tackle the situation, the Nagaon district administration has launched a joint operation with the State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) and Fire and Emergency Services.

Three relief camps have been set up at Salna Bapuji LP School, No. 23 Dijuveli LP School and Amguri LP School under the Kaliabor Revenue Circle. The district administration is providing food, essential

supplies and other emergency assistance to people taking shelter at the camps.

Officials said that while water levels have receded slightly in some foothill areas, the rising Diju river continues to inundate new localities. Runoff from the Karbi Hills has caused the river to swell rapidly, affecting three villages under the Kaliabor Revenue Circle and 10 villages under the Samaguri Revenue Circle.

The affected villages in Samaguri are Chamgaon, Nalbari, Purana Salna, Udmarigaon, Niz Chapana, Khonajan Grant, Borchungjar, Motiaporbat, Udumari Grant and Garchuk. Rangulu Sutargaon under the Nagaon Sadar Revenue Circle has also been affected by artificial flooding.

A total of 14 villages across the three revenue circles have been affected, with nearly 1,000 people impacted. Of them, more than 800 are from the Kaliabor Revenue Circle. Around 30 hectares of agricultural land have also been affected.

Meanwhile, backflow from the Diju river has caused the water level of the Kolong river, which flows through Nagaon town, to rise.

In view of the flood situation, the district administration has activated a control room and issued helpline numbers — 1077 (Toll Free), 03672-238800, 236827 and 230177.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

Three things cannot be long hidden: the sun, the moon, and the truth.- Buddha

CJP protest and uproar in Parliament

Both Houses – Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha – of the Parliament of India adjourned for the second day of the Monsoon Session on Tuesday amid protests by the opposition seeking discussion on the police “brutality unleashed” on students during their “March to Parliament” on July 20. The March was led by Cockroach Janata Party, which was blocked by barricades erected by the Delhi Police, which later resorted to canning and tear gassing the protestors in which over 60 students were injured. Police said that 118 police officials also sustained injuries while 70 protestors were detained. July 20 was the first day of the Monsoon Session of Parliament. The opposition rocked the parliament with protests and repeated disruptions over CJP protests and demanded discussions on the examination irregularities and paper leaks including in the NEET examination, for which the govt was not ready. Both the Houses witnessed repeated disruptions and it was not possible to conduct the proceedings leading to adjournment of the Houses for the day. The first day of the Monsoon session was completely washed out. Cockroach Janata Party has been protesting examinations irregularities and paper leaks in the country since June 6, 2026 at Jantar Mantar, with series of protests, including hunger strikes, and March to Parliament on July 20, the day on which Jantar Mantar protest site was completely cleared of protestors and their makeshift tents.

Nevertheless, students have reclaimed the protest site again today July 21 in the morning and the protest continues. They have been demanding accountability and resignation of Union Minister of Education Dharmendra Pradhan. Union Government clearly tried to suppress the movement by not talking to the protestors and using force against the protestors – first, by forcefully shifting Sonam Wangchuk on 21st day of his hunger strike from the protest site to hospital, secondly by resorting to lathi-charge and teargas the protestors on the March to Parliament on July 20, thirdly detaining scores of them, and fourthly by clearing the protest site of them. Government’s intention of suppression was betrayed by a statement of Union Minister of Health J P Nadda who said that “on request of the protestors” he talked with them and received their demand letter.

Amidst repeated disruption, both the Houses adjourned several times, and resumed only to be adjourned again. Both the Houses were adjourned for the day after 2 PM. In Rajya Sabha, the leader of the House and Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge raised the issue of a brutal police crackdown on CJP protestors. Disruption started immediately thereafter. Cong MP Renuka Chowdhury even filed an adjournment motion in Rajya Sabha alleging that several gates of Parl were sealed and internet services were suspended. Even though the government’s arrogance was clear from Nadda’s statement, PM Narendra Modi, as stated by the Union Minister Kiren Rijiju, said on Tuesday in the NDA’s parliamentary party meeting, that “security and future of youth” was the government’s priority. Rijiju said that the prime minister stated that “NEET paper leak should not be an issue of partisan politics” as it is a “national issue and not a matter of one state or the Centre alone.” The PM has called for coordinated efforts by all stakeholders to prevent paper leaks in future examinations, and reiterated the government’s commitment to ensure strict action against those involved in paper leaks and safeguarding the interest of the country’s youth.

Flood lessons from upper Assam

The latest floods in Upper Assam have once again demonstrated that a flood is never merely the consequence of rivers overflowing their banks. It is the outcome of a chain of natural and human factors that unfold across landscapes connected by water, climate, and geography. Heavy rainfall over the hill districts of neighbouring Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh rapidly enters the tributaries that descend into the Brahmaputra valley, leaving little time for downstream communities to prepare. During the recent monsoon, exceptionally intense rainfall, including cloudburst-like conditions reported from parts of Nagaland, triggered a sudden rise in river levels that submerged villages, tea estates, cropland, roads, railway tracks, and public infrastructure across Sivasagar, Charaideo, Jorhat, Golaghat, Dibrugarh and several adjoining districts. Rescue operations carried out by the Indian Army, the National Disaster Response Force, the State Disaster Response Force, the Fire and Emergency Services, and local volunteers prevented an even greater tragedy, yet thousands of families were forced to leave their homes while schools, health centres and transport services faced severe disruption. Such scenes have become painfully familiar across Assam, where annual flooding has long shaped social and economic life. The frequency with which these events recur, however, demands a more careful examination than the routine cycle of relief and rehabilitation. Every flood exposes weaknesses that remain unaddressed from previous years. Roads that washed away once become vulnerable again. Embankments repaired hurriedly before the monsoon face renewed pressure. Drainage systems fail under volumes of water they were never designed to accommodate. Farmers lose standing crops just weeks before harvest, while small traders, daily wage earners and tea garden workers experience sudden interruptions to their livelihoods. These recurring losses reveal that flood management cannot depend solely on emergency response after disaster strikes. Contemporary society must recognise that resilience begins months and even years before the arrival of the monsoon. Scientific weather forecasting, real-time monitoring of upstream rainfall, coordinated river basin management, reliable communication between neighbouring states, and efficient local administration together determine whether a natural hazard develops into a humanitarian crisis. Rivers ignore administrative boundaries. Rain falling over the Naga Hills or the eastern Himalayas inevitably influences communities hundreds of kilometres away in the plains of Assam. This implies that flood preparedness must operate through regional cooperation rather than isolated state-level planning. Climate research has also strengthened this argument. A warmer atmosphere retains greater amounts of moisture, increasing the possibility of short-duration but highly intense rainfall events. Although individual floods arise from multiple interacting

factors, observational records across South Asia increasingly indicate that episodes of extreme precipitation are becoming more frequent and more intense. Infrastructure designed decades ago under different climatic conditions may therefore struggle to withstand present-day rainfall extremes. Engineers, planners and policymakers must acknowledge this changing reality while designing roads, bridges, culverts, railway embankments, urban drainage networks and flood-control structures. Communities cannot continue relying on historical rainfall averages when present weather repeatedly exceeds those assumptions. Public investment should therefore prioritise resilience rather than temporary restoration, because rebuilding damaged infrastructure year after year ultimately imposes greater financial costs than constructing stronger systems capable of enduring future extremes. The recent experience of Upper Assam reminds us that preparedness is not merely a technical exercise. It reflects political commitment, administrative efficiency, scientific capacity and social responsibility working together before rivers begin to rise.

The floods have also revealed a deeper relationship between environmental change and patterns of development that contemporary society can no longer afford to overlook. Assam’s economy depends heavily upon agriculture, tea cultivation, fisheries, inland transport and expanding urban centres. Economic progress naturally requires improved infrastructure, industrial investment and better connectivity across districts. Yet development succeeds only when it respects the ecological characteristics of floodplains rather than attempting to erase them. Many wetlands that once absorbed excess monsoon water have gradually shrunk because of encroachment, land conversion and unplanned construction. Natural drainage channels have narrowed or disappeared beneath roads, settlements and commercial expansion. Rivers carrying enormous sediment loads continuously alter their courses, while human interventions often restrict the space available for floodwaters to spread safely across traditional floodplains. During periods of exceptional rainfall, water inevitably seeks these older pathways, producing severe flooding in locations that had previously appeared secure. The evidence suggests that engineering structures alone cannot eliminate flood risk. Embankments remain necessary in many vulnerable locations and have protected countless lives over the decades, yet their effectiveness depends upon regular maintenance, scientific monitoring and realistic expectations regarding their limitations. Silt accumulation, riverbank erosion and structural weaknesses require continuous attention rather than seasonal repairs undertaken immediately before the monsoon. A key distinction here is that flood resilience extends far beyond embankments. Healthy wetlands, restored river channels, protected forests in upstream catchments,

stable hill slopes and well-maintained drainage systems collectively reduce the destructive impact of extreme rainfall. Investment in watershed management therefore deserves equal priority alongside conventional flood-control infrastructure. Technological advances also provide opportunities that earlier generations lacked. Satellite-based rainfall estimation, Doppler weather radar, automated river gauges, Geographic Information Systems, high-resolution flood modelling and mobile-based early warning systems now allow authorities to anticipate changing conditions with far greater accuracy. These technologies, however, produce meaningful results only when administrative institutions respond rapidly and local communities trust the warnings they receive. Delayed communication can reduce the value of even the most sophisticated forecast. Community awareness therefore remains indispensable. Schools should include practical disaster preparedness in their educational activities. Village committees should regularly update evacuation plans before every monsoon. Local administrations should identify vulnerable elderly residents, pregnant women, persons with disabilities and isolated households well in advance of emergencies. Tea estates, educational institutions, health facilities and commercial establishments should prepare location-specific contingency plans instead of relying solely on district-level advisories. Such preparedness strengthens social confidence while reducing panic during crises. Equally important is the economic dimension of resilience. Floods interrupt agricultural production, damage fisheries, reduce tea output, delay transport, increase food prices and discourage investment in vulnerable regions. Families often lose livestock, stored grain, household possessions and sources of income simultaneously. Poor households recover far more slowly because they possess limited savings and fewer financial safeguards. Recovery therefore requires more than compensation payments. Affordable crop insurance, easier access to institutional credit, diversified rural employment, climate-resilient farming techniques and stronger rural healthcare systems all contribute to long-term resilience. Disaster policy should measure success not only by the number of rescue boats deployed or relief camps established but also by how quickly affected families regain economic stability, educational continuity and psychological confidence after floodwaters recede.

Upper Assam therefore offers lessons that extend well beyond the boundaries of one region or one monsoon season. The annual arrival of floods should no longer be accepted as an unavoidable cycle demanding only temporary relief measures. Instead, it should encourage governments, scientific institutions, civil society organisations and citizens to reconsider how development, environmental conservation and disaster preparedness can reinforce one another. The Brahmaputra valley possesses extraordinary ecological richness that has sustained human civilisation for centuries despite recurring floods. Traditional Assamese settlements historically adapted to seasonal flooding through elevated housing, commu-

nity grain storage, diversified agriculture and close observation of local rivers. Many of these practices reflected practical knowledge accumulated across generations. Modern planning should integrate this indigenous understanding with contemporary science rather than treating the two as separate approaches. Universities, research institutions and government agencies already generate valuable data on hydrology, sediment transport, rainfall variability and climate projections. Policymakers should translate this scientific knowledge into practical planning decisions that influence infrastructure design, land-use regulation and emergency preparedness. Transparent governance also plays a decisive role. Public confidence increases when authorities openly communicate risks, share reliable forecasts and explain the rationale behind major flood management decisions. Citizens become active partners rather than passive recipients of relief. Media organisations likewise carry an important responsibility by providing verified information, countering rumours and highlighting scientific explanations instead of sensational narratives. The private sector also has a significant contribution to make. Industries, tea companies, transport operators and financial institutions benefit directly from resilient infrastructure and should therefore participate actively in disaster preparedness, environmental restoration and community resilience programmes. Climate adaptation should become a central component of economic planning rather than an isolated environmental concern. International experience demonstrates that societies investing consistently in preparedness, ecosystem restoration, resilient infrastructure and scientific forecasting ultimately reduce both human suffering and long-term financial losses. Assam possesses the institutional experience, technical expertise and community resilience necessary to move in that direction if these resources receive sustained political commitment. The courage displayed by volunteers, rescue personnel, healthcare workers and ordinary citizens during the recent floods reflects the strength of Assamese society under extraordinary pressure. That spirit deserves policies that match its determination. The next monsoon will undoubtedly test the region once again. Rivers will continue to flow from the surrounding hills, rainfall will remain unpredictable, and climate uncertainty will persist. Human decisions, however, remain within our control. If governments strengthen regional cooperation, if engineers build for future climate realities rather than past averages, if communities prepare before disaster arrives, and if environmental conservation becomes an integral part of development policy, Upper Assam can gradually transform repeated flood emergencies into a model of informed resilience. That transformation will neither occur quickly nor eliminate floods altogether, because rivers have shaped Assam for centuries and will continue to do so. It will, however, reduce avoidable losses, protect livelihoods, strengthen public confidence and ensure that future generations inherit a region better prepared for the environmental realities of the twenty-first century.

DEGREE OF THOUGHT

By: Himangshu Ranjan Bhuyan



The Post-Imperial convergence: How London and New Delhi are rewriting the rules of Western Globalisation

By: Bedanga Chutia & Swastika Chutia

When the clock struck midnight on July 15, 2026, the activation of the India-UK Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) did more than lower customs barriers—it decisively closed the book on empire. For nearly eight decades following India’s 1947 independence, bilateral commerce was filtered through the bureaucratic lens of Brussels, leaving London and New Delhi trapped in an institutional time warp where annual trade volumes doubled at £39 billion. Brexit upended that framework, forcing a high-stakes search for Britain’s post-EU identity. While critics mocked early trade deals with smaller economies, securing an unfettered alliance with a \$4.2 trillion economic titan provides the ultimate validation of British regulatory sovereignty. By slashing tariffs on 90% of trade lines—including an immediate drop in India’s punitive 150% Scotch whisky tariff—this historic agreement proves post-Brexit London can successfully translate raw legislative autonomy into profound geopolitical influence within the world’s most dynamic trading zone.

India enters this historic agreement from a position fundamentally transformed from the early post-colonial era, operating not as a junior trading partner but as a central engine of the global economic architecture. Boasting a real GDP growth rate hovering consistently between 6.8% and 7.2%, India stands as the world’s most populous marketplace and a leading digital superpower, driven by over 950 million active internet users. Britain is no longer engaging a developing economy seeking concessionary terms; it is negotiating directly with an emerging great power that serves as the undisputed strategic anchor of the Indo-Pacific. Beyond basic tariff reductions, the deeper significance of the CETA lies in the permanent institutional integration of these two highly complex economies. The treaty establishes comprehensive, legally binding frameworks spanning investment protections, cross-border services, digital trade, and the mutual recognition of professional qualifications. These structural links effectively insulate trillions of rupees in capital flows from sudden regulatory reversals, building a resilient, long-term corridor for corporate capital that transcends trans-

sient political cycles.

This institutional alignment arrives at a critical juncture for the Western alliance, which is racing to insulate vulnerable supply chains from over-dependence on China. As Western governments pursue “friend-shoring” strategies to establish trusted production networks among democratic allies, India represents the ideal geopolitical substitute, backed by its \$26 billion Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme designed to build global manufacturing hubs. The Cold War separation of market economics and national security is officially dead; today, trade frameworks double as primary instruments of geopolitical strategy. By establishing shared standards for critical components, digital governance, and rigorous investment screening, the India-UK agreement directly complements wider G7 diversification efforts. As Indian External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar noted, “globalization cannot be weaponized if it is properly diversified.” The treaty explicitly demonstrates that economic statecraft has become the premier tool for securing vital supply chains, transforming commercial law into a frontline asset for democratic stability and security across the Indo-Pacific.

While physical manufacturing dominates headlines, high-value services represent the true economic prize of this bilateral treaty, uniting two remarkably complementary economies rather than forcing them into direct competition. India brings unmatched global strength in software engineering, institutional consulting, and digital innovation, backed by a service export sector exceeding \$340 billion. Conversely, the United Kingdom offers unparalleled global depth in advanced finance, insurance, and research, with its services sector contributing nearly 80% to its domestic economic output. Despite the persistent skepticism that followed its departure from the European single market, London has fiercely maintained its status as a premier financial hub, managing over £11 trillion in assets. Through this new trade framework, the City of London strengthens its position as the primary international gateway for Indian corporations seeking global equity, venture funding, and green bonds, directly tying British financial abundance to India’s insatiable domestic infrastructure development.

The long-term trajectory of global power will not be determined by basic

commodities, but by absolute dominance over the foundational technologies of the future, including artificial intelligence, quantum computing, semiconductors, and digital public infrastructure. The CETA provides a pioneering legal matrix for co-developing these sectors, establishing common data standards and intellectual property protections that could shape international regulatory norms, especially as India processes over 13 billion monthly transactions via its UPI network. Crucially, this technological integration is catalyzed by the accompanying Social Security Agreement, which eliminates the double social-security contribution friction for temporary skilled professionals. Historically, Indian IT firms paid close to £500 million annually into the UK National Insurance system without their workers ever seeing the benefits. In a knowledge-driven economy where talent mobility is a vital strategic asset, enabling engineers, researchers, and tech experts to move fluidly between New Delhi and London without punitive double taxation ensures both nations can maximize their human capital.

Recognizing that human capital is the ultimate foundation of durable bilateral relations, the agreement strategically integrates Britain’s globally influential university system with India’s massive youth population—where over 600 million people are under the age of 25—through expanded frameworks for joint research, dual degrees, and startup innovation partnerships. Simultaneously, the treaty encourages British firms to aggressively diversify manufacturing away from volatile industrial nodes. Sectors ranging from precision aerospace and automotive components to renewable energy and medical devices stand to gain immensely. Backed by India’s recent \$15 billion commitment to its Semicon Mission 2.0 and its status as the provider of over 60% of the world’s vaccines, this integration allows Western enterprises to seamlessly embed their operations into India’s rapidly ascending, higher-value supply chains, facilitating vital technology transfers that enhance long-term economic security for both nations.

In an era where aggressive climate policies are reshaping global commerce, the India-UK partnership successfully realigns economic expansion with deep decarbonization. By creating shared platforms for sustainable finance, carbon markets, and joint research into offshore



wind, hydrogen, and advanced battery technologies, the agreement supports India’s ambitious goal of reaching 500 gigawatts of non-fossil fuel capacity by 2030. Furthermore, this deep economic trust naturally paves the way for enhanced defense industrial cooperation, which is critical given rising security anxieties in the Indo-Pacific. By standardizing intellectual property rules and investment flows, the treaty directly accelerates co-development and joint manufacturing in sensitive sectors like maritime surveillance, aerospace, and cyber resilience, demonstrating that deep economic integration is the absolute prerequisite for robust, modern defense partnerships.

Post-Brexit Britain has spent years attempting to execute a meaningful strategic tilt toward the Indo-Pacific; this trade agreement finally provides the robust economic foundation needed to support its regional engagement beyond transient military deployments. India sits at the absolute geographical and strategic center of this maritime theater, making it the most critical partner for any Western power hoping to project long-term stability across trade lanes that handle over 60% of global commerce. Although the text of the treaty carefully avoids explicitly targeting Beijing, the looming shadow of China’s economic dominance undeniably shapes the entire strategic context. The true significance of the CETA lies not in open confrontation, but in systemic market diversification, offering Western economies a viable, trusted

alternative that significantly reduces vulnerability to geopolitical blackmail.

For generations, the Commonwealth of Nations was dismissed as an empty talking shop built on post-colonial nostalgia, but this agreement completely reimagines that historical relationship into a modern, forward-looking alliance of equals centered on technology and practical innovation, revitalizing a bloc representing 2.5 billion citizens. At the same time, this deal highlights the sheer sophistication of India’s modern multi-alignment foreign policy strategy. New Delhi has masterfully demonstrated that it can deepen its economic integration with London while simultaneously expanding critical trade ties with the United States via the iCET framework, pursuing its €100 billion trade discussions with the European Union, and maintaining deep ties across Japan, ASEAN, the Gulf, and Africa. By refusing to enter into exclusive, restrictive blocs, India has successfully positioned itself as an indispensable global swing state, capable of extracting maximum economic advantage from multiple global centers of power without rigid alignment.

Yet a realistic assessment reveals immense regulatory and political constraints to long-term success. Full implementation remains riddled with friction points, from complex rules-of-origin thresholds requiring up to 40% local value addition to the steep administrative hurdles of aligning contradictory data localization laws. Sensitive domestic

sectors—particularly UK agriculture vulnerable to Indian agro-exports and Indian manufacturers facing specialized British imports—will endure painful structural adjustments. Furthermore, sudden global shifts in either capital, coupled with macroeconomic headwinds dragging global growth below 3%, could easily trigger protectionist backlashes. The agreement is not a self-executing text, but a complex machinery requiring continuous, high-stakes diplomatic maintenance to survive.

Ultimately, the activation of the India-UK CETA transmits an unmistakable global signal that echoes far beyond its signatories, offering a brilliant blueprint for a fractured world order. It conclusively proves that post-Brexit London retains the regulatory agility to shape major trade architectures independent of traditional blocs, while cementing New Delhi’s status as an indispensable partner for Western democracies. By demonstrating that economic statecraft now serves as an essential complement to military alliances, this historic agreement illustrates how major and middle powers can collectively rewrite the rules of globalization to prioritize supply chain resilience over raw efficiency. The true narrative is not merely one of lowered tariffs, but the birth of a more diversified, strategically interconnected global marketplace where national sovereignty and international interdependence are no longer viewed as opposing forces, but as the twin engines driving the next era of global stability.

The Digital World: Opportunities, Risks and the need for cyber safety among children

By: Janki Khaund

The times, lives, milieu, conditioning and experiences of children have vastly changed today from what they were in our childhood, when friendly neighbourhoods and open playgrounds encouraged children to engage in games, sports and other community activities. Friendships extended across different age groups, fostering camaraderie, trust and joyful social connections. As the saying goes, "It is the sweet, simple things of life which are the real ones after all."

However, this script has gradually changed with the advent of digitalisation. Parks and playgrounds have increasingly given way to laptops, desktops, smartphones, tablets and other digital devices. Children today spend a significant part of their lives in the virtual world. They make friends through online games, attend digital classes and remain constantly connected through social media and various online platforms. While the digital world offers immense opportunities for learning, communication and innovation, it also exposes children to a wide range of unseen hazards.

One of the most concerning dangers is the phenomenon of stranger danger in the digital world. Although social media and online platforms connect children with friends, teachers and genuine well-wishers, they are equally occupied by individuals who misuse these platforms for fraud, manipulation and deceit. Such offenders often hide behind fake identities and fabricated profiles, posing as trustworthy friends while concealing malicious intentions. Unlike the dangers that parents traditionally warned children about in the physical world, these digital threats are invisible and often difficult to detect, making young and gullible children particularly vulnerable.

These manipulators deliberately exploit children's emotional vulnerabilities and loneliness. They invest weeks or even months in building trust by initiating innocent conversations, offering compliments, encouragement and emotional support, and presenting themselves as dependable friends. Gradually, these seemingly harmless interactions evolve into more personal and intimate conversations. Without realising it, children may find themselves emotionally dependent on someone they have never met in person. Eventually, they may be persuaded to share sensitive personal information, photographs or other private details.

By the time children realise that something is wrong or that they are being pressured into doing something they are uncomfortable with, the situation often escalates beyond their control. Fear of embarrassment, shame or being judged frequently prevents them from seeking help. What begins as emotional manipulation can ultimately lead to ex-

ploitation, abuse, sextortion, cyberbullying or other serious forms of online victimisation. This process may aptly be described as a digital trap, and it is important to recognise that not only children but even many adults have unknowingly fallen prey to such tactics. Recent surveys further reinforce the seriousness of these risks. A nationwide survey conducted in 2025 found that 78% of Indian teenagers experienced at least one form of online risk during the previous year. The survey also reported that 36% had experienced cyberbullying, harassment or abuse, 51% encountered hate speech, and 66% were exposed to personal online risks. Another study conducted in urban India in 2026 revealed that 54% of parents reported that their children had encountered adult or inappropriate online content, while 46% said their children had experienced bullying or trolling. These findings demonstrate that online harm is no longer confined to interactions with strangers but has become a broader challenge affecting children's overall digital experience.

The situation in Assam is equally concerning. According to NCRB-based data, the State registered 4,846 cybercrime cases in 2021, 1,733 cases in 2022, and 909 cases in 2023, reflecting the substantial burden of cyber offences. Furthermore, when crimes against children are assessed relative to the child population, Assam recorded 84.2 crimes against children per lakh child population in 2023, making it one of the most affected states in the country. At the national level, India recorded 1,77,335 crimes against children in 2023, representing a 9.2% increase over the previous year. These figures underline that children continue to face growing vulnerabilities in both physical and digital environments.

Preventing this growing digital onslaught requires a collective effort involving parents, schools and society at large.

The foundations of digital literacy and awareness against cybercrime should begin at home. Parents must not only monitor their children's screen time but also actively supervise and filter the type of content to which young minds are exposed. Equally important is creating a home environment where children feel safe discussing their online experiences, concerns and mistakes without fear of punishment or ridicule. Parents should regularly educate their children about responsible online behaviour, encourage them to question unusual requests from online contacts, and help them understand the crucial distinction between privacy and secrecy. Children should know that keeping personal information private is important, but keeping secrets from trusted adults at someone else's insistence is often a warning sign.

Schools also have an equally important respon-

sibility. Digital literacy should extend far beyond teaching technical skills and computer operations. Educational institutions should conduct regular awareness programmes on cyber safety, responsible digital citizenship, cyberbullying, misinformation, emotional manipulation, online grooming and cyber trafficking. Such programmes can equip children with the knowledge and confidence needed to recognise warning signs and seek timely help. If schools conduct regular awareness sessions on cyber safety, many children can be protected from the trauma of cyberbullying, misinformation, emotional manipulation and the growing menace of cyber-enabled trafficking.

Finally, children should be taught to distinguish between reality and virtual reality. They must understand that not everyone they encounter online is who they claim to be and that friendships formed in the digital world should always be approached with caution. Digital literacy must therefore go beyond merely teaching children how to use technology; it must empower them to use it wisely, responsibly and safely. By fostering digital literacy, critical thinking, open communication and responsible online behaviour, parents, educators and society can work together to ensure that children enjoy the immense benefits of technology while remaining protected from its hidden dangers.

India has also strengthened its legal framework to safeguard children from cyber-enabled exploitation and abuse. The Information Technology Act, 2000, particularly Sections 66E, 67, 67A and 67B, criminalises offences relating to the violation of privacy, publication and transmission of obscene material, sexually explicit content and child sexual abuse material in electronic form. The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012 provides stringent punishment for online sexual exploitation, grooming, use of children for pornographic purposes and other forms of sexual abuse facilitated through digital platforms. The Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 (BNS) also contains provisions dealing with criminal intimidation, extortion, cheating by personation, voyeurism, stalking and offences committed through electronic communication, enabling law enforcement agencies to effectively prosecute cyber-enabled crimes against children.

Cyber-enabled trafficking and exploitation of children are also addressed under the Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956, relevant provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023, and the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015, which recognises children who are vulnerable to abuse, trafficking and exploitation as children in need of care and protection. The legal framework is further strengthened by the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and



Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021, which require intermediaries and social media platforms to exercise greater due diligence, remove unlawful content, and cooperate with law enforcement agencies in protecting children from online harm.

However, legislation alone cannot guarantee children's safety. Laws become truly effective only when they are complemented by awareness, timely reporting, responsible parenting, digital literacy and prompt intervention by institutions. Every child, parent, teacher and citizen must be aware that online grooming, cyberbullying, sextortion, circulation of child sexual abuse material and cyber trafficking are not merely unethical acts—they are serious criminal offences punishable under Indian law.

As India continues its journey towards becoming a digitally empowered society, it is equally important that the digital ecosystem becomes a safe space for children. Technology itself is neither inherently good nor bad; rather, its impact depends on how responsibly it is used and how effectively children are equipped to navigate the online world. The challenge before us is therefore not to discourage children from embracing technology but to ensure that they possess the knowledge, confidence and resilience to use it wisely.

Every stakeholder has a shared responsibility in this endeavour. Governments must continue strengthening cybercrime investigation mechanisms, improving reporting systems, and ensuring that offenders who target children online are brought to justice swiftly. Law enforcement agencies should work closely with educational institutions, child protection agencies and technology companies to create safer digital environments. Social media platforms and digital service providers must also adopt stronger safeguards, age-appropriate privacy settings and robust mechanisms to detect and remove harmful content. While technology companies have made notable progress in developing child safety features, continuous innovation and accountability remain essential in responding to emerging digital

threats.

At the community level, awareness programmes should become a regular feature rather than occasional events. Schools, community organisations, civil society institutions and local self-government bodies can play an instrumental role in educating children and parents alike. Workshops, interactive sessions and discussions on cyber safety should become an integral part of school education and community outreach initiatives. Children should be encouraged to report uncomfortable online experiences immediately, with the assurance that they will be heard, supported and protected rather than blamed or punished.

Equally important is nurturing emotional resilience among children. A child who enjoys healthy family relationships, positive friendships, open communication and emotional support is less likely to become vulnerable to manipulation by strangers online. Parents must therefore invest not only in monitoring digital activities but also in spending quality time with their children, understanding their emotional needs and fostering mutual trust. When children know that they can freely approach their parents or teachers without fear of criticism, they are far more likely to seek help at the earliest signs of online exploitation.

The digital age is here to stay, and with it come immense possibilities for education, creativity, innovation and global connectivity. Our objective should not be to create fear of technology but to cultivate informed, responsible and resilient digital citizens. Every child has the right to explore, learn and thrive in a safe environment—both offline and online. Protecting children in cyberspace is, therefore, not merely a technological challenge; it is a collective social responsibility and a fundamental child rights obligation. By working together—parents, educators, policymakers, law enforcement agencies, technology companies and society at large—we can ensure that the digital world remains a place of opportunity rather than exploitation, empowering every child to grow with confidence, dignity and security.

The growing market for 'masculine weakness' on social media

By: Dr Satyawan Saurabh

The digital revolution has provided society with unprecedented convenience. Today, health information, expert advice, and medical services are available just a few clicks away. But this digital world also has another side, where people's vulnerabilities, fears, and social inhibitions are being turned into profit opportunities. If there's one area that's rapidly expanding on social media, it's the massive business of advertisements and products peddling "male weakness."

Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, short video platforms, and messaging apps are flooded with advertisements that claim to enhance virility, improve marital life, or grant miraculous powers in a matter of days.

This isn't just a commercial trend, but a serious issue involving social psychology, health literacy, and digital regulation. This industry capitalizes on men's hesitation, which prevents them from openly discussing sexual health issues. Advertisements first instill fear and then sell solutions to that fear. This is the ultimate business model of this entire business.

Sexual health remains a topic of open discussion in Indian society. Most men hesitate to discuss such issues with family or a doctor. Exploiting this hesitation, self-proclaimed experts, uncertified vaidyas, influencers, and many companies on social media sell products that lack solid scientific evidence of their effectiveness. Claims like "effective in seven days," "100 percent guarantee," "secret formula," and "thousands have benefited" may sound appealing, but they often fall short of scientific medical standards.

The language of these advertisements is also noteworthy. They don't directly sell a product, but rather question a person's self-

confidence. The messages imply that not taking a particular product will affect marital life, diminish respect, or diminish masculinity. Thus, a common health concern is linked to social status and self-esteem. As a result, many people purchase these products without medical advice. Social media algorithms further exacerbate this problem. Once a person sees or clicks on such an ad, the platforms repeatedly show similar content. Gradually, users begin to believe that this problem is common and that most people are using such products. This psychological effect can often lead to unnecessary anxiety.

It's also important to note that sexual health isn't just about medications. In many cases, conditions like stress, depression, diabetes, high blood pressure, hormonal imbalances, smoking, alcohol consumption, lack of sleep, and an unhealthy lifestyle also play a role. In such cases, simply taking so-called "potency-enhancing" drugs isn't the answer. Proper diagnosis and evidence-based treatment are the right approach.

Another concern in this social media business is fake reviews and false experiences. Many advertisements feature alleged experiences from people whose authenticity is difficult to verify. Advertisements are presented with people dressed up as doctors, which can be misleading to the average person. Terms like "Ayurvedic," "herbal," or "natural" are often used to create the impression that a product is completely safe. However, being natural does not in itself guarantee safety or effectiveness.

It's also important to clarify that Ayurveda is a rich and scientific medical tradition in India, with its own

principles, research, and qualified practitioners. The problem isn't Ayurveda itself, but rather the tendency to market products in its name without adequate evidence, quality control, or misleading claims. Therefore, it's essential to consult a qualified and registered practitioner in any medical practice.

Digital platforms also have a significant responsibility. If they can monitor financial fraud, fake investment schemes, and other misleading advertisements, a more stringent verification system should also be developed for health-related advertisements. Ensuring that health claims have a scientific basis, necessary disclaimers, and adherence to regulatory standards should be part of platforms' social responsibility.

Government regulatory bodies must also strengthen oversight of digital advertising. Enforcing regulations solely on print and television is insufficient. Today, many young and middle-aged individuals spend significant time on social media, so effective action against misleading health advertisements is essential at the digital level. Furthermore, people should be informed about the importance of consulting a certified physician in case of a health problem. There's also a social aspect to this issue. Men are often expected to be physically and mentally strong at all times. This is why many men avoid acknowledging their health problems or seeking help. This mindset needs to change. Having a health problem isn't a sign of weakness, and seeking timely treatment is responsible behavior. The media also plays an important role. News media and digital content creators should promote evidence-based information rather than sensational claims. The goal of health journalism should be to raise awareness, not to spread fear and confusion. Expert opinions, scientific research, and public health messages should be given greater space.

Providing scientific information on sexual health through educational institutions and public health campaigns is also the need of the hour. As accurate information increases in society, the impact of misleading advertisements will automatically decrease. The stronger the health literacy, the less likely we are to be vulnerable to digital fraud. It's also essential that consumers exercise self-awareness. Be wary of any advertisements that claim extraordinary results, immediate efficacy, or a "100 percent guarantee." If the scientific information, manufacturer's credibility, or regulatory approval of a product is unclear, it's advisable to seek expert advice before relying on it.

Ultimately, the growing market for "masculine fragility" on social media isn't just a health or advertising issue; it's a question of societal mindset, digital ethics, consumer protection, and public health. Exploiting men's insecurities for profit is neither ethical nor socially appropriate. The solution lies not in selling fear, but in promoting accurate information, scientific medicine, healthy lifestyles, and open dialogue.

An empowered society is one where health is not considered a matter of shame, but of awareness; where treatment is determined not by advertising claims, but by evidence-based medicine; and where digital platforms play a responsible role in people's well-being, rather than simply trading on their vulnerabilities. Only then can social media truly become a medium for knowledge, communication, and public welfare. (Dr Satyawan Saurabh, PhD (Political Science) is a poet and social thinker.)

Parliament's Monsoon Session Democracy must deliver dialogue, accountability and solutions

By: Lalit Garg

The greatest strength of Indian democracy lies in its Parliament. It is the supreme forum where the aspirations of the people, the challenges confronting the nation, and the direction of India's future are debated and determined. Parliament is not merely a law-making institution; it is the highest platform for democratic deliberation, accountability, and the expression of the people's will. In this context, the Monsoon Session of Parliament commencing on 20 July is not just another legislative exercise, but a fresh test of the maturity of India's democracy. The people of India expect this session to be remembered not for uproar, political confrontation, and repeated adjournments, but for meaningful dialogue, informed debate, and decisive policymaking. Unfortunately, in recent years, parliamentary proceedings have increasingly become symbols of political confrontation rather than democratic dignity. Instead of constructive discussions on policy and governance, the House has too often witnessed slogan-shouting, placards, protests in the Well of the House, and repeated disruptions.

Every minute of Parliament functions at the expense of taxpayers' money. Therefore, every unproductive moment is not merely a parliamentary failure but also a misuse of valuable democratic resources. The role of Parliament is certainly to hold the government accountable, but not merely to create disorder. Likewise, it is the responsibility of the government not only to rely on its numerical majority but also to listen to the opposition and foster an atmosphere conducive to dialogue. This session is expected to witness the Opposition raising several significant issues, including alleged irregularities in competitive examinations, the state of education, inflation, unemployment, foreign policy, national security, border concerns, controversies relating to religious places, thefts in temples, taxation, and electoral reforms. These are all matters of national importance and deserve serious parliamentary discussion. Such debates are not only essential for democracy but are also the rightful expectation of the people. However, if these issues are reduced merely to instruments of political sloganeering, their very purpose will be defeated. Every issue raised in Parliament must ultimately contribute to finding practical solutions—that alone reflects democratic maturity.

The Opposition is an indispensable pillar of democracy. Its duty is not merely to oppose the government but to encourage it to make better decisions. In a healthy democracy, the Opposition serves as both the eyes and ears of the government. If it confines itself solely to obstructionist politics, its own credibility inevitably suffers. At the same time, if the government dismisses every question raised by the Opposition as a political conspiracy and avoids meaningful engagement, the democratic balance is weakened. Both the ruling party and the Opposition must therefore discharge their constitutional responsibilities with seriousness and sincerity. If education is debated during this session, the focus must remain on the future of students rather than political gains. If inflation is discussed, the objective should be to formulate



policies that provide genuine relief to ordinary citizens. If issues relating to national security, foreign affairs, or border management arise, national interest must take precedence over partisan politics. Parliamentary debate can be called meaningful only when it leads to sound policymaking and reassures citizens that their concerns are being addressed with seriousness.

Debate and dissent are not weaknesses of democracy; they are among its greatest strengths. However, when dissent gives way to disruption and debate is replaced by boycott, the very soul of democracy is wounded. Former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee rightly observed that the true test of democracy lies in the smooth functioning of Parliament. His words are more relevant today than ever before. A stalled Parliament is not the defeat of any one political party—it is the defeat of democracy itself. India today faces numerous pressing challenges. Young people seek meaningful employment; farmers aspire to better incomes; the middle class struggles with inflation; education and healthcare require substantial reforms; and amid uncertain global economic conditions, India must sustain its momentum of growth and development. At such a crucial juncture, the people expect Parliament to offer solutions, not political confrontation. If the entire session is consumed by partisan conflict, it is the ordinary citizen—whose voice Parliament is meant to represent—who suffers the greatest loss.

The dignity of Parliament does not rest merely on the Speaker's Chair or the grandeur of the parliamentary building; it is shaped by the conduct of those elected to sit within it. Members of Parliament must remember that they are not merely representatives of their political parties but of the entire nation. Every word they speak and every action they take contributes to India's democratic culture. Therefore, facts, reasoned arguments, and policy-oriented discussions should replace personal accusations and bitterness. The Bharatiya Janata Party has consistently maintained that it believes in development, good governance, and policy-driven politics. If that commitment is genuine, it should have no hesitation in providing factual and transparent responses to the important questions raised by the Opposition. Likewise, the Opposition must recognize that public confidence cannot be won merely through slogans or by disrupting parliamentary proceedings. It must present credible alternatives, constructive criticism, and practical policy recommendations. In a democracy, the success of both the government and the Opposition is inseparably linked to the success of

Parliament itself.

In today's age of information and digital transparency, citizens observe everything. They can distinguish who participates in meaningful debate, who merely engages in political theatrics, and who genuinely raises issues affecting public welfare. Symbolic politics alone is no longer sufficient. People's representatives must perform their responsibilities with greater seriousness, sensitivity, and accountability. Former President and philosopher Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan described Parliament as "the voice of the nation's conscience." If that conscience is drowned in noise and disorder, the democratic path itself becomes blurred. The Monsoon Session should therefore become an opportunity for both the government and the Opposition to demonstrate that the true strength of democracy lies in dialogue, consensus, and thoughtful deliberation.

A strong and vibrant democracy requires an equally strong, responsible, and constructive Opposition. The Opposition is often described as the eyes of democracy. But when those eyes are blinded by perpetual confrontation and blind opposition, democracy itself loses its vision. Public opinion alone can compel the Opposition to introspect and improve. When citizens make it clear that they seek a constructive, policy-oriented Opposition rather than politics driven by slogans, political behaviour will inevitably change. The Opposition must honestly ask itself whether it is genuinely fighting for the people's concerns or merely pursuing the politics of power. The media, too, has a responsibility to promote informed, policy-based debates instead of glorifying disruption and sensationalism. Disagreement is an inherent strength of parliamentary democracy, but when disagreement loses direction, it turns into weakness. The need of the hour is to restore the dignity of Parliament. The Opposition must discharge its constitutional role with responsibility, while the government must shed any trace of arrogance and embrace dialogue as a democratic obligation. If Parliament is truly the "Temple of Democracy," it should not become merely a place where political power is celebrated; it must remain a forum dedicated to public welfare and national progress.

This Monsoon Session should devote its valuable time to legislation, policy formulation, and meaningful debate, rather than repeated adjournments. The representatives elected by the people must remain faithful to the issues and aspirations on which they sought public trust. The nation expects Parliament to become a platform of resolve, not confrontation. The government should listen to the Opposition; the Opposition should hold the government accountable; but both must remain guided by the larger objective of national interest and public welfare. If this session succeeds in replacing political bitterness with policy-oriented discourse, accusations with accountability, and deadlock with solutions, it will not merely mark a successful parliamentary session—it will open a new chapter in the maturity of Indian democracy. Parliament will truly deserve to be called the Temple of Democracy only when every voice raised within it reflects the hopes, aspirations, and concerns of the last person in the queue.

'There is a question mark on his claims of being young'

JD(U) leader mocks Lok Sabha LoP over 'Modi anti-youth' remark

PATNA, July 21: Senior JD(U) leader Shrawan Kumar on Tuesday mocked Rahul Gandhi for calling Prime Minister Narendra Modi "anti-youth", and reminded the former Congress president that he was himself past his prime.

The JD(U) legislature party leader, who is also a minister in the BJP-led government in Bihar, also indirectly supported the police action against protesters in Delhi a day ago, saying, "Even if one is a big shot, one must face action upon breaking the law."

Kumar, who was speaking to reporters outside the state assembly, was asked about a video statement that Gandhi, the leader of the opposition in Lok Sabha, had issued shortly after police took recourse to lathi charge and bursting of tear gas shells to disperse Cockroach Janata Party supporters who were marching from the Jantar Mantar towards Parliament.

Fifty-six-year-old Gandhi had



RAHUL HIMSELF PAST HIS PRIME

said, "A majority of the population in this country are young people. Prime Minister Modi is the most anti-youth prime minister India has ever had. The boys and girls who are walking the streets of Delhi are criminals."

The JD(U) leader remarked, tongue in cheek, "Rahul Gandhi is himself not young anymore, though he pretends to be so. There is a question mark on his claims of being young. Nonetheless, we be-

lieve that Bihar and the country will progress by making our youth capable of holding their own in a fiercely competitive world."

When Shrawan Kumar was asked about the police action, he said, "Be it students or big shots like members of the legislature or even ministers in the government, law shall take its course whenever someone breaks it."

Another NDA partner, Lok Janashakti Party (Ram Vilas), headed

by Union minister Chirag Paswan, had a slightly different take on the incident. The party's state president and MLA Raju Tiwari told reporters, "In my opinion, the use of force against young protesters should have been avoided. I cannot, however, give an opinion on the demands they were raising."

Notably, the protesters, some of whom have been on a hunger strike for several days, have demanded the resignation of Union education minister Dharmendra Pradhan over the repeated leak of NEET question papers.

After the day-long protest, a delegation of Cockroach Janata Party met Union minister J P Nadda whom they submitted a memorandum seeking, in addition to the aforesaid demand, release from the hospital of innovator-turned-activist Sonam Wangchuk and compensation to family members of those who died by suicide after the leak of NEET examination papers earlier this year. (PTI)

Families say unable to contact students detained after CJP protest

NEW DELHI, July 21: Families of students detained during the Cockroach Janta Party protest in Delhi said they had been unable to contact them for hours and did not know whether any charges had been filed, as concerns mounted over the whereabouts of those detained.

Kartikyan, a resident of Tilak Nagar, said his 20-year-old brother Harshit, who had appeared for the NEET examination twice this year, was picked up during the protest and was believed to be at a police station in northwest Delhi.

"We last spoke to him around 1.30 pm on Monday and had not been able to contact him since," Kartikyan told PTI.

"We are on our way to a police station in Shalimar Bagh area and upon reaching we will get to know," he added.

In another case, the family of a 26-year-old Amit Upadhyay who is a law graduate from Delhi University, and is currently pursuing an LLM, said he had also been detained and was being held at another police station in northwest



Delhi. They said they were trying to meet him but had not been informed when he would be released or whether any charges had been invoked.

"My elder brother is detained in the Jahangirpuri area, we are trying to get more information so that he can be released as soon as possible," Saurav, Amit's younger brother told PTI.

Along with detention, family members said that with paper leaks, delayed results and mismanagement in the country's education system, families now have to

worry about impending legal issues.

"My brother had to appear for NEET twice in one year. How is it possible that demanding reforms in the education sector results in police detention?" Kartikyan said.

The detentions came after thousands of protesters marching towards Parliament over education reforms clashed with police in central Delhi. Security personnel used batons and tear gas after demonstrators allegedly attempted to breach barricades near Parliament Street. (PTI)

J-K administration will eradicate drug cartels, narco-terrorism networks: LG Sinha

SRINAGAR, July 21: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Tuesday said the administration is determined to neutralise drug cartels and narco-terrorism networks that target the youth of Jammu and Kashmir.

Addressing an event organised by the Department of Social Welfare, commemorating the successful completion of 100 days of 'Nasha Mukta (drug-free) J&K', Sinha said while the milestone marks significant progress, the mission is far from over.

"We are determined to neutralise the drug cartels and narco-terrorism networks that target our youth. We continue to strengthen our key priorities of dismantling illicit trafficking ecosystems, enhancing public awareness, and providing robust rehabilitation to help affected individuals reintegrate into society," he said. Sinha said the first 100 days of the campaign laid the foundation for the rigorous path ahead.

"The road ahead will certainly be tough, but our resolve to completely wipe out narco-terrorism is stronger than ever," he said. The LG said that during the campaign, he travelled across every region of the Union Territory, connecting with communities in all 20 districts through Padyatra, as he recalled meeting many parents burdened by fear for their children's futures.

"Standing alongside families in their darkest moments allowed me to truly grasp the depth of their anguish. Yet amid that pain, I saw an unwavering hope of a shared conviction that our youth can break free from addiction and reclaim their lives. During my padyatra, I saw both pain and courage. I witnessed despair and also glimpses of hope, and I can proudly say that such unprecedented public support for this campaign has never been seen in the history of Jammu and Kashmir," he said. (PTI)

UP ex BJP MLA says Delhi protest 'foreign-funded'

LUCKNOW, July 21: The allegation by a former BJP MLA on Tuesday that the ongoing protest at Delhi's Jantar Mantar was backed by "foreign funding" and aimed at targeting "Hindu, Hindutva and Sanatan", prompted sharp reactions from the Congress and the Samajwadi Party.

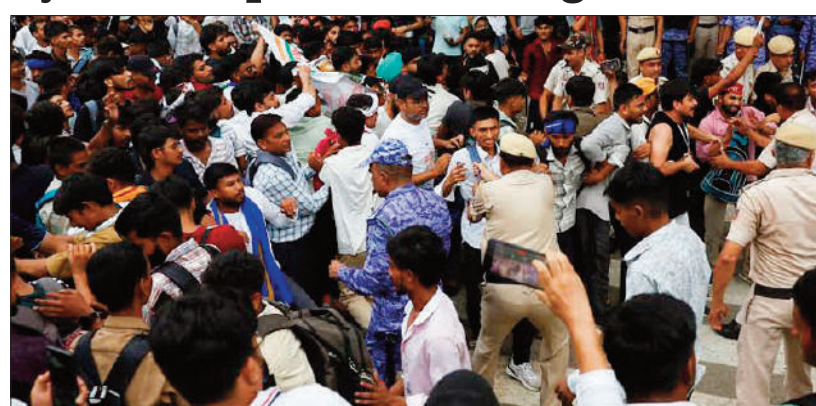
Rakesh Singh, a former MLA from Harchandpur Assembly constituency in Raebareilly district, made the remarks in a post on Facebook.

"Our young brothers should remain alert. The protest taking place at Jantar Mantar is not merely about the paper leak. It is aimed at targeting Hindus, Hindutva, Sanatan and eventually capturing the country. That is why foreign funding is being used to mobilise anti-national and anti-religion parties and people," Singh claimed in the Hindi post.

The remarks came amid continuing protests by students and job aspirants at Delhi's Jantar Mantar over alleged irregularities in NEET and other competitive examinations, demanding the resignation of Union education minister Dharmendra Pradhan.

Reacting to the former legislator's remarks, Congress spokesperson Manish Hindi accused the ruling party of trying to divert attention from the core issues. "This is pseudo-nationalism. Whenever students protest, they are branded."

Earlier, Jamia students were called Pakistanis and JNU students were labelled anti-national. Now, when young people are protesting against irregularities



in examinations like NEET, a (former) BJP MLA is alleging foreign funding," Hindi told PTI.

The BJP cannot run away from issues such as unemployment and repeated paper leaks. This is not anger of a single day but the result of growing frustration over time, he added.

Samajwadi Party spokesperson Abbas Haider also slammed the ruling dispensation over the remarks.

"It is unfortunate that a former MLA of the ruling BJP has chosen to malign the country's youth instead of addressing their genuine concerns."

Students and job aspirants are peacefully exercising their democratic and constitutional right to protest. Branding them as foreign-funded or anti-national is an attempt to deflect attention from the real issues. This reflects the BJP's mindset --

whenever citizens ask questions, they are labelled and defamed instead of being heard," Haider told PTI.

PTI had earlier erroneously mentioned Singh as the MLA from Harchandpur. SP's Rahul Rajpoot alias Rahul Lodhi is the current MLA from the seat.

BJP's Singh, however, continues to mention MLA in his social media profiles. However, he no longer holds any official position in the party in the district, a BJP functionary told PTI.

On Monday, as protests spiked at Jantar Mantar in Delhi, several workers and functionaries of Samajwadi Party also held protests over the NEET issue in parts of Uttar Pradesh, including state capital Lucknow. Senior leader and MP Dimple Yadav also joined protestors at Jantar Mantar, extending support to their demands. (PTI)

HP: Ex-Dehra MLA booked for misuse of MLA fund

DHARAMSHALA, July 21: The Himachal Pradesh Vigilance and Anti-Corruption Bureau has booked former Dehra MLA Hoshiyar Singh in connection with alleged misuse of the MLA Discretionary Fund, officials said on Tuesday.

The bureau has intensified its investigation into allegations that financial assistance credited to the bank accounts of beneficiaries was later collected back from them, they said.

The inquiry was initiated based on a complaint lodged by an employee at a factory allegedly linked to the former MLA. After scrutiny of the complaint, statements, government records and relevant bank documents, the bureau found sufficient grounds to register a criminal case.

Preliminary investigation revealed that financial assistance of Rs 50,000 each was sanctioned from the MLA Discretionary Fund between July 2023 and January 2024, and credited to the bank accounts of 16 factory employees.

However, the funds, estimated to be around Rs 8 lakh, were later recovered from the beneficiaries.

The FIR was registered at the Vigilance Bureau police station in



Dharamshala on July 16.

According to the Vigilance Bureau, based on documentary evidence and bank records collected during verification, it was prima facie revealed that the government funds were allegedly used contrary to the intended purpose, and the beneficiaries did not receive the actual benefit of the amount sanctioned in their names.

Singh, who was elected to Vidhan Sabha from the Dehra constituency in 2017 and 2022, could not be contacted despite repeated calls.

An Independent MLA, Singh resigned from the Vidhan Sabha in 2024. He contested the by-election to the seat on a BJP ticket, but was defeated by Kamlesh Thakur, wife of Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Thakur. (PTI)

K'taka BJP to launch 'mega outreach' on SIR



SHIVAMOGGA (KARNATAKA), July 21: Karnataka BJP President B Y Vijayendra on Tuesday said the party will hold a "mega outreach campaign" on July 25 and 26 regarding the SIR of electoral rolls under way in the state. The campaign aims to reach one crore households across Karnataka, he added.

He said the campaign will be held in every Assembly constituency under the leadership of the BJP leaders and workers.

All BJP MPs, MLAs, MLCs, former elected representatives and party workers will participate.

"We plan to reach about one crore households. Party workers will visit homes to create awareness about the enumeration form, address voters' concerns and confusion, and encourage support for the successful completion of the Special Intensive Revision of electoral rolls," he told reporters here, adding that each party worker had been as-

signed a minimum of 20 households.

Noting that Karnataka is facing a severe drought due to inadequate rainfall, the BJP chief criticised chief minister D K Shivakumar and the state government for holding meetings through video conference from Bengaluru instead of visiting the affected areas.

"No ministers are touring the state or listening to farmers' grievances. The CM has travelled to Delhi with senior leaders. Instead of rescuing farmers, the government and the CM are trying to shift responsibility by writing letters to Prime Minister Narendra Modi," he said. Criticising Shivakumar, he added, "He should show as much concern for farmers as he does for real estate. He should come to their rescue."

Pointing out that many farmers who had already sown crops are now in distress due to inadequate rainfall, Vijayendra said the government should respond effectively to the situation, with ministers immediately visiting drought-hit districts and villages.

"Without waiting for central relief, the state government should begin providing relief, as the BJP government did in the past," he added. Referring to the protest in New Delhi demanding the resignation of Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, Vijayendra alleged that it was used as a pretext to create unrest. (PTI)

AAP announces helpline to provide legal, medical aid to CJP protesters

NEW DELHI, July 21: Aam Aadmi Party national convenor Arvind Kejriwal on Tuesday hit out at the Central government, saying that its crackdown on Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) protesters was worse than the brutality of the Britishers.

Kejriwal said the party has launched a helpline number -- 8588833548 -- to provide medical aid to injured protesters and legal assistance to family members of students who were detained.

"The police brutality we saw on young protesters! Even the British did not unleash violence on freedom fighters similar to what the Modi government did to our own children. The videos showed that police kept beating girls and students, and lathi-charging them without any provocation," Kejriwal said at a press conference. He compared the scenes to General Dyer's brutality at Jallianwala Bagh in 1919.

"I want to tell the parents and family members of the protesters: You need not fear, we are with you. Send a message to the helpline number. We will get in touch, and provide legal and medical aid," Kejriwal said.

The former Delhi chief minister said he could not take part in the protest, but both his children marched with the protesters.

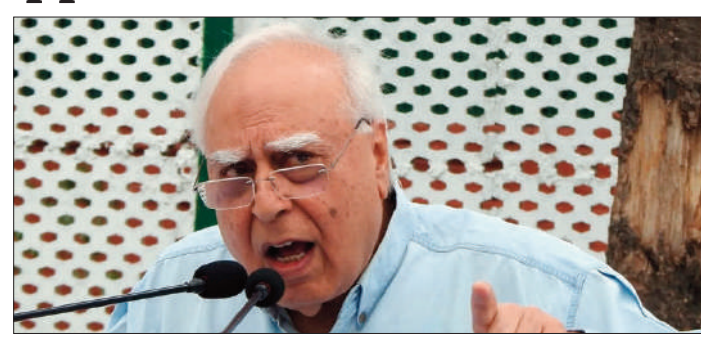
"Modi ji, you are the biggest anti-national in the country. You are calling our students 'anti-national' but you are unable to stop paper leaks," he added. (PTI)

Students may be turned into accused in FIRs as had happened in Delhi riots: Sibal

NEW DELHI, July 21: Rajya Sabha MP Kapil Sibal on Tuesday demanded that the list of police personnel and protesters injured during the march to Parliament be made public and expressed apprehension that students may be turned into accused in FIRs, alleging that this happened during the 2020 Delhi riots as well.

Sibal said children should raise their voice peacefully in every city of the country, so that governments listen to them. He also lashed out at Union minister J P Nadda over his assertion that a proposal came from the protesters to hold talks with the government and asked that when "our fasting children's proposals" were known to all, was the government waiting to tear gas and lathi-charge them.

In the first direct contact between the Centre and the agitating Cockroach Janta Party (CJP), Nadda on Monday held talks with two representatives of the outfit



and assured them that the government leadership would hold internal discussions on their demands, after thousands of protesters tried to march to Parliament.

According to the CJP, the assurance came after its spokespersons Ashutosh Rana and Saurav Das met Nadda, who acted as a government emissary, twice within two hours at the health minister's residence. They submitted a memorandum listing their demands, including the resignation of Union

education minister Dharmendra Pradhan over alleged examination irregularities.

Reacting to the development, Sibal said on X, "Nadda: 'for the first time a proposal came from the protesters to hold talks with the government'. How arrogant!"

"Our fasting children's proposals were known to all. What was the government doing? Watching and waiting to tear-gas and lathi charge them! Shameful!" the Independent Rajya Sabha MP said. (PTI)

Cong holds Martyrs Day event first time in years, announces Brigade rally with Rahul Gandhi



KOLKATA, July 21: The West Bengal Congress on Tuesday held its Martyrs' Day programme here after several years, commemorating the youth wing workers killed in the 1993 police firing, and said the attendance at the gathering marked the party's revival in the state.

It also announced organising a rally at the Brigade Parade Ground in central Kolkata early next year that would be addressed by the leader of the opposition in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi.

Martyrs' Day traces its origins to July 21, 1993, when 13 Youth Congress workers were killed in police firing during a rally led by Mamata Banerjee at Esplanade during the Left Front regime. The Congress had declared the day as Martyrs' Day in memory of those killed.

After Mamata Banerjee disassociated from the Congress and formed the Trinamool Congress in the late 1990s, her party gradually took over the annual observance, holding massive rallies at Dhar-

matala every year.

With the TMC suffering a rift after losing Assembly polls this year, the observance was quite lacklustre this year, with the Mamata Banerjee faction and the rebel group led by Ritabrata Banerjee holding separate programmes.

The Congress took the opportunity to organise its own programme at the iconic Shaheed Minar, a 157-foot-tall British-era tower in central Kolkata.

The programme, however, brought to the fore murmurs of factionalism within the Congress' state unit, as a section of workers raised slogans in support of West Bengal Congress chief Subhankar Sarkar when his predecessor Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury arrived at the venue.

Chowdhury, however, sought to downplay the development and praised Sarkar for the turnout at the rally. (PTI)

Book to revisit Sikh history through generations of one family

'These are stories of the men and women whom history forgot'

NEW DELHI, July 21: Ahead of India's 80th Independence Day, a new novel by author Priya Hajela explores a sweeping multigenerational saga that follows a Sikh family through nearly a century that witnessed the Anglo-Sikh Wars, the uprising of 1857, the Komagata Maru incident, the freedom movement and Partition.

"For Whose Dear Sake Our Fathers Died", scheduled to release this month, explores the complex relationship between the British and the Sikh community that was shaped by dependence, loyalty, betrayal, and memory. It is published by Speaking Tiger Books.

"A look back at times that called for taking chances, stretching our wings to fly high but sometimes crashing, may bring back exuberance and joy. In this book, I write about men who lead as is expected



of them and women who carry the weight, who push, and who astonish.

"These are stories of the men and women whom history forgot," said Hajela, who has also authored "Ladies' Tailor".

At the centre of the story is Beant Kaur, who gathers her fam-

ily on winter evenings to preserve their shared past through stories inherited across generations.

What begins with her grandfather Balwant's fragmented memories grows into a family saga spanning the Anglo-Sikh Wars, British colonial rule, the Revolt of 1857, and the Komagata Maru

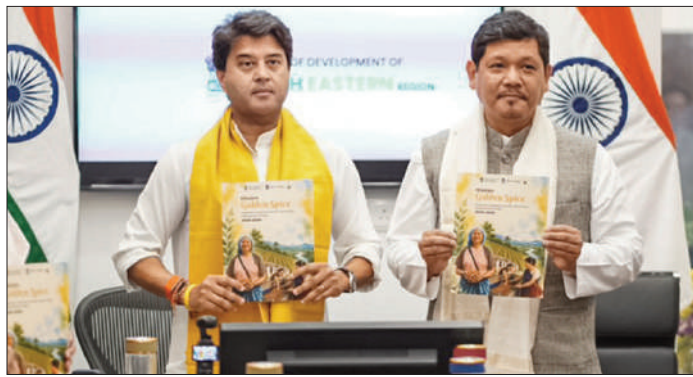
voyage. As Beant uncovers the lives of her ancestors -- warriors, soldiers, and survivors caught between resistance and service to the British Empire -- she discovers a legacy shaped by courage, sacrifice, and difficult choices.

Through these oral histories, she realises that the truth of history lies not in official records, but in the complex human struggles between loyalty, survival, and identity.

"Intimate and rooted in oral memory, 'For Whose Dear Sake Our Fathers Died' is a story about inheritance -- not just of land or name, but of the tales we must choose to tell before they are lost to time," said the publisher in its description of the book.

The book, priced at Rs 599, is currently available for pre-order online. (PTI)

Centre launches ₹ 175-crore mission to make Meghalaya's Lakadong turmeric global brand



Shillong, July 21: DoNER Minister Jyoti Raditya M Scindia on Tuesday launched a ₹ 175.45-crore mission to transform Meghalaya's GI-certified Lakadong turmeric into a globally competitive brand, with a target of doubling farmers' income and expanding cultivation over the next five years.

The Meghalaya Lakadong Turmeric Integrated Development Mission aims to benefit more than 17,500 farmers across West and East Jaintia Hills by strengthening the entire value chain -- from cultivation and certification to processing, branding, value addition and exports, officials said.

Jointly funded by the Ministry

of Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER), North Eastern Council (NEC), the Agriculture Ministry and the Meghalaya government, the mission was launched at Sanchar Bhavan in New Delhi in the presence of Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma and state Agriculture Minister Timothy D Shira.

Describing the initiative as "Mission Golden Spice", Scindia said it reflected Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of leveraging the Northeast's unique strengths for national and international markets.

"Our northeastern states are no longer the periphery of the developmental paradigm but have now

become the centre of India's development," he said.

The minister said the mission seeks to strengthen the Lakadong turmeric value chain by expanding processing capacity, reducing distress sales and increasing value addition. It aims to double farmers' remuneration to ₹ 80 per kg by 2030, he said.

The programme also envisages expanding the area under Lakadong turmeric cultivation from 2,500 hectares to 7,000 hectares and promoting exports to markets such as the US, the EU, Japan and the Gulf countries.

Scindia said the initiative would also promote women-led development, noting that Lakadong turmeric had gained international recognition after being showcased by PM Modi at the G7 Summit.

Sangma said the high curcumin content and premium quality of Lakadong turmeric stem from the unique soil and ecosystem of the Jaintia Hills.

"The unique soil and ecosystem in West Jaintia Hills and East Jaintia Hills ensure the high quality of Lakadong turmeric, making it the right product for this mission," he said. (PTI)

10 killed in Sikkim tunnel collapse; search, rescue operations underway

GANGTOK, July 21: Ten people were killed after a tunnel under construction collapsed due to a landslide in Sikkim's Namchi district a day ago, police said on Tuesday. The number of victims could go up as search and rescue operations were underway, a Namchi district official said.

Sikkim Chief Minister Prem Singh Tamang said the tunnel of NHPC Teesta Stage VI Hydroelectric Project at Samardung in Jholungey caved in due to a landslide. A total of 25 people, including project officials and workers, were trapped inside the ADIT-3 tunnel when it suddenly collapsed on Monday, he said. The CM said Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah spoke with him and enquired about the rescue operations.

"Ten bodies have been recovered till 9.30 am on Tuesday. Seven of the deceased have been identified, while three unidentified bodies were sent to the District Hospital Singtam and STNM Hospital," the Namchi police said in a statement.

Of the seven identified deceased, four were from West Ben-



gal's Jalpaiguri, one each from Assam, Punjab and Uttarakhand's Dehradun, and one was a resident of Namchi, it said.

"My heartfelt condolences go to the families of the workers, who have lost their lives. In this hour of grief, the thoughts and prayers of the entire state are with the bereaved families, and we stand firmly by them during this difficult time," Tamang said in a statement.

The chief minister said he was closely monitoring the ongoing rescue operation.

The teams of the Namchi district administration, Sikkim State Disaster Management Authority (SSDMA), Sikkim Police, State

Disaster Response Force (SDRF), Fire and Emergency Services, and the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) from Pakyong and Siliguri, along with other specialised agencies, were working tirelessly to recover the bodies of the remaining workers trapped inside the tunnel, Tamang said.

"Following the tragic incident at the under-construction tunnel of the NHPC Teesta Stage VI Hydroelectric Project at Samardung, Jholungey, in Namchi District, Hon'ble Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke with me to enquire about the situation and the ongoing rescue operations," the chief minister said on X.

Tamang also said, "His (PM) words of concern and compassion for the affected workers and their families, along with his assurance of every possible assistance from the Government of India, have provided immense strength and reassurance to the people of Sikkim during this difficult hour."

The chief minister said Shah spoke with him to review the situation and the ongoing rescue efforts.

"I briefed him on the ongoing rescue operations and the efforts being undertaken by the state government in coordination with the NDRF and other dedicated agencies," he said. Shah expressed deep concern over the incident and assured every possible assistance from the Centre, Tamang said.

He also thanked the Union home minister for his continued support and concern for the people of Sikkim during the difficult time.

The chief minister said he has directed the authorities to provide every possible assistance, expedite the rescue efforts, and ensure that the highest standards of safety are strictly maintained throughout the operation. (PTI)

Mizoram govt mulls strengthening state public service commission for efficient recruitment

AIZAWL, July 21: The Mizoram government is mulling providing additional manpower and resources to the state Public Service Commission in a bid to strengthen it for a more efficient and cost-effective recruitment process, officials said on Tuesday.

At a meeting chaired by Chief Minister Lalduhoma to review the functioning and initiatives of the Department of Personnel and Administrative Reforms (DP&AR), its Secretary Udit Prakash Rai said all government departments now prefer recruiting personnel through the Mizoram Public Service Commission (MPSC).

This has resulted in a significant increase in the responsibilities of the commission, he said and emphasised strengthening it with additional manpower and resources.

The DP&AR oversees the General Service Wing, Administrative Reforms Wing, Secretariat Service Wing, Civil Service Wing, and the MPSC.

It is responsible for managing and monitoring all government employees in the state.

According to Rai, the MPSC conducted 142 examinations, declared 57 results, and held 292 Departmental Promotion Committee meetings during 2025-26, highlighting the scale of its operations and the increasing demand for its services. He also outlined proposals for a more systematic transfer policy for government employees, online monitoring of personnel, and a review of vacant and filled posts across departments.

Addressing the officials, Lalduhoma said the government would make every effort to improve areas requiring reform and efficiency.

The meeting was informed that since the launch of "Mipui Aw," a public grievance portal on February 16, 2024, a total of 672 complaints have been received, of which 613 have been resolved. Forty-five complex cases requiring longer processing time remain pending.

It was also pointed out that the e-Office system has already been adopted by all administrative departments in the state secretariat, while eight other departments have also begun using the platform.

All government departments have been instructed to transition fully to the e-Office system, officials said. (PTI)

Sikkim assembly observes silence to mourn loss of lives in tunnel collapse

GANGTOK, July 21: The Sikkim Assembly on Tuesday observed a two-minute silence to mourn the death of 11 workers in the collapse of a tunnel under construction in Namchi district.

At the outset of the proceedings on the second day of the budget session, Speaker Mingma Norbu Sherpa led the house to observe the silence as a mark of respect to those who lost their lives after a tunnel of the NHPC Teesta Stage VI project collapsed at Jhorlunge in Samardung on Monday.

As many as 25 workers, including a few project officers, had been trapped inside the collapsed tunnel on Monday. Out of them, 11 people died, and efforts are underway to rescue the others.

According to an NHPC statement, a sudden burst of suspected methane gas trapped/embedded inside the rocks led to the explosion, generating dense fumes and toxic gases.

Sherpa expressed grief over the tragic incident and conveyed his heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families while wishing a speedy recovery to those injured.

Chief Minister Prem Singh



Tamang also expressed deep sorrow over the loss of lives and informed the House that ex-gratia assistance would be provided to the families of the deceased and to the injured under the standard norms of the National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF).

Tamang earlier announced Rs 4 lakh as ex-gratia for the next of kin of those workers who died in the collapse of the tunnel under construction in Namchi district and Rs 50,000 for the injured.

He said that the state government is closely monitoring the situation and extending all possible support to those affected.

The CM informed the House

that Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah had spoken to him regarding the incident.

He said he had apprised them of the ongoing rescue operations, while Modi and Shah assured him of all assistance from the Government of India.

The House later took up legislative and financial agendas and passed two bills seeking to establish a state medical council and to facilitate the establishment of a private open schooling board in the state.

The House also adopted the Motion of Thanks on the Governor's address. (PTI)

DGP's death irreparable loss not only for family but also for Tripura: CM

AGARTALA, July 21: Tripura Chief Minister Manik Saha on Tuesday described the unnatural death of DGP Anurag Dhankar as an irreparable loss not only to his family but also to the northeastern state.

The IPS officer, who led the CBI probe into the alleged ₹ 13,000 crore PNB fraud involving diamondaire Nirav Modi and the reinvestigation of the 1984 anti-Sikh riots, was found hanging in his washroom at the police headquarters on Monday.

"Soon after being alerted, I rushed to the police headquarters and saw his body hanging in his washroom. We waited until a forensic science team arrived at the scene," he said.

Dhankar, who was elevated to the post of DGP from Additional DGP in May 2025, was due to retire in 11 months.

"Today I am speechless. The loss is irreparable not only for his family but also for our state. My prayers go to the departed soul and may strength be given to his family to bear the pain and grief," he said.

"We used to share very cordial talks. I was confident in Anurag

Dhankar's leadership in the effective handling of law and order. Under his leadership, law and order had improved significantly. But what has happened is unbelievable for all of us," the CM told reporters after offering floral tributes to the departed soul at the Civil Secretariat.

The chief minister said the government used to highlight the improved law and order under the DGP's leadership even outside the state and asserted that the northeastern state under Dhankar's guidance achieved its lowest crime rate in the last three decades.

Saha recalled, "After attending the passing out parade of police constables at RK Nagar Police Training Institute in West Tripura on July 18, we had tea together. His wife also joined us. We had a cordial discussion but never thought this would be my last meeting with the DGP."

Opposition CPI(M) and Congress demanded an impartial probe into the circumstances leading to the death of the police officer who served the northeastern state for around 18 years in various positions. (PTI)

Toll in Nagaland floods, landslides rises to nine; four still missing



KOHIMA, July 21: The toll in the flash floods and landslides triggered by incessant rain in Nagaland's Mon district rose to nine with the recovery of five more bodies, while four people remain missing as search and rescue operations were underway on Tuesday, a state government report said.

The continuous downpour has disrupted normal life, damaged infrastructure, agricultural land and public utilities, with the authorities warning that the extent of destruction is expected to rise as assessments continue.

According to preliminary reports from district disaster management authorities, the rain fury has impacted at least 7,460 people statewide.

The Nagaland State Disaster Management

Authority report said the worst-hit district is Mon, where nine people lost their lives in landslides, including five fatalities at Shantham Ward in Mon Town.

In Naginimora, four people, swept away by flash floods, were rescued, it said, adding that one of them suffered fractures and three others had minor injuries.

Four people remain missing, with search and rescue operations underway, it said.

Preliminary assessments indicate that 64 residential houses in 93 villages across 10 districts have been damaged, the report said.

Officials cautioned that these figures are expected to increase as surveys continue.

The disaster has also severely impacted livestock in several districts, with at least 83 animals lost, including 15 mithuns, 13 cattle and 53 pigs.

Shamator recorded the highest number of affected residents, with nearly 7,000 people from six villages impacted by widespread landslides.

Giving the district-wise impact, the NSDMA report said 12 villages were affected in Tuensang, with 201 people impacted.

In Zunheboto, around 30 villages were hit by landslides, with 26 people suffering from the deluge, it added. (PTI)

Tripura DGP's body flown to Delhi, final rites to be conducted at native village in UP

AGARTALA, July 21: The body of Tripura DGP Anurag Dhankar, who was found hanging in his washroom in the police headquarters here a day before, was flown to Delhi by an air ambulance on Tuesday, an official said.

His last rites are scheduled to take place in his native village of Baraut in Baghat district of Uttar Pradesh on Wednesday.

Tripura Governor N Indrasena Reddy, Chief Minister Manik Saha, Chief Secretary J K Sinha and senior officials offered floral tributes to the mortal remains of the DGP at the Civil Secretariat here.

The decorated IPS officer was also accorded a gun salute at the police headquarters.

Speaking to reporters, the chief minister said a case of unnatural death has been registered and an investigation is underway.

"We will investigate the case as per law," he said.

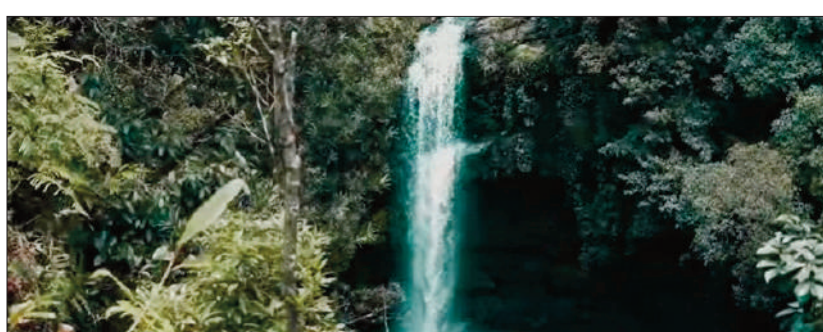
However, the chief minister refused to make any comment on the opposition's demand for a probe under the supervision of the chief justice of the Tripura High Court.

Saha described Dhankar's death as an irreparable loss not only for his family but also for the northeastern state.

"I am speechless. The loss is irreparable not only for his family but also for our state... We used to have cordial talks. Under his leadership, law and order had improved significantly," he said.

"After attending the passing out parade of police constables at RK Nagar Police Training Institute in West Tripura on July 18, we had tea together. His wife also joined us. We had a cordial discussion but never thought this would be my last meeting with the DGP," the CM said. DIG, Range, Ratiranjana Dhar said Dhankar's body was flown to Delhi by an air ambulance and from the national capital, it would be taken to his native place for last rites. (PTI)

Waterfall in Meghalaya named after Deputy CM Sniawbhalang Dhar



JOWAI, July 21: A waterfall in Meghalaya's West Jaintia Hills district has been named after Deputy Chief Minister Sniawbhalang Dhar.

It was christened 'Sniawbhalang Dhar Waterfalls' during a programme at Amtharohr Pdeang Thangchap in the Amtharohr subdivision on Sunday, with Dhar laying the foundation stone for a tourism

project.

According to the organisers, the site was donated by Raid Buam in recognition of the deputy chief minister's role in resolving issues related to the management of the Krangshuri tourist spot and for his contributions to the development of the area.

Raid Buam, a traditional administrative

territory and community managing natural resources, also felicitated Dhar during the programme.

The development comes nearly six years after the inauguration of the 'Sanbor Shullai Road' in Shillong, the first road in Meghalaya to be named after a sitting legislator.

During the programme, Dhar also laid the foundation stone for an afforestation initiative under the Regeneration Meghalaya Project, under which 20 lakh saplings will be planted in the Raid Buam forest.

Addressing the gathering, the deputy chief minister said he would revisit the area to expedite tourism development projects. He said the state government has promoted around 5,000 homestays, besides hotels, to strengthen Meghalaya's tourism sector, adding that the state is steadily emerging as a preferred travel destination. (PTI)

Important Update Special Trains

To facilitate the stranded passengers of trains arising due to water-logging over Tinsukia Division

TRAIN NO.	FROM - TO	DATE OF SERVICES	DEP.	ARR.
07641	Lumding-Mariani	Up to 25-07-2026	08.30	13.30
07642	Mariani-Lumding	Up to 25-07-2026	14.00	19.00
07643	Lumding-Mariani	Up to 25-07-2026	20.00	01.00
07644	Mariani-Lumding	Up to 26-07-2026	01.30	06.30
05832	Rangiya-Mariani	Up to 29-07-2026 (Except 25-07-2026)	07.20	17.00
05831	Mariani-Rangiya	Up to 29-07-2026 (Except 25-07-2026)	18.00	03.20



NOTE:
For details of stoppages, please check NTES (National Train Enquiry System)

Visit/Follow us on: [Social Media Icons]

No.EE/KOJ/PWD(R)/TEN/23/160/2025-26/19

Dated Kokrajhar, the 16/07/2026

SHORT NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Sealed tender subsequently to be drawn in F-2 form affixing Non-refundable court fee stamp of Rs. 8.25p (Rupees eight and paise twenty five) only are invited from the Registered PWD Contractor's under Class-I (A, B, C) of Assam PWD (Rural Roads), Class-II Roads and Class-III Roads category will be received for the following works up to 2-00 P.M 30/07/2026 in the office of the Executive Engineer, PWRD Kokrajhar Rural Roads Division, Kokrajhar which will be opened on the same date, place at 2.15 P.M in presence of the tenderers or their authorized agent.

Sl. No.	Name of work	Tender Amount (in Rs.) (Including 12% /18% & G.S.T & 1% L.W.C)	Earnest Money (in Rs.) (ST, SC, OBC -1% & GEN-2%)	Cost of Tender Paper (in Rs.)	Time for completion in months
1	Construction of Road from Tansim Club to Mayani Marak house under North Nayekgaon VDC under MPLADS for the year 2025-26.	9,99,811.00	1%-Rs. 10,000/- 2%-Rs. 20,000/-	Rs. 1000/-	6 (six) months
2	Construction of Road from Magurman High School to Absir Ali House under Magurman VDC road from Ch.0.00Km to Ch.0.47Km (Length : 0.47Km) under MPLADS for the year 2025-26 of District-Kokrajhar.	10,00,000.00	1%-Rs. 10,000/- 2%-Rs. 20,000/-	Rs. 1000/-	6 (six) months
3	Construction of RCC Box Culvert at 2 No. Suljhora near Rohen house under Maoragaon VDC in Kokrajhar District, Assam under MPLAD Scheme (L/S) for the year 2025-26.	15,00,000.00	1%-Rs. 15,000/- 2%-Rs. 30,000/-	Rs. 1000/-	6 (six) months

Details NIT may be seen in all working days in the office of the undersigned. Tender paper will be issued to the contractors or their authorized agent up to 12.00 Noon on all working days from 23/07/2026 to 30/07/2026 in the office of the undersigned on payment of cost of tender paper in the form of Banker Cheque/Demand draft of any nationalized Bank (Preferable SBI) duly pledged to the Empowered Officer, Assam State Road Board.

Sd/-

Executive Engineer, PWD,
Kokrajhar Rural Roads Division

IPR(BTC)/C/2026/27/841

Bowlers face entire match suspension for deliberate front foot no balls: BCCI

BENGALURU, July 21: The BCCI has made a significant change to the playing conditions ahead of the 2026-27 domestic season, and, now, the bowler will be suspended for the remainder of the match for bowling deliberate front foot no balls or non-landing deliveries.

As per the existing rules, the bowler would have been suspended just for that particular innings for such deliveries.

The BCCI has circulated the changes, mooted by the Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) recently, among all the state associations.

"Bowler suspended for deliberate front foot no ball cannot bowl in the whole match. ...but the change to the playing conditions (41.8), will be decided by the on-field umpires," the BCCI said in the circular, accessed by PTI.

Another significant rule change pertains to the day's closure, and now, the last over will have to be completed even if a wicket falls in that over.

At present, stumps will be drawn if a wicket falls in the middle of the last over of the day.

But the MCC, and BCCI thereby, felt that rule 12.5.2 needed to be amended as it "prevented teams from sending a new batter out late in the day."

Similarly, the teams henceforth will not be permitted to declare or forfeit (Rule 15.2) the final innings of the match, as the governing bodies thought "it was used for contrived results and bad for the game." (PTI)

Spain's World Cup champions return home for royal welcome

MADRID, July 21: Spain's World Cup-winning soccer team returned home on Monday and an estimated crowd of almost 2 million was on hand to greet the squad through the streets of Madrid.

The 26 players and their coaching staff met with the country's royals, and then with Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez, after arriving in the Spanish capital a day after beating Argentina 1-0 in the final in New Jersey.

"Thank you to the coaches and players for the style of play, the effort and the victory," Sánchez said. "We have truly enjoyed watching you play."

The squad then boarded an open-top bus for a raucous parade through central Madrid. "Stars shine together" was written on the bus, which also carried photos of the footballers.

Players — carrying the World Cup trophy and wearing shirts with the words Somos Campeones (We Are Champions) — danced and interacted with the fans along the route.

"It's been an emotional and proud experience to represent a wonderful country with such passionate and devoted fans," Spain coach Luis de la Fuente said before the parade started. "We are filled with joy."

The squad traveled down Madrid's historic avenues from near Moncloa Palace, the prime minister's official residence, to Cibeles Square, where authorities told local media that some 120,000 people were on hand for a ceremony.

Players were introduced one by one before entering the stage set up at the square. Each picked the song to be played when they came in. Alex Baena, celebrating his 25th birthday, entered with the World Cup trophy.



Coach De la Fuente was thrust into the air by his players after being introduced. The coach was among those who sang along to the song being played for them.

Striker Borja Iglesias featured as a D.J. at one point, with his teammates dancing on the stage.

Singers Aitana, Ana Mena and Lola Índigo were among those entertaining the crowd and the players.

The ceremony ended with the whole Spain squad lifting the trophy again, just like at the awards ceremony on Sunday, but

now in front of the local crowd.

Groups of fans had begun securing their spots near Cibeles late Monday morning ahead of the team's arrival, bringing umbrellas to protect against the sun and temperatures of up to 35 Celsius (95 Fahrenheit). The square is where previous Spain teams and their supporters have typically gathered to celebrate. It's also the traditional celebration spot for Real Madrid when it wins titles.

Officials estimated a total of 1.8 million people welcomed the team in Madrid.

Spain walked off with the trophy Sunday after Ferran Torres scored the winner in extra time to secure its second World Cup title — and first since 2010 in South Africa.

The team was congratulated by the leaders of the three countries that co-hosted the tournament — U.S. President Donald Trump, Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum and Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney.

After the final whistle, Madrid erupted into celebrations, with thousands of supporters pouring into the streets from bars

and restaurants, many draped in Spanish flags or wearing the team's colors.

Crowds packed the capital's Puerta de Sol and other major squares — singing, dancing and setting off flares while car horns blared.

Many celebrated Sunday's victory long into the wee hours of Monday morning.

"I'm very happy. I've slept three or four hours, but for the team, I'll do whatever it takes," 19-year-old Victor Álvarez said.

The men's victory, combined with the Women's World Cup won by Spain in 2023, makes the European nation the first to hold both titles simultaneously.

"Honestly, it was very exciting. We preferred not to go to any bar or anything, to experience it at home, focused and very happy, very joyful," 59-year-old civil servant Gema Rodero said.

Celebrations were dampened, however, after local authorities reported that a 13-year-old in Salamanca, northwest of Madrid, had died after a fountain he had climbed onto with friends to mark the victory had collapsed.

For many young supporters, the triumph is their first time witnessing the men's team lift the trophy — and the national delirium that has followed.

Spain now is markedly different from 2010, when the Iberian nation was beset by a debt crisis, 20% unemployment and nationalist regions fighting to win more autonomy.

The economy is expanding, the unemployment rate has halved and the country is forecast to again be among the Eurozone's fastest-growing major economies. Nationalist and separatist tensions have considerably cooled. (AP)

India Club Tennis Academy shines



HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, July 21: The young players of India Club Tennis Academy have once again brought pride to Assam with their outstanding performances at the national level.

Academy player Anirban Deka won the championship title in the Boys' Under-14 category at the Tennis Premier League Tournament Champion 2026, bringing great honour to India Club Tennis Academy as well as to the people of Assam.

In addition, Riya Boro secured the runner-up (second) position in the Girls' Under-14 category, while Chinmoy Boro finished second in the Boys' Under-10 category.

These remarkable achievements reflect the dedication of the players and the quality of training provided by India Club Tennis Academy. Their success has made the academy and the entire state of Assam proud, while inspiring many young athletes to pursue excellence in tennis.

Quarter-miler Vishal TK eyes strong debut in CWC

MUMBAI, July 21: Riding high on confidence after a historic season that has firmly established him as one of the country's premier sprint talents, Indian quarter-miler Vishal TK is focussed on delivering his best in his debut Commonwealth Games in Glasgow.

The 22-year-old created history earlier this year by becoming the first Indian man to break the 45-second barrier in the 400m, clocking 44.98 seconds to set the current Indian National Record in the event.

A four-time national champion, Vishal has rapidly emerged as one of Asia's leading quarter-milers and now heads into his maiden CWC confident of producing a breakthrough performance.

Vishal played a pivotal role in India's relay teams at the Asian Athletics Championships, winning gold in the mixed 4x400m relay and silver in the men's 4x400m relay. Ranked among the top 60 men's 400m runners in the world, the 22-year-old is now one of India's leading hopes in the sprint events. (PTI)

Kuldeep's fighting spirit will see him through: Childhood coach Kapil Pandey

NEW DELHI, July 21: India's decision to go with four specialist fast bowlers in the third ODI against England at the Lord's without fielding Kuldeep Yadav has not shaken the left-arm wrist spinner's confidence, and his childhood coach Kapil Pandey insisted that the 31-year-old's fighting spirit will help him regain his place in the side.

Kuldeep's absence from the entire series has once again put the spotlight on his role under head coach Gautam Gambhir.

Since Gambhir took charge on July 9, 2024, Kuldeep has featured in only 38 internationals across formats despite India playing 104 matches during the period.

Pandey said Kuldeep is not frustrated as team selection remains the prerogative of captain and coach.

"There is no question of disappointment for Kuldeep. He has prepared well and performed whenever he has got opportunities," Pandey told PTI during an interaction.

For Pandey, Kuldeep being a



part of the squad is a matter of pride.

"It is always painful when the team loses, but the biggest thing is to remain part of the Indian team. Playing for the country is a matter of pride. Whether he is picked in the playing XI depends on the captain and the coach. We cannot do anything about that. There is no problem in being benched."

The veteran coach maintained that Kuldeep remains India's premier spinner and would make an immediate impact whenever his chance arrives.

"Kuldeep is India's top spinner

and one of the country's best bowlers. Whenever he gets a chance, he will perform."

Pandey also dismissed suggestions that Kuldeep's modest tally of Test appearances reflected his worth, saying it was the impact that mattered.

Kuldeep has only played 18 Tests in nine and half years since his debut.

"It is not about how many Tests he has played but the kind of impact he has made in those games. Whenever Kuldeep has played, he has helped India win."

"Against England at home in 2024, he played a major role in India's victories. He is a fierce competitor," he said.

He said Kuldeep's ODI record has consistently shown that he delivers when entrusted with responsibility.

"Whenever he gets an opportunity, Kuldeep delivers. It doesn't matter how many matches he has played. The more opportunities he gets, the more matches he helps India win."

Pandey pointed out that the spin-

ner's improvements with the bat are often overlooked.

"If you look at Kuldeep's batting, he has scored a 100 for Uttar Pradesh and has made several half-centuries. He has worked hard on that aspect of his game as well."

The Kanpur-based coach said he has always reminded Kuldeep that opportunities in international cricket are precious and must be grabbed with both hands.

"I have always told him that whenever he gets a chance, he has to fight for it. All his coaches believe Kuldeep is a very good bowler. Even the assistant coach says he is a quality bowler."

"Kuldeep knows that whenever an opportunity comes, he has to make it count because chances can come from anywhere," he said.

Pandey also revealed that Kuldeep's work ethic has remained unchanged despite becoming an established international cricketer.

"Whether it is after the IPL or any international series, he comes straight back to our academy in Kanpur. (PTI)

Vaibhav could be a generational talent if managed well: Raza

HARARE, July 21: Vaibhav Sooryavanshi's much-hyped India debut may not have gone to script in England, but Zimbabwe skipper Sikandar Raza sees the 15-year-old as a potential "generational talent" if handled well. The batting prodigy scored 14, 13 and 15 in three T20Is as India suffered a 0-4 series defeat. In two of those innings, he was undone by Jofra Archer's short-ball.

"Vaibhav is a supremely talented cricketer. If a 15-year-old kid is playing international cricket, criticising him after just two or three matches isn't justified," Raza said on JioStar.

"I think Vaibhav has a lot of very good senior cricketers around him.

If he is managed and handled well, I think Vaibhav could be a generational talent."

The left-hander will now return to familiar surroundings in Harare, where he had lit up the Under-19 World Cup in January with a match-winning 80-ball 175 against England in the final. With no Sanju Samson in the squad, Sooryavanshi is set to get an extended run at the top of the order in the series beginning on Thursday.

"To see what he has done over the last year, what he has done for India Under-19, and the fact that he made his international debut at the same age, these are no small feats by any means. (PTI)

Pilot edition of Total Chess World Championship Tour to be held in Budapest

NEW DELHI, July 21: The official pilot edition of the FIDE-approved Total Chess World Championship Tour will be held in Budapest, Hungary, from November 10 to 21.

The event, conceptualised by Norway Chess and approved by the international chess federation (FIDE), will feature competition across three formats — Fast Classic, Rapid, and Blitz — with the combined results determining the overall champion.

The Budapest event will serve as the pilot for the championship format that is scheduled to be rolled out globally in 2027. The inaugural season, beginning in March 2027, is expected to include multiple tournaments across different host cities before culminating in the crowning of the FIDE World Combined Champion.

Unlike traditional events that are played in a single time control, the Total Chess World Championship Tour will combine results from Fast Classic, Rapid and Blitz events. Players' cumulative performances across the three formats will determine the final standings. (PTI)

HARARE, July 21: He might have played just six IPL games for Gujarat Titans but mentorship of head coach Ashish Nehra has certainly helped rookie pacer Ashok Sharma evolve as a potent weapon, ready to be unleashed against Zimbabwe in the upcoming three-match T20I series. The first match will be played here on Thursday.

"Whenever I talk about belief, I think of (Ashish) Nehra sir. I used to go to him with every doubt. Whenever I had any self-doubt or needed to ask something, I would approach him," Ashok, who had just turned 24 last month, told JioStar.

"He (Nehra) had told me once, 'Even if you come to me at midnight with a question, I will be ready for you.' So whenever I had any doubt, whether it was about a delivery or anything related to my bowling, I would go to him."

"After matches, I would go to his room and watch videos of my bowling. I would ask him what more I could perfect and what I needed to work on. I consider him my mentor. I have learned so much from him this IPL season, and he has helped me a lot," said one of India's fastest bowlers, who plays domestic cricket

for Rajasthan.

Ashok, who clocked 95.8 miles (154.2 km) for GT during an IPL match against Rajasthan Royals at Motera, is confident of doing well against Zimbabwe but his ultimate aim is to play Test cricket for India.

"My first target will be to wear the India jersey. I am waiting for that moment, to wear that jersey and represent my nation. Now that I am in the squad for the series against Zimbabwe, my next target will be to take as many wickets as possible and try to play as many matches as I can. I want to make this opportunity count. (PTI)

India name 20-member squad for Hockey World Cup, Harmanpreet Singh to lead

NEW DELHI, July 21: India on Tuesday named a 20-member squad for next month's FIH Men's Hockey World Cup, with four players from the side who featured in the European leg of the Pro League missing out owing to the tournament's squad-size limit.

Defender Amandeep Lakra, midfielders Raj Kumar Pal and Rabichandra Singh Moirangthem, and forward Selvam Karthi were the four players omitted from the 24-member Pro League squad.

India endured a disappointing FIH Pro League campaign last month, winning four, drawing five and losing seven matches to finish eighth among nine teams, just above Pakistan. The side will now look to improve on their recent World Cup record.

India finished ninth in the previous edition in 2023 and have not won any medal since claiming their lone title in Kuala Lumpur in 1975. They had earlier secured

bronze in Barcelona in 1971 and silver in Amsterdam in 1973.

Ace drag-flicker and defender Harmanpreet Singh, who led India to Olympic bronze medal at the 2024 Paris Games, will captain the side. Veteran midfielder Manpreet Singh, India's most-capped player, adds experience to a squad blending established stars with promising youngsters.

"This is a well-balanced squad - the right mix of tournament experience and in-form youth who've earned their spot through performance, not reputation," chief coach Craig Fulton said.

The goalkeeping department comprises Mohith HS and Suraj Karkera, while the defensive unit features Jarmanpreet Singh, captain Harmanpreet, Amit Rohidas, Jugraj Singh, Sanjay, Sumit and Yashdeep Siwach.

The midfield will be led by Manpreet, Hardik Singh and Vivek Sagar Prasad, alongside Nilakanta



Sharma and youngsters Rajinder Singh and Aditya Arjun Lalage.

The forward line consists of Mandeep Singh, Dilpreet Singh, Abhishek, Sukhjeet Singh and Shilanan Lakra.

India have been drawn in Pool D alongside England, Pakistan and Wales, with all their group-stage

matches scheduled to be played in Amstelveen, the Netherlands.

"Press, counter, perform isn't just our tactical identity -- it's how this group trains and thinks together every single day. We are not getting ahead of ourselves -- one game at a time, all in, is the mentality we're taking into every

match," Fulton added.

India will open their campaign against Wales on August 15 before facing England on August 17 and arch-rivals Pakistan on August 19 in what is expected to be the marquee clash of the group stage.

"Fifty years since 1975 (World Cup win), this group has a chance to write its own chapter in Indian hockey history, and we are really excited about it," Fulton concluded.

The Squad

Goalkeepers: Mohith HS and Suraj Karkera

Defenders: Jarmanpreet Singh, Harmanpreet Singh (c), Amit Rohidas, Jugraj Singh, Sanjay, Sumit and Yashdeep Siwach

Midfielders: Rajinder Singh, Aditya Arjun Lalage, Hardik Singh, Manpreet Singh, Nilakanta Sharma and Vivek Sagar Prasad

Forwards: Dilpreet Singh, Shilanan Lakra, Sukhjeet Singh, Mandeep Singh and Abhishek. (PTI)

LYON, Team Vitality, Dplus KIA and PVISION crowned Esports World Cup champions

PARIS, July 21: LYON claimed the Free Fire title, Team Vitality won the Mobile Legends: Bang Bang (MLBB) Women's International crown, Dplus KIA emerged victorious in League of Legends, while PVISION triumphed in Dota 2 as four champions were crowned during the second week of the Esports World Cup here.

In Free Fire, LYON put up one of the most remarkable performances, blowing away a field stacked with competitive pedigree. The South American squad broke the EWC elimination record with 33 kills and a Booyah in game five, before sealing the title two games later in game seven.

The organisation's 33-frag game breaks the previous record held by Team Falcons, who won Free Fire at EWC 2024.

LYON had a disappointing group stage, failing to secure automatic qualification to the finals. Instead, they were sent to the Survival Stage where they picked up the unstoppable momentum that would propel them to the USD 300,000 prize and direct qualification for the Free Fire Global Finals.

The team's Benjamin "Gamezking" Pérez was named the Sony MVP after recording 60 eliminations and 71 knockdowns across the tournament. Team Vitality was crowned the inaugural MLBB Women's International (MWI) Champions, following the tournament's official global championship recognition.

This is the roster's second EWC win, and fourth MWI title, as they become back-to-back champions of the MLBB female tournament, defeating Natus Vincere PH, whose roster beat them at the Esports World Cup in 2024. (PTI)