

**6 NATION**

- BJP links Channi's reported displeasure to infight in Congress, says 'new cracks' emerging
- SIT to re-audit temple trust's accounts of past five years

**7 NORTHEAST**

- Relief, restoration ordered for flood-hit Namchi in Sikkim
- SDF says it never entered into any electoral or political alliance with BJP in Sikkim

## Honeymoon murder case

# SC refuses to stay HC's Sonam bail order

*Prima facie, we have some reservation with the high court's judgment: Apex court bench*

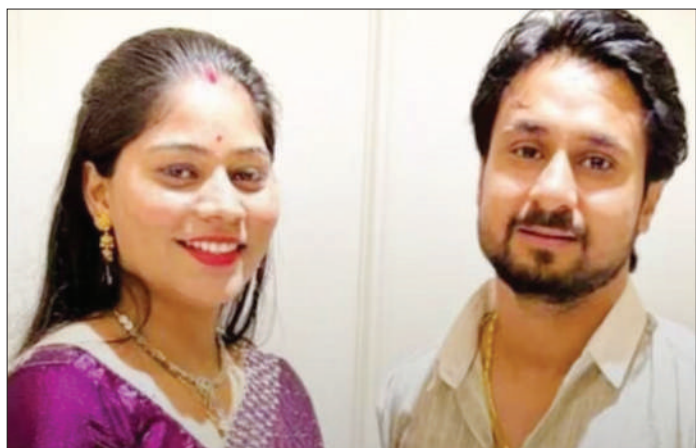
**NEW DELHI, July 3:** The Supreme Court on Friday refused to stay a Meghalaya High Court order granting bail to Sonam Raghuvanshi, accused of killing her husband during their honeymoon in the northeastern state in 2025.

A bench of Justices M M Sundresh and Shiel Nagu expressed reservation over the high court order but refused to stay it, noting that Raghuvanshi has been released from jail and is in Shillong pursuant to the bail conditions imposed by the trial court.

Appearing in the court for the state, solicitor general Tushar Mehta said the allegations against Raghuvanshi are serious in nature and she cannot be released on technical grounds.

Mehta said the case is "really shocking" and sought a stay of the high court order granting bail as it was given citing non-supply of full grounds of arrest.

"This is the case where both of them went on honeymoon in Meghalaya. It was a premeditated murder. There were three of her accomplices. She killed the husband on a hill and threw the dead



body into a gorge. The three assailants and the lady herself were part of the physical assault. She absconded and was later arrested from a place in Uttar Pradesh," Mehta said.

If the high court order is not stayed, she may abscond, he said and referred to the order of the magistrate, who issued the order for transit remand in Uttar Pradesh and had recorded satisfaction that the grounds of arrest were supplied to her.

Mehta submitted that multiple

bail applications of Raghuvanshi have been rejected and the ground of non-supply of documents was not taken in any of those.

He said it was a typographical error to refer to section 403(1) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) instead of section 103(1) (punishment for murder) and the high court upheld the grant of bail on this ground.

When the bench asked about the stage of the trial, Mehta said the trial is going on, adding that of the 94 witnesses, four have been

examined.

The bench told the counsel, appearing for Raghuvanshi, "Prima facie, we have some reservation with the high court's judgment. The way the high court has dealt with the issue, we have a reservation with that."

Justice Sundresh pointed out that the grounds of arrest were explained to Raghuvanshi and it was recorded in the magistrate's order, and this ground was not raised in the previous bail applications.

"After that, somehow, wisdom dawned on you and you raised this ground. Is the court right in granting bail on the technical ground that a wrong provision was quoted, especially when bail was rejected on merits earlier?" Justice Sundresh asked.

The lawyer, however, claimed that the grounds of arrest were never communicated to Raghuvanshi at any point.

He submitted that the magistrate's order was for transit remand, when she was not represented by her counsel and only a memo was given to her.

Justice Sundresh asked if that is the case, (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

## Tiger population goes up in Nameri reserve

**GUWAHATI, July 3:** The big cat population in Assam's Nameri National Park and Tiger Reserve has increased from three in 2022 to 12 by the end of 2025, state Forest and Environment Minister Jayanta Malla Baruah said on Friday.

The minister said the increase was a significant conservation achievement.

"From just 3 tigers in 2022 to 12 by the end of 2025, Nameri Tiger Reserve has scripted a remarkable conservation success, validated by the Wildlife Institute of India,"



Baruah said in a post on X. "Forest conservation efforts under the guidance of Hon'ble CM @himantabiswa is doing wonders!" he added. Baruah also said two tigers have returned to the Sonai-

Rupai Wildlife Sanctuary, the satellite core of Nameri Tiger Reserve, after decades of absence, marking another milestone for wildlife conservation in the state.

Nameri Tiger Reserve comprises Nameri National Park and Sonai-Rupai Wildlife Sanctuary, along with the Naduar and Balipara Reserve Forests. Nameri National Park, spread over 200 sq km, forms the core area of the tiger reserve, while the approximately 120 sq km Sonai-Rupai Wildlife Sanctuary serves as its satellite core. (PTI)

## Teenage girl dies after being attacked by boyfriend

*GMCH doctors say victim suffered cardiac arrests after prolonged treatment; cousin and accused had died earlier*



**GUWAHATI, July 3:** An 18-year-old girl, who was injured in an attack by her alleged boyfriend more than a month ago, died at a hospital here on Friday, an of-

ficial said.

She succumbed to her injuries at the Gauhati Medical College and Hospital (GMCH), Superintendent Dr Debojit Choudhury said.

The teenage girl and her cousin were attacked by one Ashik Ali alias Rose Ali with a machete in Nalbari town when they were returning to their village, Gan-gapur, on a scooter on May 31.

Her cousin, identified as a local student leader Mad-hurjya Barma, died on the same day while the assailant was killed in a police firing the next day in Nalbari.

Mridumudra Deka was admitted to GMCH's intensive care unit and had undergone two surgeries on her spine as she had sustained severe injuries in the cervical and lumbar regions, Choudhury said.

A special medical team, comprising experts from various departments, was constituted to monitor her treatment, and she had been progressing well, he said.

"Her condition, however, began to deteriorate since last week, and she was put on a ventilator on Thursday. She suffered two cardiac attacks early on Friday and was declared dead at 7.30 am," the hospital superintendent added. (PTI)

## Order issued to deport declared foreigner to Bangladesh

**TEZPUR, July 3:** Assam's Biswanath district magistrate has issued an order to deport a person declared a foreigner to Bangladesh under the 'Immigrants (Expulsion from Assam) Act, 1950'.

The order, issued by District Magistrate Karabi Saikia Karan, stated that according to a report submitted by the superintendent of police (border), Kayam Ansari, a resident of Kherbari village in Sonitpur district, was declared a Bangladeshi citizen and a foreigner by the Foreigners' Tribunal.

The declared foreigner has been kept at the Matia transit camp in Goalpara district since his arrest on May 28, 2025 and currently, no cases, writ petitions, or other legal proceedings are pending against him in any court.

The order, issued on Thursday, stated that no legal impediment exists to his deportation, and Ansari is directed to leave Assam and pro-



ceed to Bangladesh via either the Sribhumi, Dhubri or South Salmara border within 24 hours of receiving the order.

The order further said that if he fails to comply with the directive, the government will take steps for forceful deportation in accordance with the law.

Biswanath SP (border) has also been directed to complete the deportation process immediately and ensure his transfer to Bangladesh in accordance with the law, with the assistance of the authorities concerned, it said.

The district election officer has been (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

## Assam girl goes missing in Bengaluru

**RANGIA, July 3:** A 22-year-old woman from Assam's Tamulpur district has been missing from Bengaluru for the last week, family members claimed on Friday.

The woman, who hails from Harinchara village along the Indo-Bhutan border, had been working in a private company in the southern city for the last six months, her father claimed.

He said she first went to Tamil Nadu about a year back in search of a job and was later employed by a company in Bengaluru.

She was staying in a rented house with three other women.

Her family lodged a complaint at Kumarikata police station in the district after they were informed that she had gone missing on June 26.

Police said they are investigating the matter and have informed higher authorities.

Her parents have appealed to Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma to help trace their missing daughter and bring her home. (PTI)

## Assam tea estate becomes 'first in India' to commercially manufacture Matcha brew

**GUWAHATI, July 3:** An estate in Assam's Tinsukia district has created history by producing and launching India's first-ever commercially manufactured Matcha tea, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said on Friday.

Chota Tingrai Tea Estate in the Upper Assam district has successfully produced and launched Matcha tea, with the lot selling at the Gauhati Tea Auction for Rs 3,000.

"Your favourite Matcha brew, will now be produced in Assam. Furthering our glorious tea legacy, Assam becomes the first State in India to commercially produce Matcha tea at the Chota Tingrai Tea Estate in Tinsukia," Sarma said in a post on X.

The diversification of the viral drink will help strengthen brand Assam Tea in the global markets, he said.

"This has been made possible due to the strong India-Japan ties and our collaboration in various fields, and has fetched a handsome

price at the Guwahati Tea Auction Centre," the CM said.

Mrityunjay Jalan, the director of the tea estate, said it has spent the past decade collaborating closely with Japanese tea manufacturers, agronomists, equipment suppliers, and tea experts to bring this vision to life.

"By establishing a fully automated, state-of-the-art Japanese tea manufacturing facility on its estate, Chota Tingrai has successfully bridged traditional Assam tea heritage with authentic Japanese expertise," he said.

Matcha is a highly sought-after, premium green tea product primarily manufactured in Japan, China, and Vietnam, which is currently facing global shortage due to skyrocketing demand, officials said.

Assam is globally celebrated for its rich and robust black teas, and the introduction of high-quality specialty teas like Matcha marks a monumental shift, they said.

Jalan said the development adds a valuable (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

## KAAC distributes sanitation vehicles, civic equipment to local bodies

**DIPHU, July 3:** The Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council (KAAC) on Friday distributed a major consignment of sanitation vehicles and civic equipment to various Municipal Boards (MBs), Town Committees (TCs) and Market Committees across Karbi Anglong and West Karbi Anglong districts.

The procurement, funded under the 15th Finance Commission for the financial year 2024-25, was officially handed over during a ceremonial function held at Hemphu Mukrang Achatai in Taralungso.

The distribution covered nine Municipal Boards—Diphu, Howraghat, Bokajan, Bakulia, Langhin, Dokmoka, Baithalungso, Hamren and Dongkamukam—along with 13 Town Committees.

The civic assets distributed included 49 Tata ACE small commercial vehicles, seven cesspool emptier trucks, one excavator, 115 steel dustbins, 173 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) sets, and 173 sanitation tools, including grass cutters, spades and shovels.

Addressing the gathering as the chief guest,

KAAC chief executive member (CEM) Tuliram Ronghang directed the leadership of urban local bodies to ensure the regular payment of employee salaries, referring to recent hunger strikes by staff over unpaid wages.

Ronghang reminded the chairpersons, chairmen and ward commissioners that urban local bodies function as autonomous institutions and must align recruitment with their internal revenue generation.

"If a Municipal Board earns around Rs 1 crore annually but requires Rs 3-4 crore to pay salaries, it will inevitably face financial difficulties. Employees have families to support, and every effort should be made to ensure they receive their salaries regularly," Ronghang said.

Reflecting on past administrations, the CEM said salary arrears had stretched to as long as 18 months during the Autonomous State Demand Committee (ASDC) regime and 10 to 12 months under the Congress government. He claimed that the present KAAC administration had cleared those major backlogs, reducing delays to (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

## Chandrayaan-3's analysis links soil at landing site to first known lunar meteorite

**NEW DELHI, July 3:** The soil analysed by Chandrayaan-3's Pragyan rover in the southern high-latitudes on the Moon's near-side has a geochemical composition closely resembling that of the first meteorite confirmed to have a lunar origin, according to a new study.

For instance, both the meteorite, called ALHA 81005, and the soil at the Shiv Shakti Station -- Chandrayaan's landing site -- contain nearly similar amounts of aluminium oxide and a combination of iron oxide and magnesium oxide.

The study -- "Chandrayaan-3 APXS measurements reveal Lunar highland compositional diversity and meteorite connections" -- was conducted by scientists from the Physical Research Laboratory (PRL), Ahmedabad.

It was published in the "npj Space Exploration" journal, the



Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) said in a statement on Friday.

The study, however, noted that the findings do not mean "the Lunar meteorite came from the Shiv Shakti Station; rather, it indicates that both represent a similar

type of magnesium-rich lunar crust and regolith (unconsolidated material found on the surface of the Moon)".

ALHA 81005 was discovered in the Allan Hills region of Antarctica during a 1981-1982 expedition. (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

## Governor urged all stakeholders to work collectively towards building a prosperous Nagaland

## Nagaland Gov stresses cooperatives' role for inclusive growth

**DIMAPUR, July 3:** Calling for a future-ready cooperative sector, Nagaland Governor Nand Kishore Yadav on Friday stressed the role of cooperatives in promoting inclusive growth, with a focus on the state's potential in dairy, fisheries, piggery, handloom and handicrafts, and organic agriculture.

Gracing the celebration of Coops Day and Cooperative Week, commemorating five years of the Ministry of Cooperation, as the special guest at Lok Bhavan, Kohima, Yadav called for embracing technology, encouraging youth participation, empowering women-led enterprises, and investing in skill development to build professionally managed and market-oriented cooperatives.

He said the cooperative movement embodies the spirit of self-help, mutual support and collective



action, and has played a transformative role in promoting inclusive growth and empowering communities across the country.

He also underscored the important role of institutions such as the Nagaland State Cooperative Bank,

towards building a prosperous, vibrant and self-reliant Nagaland through the enduring spirit of cooperation.

On the occasion, Governor Yadav virtually inaugurated four model cooperative society offices across different districts of the state.

In his address, the PHED & Co-operation Minister, Jacob Zimomi, said the cooperative sector has been playing a silent yet significant role in nation-building by strengthening economic development at the grassroots level and empowering communities.

He said the state government is organising awareness programmes, cleanliness drives, plantation drives, and activities in schools and colleges to instil cooperative values among the younger generation as part of the week-long celebrations.

## OPPO unveils Reno16 series with AI Camera, HoloVerse 3D Design

HT Bureau

**GUWAHATI, July 3:** OPPO India on Friday launched its new Reno16 Series, comprising the Reno16 and Reno16c smartphones, featuring AI-powered imaging, the country's first HoloVerse 3D Design, enhanced productivity tools and upgraded performance aimed at content creators and young users.

The new lineup introduces a 50MP AI Portrait Camera with a 3.5x telephoto lens, Natural Tone Imaging and support for 4K 60fps HDR video recording across multiple focal lengths.

OPPO said the devices combine advanced photography, AI-assisted editing, productivity features and personalised software experiences in a single platform.

The Reno16 Series debuts India's first HoloVerse 3D Design, inspired by cosmic themes and available in the Starry White variant, alongside Twilight Violet and Stellar Purple colour options.

Both smartphones feature AMOLED displays with a 120Hz refresh rate, aerospace-grade aluminium frames and IP66, IP68, IP69 and IP69K ratings for dust and water resistance.

Among the new features is the AI Snap Key, which allows users to quickly access the camera, translator, recorder and other frequently used functions.

The phones also include AI-powered creative tools such as AI Remix Collage, Pop Cam, Popout 2.0, AI Recompose, AI Perfect Shot, AI Best Face, AI Eraser and AI Studio for editing and content creation.

The Reno16 is powered by the Snapdragon 7 Gen 4 processor, while the Reno16c features the MediaTek Dimensity 7300 chipset.

The devices pack 6,700mAh and 7,000mAh batteries respectively, both supporting 80W SUPERVOOC fast charging.

They run on the latest ColorOS 16, which introduces AI Mind Pilot, AI Mind Space, AI Bill Manager, AI Menu Translation and AI Live Translation to improve productivity and user convenience.

Alongside the smartphones, OPPO also introduced the OPPO Bubble, a magnetic smart camera companion with a 1.73-inch AMOLED display for rear-camera selfies and remote photography, and the OPPO Enco Air5 wireless earbuds featuring active noise cancellation, AI-powered call noise reduction and up to 54 hours of battery life.

The Reno16 5G is priced at ₹61,999 for the 8GB+256GB variant and ₹67,999 for the 12GB+256GB model.

### NAME CHANGE

Vide an affidavit at Executive Magistrate, Morigaon I have declared that my actual and correct name is Amio Dey instead of Amiya Dey. Amio Dey and Amiya Dey is one and the same person.  
Amio Dey  
w/o- Bishnu Dey  
R/o- Vill- Nakhula gaon  
P.O- Jagiroad  
P.S- Jagiroad  
Dist- Morigaon, Assam  
pin-782410

### NAME CHANGE

I, Son Timung, S/o- Sarphu Timung born on 01/01/1974, a resident of Sarthe Timung village, have change my name from Son Timung to CHAN TIMUNG vide an affidavit dated on 20th May, 2026 before the Magistrate at Bokajan. Therefore, from now onwards I shall be known and addressed as CHAN TIMUNG for all future and official purposes.

### AFFIDAVIT

In my Aadhaar Card my name was mistakenly written as "Binny Pangyok" instead of "Chou Binny Pangyok" Aadhaar Card. No. 4372-7838-2774.

I declare that my real name is "Chou Binny Pangyok" and not "Binny Pangyok". The name "Chou Binny Pangyok" and "Binny Pangyok" is of the same person i.e me.

Chou Binny Pangyok,  
S/o Chou Durbojyoti Pangyok,  
Jona -IV, PO-Lathao, PS- Namsai, Dist.- Namsai, Arunachal Pradesh, Present Add.- Namsai Block-IV, PO& PS-Namsai, Dist.- Namsai, Arunachal Pradesh,

### NAME CORRECTION

I, Sadik Khan, S/O: Fatik Khan R/o: J.K Kedia Road, Ward No. 18, Hojai Town, P.O & PS- Hojai, District: Hojai, Assam, PIN: 782435 do solemnly affirm and declare via an affidavit executed before Executive Magistrate, Nagaon on May 12, 2026 that my father's actual and correct name is Fatik Khan, which is recorded in all my relevant documents. But, in voter certify copy of 1966 of 93 No. Hojai LAC vide SI. No.-166, House No.-57, Part No-114 his name has been inadvertently recorded as Najib Ali Khan, instead of his actual and correct name i.e Fatik Khan. I declare that the names Fatik Khan and Najib Ali Khan are the names of one and same person i.e My Father.

## Targeting 16-17 pc growth in goods exports, 11 pc in services in FY27: Goyal

**NEW DELHI, July 3:** India is targeting an ambitious 16-17 per cent growth in merchandise exports to about USD 530 billion in the current fiscal year, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said on Friday.

Speaking at the Board of Trade meeting here, Goyal said the target for the services sector is 11 per cent growth to about USD 470 billion in 2026-27.

"We want to grow to USD 1 trillion export this year. And to reach USD 1 trillion, our goods export will have to increase from (USD) 442 (billion) to about (USD) 530 billion, USD 90 billion increase," Goyal said.

In 2025-26, the country's total exports were USD 863 billion (USD 442 billion in goods and USD 421 billion in services).

During the April-June quarter, the country registered a 15 per cent growth in merchandise shipments and 11 per cent in services exports, Goyal said. "So we are getting there (to achieve the target). We are on track. But when you fly a kite, you have to hold it tight. So we have to achieve this with everyone's collective effort," the minister said.

He added that though it's an "ambitious" target, "we have to achieve this". The Board of Trade is a platform where the Centre, states, exporters and industry representatives discuss ways to boost the country's trade. The minister suggested that the industry focus on manufacturing high-quality goods and tap into export opportunities by leveraging free trade agreements (FTAs) finalised by India. He said the industry should not depend only on the vast domestic market.

Industry should get out of the "cosy comfort" and reach out to the world market, he said, adding that the commerce ministry's export



promotion mission will help set up branding overseas, warehouses, and participate in global exhibitions.

The FTA with the UK will be operational from July 15 and it is a big market, he said. "UK imports even more than what India imports. UK imports twice India's exports. Their import is almost USD 900 billion. The UK offers that much," Goyal said. Under the trade pact, 99 per cent of Indian goods will get zero-duty access. "And if freight is expensive, it's expensive for the whole world. It's not just expensive for India," he said, adding that the industry should not complain.

He added that India is exporting defence goods to 100 countries.

"A historic ₹ 38,400-crore export of defence material last year... we have exported more defence goods than we have imported. We have a surplus in defence exports," he said. He suggested seven action points for board members to focus on to boost trade and manufacturing.

"First, please make exports a higher priority item of your agenda. Whether state governments, export promotion councils or industry associations, let's make export the

high priority agenda of our world," he said. The other suggestions include participation of states in the Centre's ₹ 33,660-crore BHAVYA (Bharat Audyogik Vikas Yojna) scheme; utilising services of the Directorate General of Trade Remedies (DGTR) in case of dumping of goods; and increased participation in global exhibitions.

Goyal said the ministry will provide funds to set up testing facilities. "... for any approvals you require internationally, like pharma requires approvals, agri-products require approvals, any testing cost that you have to bear or to meet the EU regulations, or to meet regulations of these developed countries, export promotion mission will finance most of your expenditure," he said. He urged states to align their incentives and industrial policies with those of the Centre.

"So that together we can bring economies of scale and high quality, high productivity units, which will help us capture foreign markets," he said, adding that goods that can be manufactured here need to be identified to cut import dependence. (PTI)

## Yezdi Scrambler debuts on Amazon Prime Day 2026

HT Bureau

**GUWAHATI, July 3:** Jawa Yezdi Motorcycles has announced the launch of the Yezdi Scrambler on Amazon.in's New Launch Store during Prime Day 2026, allowing Prime members to book the motorcycle online between July 4 and 6 with a range of exclusive offers.

The company said the move is aimed at making its performance-classic motorcycle more accessible to digitally driven buyers while simplifying the purchase process through Amazon's e-commerce platform. Powered by a 350cc liquid-cooled Katar engine, the Yezdi Scrambler is positioned as India's lightest scrambler motorcycle.

Designed for both urban commuting and weekend adventure riding, the motorcycle features factory-custom styling, agile handling and ergonomics suited to varied road conditions.

Anupam Thareja, Co-founder of Jawa Yezdi Motorcycles, said the Yezdi Scrambler had pioneered the scrambler category in India and that the partnership with Amazon would help introduce the motorcycle to a wider generation of riders seeking authentic performance and adventure. Customers booking the motorcycle during Prime Day will be eligible for several promotional offers, including no-cost EMI, an instant discount of up to ₹3,000 on select credit cards, and cashback of up to five per cent for Prime members using the Amazon Pay ICICI Bank Credit Card. Eligible business customers can also avail GST invoice benefits.

## Govt orders removal of three Chinese apps

**NEW DELHI, July 3:** The government has ordered the removal of three Chinese mobile applications - BAT-BMS, Lossigy and Epoch-i-ion - from app stores after they were allegedly misused to remotely disable battery-operated vehicles in India, official sources said on Friday, amid heightened concerns over cybersecurity vulnerabilities in internet-connected mobility systems.

The action follows the emergence of multiple videos on social media showing electric rickshaws being rendered inoperable through a remote shutdown feature linked to the BAT-BMS application. The videos triggered concerns over the ability of third-party applications to remotely access and control critical vehicle functions, raising questions about the cybersecurity safeguards built into battery management systems used in electric vehicles.

Government sources said the three applications were found to be misused to remotely disable battery-operated vehicles and have been ordered to be removed from app stores. They added that authorities would also move to block any other application found to be facilitating similar misuse.

The government is also engaging with app marketplace operators to prevent the distribution of applications that could pose cybersecurity risks, the sources said.

BAT-BMS is a Bluetooth-enabled battery management application developed by China's Shenzhen Greenery Technology Co. Ltd. for monitoring and managing compatible lithium battery packs. The app allows users to view battery parameters such

as charge level, voltage, current and temperature, and to control charging and discharge functions on compatible batteries.

Concerns centre on the lack of authentication in some Bluetooth-enabled battery management systems used in low-cost e-rickshaws, which allegedly allowed unauthorised users within Bluetooth range to disable vehicles remotely.

BAT-BMS works within a Bluetooth range of roughly 15 metres and can connect to multiple batteries simultaneously. The app itself is marketed as a battery monitoring and management utility rather than a vehicle control application.

Lossigy and Epoch-i-ion (Epoch Li-ion) are similar BMS applications used with Bluetooth-enabled lithium batteries from other manufacturers. The viral videos showed individuals approaching e-rickshaws, pairing with compatible batteries over Bluetooth and switching off the battery's discharge output, leaving vehicles stranded. Some reports also alleged that pranksters subsequently offered to "fix" the vehicles for a fee after restarting them using the same app. Some BMS units lacked password protection or robust authentication, allowing anyone within Bluetooth range to pair with the battery and disable its discharge function, effectively immobilising the vehicle.

Earlier on Friday, IT Secretary S Krishnan - speaking on the sidelines of a CII Cybersecurity summit - asserted that app stores must exercise due diligence, and said the government would take up the matter with them to ensure that potentially harmful apps are not made available. (PTI)

## Jettwings Business School marks 16 years of industry-focused education

Institution highlights 100% placement record, academic excellence and admissions for 2026-27 session

HT Bureau

**GUWAHATI, July 3:** Jettwings Business School (JBS) has completed 16 years of operations, highlighting its journey from a regional institution to a nationally recognised business school with a focus on industry-oriented education in aviation, hospitality and business management.

Established in 2008 under the Jettwings Foundation, the institution was founded to bridge the gap between conventional higher education and industry requirements by equipping students with professional skills and corporate exposure.

Authorised by the Department of Higher Education, Government of Assam, and affiliated with Gauhati University, JBS offers a three-year Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) programme and a one-year Post Graduate Diploma in Business Administration (PGDBA) specialising in Aviation, Hospitality and Tourism Management.

According to the institution, it has maintained a 100 per cent campus placement record for the past 16 years, with its highest placement package reaching ₹37 lakh per annum.

It also claimed that more than 80 per cent of its students consistently secure first-class marks and that no student has failed an examination over the past decade.

Jettwings Group of Institutes Chairman Sanjay Aditya Singh attributed the institution's academic performance to personalised mentoring, corporate-oriented training and student support systems.

The institution also highlighted its national recognition through rankings by organisations and publications including The Times of India, The Economic Times, Times Now and the CSR-GHRDC rankings.

It said JBS is the only institution affiliated with Gauhati University to receive consistent national recognition in the aviation and hospitality education sector.

The business school has also developed partnerships with Webster University in Thailand, Quality Hospitality College in Australia and Willis in the United States to provide international exposure and career opportunities for students.

It further stated that its campus has been developed with sustainable infrastructure, including rainwater harvesting systems and environmentally conscious construction practices.

JBS Principal Dr Mampi Bora announced that admissions are open for the 2026-27 academic session for the BBA and PGDBA programmes.

Applications will be accepted until July 20, after which the admission process for the new academic session will conclude.

## Govt reviews rain deficit, potential drought situation; Amit Shah directs Centre-states coordination

**NEW DELHI, July 3:** The government is continuously monitoring the below-normal rainfall situation and potential drought conditions in certain parts of the country, Home Minister Amit Shah said on Friday after a high-level review meeting.

Shah has directed all the central departments to be vigilant as well as ensure coordination with states on providing proper advice to farmers on sowing of kharif crops.

According to an official statement, Shah, along with Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, "reviewed the situation regarding below-normal rainfall and its impact in certain parts of the country due to El Nino."

At the meeting, the ministers emphasised the need to ensure adequate electricity supply to farmers, closely monitor water levels at all reservoirs and promote crops that require less water.

In June, India as a whole witnessed a rainfall deficit of about 40 per cent, with Central India worst affected with a shortfall of 50.4 per cent. In July also, the monthly average rainfall is expected to be below normal.

Due to low rainfall, the sowing of kharif crops declined 23 per cent to 182.72 lakh hectares as of June 25.

"The government is continuously monitoring the situation regarding below-normal rainfall and potential drought conditions in certain parts of the country due to El Nino," Shah said and directed the agriculture ministry as well as other ministries to remain vigilant about the prevailing situation.

Shah, who is also the cooperation minister, told officials to coordinate with state governments and advise farmers about appropriate crops to sow.

Home and agriculture secretaries, along with senior officials from various ministries and departments, were present at the meeting.

Shah "instructed officials from the Department of Water Resources to monitor all water reservoirs across the country".

He emphasised the need to focus on alternative crops

that require less water, such as fodder, millets, and pulses.

The home minister directed the Power Secretary to take necessary action to ensure a smooth and adequate supply of electricity.

During the meeting, the Home Minister also informed that adequate quantities of essential food grains, including rice and wheat, are available in the country, and the prices of essential commodities remain stable.

The meeting was also attended by secretaries from the Department of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation, Department of Consumer Affairs, Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Ministry of Power, Ministry of Rural Development, and Department of Science and Technology.

Members and heads of divisions of the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA); the Director General of the India Meteorological Department (IMD); the Chairman of the Central Water Commission; and officials from various other departments, including the Indian Agricultural Research Institute and the National Remote Sensing Centre, were also present.

Shah also instructed that the Inter-Ministerial Central Team (IMCT) of the Ministry of Home Affairs should be deputed to Assam and Arunachal Pradesh to assess the damage caused by recent heavy rainfall, flash floods, and landslides.

Both states have been affected, with Assam experiencing rising floodwaters in multiple districts and Arunachal Pradesh facing landslides and road blockages in several hill areas.

El Nino is one of the three phases of the El Nino Southern Oscillation (ENSO), a climate phenomenon characterised by changes in sea temperatures along the central and eastern tropical Pacific Ocean, accompanied by fluctuations in the atmosphere overhead.

While El Nino is known to have a warming effect on the planet, its opposite phase, called La Nina, usually results in a cooling effect. ENSO also has a neutral phase. (PTI)

## Middle class growth engine of India; 500 cities to emerge as economic hubs: Sitharaman

**NEW DELHI, July 3:** Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Friday described the middle class as the growth engine of India and said nearly 500 cities are poised to emerge as the country's next centres of economic activity.

Participating in a panel discussion on 'How to promote the rise of a new middle class' at the Rencontres Economiques d'Aix-en-Provence, a major economic forum of France, Sitharaman said 31 per cent of India's population is middle class as of today.

Since India opened its economy, the middle class is growing at an annual rate of 6.3 per cent, she noted.

"We think 93 per cent of all spending in India will be because of the middle class or the slightly affluent consumers...and again, this middle class is not concentrated in our metropolitan cities...India's model has resulted in the development in such a way that the middle class is present not just in big cities but they

are on the contrary in these tier two, tier three cities," the finance minister said.

The distribution of wealth is therefore automatically seen spreading to cities beyond the metropolitan, she added.

"So, we see the middle class not just as a beneficiary of growth, but actually as the engines of growth. It is their consumption, which is happening, which is making the economy grow," she said.

Quoting an OECD study, Sitharaman said India will surpass China in absolute terms in its middle-class population size between 2030 and 2035 on the back of several measures taken by the government.

Stressing that India remains the fastest-growing large economy after Covid-19, primarily because of consumption triggered by the middle class, she said, "Nearly 500 cities poised to emerge as the new centres of economic activity". (PTI)

Contd. from Page 1...

## SC refuses to

could this ground be raised belatedly. "If bail is granted only on this reason, the state is not barred under the law from arresting her again," the bench said.

The accused's counsel then submitted that she has been put to strict bail conditions by the trial court and has to remain in Shillong itself, and hence, there is no likelihood of her absconding.

The bench then noted that the accused has already been released and expressed its reluctance to stay the bail order.

"If she is released, then we cannot stay the order," it said, adding that the court was under the impression that she was still under custody.

The solicitor general then attempted to persuade the bench by highlighting the gravity of the crime. He said instances of wives killing husbands are increasing and referred to the recent Lohagad case, where a woman allegedly killed her fiancé. Justice Sundresh said an element of introspection is needed from all stakeholders and referred to another case from Bengaluru.

The Meghalaya government moved the Supreme Court on Thursday against the bail granted to the prime accused in the case.

Sonam Raghuvanshi, a resident of Indore in Madhya Pradesh, was arrested in June last year in connection with the killing of her businessman husband, Raja Raghuvanshi.

The couple had gone missing while vacationing in Meghalaya's Sohra area on May 23 last year. Subsequently, Raja Raghuvanshi's body was found in a deep gorge on June 2, 2025.

Police have alleged that Sonam Raghuvanshi conspired with hired assailants to kill her husband for financial gains.

On June 29, the Meghalaya High Court upheld a trial court order granting bail to Sonam Raghuvanshi.

The high court had dismissed a criminal petition filed by the state government, seeking cancellation of the bail granted by the trial court on April 27.

It had held that the manner in which the grounds of arrest were prepared reflected a "total non-application of judicious mind". (PTI)

## Order issued to

asked to remove the declared foreigner's name from the electoral roll, if included.

The Revenue Department has also been instructed to take action regarding his movable and immovable properties, if necessary, according to existing laws. (PTI)

## Assam tea estate

new dimension to Assam's tea portfolio, opening lucrative new export opportunities and strengthening India's position in the global specialty tea market.

"We have been working with tea experts from Japan for the past decade to introduce the highest quality of green tea to the Indian market," he said.

Jalan said they have successfully sold whole-leaf green tea grades for the past 10 years, but the "launch of authentic Indian Matcha is a milestone we are incredibly proud of".

It is the result of a dedicated partnership with our Japanese counterparts, and "we are confident that Matcha from Chota Tingrai will soon find a home in both Indian and international households", he added. (PTI)

## KAAC distributes sanitation

occasional periods of one to three months.

Seeking a long-term solution, Ronghang requested Tongkeshor Das, director-cum-secretary, Urban Development Department, Government of Assam, to examine whether 15th Finance Commission funds could legally be utilised to pay the salaries of employees of Municipal Boards and Town Committees.

The CEM also announced that he, along with four local MLAs, plans to meet Assam chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma and the State Urban Development Minister to seek immediate financial assistance and additional urban development schemes.

During his address, Ronghang confirmed that elections to all Municipal Boards and Town Committees in the region will be held in 2027, following a two-year extension of their current terms.

Highlighting other development initiatives, Ronghang said local bodies are implementing housing assistance for homeless urban residents under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Urban (PMAY-U). He also said NABARD-funded projects worth Rs 3 crore, Rs 4 crore and Rs 6 crore have been sanctioned for the construction of modern market sheds in various urban areas.

The programme concluded with the CEM and other dignitaries formally handing over the keys and machinery to representatives of the local bodies. Ronghang urged the recipients to make optimum use of the new machinery to improve cleanliness standards across the towns of Karbi Anglong.

The event was attended by KAAC deputy chairman Avijit Kro, MP Amarsing Tisso, MLAs Niso Terangpi, Lusing Teron and Surjya Rongphar, besides executive members and other autonomous council representatives.

## Chandrayaan-3's analysis

The analysis also revealed that the soil at Shiv Shakti Statio is a mixture of materials from different layers of the Moon's crust.

The surface appears to contain not only material from the upper crust but also fragments of magnesium-rich rocks, likely derived from the Moon's deeper layers, according to the ISRO.

"By linking the Shiv Shakti Statio to the Moon's first recognised meteorite, the Chandrayaan-3 mission has opened new avenues for understanding the formation of the ancient lunar crust," the ISRO said. (PTI)

# Forest department cracks down on illegal timber trade in BTC

Illegal sawmill busted, timber and furniture seized in coordinated raids across Kokrajhar and Chirang

HT Correspondent

**KOKRAJHAR, July 3:** The Forest Department has intensified its crackdown on illegal timber smuggling and unauthorised tree felling in the Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC), conducting a series of coordinated raids in Kokrajhar and Chirang districts that led to the seizure of illegal timber, the detection of an unauthorised sawmill, and the confiscation of illegally stored furniture.

Acting on specific intelligence, a joint team led by the in-charge of the Kokrajhar Gossagaon Forest Depot and the in-charge of the Consolidation Range, Gossagaon, along with staff under the Kachugaon Division, raided Kurshakati No 2 Revenue Village. During the operation, officials seized a large quantity of illegally felled Jia Poma logs.

The confiscated timber is being transported to the Gossagaon Forest Depot, where it will remain in official custody pending legal proceedings.

In a separate operation under the Basugaon Forest Depot in Chirang district, forest officials uncovered an illegal sawmill operating at Bhutiapara.

During the raid, conducted in the presence of the Range Officer and Basugaon Forest Depot



staff, a quantity of illegal timber was seized and an illegal timber shop functioning in the area was also busted, dealing a significant blow to the illicit timber trade.

In another intelligence-based operation, staff of the Chirang Amtaka Range Office raided a premises in the Joypur area and seized illegally

stored furniture that lacked valid permits or supporting documents.

The seized materials have been taken into custody, and legal action has been initiated under the provisions of the Assam Forest Regulation and other applicable laws.

Forest officials said the operations are part of an ongoing drive to curb illegal logging, unauthorised timber trade and other forest-related crimes.

They added that intelligence-based raids, surprise inspections and coordinated enforcement drives would continue across vulnerable areas to protect forest resources and ensure strict compliance with forest laws.

The department has appealed to the public to assist authorities by reporting any information related to illegal felling, transportation, storage or trade of forest produce.

Officials also warned that strict legal action would be taken against those found violating forest laws.

"The Forest Department has intensified its strict measures against illegal tree felling and the operation of unauthorised sawmills across the region. Necessary initiatives are being undertaken to conserve forest resources in the districts," a senior forest official in Kokrajhar said.

## James Basumatary sworn in as BTC Executive Member

HT Correspondent

**KOKRAJHAR, July 3:** James Basumatary, Member of the Council Legislative Assembly (MCLA) from the No 16 Nichima (ST) BTC constituency, was sworn in as an Executive Member (EM) of the Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) on Friday at a ceremony held at the Auditorium Hall of the BTC Legislative Assembly, Bodofa Nwgr, Kokrajhar.

The programme began with a welcome address by Bhaskar Jyoti Manta, Secretary of the General Administration Department (GAD), BTC.

The proceedings were conducted by A.N. Deka, Secretary of the BTC Legislative Assembly.

Principal Secretary of the BTC Mukesh Ch. Sahu administered the Oath of Office and Secrecy to Basumatary, who formally assumed office as an Executive Member of the Council.

With his induction, Basumatary became the 92nd Executive Member of the BTC.

The swearing-in ceremony was attended by BTC Deputy Chief Rihon Daimari, Executive Members Derhasat Basumatary, Karmeswar Roy and Prakash Basumatary, Additional Principal Secretary Pranjit Kumar Wary, secretaries of various departments, senior officials and other dignitaries.

## NFR completes Majbat station redevelopment under ABSS

₹ 12-crore upgrade brings modern passenger amenities, improved accessibility and enhanced infrastructure

HT Bureau

**GUWAHATI, July 3:** Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) has completed the redevelopment of Majbat Railway Station in Assam's Udalguri district under the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme (ABSS), significantly upgrading passenger amenities and station infrastructure at a cost of over ₹ 12 crore.

Majbat is among the 92 railway stations identified for redevelopment under the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme in the NFR zone, including 60 stations in the Northeast and 50 in Assam.

Located under Rangiya Division, the station serves as an important railhead for Udalguri district.

The redevelopment project has modernised the station with an up-

graded façade, a spacious entrance porch, improved waiting hall, landscaped surroundings, widened circulating area, new toilet blocks, improved approach roads and drainage systems, platform shelters and other passenger-friendly facilities.

As part of the project, Platform No 1 has been extended to accommodate full-length trains.

The station has also been equipped with tactile paving, Divyang-friendly drinking water facilities and two lifts to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities.

Passenger amenities have been further enhanced through upgraded electrical infrastructure, including modern lighting, air-conditioned

waiting facilities, mobile charging points, improved platform wiring and illuminated approach roads.

Coach Guidance Boards (CGBs) and Train Indication Boards (TIBs) have also been installed to provide better passenger information and improve operational efficiency.

NFR officials said the redevelopment of Majbat station reflects the Railways' commitment to providing modern, safe and inclusive infrastructure while strengthening rail connectivity in Assam and the Northeast.

They added that the upgraded station is expected to improve passenger comfort, operational efficiency and contribute to the socio-economic development of the region.

## Gaurisagar hawker emerges as model farmer through diversified farming

HT Correspondent

**SIVASAGAR, July 3:** A newspaper hawker from Hatighuli near Gaurisagar has emerged as an inspiring example of self-reliance by successfully adopting diversified farming despite financial hardship and repeated setbacks.

Munin Bora, the sole breadwinner of his family, earns his livelihood by distributing newspapers from Gaurisagar Book House every morning after completing night guard duty at a private firm.

Like many newspaper hawkers, Bora has faced growing economic challenges in the post-COVID period, but instead of giving up, he turned to farming to supplement his income.

Three years ago, Bora ventured into pisciculture by excavating three ponds for fish farming.

He also took up pig rearing but suffered a major setback last year when African Swine Fever claimed 40 pigs.

Undeterred by the loss, he intensified paddy cultivation and now harvests more than 400 dangaries of paddy each season.

This year, Bora further diversified into rabi crop cultivation.

With support from the District Agriculture Office and the East-West Seed Knowledge Transfer Foundation (EWSKTF), he cultivated 800 high-yielding cucumber seedlings on a 300-square metre plot of land.



The foundation also provided quality onion seeds free of cost.

EWSKTF, a non-profit organisation, works to improve the livelihoods of small and marginal vegetable growers by promoting modern agricultural practices.

It provides training on vegetable cultivation, good agricultural practices, crop selection, soil health, fertiliser management, irrigation techniques and integrated pest management.

In recognition of his efforts, Bora was felicitated by the East-West Seed Knowledge Transfer Foundation at a programme held on his farm on Thursday.

## One injured as speeding car rams parked vehicles

HT Correspondent

**MARGHERITA, July 3:** A man was seriously injured and several two-wheelers were damaged after a speeding car lost control and ramed into vehicles parked outside a garage at Dehing Tea Estate under Margherita in Tinsukia district on Friday morning.

According to eyewitnesses, a Maruti Swift Dzire bearing registration number AS 23 G 8598 was travelling at high speed along NH-315 when the driver lost control of the vehicle.

The car crashed into five to six motorcycles and scooters parked in front of a garage before overturning and landing by the roadside.

The impact of the collision completely crushed the parked two-wheelers and caused extensive damage to the vehicle involved in the accident.

Pappu Shah (32), an employee of the garage, sustained serious head injuries in the incident.

Local residents rushed him to Margherita FRU Civil Hospital, from where he was referred to a higher medical centre for advanced treatment due to the severity of his injuries.

The driver of the car fled the scene immediately after the accident.

## African Swine Fever outbreak reported in Nagaon; pork sale, transport banned

HT Correspondent

**NAGAON, July 3:** The Nagaon district administration has imposed a ban on the sale and transportation of pigs, pork and pork products following the detection of an outbreak of African Swine Fever (ASF) among domestic pigs at Haluwagaon village under Samaguri Revenue Circle.

Invoking Section 163 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), the administration has prohibited the sale and movement of pigs, pork and pork-based products within a 10-km radius of Haluwagaon under the Barhampur Development Block as a precautionary measure to prevent the spread of the disease.

According to an order issued by District Commissioner Devashish Sarma, the area within a 1-km ra-

dius of Haluwagaon has been declared an "Infected Zone", while the surrounding 10-km radius has been designated a "Surveillance Zone."

The movement of live pigs into or out of the surveillance zone has also been prohibited.

The district administration has directed pig farmers to strictly adhere to all guidelines issued by the Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Department.

Residents have also been asked to immediately report any pig deaths to the nearest veterinary or Animal Husbandry Department officials.

The administration warned that strict legal action would be taken against anyone found violating the restrictions imposed to contain the spread of African Swine Fever.

ical and practical assessments to evaluate their learning.

Certificates of participation were distributed on July 2 by Additional District Commissioner (Health) Kuldip Hazarika in the presence of District Nodal Officer, Ayush, Dr Ratul Saloi, Government Yoga Instructor Namita Lahkar, other yoga instructors and officials.

The trained participants will now conduct awareness programmes and basic yoga sessions in their respective communities to encourage healthy lifestyles and expand the reach of yoga across villages and urban communities in Sonitpur.

Officials said the successful completion of the programme marks another important step in strengthening community participation in health promotion through the "PM SHREE Gaonwe Gaonwe Jog Maha-Abhijan" initiative.

## Farmers to receive access to PM-KISAN, crop insurance and other government welfare schemes Pijush Hazarika launches small tea growers' registration in Biswanath

HT Correspondent

**BISWANATH CHARIALI, July 3:** Assam Agriculture Minister Pijush Hazarika on Friday inaugurated the registration of small tea growers under the state's farmer registration programme at two separate functions in Biswanath district, enabling eligible growers to access a range of government welfare schemes.

The district-wide registration drive forms part of a statewide campaign through which small tea growers will, for the first time, be recognised as farmers and become eligible for benefits under various agricultural schemes.

The first programme was held at Srimanta Sankardev Hall in Bargang, where District Agriculture Officer Baneshwar Bey welcomed the gathering.

Ranjit Dutta addressed the meeting, which was attended by Behali MLA Munindra Das, District Commissioner Karabi Saikia Karan, former MLA Diganta Ghatowal, Assam Seed Corporation Chairman Prabin Hazarika, Behali Co-District Commissioner Kabita Kakaty Konwar, Biswanath Zila Parishad President Sunita Tati and other dignitaries.

The registration process for



small tea growers under the Behali Assembly constituency was formally launched during the programme.

The second function was organised at Kamala Kanta Natya Samaj in Biswanath Chariali, where the Agriculture Minister inaugurated the registration drive for the Biswanath Assembly constituency.

Addressing the gathering, Hazarika said the State Government had recognised small tea growers as farmers for the first time, allowing them to avail benefits such as PM-KISAN assistance, crop insurance, subsidies on agricultural machinery and other government schemes.

He urged all eligible small tea growers to complete their registra-

tion at the earliest to avail themselves of these benefits.

The programme was attended by Biswanath MLA Pallab Lochan Das, Regional Small Tea Growers' Association Secretary Bharat Kalita, District Commissioner Karabi Saikia Karan, former MLA Pramod Barthakur, Assam Seed Corporation Chairman Prabin Hazarika, Biswanath Chariali Town Committee Chairman Amarjyoti Barthakur, social worker Asim Das and other dignitaries.

Officials said the registration initiative is expected to benefit hundreds of thousands of small tea growers across Assam by bringing them under the ambit of government agricultural welfare programmes.

## Man killed in wild elephant attack near Silghat

HT Correspondent

**NAGAON, July 3:** A man was killed in a wild elephant attack at Kamakhya village near Silghat under Kaliabor subdivision of Nagaon district, highlighting the growing human-elephant conflict in the region. The deceased has been identified as Bishnu Gaur, also known as Jiten, a worker at a small tea garden in Kamakhya village.

According to local sources, Gaur was returning home after purchasing essential items from a nearby shop on Thursday evening when he encountered a wild elephant on the road connecting Kamakhya Temple and Kamakhya village.

The elephant reportedly attacked him, killing him on the spot. His body was discovered by local residents on Friday morning, triggering panic and grief in the area. Forest department officials later reached the spot, recovered the body and sent it to Nagaon Medical College Hospital for post-mortem examination.

Residents said the Kamakhya Temple-Kamakhya village road is generally avoided after dusk because of frequent sightings of wild animals, including tigers, which delayed the discovery of the incident.

Villagers alleged that they had informed the Sonari Forest Beat Office, located about a kilometre from the site, about the movement of wild elephants in the area earlier that afternoon.

They claimed no preventive action was taken despite the warning and held the forest department responsible for the tragedy.

The incident has sparked resentment among local residents, who also alleged that several people had lost their lives in elephant attacks in the area in the past but their families were yet to receive compensation. They urged the authorities to strengthen measures to prevent human-wildlife conflict and ensure timely relief for affected families.

## Formalin tanker overturns in Dima Hasao; advisory issued over possible river contamination

HT Correspondent

**HAF LONG, July 3:** The Dima Hasao district administration has advised residents living along the Jatinga River and downstream areas not to use river water after a tanker carrying formalin met with an accident on National Highway-27 near Jatinga, triggering fears of possible contamination. The accident occurred between Jatinga and Jatinga Lampu when the tanker overturned, causing a leak of formalin.

Officials suspect the chemical may have entered the Jatinga River, which flows through Cachar district before joining the Barak River.

The driver of the tanker, identified as Saiful Haque (36), a resident of Dalgaoon in Chirang district, died in the accident.

Following the incident, the District Disaster Management Authority (DDMA), Dima Hasao, issued a public advisory asking residents not to use water from the Jatinga River for drinking, cooking, bathing, washing or any other domestic purpose until further notice.

The administration has also advised people not to allow livestock or pets to drink water from the river and to avoid consuming fish or other aquatic organisms caught from the affected stretch.

Residents have further been asked to refrain from swimming, fishing or entering the river, while farmers have been requested not to use river water for irrigation until scientific assessments are completed.

An emergency response team from Assam Petro-Chemicals Limited reached the accident site and assessed the situation.

Officials said two of the tanker's five chambers had leaked, while arrangements were being made to safely transfer the remaining formalin to prevent further spillage.

Dima Hasao Deputy Commissioner Gayatri Hyalinge said water samples were being tested by the Pollution Control authorities and the Public Health Engineering (PHE) Department and appealed to the public to strictly follow the advisory as a precautionary measure.

As the Jatinga River flows downstream into Cachar district before merging with the Barak River at Jatingamukh near Barkhola, authorities in the Barak Valley are also closely monitoring the situation.

## KKHSOU lays foundation stone for Jorhat Regional Centre

HT Correspondent

**JORHAT, July 3:** Krishna Kanta Handiqui State Open University (KKHSOU) on Friday laid the foundation stone for its permanent Jorhat Regional Centre building at Purani Gayan Gaon, marking a significant step in strengthening the university's academic and administrative presence in Upper Assam.

The foundation stone was laid by KKHSOU Vice-Chancellor Prof Rajendra Prasad Das in the presence of university officials, representatives of the Public Works Department (PWD), study centre officials, local dignitaries and well-wishers. The Jorhat Regional Centre, which has been functioning from a rented premises at Tarajan since December 2013, serves as the university's nodal centre for six Upper Assam districts—Jorhat, Golaghat, Sivasagar, Charaideo, Dibrugarh and Tinsukia. Construction of the permanent facility will begin following the completion of preliminary site works.

Addressing the gathering, Prof Das reaffirmed the university's commitment to completing the project on time, stating that the permanent campus would significantly strengthen learner support services and expand KKHSOU's outreach across the region.

Executive Engineer of the PWD, Jorhat, Pranjal Pujari, assured the university of all necessary technical assistance, including support in design and quality assurance, during the construction of the project.

## Sonitpur concludes district yoga training programme

HT Correspondent

**TEZPUR, July 3:** The district-level yoga training programme under Assam Governor Lakshman Prasad Acharya's flagship initiative, "PM SHREE Gaonwe Gaonwe Jog Maha-Abhijan," concluded successfully in Sonitpur on Friday, with 99 participants completing the 11-day course and set to serve as grassroots yoga promoters.

The programme was organised by the Sonitpur District Administration in collaboration with Ayush Mission Assam at the auditorium of Tezpur College.

Launched on the occasion of the 12th International Day of Yoga on June 21, the Governor's initiative is being implemented simultaneously in Sonitpur, Jorhat, Kokrajhar, Bongaigaon and Cachar districts.

It aims to create a network of trained yoga practitioners who will work as yoga instructors and wellness ambassadors to promote the practice of yoga across the State.

In Sonitpur, 101 participants registered for the programme, of whom 99 successfully completed the training that began on June 22.

## Ninety-nine trainees to promote yoga and healthy living at the grassroots under Governor's flagship initiative



The trainees included college and school teachers, members of Self-Help Groups (SHGs) under the Assam State Rural Livelihoods Mission (ASRLM) and the National Urban Livelihoods Mission (NULM), Assam Civil Defence personnel and representatives of various non-governmental or-

ganisations. During the first ten days, participants received training in yoga postures (asanas), breathing techniques (pranayama), relaxation methods and the role of yoga in promoting physical and mental well-being. On the final day, they underwent theoret-

## QUOTE OF THE DAY

Every act of creation is first an act of destruction  
-Pablo Picasso

## Cut in petro prices expected

The arithmetic of India's fuel market has long been sold as market-driven, but the latest price movements expose a more selective discipline. When crude oil rises, the pass-through to consumers and businesses is quick, stern and explained as unavoidable. When the same crude oil retreats, the adjustment becomes cautious, partial and wrapped in administrative silence. The cut in commercial LPG prices from July 1 is being presented as relief for restaurants, hotels, caterers and small food businesses. A 19-kg commercial cylinder has been reduced by ₹183.50, taking the Delhi price to ₹2,930. The figure looks substantial in isolation, but it comes after a period in which oil and gas prices had hardened sharply on fears of supply disruption in West Asia. The same international conditions that were invoked to justify the rise have now eased materially, yet the scale of the reduction does not fully reflect the reversal in global petroleum prices. That asymmetry is the real story. The price cycle has once again followed a familiar pattern. Consumers are asked to accept increases as the natural consequence of a volatile global market, but reductions arrive as if they were concessions. This is not a technical quibble. Fuel pricing has a direct bearing on transport costs, food inflation, household budgets, restaurant margins, small vendors, and the cost structure of almost every traded good. A slow or incomplete fall in petroleum prices keeps inflationary pressure embedded even after the original shock has faded.

The latest global context makes the hesitation harder to defend. Crude prices surged during the West Asia crisis as markets priced in the possibility of supply disruption around the Strait of Hormuz. Once the immediate danger receded and tanker movement normalised, oil prices fell back towards pre-war levels. Brent crude, which had climbed during the crisis, dropped sharply as the geopolitical premium unwound. The market did what markets do: it repriced risk. Indian fuel pricing, however, has not shown the same elasticity on the way down. The contrast with Nayara Energy is revealing. The private refiner and fuel retailer moved to reduce petrol and diesel prices at its pumps, cutting petrol by ₹5 a litre and diesel by ₹3 a litre as global crude softened.

The public sector oil marketing companies remain the dominant players in India's fuel retail market, and their pricing behaviour matters far beyond their balance sheets. They shape the benchmark for the entire economy. When they hold petrol and diesel prices steady after crude falls, the benefit of lower import costs is retained within the system rather than transmitted to households and businesses. This may improve margins, repair past losses or create fiscal comfort, but it weakens the claim that retail fuel prices are a clean reflection of market forces.

## Harsing Ingti – A Student, Cultural Activist, Sports Lover, and Translator of the Bible

The largest recorded earthquake struck Assam in 1950, measuring 8.6 on the Richter scale. Harsing Ingti was about ten years old when this devastating earthquake occurred. Today, at around 82 years of age, he has slight hearing and vision impairment but remains alert and cheerful. He lives in Inglongcherop, on the western outskirts of the expanding town of Diphu, in a modest house with his wife, Charne Tokbipi, and their son.

He married in his late fifties in 2000, when he finally decided to settle down after years of leading a hectic life as an activist, having almost resolved to remain a bachelor. Throughout his life, he was a football player for Karbi Anglong, a cultural activist, a playwright, a composer of protest songs, an organiser of student demonstrations, the first Karbi Baptist to obtain a Bachelor of Divinity (B.D.) degree, and the translator of the Holy Bible into the Karbi language.

He was awarded the Bachelor of Divinity degree from Serampore College, West Bengal, on 6 February 1981. Later that year, on 15 March 1981, he was awarded the Graduate Diploma in Theology after completing a three-year course at the Union Biblical Seminary, Yavatmal, Maharashtra, on the recommendation of the faculty and the Board of Governors.

His protest songs reflected the anger, frustration, and aspirations of the youth of his generation. One of his songs, "Kardom Dengtha Oh Karbi An...", written in 1972 during the student movement demanding the implementation of the Roman Script, later became the theme song of the Karbi Youth Festival (KYF).

He was born in Mon (Mang) Timung village, on the outskirts of present-day Howrah town. The village was named after his maternal grandfather, Mang Timung, the father of his mother, Kamir Timungpi. His father, Sar'et Ho Ingti, passed away when Harsing was only about three years old. The family had earlier lived in the nearby village of Ronglangbung. He was the third among four siblings—two brothers and two sisters.

As there was no school in his village, he walked nearly five kilometres through paddy

fields and forests to attend the LP School at Mohori Rongpi village. The school building was dilapidated and had only a table and a chair for the lone teacher, while students carried their own jute sacks to sit on. A few years later, through the efforts of enterprising village elders, a school was established in his own village. However, he had to appear for the LP Scholarship Examination at Dengaon Merok LP School, the only institution offering the examination. After successfully clearing the scholarship examination, he continued his studies at Dengaon Merok ME School.

He later joined Diphu Government Boys' High School. Unfortunately, while studying in Class X, he fell seriously ill and had to discontinue his studies for a year. He returned to Howrah and eventually passed the HSLC Examination on 21 June 1969 in the Second Division.

Mathematics was his favourite subject, and everyone encouraged him to pursue the Science stream. Accordingly, he joined Nagaon Science College with the dream of becoming a doctor. However, due to a misunderstanding, he missed his practical examinations, which brought an end to his dream of studying medicine. He then returned to Diphu and joined the Night Shift of Diphu Government College in 1970.

During his college life, he excelled in cultural, literary, and sports activities. At the 6th Annual College Week Festival, held on 10 December 1970, he won the first prize in the Karbi Poetry Competition and received awards for his dramas "Ale" and "Pavir."

During the 7th Annual College Week Festival, held from 8 to 17 December 1971, he won several prizes, including first prize in Extempore Speech, Best Drama for "Kangsip," and the Boys' Singles Championship in Carrom.

Again, during the 8th Annual College Week Festival, held from 5 to 9 January 1973, he secured the second prize in Extempore Speech and became the Chess Champion.

Continuing his outstanding performance,

during the 10th Annual College Week Festival, held from 8 to 12 January 1975, he won several prizes, including Best Actor in a One-Act Play, second prize in the Chorus Competition, and first prize in the Extempore Speech Competition.

He also actively participated in the Youth Against Famine Campaign at Lorulango and Mohendijua from 25 June to 12 July 1973, where his dedication and sense of duty were highly appreciated.

Before joining college, he enrolled in the National Cadet Corps (NCC) under the 6 Assam Battalion NCC, Nowgong, Assam. He successfully passed the NCC Certificate "A" Part-I Examination held in April 1966 under the authority of the Ministry of Defence, Government of India, during the tenure of Director General NCC, S. K. Dalvi.

Apart from his achievements in sports, culture, and literature, he also completed a Type-

writing Course at the Mikir Hills Vocational and Commercial Training Institute, Diphu, on 15 May 1974. To support himself financially, he accepted employment under the Mikir Hills District Autonomous Council, as his family could no longer afford to support his education.

Harsing arrived in Diphu during a period when the youth and students were searching for a way forward after the failure of the Hill State movement. He became actively involved in the Karbi Students' Association (KSA), which was critical of the ruling leadership in the Council. He wrote several politically charged one-act plays, including "Kai Kirla," which criticised the Council leadership. As a result, he attracted the displeasure of the authorities and was warned not to perform such plays again, marking one of the earliest instances of censorship in Karbi theatre. He himself performed in the play "Ale" (Profit) during a College Week Festival, earning awards for both his performance and the play itself.

It was also a difficult period for the KSA, which was struggling to survive against the challenges posed by the Karbi Riso Adorbar.

Together with leaders such as Bidyasing Engling (present MLA of Diphu), Harsing Teron (former Joint Secretary of KAAC), and Ajit Timung (former KSA leader), he helped revive the organisation. During his tenure, the KSA successfully fought for the right of Karbi students to wear their traditional attire in educational institutions.

This period also marked the most creative phase of his life. He composed numerous Karbi choruses and introduced group singing at public functions. One of his earliest compositions, beginning with:

"So Karbi adang thepi  
Do an riso nimsopi..."

was first performed at the inaugural Karbi Youth Festival in 1974.

His song "Kardom Dengtha Oh Karbi An...", composed in 1972, continued to be sung in subsequent editions of the Karbi Youth Festival and was gradually accepted as its official theme song. Not he composed the theme song of KCS he was the founder member of Karbi Youth Festival and Karbi Cultural Society.

He embraced Christianity in 1978 and received generous sponsorship from the Union Baptist Church (UBC), Kohima, to pursue a three-year Bachelor of Divinity programme at the Union Biblical Seminary, Yavatmal, Maharashtra. He became the first Karbi Baptist to obtain this degree.

After returning home, he undertook the painstaking task of translating the New Testament into the Karbi language at the NKBA Mission Centre, Manja. The translation took him five years to complete and remains one of his greatest contributions to the Karbi Christian community.

For his outstanding contributions in the fields of art and culture, literature, social service, student leadership, and community development, Harsing Ingti has received recognition and appreciation from various organisations and institutions. In recognition of his lifelong and remarkable contributions, he was conferred the Chief Executive Member (CEM) Lifetime Achievement Award on 23 June 2023 at Dokamukam Waisong Sports Complex during the celebration of the 72nd Council Foundation Day, 2023.

## RSS at 100: Between history and civilization, between memory and modernity

By: Dr. Jayadeba Sahoo

"Ā No Bhadrāḥ Kratavo Yantu Viśvataḥ". "Let noble thoughts come to us from every direction."

The timeless invocation of Rig Veda (1.89.1) continues to illuminate India's path—one where ancient wisdom and modern aspiration converge in the shared pursuit of knowledge, justice, harmony, and human flourishing.

The history of nations is not merely chronicled through political revolutions or military victories; it is equally sculpted by institutions that shape collective consciousness, nurture ethical citizenship, and preserve civilizational memory. Throughout history, organizations dedicated to social cohesion, cultural continuity, and moral education have frequently exerted influence extending far beyond conventional political structures. India's modern history similarly encompasses a constellation of reform movements, educational initiatives, spiritual organizations, and cultural institutions that sought to reconstruct national self-confidence under colonial rule. Among these organizations, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), established in Nagpur in 1925 by Dr. Keshav Baliram Hedgewar, occupies a distinctive place.

**Prologue: India's Civilizational Continuum and the Idea of Cultural Organization**

India represents one of humanity's oldest continuous civilizations, whose philosophical traditions encompass the Vedas, Upanishads, Buddhist canons, Jain Agamas, Sikh scriptures, classical Sanskrit literature, regional knowledge traditions, and innumerable folk epistemologies. Unlike many nation-states founded upon singular ethnic or linguistic identities, Bharat has historically evolved through remarkable pluralism united by shared civilizational values.

Organizations committed to preserving these philosophical traditions frequently emphasize education, moral development, service, and community cohesion as mechanisms for sustaining civilizational continuity across generations. It was within this broader intellectual environment that the RSS emerged during the early twentieth century.

As the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) enters its second century, the discourse surrounding the organization has expanded beyond questions of organizational growth or historical evolution to encompass larger issues concerning India's civilizational identity, democratic development, educational transformation, and global aspirations. Whether viewed through the lens of appreciation, critical inquiry, or balanced scholarship, the RSS has become an integral component of contemporary national discourse. The centenary therefore provides an opportunity not only to revisit its historical journey but also to examine its relevance in the context of India's emergence as a major knowledge economy and civilizational power.

**RSS and Contemporary National Discourse**

Modern India is characterized by remarkable pluralism, constitutional democracy, rapid technological transformation, and increasing global engagement. Within this dynamic landscape, debates concerning nationalism, cultural identity, secularism, social harmony, education, and constitutional values have acquired renewed significance. The RSS has figured prominently in many of these discussions, both as a source of influence and as an object of critical scrutiny.

Supporters describe the organization as an enduring force for character formation, volunteerism, social cohesion, and cultural self-confidence. They argue that a nation aspiring to global leadership requires not only economic strength but also ethical citizenship, disciplined civic participation, and a deep awareness of its civilizational heritage. Critics, on the other hand, contend that any articulation of cultural nationalism must be carefully harmonized with constitutional pluralism, minority rights, and the equal citizenship guaranteed by the Constitution of India. These contrasting perspectives continue to animate scholarly and public debate (Andersen & Damle, 2018; Jaffrelot, 2021).

From an academic standpoint, these debates should not be understood merely as ideological disagreements but as reflections of broader questions confronting many contemporary societies: How should historical memory inform national identity? Can civilizational traditions coexist with liberal constitutional democracy? How can cultural rootedness be reconciled with global citizenship? Such questions transcend the Indian context and resonate with international discussions on heritage, identity, and democratic governance.

## A Critical Analysis of Reawakening Bharatiya Consciousness, Nation Building and Contemporary Political Contestations

Integral Humanism and the Vision of Viksit Bharat 2047

Among the most influential philosophical contributions associated with the broader Sangh tradition is Integral Humanism (Ekatma Manav Darshan), articulated by Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya in the mid-1960s. Conceived as an indigenous framework for human development, Integral Humanism argues that neither unrestrained capitalism nor centralized socialism sufficiently addresses the holistic needs of individuals and society. Instead, it advocates an integrated vision in which economic prosperity, ethical conduct, cultural continuity, ecological balance, and spiritual well-being reinforce one another.

This philosophy resonates with the classical Indian doctrine of the Purusharthas—Dharma (ethical order), Artha (prosperity), Kama (legitimate aspirations), and Moksha (spiritual fulfillment)—which together present a balanced understanding of human flourishing. In this perspective, development is not measured solely by gross domestic product or industrial output but also by social trust, environmental sustainability, educational excellence, cultural vitality, and moral responsibility.

As India advances towards the national aspiration of Viksit Bharat 2047, marking the centenary of Independence, these ideas have gained renewed relevance. The ambition of becoming a developed nation extends beyond economic indicators to encompass innovation, inclusive growth, social cohesion, institutional integrity, and cultural confidence. While the pathways to achieving these goals remain subjects of democratic deliberation, the underlying emphasis on holistic development aligns with broader global conversations surrounding sustainable development and human well-being.

The Bhagavad Gita (3.20) expresses this ethical orientation through the ideal of Lokasangraha: "Lokasangrahavevāpi Saṃpāśyan Kartumarhasi."—"Act with a view to the welfare and cohesion of the world." This principle suggests that public leadership should ultimately serve the common good rather than sectional interests—a value that remains relevant to democratic societies across the world.

**Education, Innovation, and India's Knowledge Economy**

India's emergence as a global knowledge economy depends upon its ability to integrate scientific excellence with cultural confidence. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 has articulated a vision of education that is multidisciplinary, experiential, learner-centric, and rooted in India's intellectual traditions. Its emphasis on Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS), Indian languages, ethical education, critical thinking, and research excellence reflects an effort to bridge the perceived divide between ancient wisdom and contemporary innovation (Government of India, 2020).

Many educational institutions inspired by the broader Sangh ecosystem have, over several decades, promoted value-based education through the study of Sanskrit, yoga, environmental ethics, and India's philosophical traditions. While these institutions differ in their pedagogical approaches, their emphasis on holistic personal development parallels emerging international interest in social-emotional learning, character education, and values-based pedagogy.

The ancient Indian educational ideal continues to offer enduring relevance:

"That alone is true knowledge which liberates."

In the twenty-first century, liberation may be understood not only in spiritual terms but also as freedom from ignorance, poverty, prejudice, ecological degradation, and intellectual dependency. A knowledge society capable of generating original research, technological innovation, ethical leadership, and global cooperation must nurture curiosity alongside character, creativity alongside compassion.

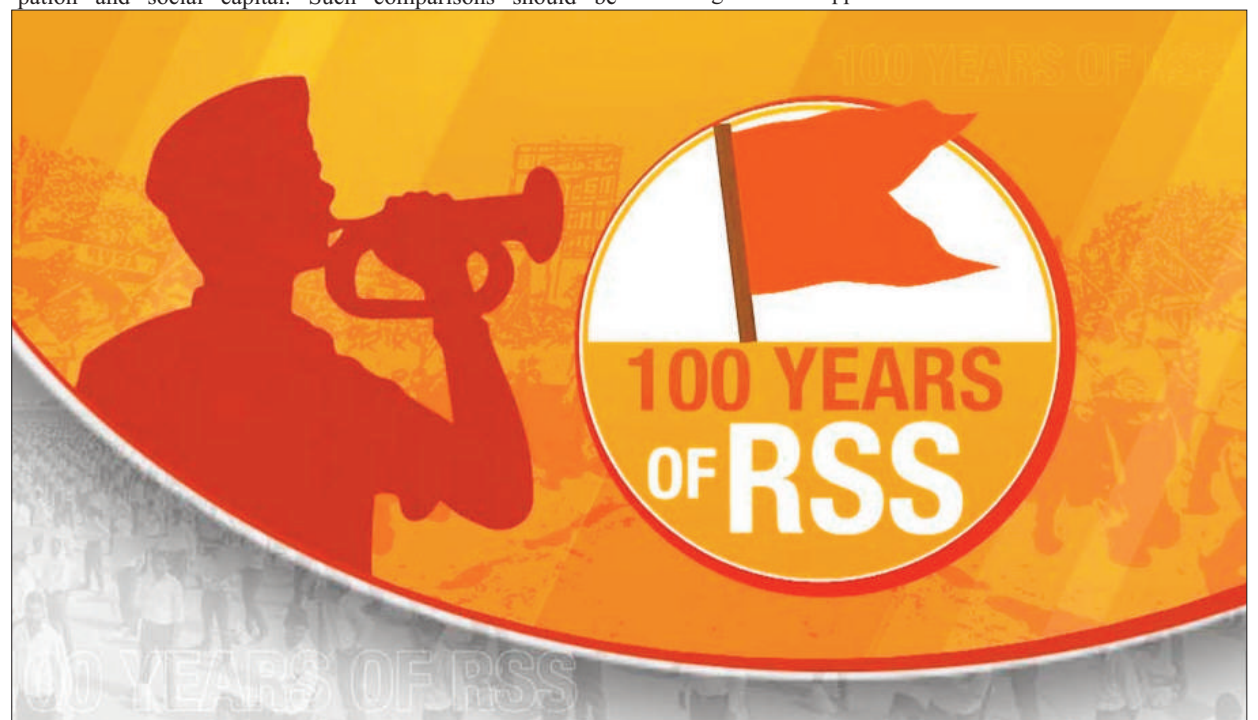
India's scientific achievements—from digital public infrastructure and space exploration to biotechnology and artificial intelligence—can coexist with renewed engagement with classical knowledge traditions. The Indian Knowledge System should therefore not be viewed as an alternative to modern science but as a complementary civilizational resource capable of enriching contemporary education, environmental ethics, medicine, architecture, governance, and philosophy.

**The RSS in Global Perspective**

The expansion of the Indian diaspora has transformed Indian

culture into an increasingly global phenomenon. Yoga, Ayurveda, meditation, Sanskrit studies, and Indian philosophy have gained widespread international recognition, contributing to India's growing cultural influence. Organizations such as the Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh (HSS), operating independently in several countries, have organized cultural programmes, youth leadership initiatives, volunteer activities, and community service within diaspora communities.

Comparative studies of civil society often place the RSS alongside large volunteer organizations such as the Scout Movement, YMCA, or faith-based service organizations, not because they share identical ideologies, but because they demonstrate the capacity of sustained volunteer networks to generate civic participation and social capital. Such comparisons should be



approached cautiously, recognizing the distinct historical and cultural contexts in which each organization operates.

The ancient Indian civilizational axiom (Maha Upanishad 6.71–75), "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam"—"The whole world is one family"—has increasingly been invoked in discussions of India's soft power, intercultural dialogue, and global engagement. It offers a universal framework for engaging with contemporary global challenges. While interpretations of this ideal differ, it reflects a long-standing aspiration within Indian philosophical thought to reconcile cultural rootedness with universal human welfare. It reminds us that civilizational confidence need not imply exclusivity but can instead inspire dialogue, cooperation, and shared human welfare.

**Achievements, Debates, and Future Challenges**

The centenary of the RSS invites both appreciation and critical reflection. Among its widely acknowledged strengths are its extensive volunteer base, organizational discipline, long-term investment in educational and service institutions, disaster relief initiatives, and emphasis on civic responsibility. These dimensions have attracted attention from scholars of civil society, organizational sociology, and volunteerism.

At the same time, legitimate academic debates persist regarding aspects of its ideological orientation, historical role in the freedom movement, understanding of cultural nationalism, and engagement with India's religious and social diversity. Such debates should neither be dismissed nor politicized; rather, they should be explored through rigorous archival research, empirical investigation, and respectful scholarly dialogue.

A mature democracy is strengthened when influential institutions—whether governmental, social, religious, or cultural—are examined critically yet fairly. Intellectual openness remains indispensable to the pursuit of historical truth. The Rig Veda's

(10.191.2) timeless exhortation remains particularly relevant: "Sangachadhvam samvadadhvam sam v manāmsi jānām."—"Move together, speak together, let your minds be in harmony—just as the gods of old, united in purpose." This is a famous verse advocating for unity and harmony. The verse does not demand uniformity of opinion; rather, it encourages constructive dialogue grounded in mutual respect and shared purpose.

**Epilogue: Towards a Civilizational Future**  
The hundred-year journey of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh mirrors many of the aspirations, achievements, tensions, and transformations that have shaped modern India. From its modest beginnings in Nagpur to its extensive network of volunteers and affiliated institutions, the RSS has become a significant participant in national conversations on education, culture, service, and identity.

Its centenary is therefore more than an organizational milestone; it is an occasion to reflect upon the deeper questions confronting India as it approaches Viksit Bharat 2047. Can economic

progress be harmonized with ethical governance? Can technological advancement coexist with ecological responsibility? Can constitutional democracy flourish alongside a confident civilizational identity? Can ancient wisdom illuminate contemporary challenges without constraining scientific inquiry?

The Indian Knowledge System offers one possible framework for engaging these questions. By emphasizing the integration of knowledge and values, innovation and tradition, individual excellence and collective welfare, it invites a model of development that is simultaneously modern and rooted, globally engaged yet culturally confident.

Ultimately, the legacy of the RSS—like that of any enduring institution—will continue to be interpreted through multiple scholarly lenses. What remains beyond dispute, however, is that its first century has left an indelible imprint on India's social, educational, and cultural landscape. Its second century will be judged not merely by organizational expansion but by its capacity to contribute constructively to an India that is prosperous, inclusive, intellectually vibrant, environmentally responsible, and firmly anchored in the timeless wisdom of its civilizational heritage.—"Dharmo rakshati rakshitah"—"Dharma protects those who protect Dharma."

In its broad philosophical sense—as ethical order, justice, responsibility, and the common good—this ancient maxim offers an enduring reminder that the greatness of any civilization ultimately rests not only upon its material achievements but also upon the moral character of its people and the institutions they build.

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# 5 drawbacks to following your passion

By: Erin A. Cech

After earning bachelor's degrees in engineering and sociology, I was determined to do what I love. I headed straight to graduate school to investigate the social problems that frightened and fascinated me.

For almost a decade, I told everyone I encountered – students, cousins, baristas at the coffee shop I frequented – that they should do the same. "Follow your passion," I counseled. "You can figure out the employment stuff later."

It wasn't until I began to research this widely accepted career advice that I understood how problematic – and rooted in privilege – it really was.

## The passion principle

As a sociologist who examines workforce culture and inequalities, I interviewed college students and professional workers to learn what it really meant to pursue their dreams, which I will refer to here as the passion principle. I was stunned by what I found out about this principle in the research for my book "The Trouble with Passion."

I examined surveys that show the American public has held the passion principle in high regard as a career decision-making priority since the 1980s. And its popularity is even stronger among those facing pandemic-related job instability.

My interviews revealed that proponents of the passion principle found it compelling because they believed that following one's passion can provide workers with both the motivation necessary to work hard and a place to find fulfillment.

fillment.

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Yet, what I found is that following one's passion does not necessarily lead to fulfillment, but is one of the most powerful cultural forces perpetuating overwork. I also found that promoting the pursuit of one's passion helps perpetuate social inequalities due to the fact that not everyone has the same economic resources to allow them to pursue their passion with ease. What follows are five major pitfalls of the passion principle that I discovered through my research.

### 1. Reinforces social inequality

While the passion principle is broadly popular, not everyone has the necessary resources to turn their passion into a stable, good-paying job.

Passion-seekers from wealthy families are better able to wait until a job in their passion comes along without worrying about student loans in the meantime. They are also better situated to take unpaid internships to get their foot in the door while their parents pay their rent or let them live at home.

And they often have access to parents' social networks to help them find jobs. Surveys revealed that working-class and first-generation college graduates, regardless of their career field, are more likely than their wealthier peers to end up in low-paying unskilled jobs when they pursue their passion.

Colleges and universities, workplaces and career counselors who promote the "follow your passion" path for everyone, without leveling the playing field, help



perpetuate socioeconomic inequalities among career aspirants.

Thus, those who promote the "follow your passion" path for everyone might be ignoring the fact that not everyone is equally able to find success while following that advice.

### 2. A threat to well-being

My research revealed that passion proponents see the pursuit of one's passion as a good way to decide on a career, not only because having work in one's passion might lead to a good job, but because it is believed to lead to a good life. To achieve this, passion-seekers invest much of their own sense of identity in their work.

Yet, the labor force is not structured around the goal of nurturing our authentic sense of self. Indeed, studies of laid-off workers have illustrated that those who were passionate about their work felt as though they lost a part of their identity when they lost their jobs, along with their source of income.

When we rely on our jobs to give us a sense of purpose, we place our identities at the mercy of the global economy.

### 3. Promotes exploitation

It's not just well-off passion-seekers who benefit from the passion principle. Employers of passionate workers do, too. I conducted an experiment to see how potential employers would respond to job applicants who expressed different reasons for being interested in a job.

Not only do potential employers prefer passionate applicants over applicants who wanted the job for other reasons, but employers knowingly exploited this passion. Potential employers showed greater interest in passionate applicants in part because employers believed the applicants would work hard at their jobs without expecting an increase in pay.

### 4. Reinforces the culture of overwork

In conversations with college students and college-educated workers, I found that a substantial number were willing to

sacrifice a good salary, job stability and leisure time to work in a job they love. Nearly half – or 46% – of college-educated workers I surveyed ranked interest or passion for the work as their first priority in a future job. This compared to only 21% who prioritized salary and 15% who prioritized work-family balance. Among those I interviewed, there were those who said they would willingly "eat ramen noodles every night" and "work 90 hours a week" if it meant they could follow their passion.

Although many professionals seek work in their area of passion precisely because they want to avoid the drudgery of working long hours doing tasks they aren't personally committed to, passion-seeking ironically perpetuates the cultural expectations of overwork. Most passion-seekers I spoke to were willing to work long hours as long as it was work about which they were passionate.

### 5. Dismisses labor market inequality

I find that the passion principle isn't just a guide that its followers use to make decisions about their own lives. For many, it also serves as an explanation for workforce inequality. For example, compared to those who don't adhere to the passion principle, proponents were more likely to say women aren't represented well in engineering because they followed their passion elsewhere, rather than acknowledging the deep structural and cultural roots of this underrepresentation. In other words, passion principle proponents tend to explain away patterns of labor market inequality as the benign result of individual passion-seeking.

### Avoiding pitfalls

To avoid these pitfalls, people may want to base their career decisions on more than whether those decisions represent their passion. What do you need from your work in addition to a paycheck? Predictable hours? Enjoyable colleagues? Benefits? A respectful boss?

For those who are already employed in jobs you are passionate about, I encourage you to diversify your portfolio of the ways in which you make meaning – to nurture hobbies, activities, community service and identities that exist wholly outside of work. How can you make time to invest in these other ways to find purpose and satisfaction?

Another factor to consider is whether you are being fairly compensated for the extra passion-fueled efforts you contribute to your job. If you work for a company, does your manager know that you spent weekends reading books on team leadership or mentoring the newest member of your team after hours? We contribute to our own exploitation if we do uncompensated work for our job out of our passion for it.

My research for "The Trouble with Passion" raises sobering questions about standard approaches to mentoring and career advising. Every year, millions of high school and college graduates gear up to enter the labor force full time, and millions more reevaluate their jobs. It is vital that the friends, parents, teachers and career coaches who counsel them begin to question if advising them to pursue their passion is something that could end up doing more harm than good. (Courtesy: The Conversation)

## Bank of India Recruitment 2026 – 779 Credit Officer Vacancy, Online Apply

Name of Post	Credit Officer
No of Posts	779 posts
Qualification	Bachelors or Master's Degree
Age Limit	25 to 32 [28 to 38] 32 to 45 years
Application Fee	Rs 850/-
Start Date	30th June 2026
Last Date	20th July 2026

### Bank of India Recruitment 2026

Bank of India has released an employment notification for the recruitment of 779 Credit Officer (GBO Stream) vacancy. It is an excellent opportunity for job seekers who want to pursue his/her career in the field of banking.

Interested and eligible candidates may check this article for detailed official notification, educational qualification, age limit, salary details, and application procedure to be followed.

### Bank of India Recruitment Details

Name of post: Credit Officer  
No of posts: 779 posts  
Scale-wise vacancy:

MMGS-II:	677 posts
MMGS-III:	61 posts
SMGS-IV:	41 posts
Pay scale:	
MMGS-II:	64820 – 2340 (1) – 67160 – 2680 (10) – 93960
MMGS-III:	85920 – 2680 (5) – 99320 – 2980 (2) – 105280
SMGS-IV:	102300 – 2980 (4) – 114220 – 3360 (2) – 120940

### Eligibility Criteria of Bank of India Recruitment

MMGS-II:  
Age Limit: 25 to 32 years .  
Educational Qualification: A Degree (Graduation) in any discipline from recognized University/Institute with 60% marks or equivalent grade (55% for SC/ ST/ OBC/ PwBD) recognized by the Govt. of India or any equivalent qualification recognized as such by the Central Government  
OR

### CA/CMA-ICWA/CS/CFA

Experience: Minimum 3 years' post qualification experience as an officer out of which 2 years' experience should be in processing of MSME Credit/ Commercial Credit / Project Finance / Mid & Large Credit in Scheduled Commercial Banks/ Financial Institutions/ NBFC.

### MMGS-III:

Age Limit: 28 to 38 years .  
Educational Qualification: A Degree (Graduation) in any discipline from recognized University/Institute with 60% marks or equivalent grade (55% for SC/ ST/ OBC/ PwBD) recognized by the Govt. of India or any equivalent qualification recognized as such by the Central Government  
OR

### CA/CMA-ICWA/CS/CFA

Experience: Minimum 5 years' post qualification experience as an officer out of which 3 years' experience should be in processing of MSME Credit/ Commercial Credit / Project Finance / Mid & Large Credit in Scheduled Commercial Banks/ Financial Institutions/ NBFC.

### SMG-IV:

Age Limit: 32 to 45 years .  
Educational Qualification: A Degree (Graduation) in any discipline from recognized University/Institute with 60% marks or equivalent grade (55% for SC/ ST/ OBC/ PwBD) recognized by the Govt. of India or any equivalent qualification recognized as such by the Central Government  
OR

### CA/CMA-ICWA/CS/CFA

Experience: Minimum 7 years' post qualification experience as an officer out of which 4 years' experience should be in processing of MSME Credit/ Commercial Credit / Project Finance / Mid & Large Credit in Scheduled Commercial Banks/ Financial Institutions/ NBFC. uled Commercial Banks/ in a Public sector or Listed Financial Institution/ Foreign Banks.

Age Relaxation: The category-wise age relaxation is as mentioned below.  
# SC/ ST: 5 years # OBC/NCL: 3 years # PwBD: 10 years

### Application Fee:

# SC/ST/PWD: Rs. 175/- (intimation charges only)  
# General & others: Rs. 850/- (application fee + intimation charges)

### How to Apply for Bank of India Recruitment?

Interested and eligible candidates may apply online for these vacancy by visiting official Bank of India Recruitment Portal. Candidates may follow below mentioned steps to apply online.

#Scroll down, go to Important Web-Links section.

#Click on the "Online Application Form" and complete the registration process by clicking "New Registration".

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

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

#At the end, pay the application fee as per your category and submit the form.

#Don't forget to take a print out of the application form

### Important Dates of Bank of India Vacancy 2026

Starting date for submission of online application: 30th June 2026  
Last date for submission of online application: 20th July 2026

## IBPS PO Recruitment 2026 – 6715 Posts, Online Apply

Name of Post	Probationary Officer/ Management Trainee
No of Posts	6715 posts
Qualification	Graduate
Age Limit	20 - 30 years
Application Fee	Rs 850/- (₹ 175/- for reserved categories)
Start Date	1st July 2026
Last Date	21st July 2026
IBPS PO Recruitment 2026	

Institute of Banking Personnel Selection (IBPS) has released an employment notification for the recruitment of 6715 Probationary Officer/ Management Trainee (PO/MT) posts in various Participating Public Sector Banks against IBPS CRP PO/ MT-XVI. It is an excellent opportunity for job seekers who want to pursue his/ her career in the field of banking.

Interested and eligible candidates may check this article for detailed official notification, educational qualification, age limit, salary details, and application procedure to be followed.

### IBPS PO/ MT Recruitment Details

Name of post: Probationary Officer/ Management Trainee  
No of posts: 6715 posts  
Name of organization: Institute of Banking Personnel Selection (IBPS)  
Pay scale: ₹ 48480-2000/7-62480-2340/2-67160-2680/7-85920

### Bank-wise Vacancy

Total 11 public sector banks have participated in this recruitment cycle or the year 2027-28; however there are vacancies in 8 PSB only. Bank-wise vacancy details are as mentioned below.

Participating Bank	No. of vacancy
Bank of Baroda	1900
Bank of India	500
Bank of Maharashtra	1100
Canara Bank	1500
Central Bank of India	500
Indian Overseas Bank	550
Punjab National Bank	504
Punjab & Sind Bank	161
Total	6715

### Eligibility Criteria of IBPS PO/ MT Recruitment

Age Limit: Candidates age should be between 20 years to 30 years as on 1st July 2026. Candidate should be born between 2nd July 1996 to 1st July 2006 (both dates inclusive).

Age Relaxation: Category-wise age relaxation is as follows  
SC/ ST: 5 years OBC-NCL: 3 years PwBD: 10 years Ex-Servicemen: 5 years

Educational Qualification: Candidate must have a Degree (Graduation) in any discipline from a University recognised by the Govt. Of India or any equivalent qualification recognized as such by the Central Government. The candidate must possess valid Mark-sheet / Degree Certificate that he/ she is a graduate on the day he / she registers and indicate the percentage of marks obtained in Graduation while registering online.

### Application Fee:

Candidates have to pay an application Fees/ intimation Charges as mentioned below as per their categories or community:

Category	Fee
SC/ST/PwBD	Rs 175/-
Others	Rs 850/-

Payment Mode: Debit Cards (RuPay/Visa/MasterCard/Maestro), Credit Cards, Internet Banking, IMPS, Cash Cards/ Mobile Wallets by providing information as asked on the screen.

### How to Apply for IBPS PO Recruitment ?

Interested and eligible candidates may apply online for these vacancy by visiting official IBPS Recruitment Portal. Candidates may follow below mentioned steps to apply online.

- Scroll down, go to Important Web-Links section .
- Click on the "Online Application Form" and complete the registration process by clicking "New User ? Register Here".
- In the next stage, click on "Online Application Form" Link and Login.
- Fill your all personal and educational details and upload necessary documents.
- Make payment of application fee as per your category and submit the form.
- At the end, take a print out of the application form .

### Important Dates of IBPS PO Recruitment 2026

- Starting date of submission of online application: 1st July 2026
- Last date of submission of online application: 21st July 2026
- Date for Download Call Letter or Prelims Exam: August, 2026
- Date for Prelims Exam: August, 2026
- Date for Declaration of Prelims Result: September, 2026
- Date for Download Call Letter or Mains Exam: September, 2026
- Date for Mains Exam: October, 2026
- Date for Declaration of Mains Result: November, 2026
- Personality Test: November, 2026
- Conduct of Interview: November/ December, 2026
- Date for Provisional Allotment List: January, 2027

## IBPS Specialist Officer Recruitment 2026 – 745 Posts, Online Apply

Name of Post	Specialist Officer
No of Posts	745 posts
Qualification	Graduate/ Post Graduate
Age Limit	20 - 30 years
Application Fee	Rs 850/- (₹ 175/- for reserved categories)
Start Date	1st July 2026
Last Date	21st July 2026
IBPS Specialist Officer Recruitment 2026	

Institute of Banking Personnel Selection (IBPS) has released an employment notification for the recruitment of 745 Specialist Officer (CRP SPL-XVI) posts on regular basis in various Participating Public Sector Banks.

Interested and eligible candidates may check this article for detailed official notification, educational qualification, age limit, salary details, and application procedure to be followed.

### IBPS Specialist Officer Recruitment Details

1. I.T. Officer (Scale-I)	2. Agricultural Field Officer (Scale I)
No of posts: 301 posts	No of posts: 190 posts
3. Rajbhasha Adhikari (Scale I)	4. Law Officer (Scale I)
No of posts: 89 posts	No of posts: 105 posts
5. HR/ Personnel Officer (Scale I)	
No of posts: 60 posts	

Scale of pay: ₹ 48480-2000/7-62480-2340/2-67160-2680/7-85920

### Eligibility Criteria of IBPS Specialist Officer Recruitment

Age Limit: Candidates age should be between 20 years to 30 years as on 1st July 2026. Candidate should be born between 2nd July 1996 to 1st July 2006 (both dates inclusive).

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

SC/ ST: 5 years OBC-NCL: 3 years PwBD: 10 years Ex-Servicemen: 5 years

### Educational Qualification:

#### I.T. Officer (Scale-I):

a) 4 year Engineering/Technology Degree in Computer Science/ Computer Applications/ Information Technology/ Electronics/ Electronics & Telecommunications/ Electronics & Communication/ Electronics & Instrumentation OR  
b) Post Graduate Degree in Electronics/ Electronics & Telecommunication/ Electronics & Communication/ Electronics & Instrumentation / Computer Science/ Information Technology/ Computer Applications OR Graduate having passed DOEACC 'B' level.

Agricultural Field Officer (Scale I): 4 year Degree (graduation) in Agriculture/ Horticulture/ Animal Husbandry/ Veterinary Science/ Dairy Science/ Fishery Science/ Pisciculture/ Agri. Marketing & Cooperation/ Co-operation & Banking/ Agro-Forestry/Forestry/ Agricultural Biotechnology/ Food Science/ Agriculture Business Management/ Food Technology/ Dairy Technology/ Agricultural Engineering/ Sericulture / Fisheries Engineering.

Rajbhasha Adhikari (Scale I): Post Graduate Degree in Hindi with English as a subject at the degree (graduation) level OR Post graduate degree in Sanskrit with English and Hindi as subjects at the degree (graduation) level.

Law Officer (Scale I): A Bachelor Degree in Law (LLB) and enrolled as an advocate with Bar Council.

HR/ Personnel Officer (Scale I): Graduate and Two Years Full time Post Graduate degree or Two Years Full time Post Graduate diploma in Personnel Management / Industrial Relations/ HR / HRD/ Social Work / Labour Law.

### Application Fee:

Candidates have to pay an application Fees/ intimation Charges as mentioned below as per their categories or community:

Category	Fee
SC/ST/PwBD	Rs 175/-
Others	Rs 850/-

Payment Mode: Debit Cards (RuPay/Visa/MasterCard/Maestro), Credit Cards, Internet Banking, IMPS, Cash Cards/ Mobile Wallets by providing information as asked on the screen.

### How to Apply for IBPS Recruitment?

Interested and eligible candidates may apply online for these vacancy by visiting official IBPS Recruitment Portal. Candidates may follow below mentioned steps to apply online.

- Scroll down, go to Important Web-Links section .
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- In the next stage, click on "Online Application Form" Link and Login.
- Fill your all personal and educational details and upload necessary documents.
- Make payment of application fee as per your category and submit the form.
- At the end, take a print out of the application form .

### Important Dates of IBPS Specialist Officer Recruitment 2026

- Starting date of submission of online application: 1st July 2026
- Last date of submission of online application: 21st July 2026
- Date for Download Call Letter or Prelims Exam: August, 2026
- Date for Prelims Exam: August, 2026
- Date for Declaration of Prelims Result: September/October, 2026
- Date for Download Call Letter or Mains Exam: October, 2026
- Date for Mains Exam: November, 2026
- Date for Declaration of Mains Result: November, 2026
- Conduct of Interview: November/ December, 2026
- Date for Provisional Allotment List: January, 2027

## In every state, the Congress is in 'tukde tukde' mode'

# BJP links Channi's reported displeasure to infight in Congress, says 'new cracks' emerging



**NEW DELHI, July 3:** The BJP on Friday claimed that "new cracks" are emerging in the Congress, citing reports that party leader Charanjit Channi is "miffed" over the latest organisational reshuffle ahead of the Punjab polls.

The attack came a day after Congress leader Manish Tewari put out a cryptic post on X, saying he wished he had an antidote for the "insecurities of individuals" and "institutions" after he was not assigned any organisational role in the latest reshuffle in the state.

Tewari shared a media report which stated that he was "left in the cold" as the Congress appointed new working presidents and set up poll panels for Punjab.

The Congress on Wednesday retained Amrinder Singh Raja Warring as the Punjab Congress president and Partap Singh Bajwa as the leader of Opposition in the state assembly in its organisational team for the 2027 assembly election. Channi, who is said to be "miffed" at not being appointed Punjab Congress chief, was appointed chairman of the party's campaign committee. The Jalandhar MP and a former chief minister remained incommunicado throughout Thursday.

He was considered one of the frontrunners for the post and has called a meeting of his supporters on Friday. BJP national spokesperson Shehzad Poon-

awalla said that the opposition party is in "tukde tukde mode" and facing infighting across states.

"After Manish Tewari, now it is Channi's turn. Tewari was upset with the Congress and tweeted about it. A day later, Channi, who is also upset with the Congress, is calling a meeting of his supporters," he said in a video statement. Poonawalla claimed that the party was coasting headless.

"It seems the Congress is giving evidence every day that it has no neta, no niti, no netriva, no mission -- only confusion and division," he said.

Citing factional rivalries in several states, the BJP leader alleged that internal conflicts have become the defining feature of the Congress.

"In Karnataka, it is D K Shivakumar versus Siddaramaiah; in Himachal Pradesh, Pratibha Singh

ji versus (Sukhvinder Singh) Sukhu ji. We have seen Gehlot versus Pilot fight in Rajasthan. In every state, the Congress is in 'tukde tukde mode', and now Punjab too," Poonawalla said.

He alleged that the recurring internal disputes show that Congress leaders do not accept Rahul Gandhi's leadership.

"It shows that the Congress party does not consider Rahul Gandhi to be its leader, and under his so-called leadership, these fights keep taking place every day," he alleged. Poonawalla also claimed that the Telangana Congress and the Madhya Pradesh Congress had united to defeat Meenakshi Natarajan in the Rajya Sabha election.

"In the Congress party, there is a new kalesh, a new fight, a new division and a new crack emerging every day," he said. (PTI)

## RAM TEMPLE DONATION 'THEFT'

# SIT to re-audit temple trust's accounts of past five years



**AYODHYA (UP), July 3:** The Special Investigation Team (SIT) probing the alleged embezzlement of donations at the Ram temple here will conduct a re-audit of the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust's accounts for the past five years after the preliminary probe indicated large-scale irregularities, sources said on Friday.

The re-audit will cover construction-related expenditure as well as jewellery and other gold and silver items received as donations, the sources said.

The SIT will carry out a detailed scrutiny of the Trust's financial records for the entire five-year period, the sources said.

In another development, the Ayodhya Police questioned key accused Avinash Shukla after taking him into custody.

Shukla, who was involved in donation-counting work, was arrested earlier in the case, and a local court on Thursday granted his police custody for 24 hours.

Police sources said Shukla, from whose possession the highest cash recovery in the case has been made so far, is facing intensified legal proceedings.

The SIT has so far questioned Trust general secretary Champat Rai, trustee Anil Mishra and Gopal Rao, who has been associated with the temple's construction and management.

Rai and Mishra have tendered their resignations from their respective posts, and the Trust is expected to take a decision on them at its meeting scheduled for July 6.

According to police sources, cash recoveries in the case include ₹ 20.39 lakh from Shukla, ₹ 18.07 lakh from Karunesh Pandey, ₹ 16.82 lakh from Anukalp Mishra, ₹ 14.25 lakh from Lavkush Mishra, ₹ 7.32 lakh from Ramashankar Mishra and ₹ 1 lakh from Ramashankar Yadav alias Tinnu.

Police have also recovered around 11 grams of gold, about 375 grams of silver and USD 1,121 during the investigation. Investigators also seized a donation box labelled "Ramrajya Kosh", bearing a Paytm QR code, from a yoga centre in Ayodhya where Shukla had allegedly been staying for nearly a decade, the sources said.

Meanwhile, Bageshwar Dham chief Acharya Dharendra Krishna Shastri on Friday expressed confidence in the investigation, saying those responsible for the alleged embezzlement would face punishment.

"God will punish the culprits. We have complete faith in the country's law and order system and in the SIT," he told reporters.

"The present age is not just the age of Kalyug; it is more an age of 'Chhalyug' (deception). In this age of deception, it is important to remain vigilant. At the present time, saints, mahants, monasteries and temples are being targeted in a planned manner. Whoever has committed this sin will be punished by God, and the SIT, the law of the country and the government will also punish them," he added.

The alleged embezzlement of donations at the Ram temple came to light on June 7. An FIR was registered on June 25 on the basis of a preliminary report submitted by the SIT constituted by the Uttar Pradesh government. Eight persons associated with the temple's donation-counting process have been arrested so far, and the investigation is continuing. (PTI)

## Congress accuses Modi govt of 'calibrated capitulation' to China

**NEW DELHI, July 3:** The Congress on Friday alleged that the Modi government's "calibrated capitulation" to China is continuing even as India's trade deficit with that country reaches record levels "destroying large sections of our industry specially MSMEs". Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh shared a media report on X which claimed that India has allowed four Chinese power equipment manufacturers with factories in the country to participate in government tenders for critical power projects.

In his post, Ramesh said, "The Modi Government's calibrated capitulation to China continues even as India's trade deficit with that country reaches record levels destroying large sections of our industry specially MSMEs."

China's provocative actions in relation to Arunachal Pradesh are unabated, he said.

"The world's largest hydroelectric project in Medog continues, imperilling India's water security in relation to the Brahmaputra. India's traditional patrolling and herding rights in many places in Eastern Ladakh have been given up," Ramesh claimed.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi "infamously gave a public clean chit" to China on June 19, 2020 even after 20 of our brave armed forces personnel were martyred in Ladakh, he said. China's pivotal role in Pakistan's actions during Operation Sindoor were acknowledged by the Deputy Chief of Army Staff and are documented," Ramesh said. (PTI)

## Electoral democracy faces gravest threat from Modi-Shah regime: Congress

**NEW DELHI, July 3:** The Congress on Friday said democracy faces the "gravest of threats" from the current dispensation, days after opposition parties urged the Supreme Court to take steps to restore the integrity and accountability of the electoral process.

In a letter to the Chief Justice of India, leaders of several Opposition parties had written, saying "democracies turn to anarchy when institutional mechanism fails" and "when the judiciary fails, it indicates a complete breakdown of the Republic".

The opposition parties demanded that the entire SIR (special intensive revision) process be suspended and launched at a time when the next assembly election is at least five years away. They also raised the alleged misuse of central agencies and sought serious consideration of restoring ballot papers where appropriate.

Sharing the opposition parties' letter to the CJI in a post on X, Congress general secretary K C Venugopal said the Supreme Court is entrusted with the responsibility of ensuring that injustice is not done and the free and fair nature of elections is protected.

"Electoral democracy in our country faces the gravest of threats from the Modi-



Shah regime," he said in his post.

Venugopal said that on June 28, 24 opposition parties, along with an Independent MP, wrote to the CJI on the flawed SIR process, the "partisan role" of the Election Commission of India and other election-related issues.

"It is the role of our judiciary to guard our democracy from the excesses of the executive - especially one which is hell-bent on destroying the Constitutional framework that gives us our democracy.

"In our democracy, the Supreme Court is entrusted with the onerous responsibility of ensuring injustice doesn't prevail. Therefore, it has a vital role to play in protecting the free and fair nature of elections, and also to make sure that they seen to be free and fair. Without this, injustice

against 1.4 billion voters persists every single day," he said in his post.

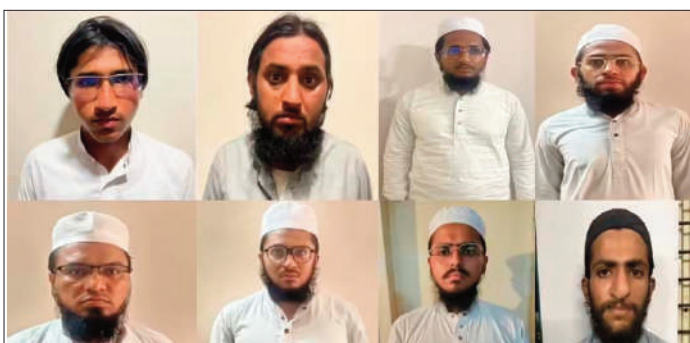
"We are releasing this letter, in the interest of transparency, and in the hope that the Hon'ble Supreme Court will take the firm steps urgently required to restore the integrity and accountability of and faith in the election process of crores of our people," Venugopal said. TMC MP Derek O'Brien also said on X, "Significant. This is the first time since five meetings of the INDIA bloc have been held, that parties opposed to the BJP, have jointly signed a letter/document".

In their letter, various leaders of political parties said it is addressed to the Supreme Court through the CJI and is not intended to influence the decision of any cause pending before any court.

"We all, representing like-minded political parties, firmly opposed to the BJP believe that the electoral process is being manipulated and outcomes in multiple instances do not reflect the will of the people. There are several reasons for this.

"First, how the Election Commission (ECI) is constituted is and has always been decided by the government in power," the letter said, citing various other instances on the functioning of the EC. (PTI)

## 8 'members' of terror outfit Jaish-e-Mohammed arrested by Gujarat ATS



**AHMEDABAD, July 3:** Eight alleged members of Pakistan-based terror outfit Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM), two of them aged 18 and 19, have been arrested by Gujarat's Anti-Terrorist Squad (ATS) for seeking to establish an active network in the western state, officials said on Friday.

The Gujarat ATS arrested the individuals from various districts of the state as well as adjoining Madhya Pradesh, they said. Police said the accused were working to establish an active terror network in Gu-

jarat. Seven of them were arrested from Gujarat and one from Madhya Pradesh.

"Eight accused were arrested on Thursday from different districts of Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh. They were members of banned terror organisation Jaish-e-Mohammed and working on behalf of it to set up an active terror network in Gujarat," ATS officials said.

The arrested individuals were identified by the ATS as Ahmed Abdullah Gajiwala (19), Mudassar Abdullah Ghaziwala (22) and

Ibrahim Mohammad Husen Ghagha (30), residents of Banaskantha; Zakariya Durani Mohammad Ammar Ghagha (21), Mufti Faujan Ismail Dauwa (40) and Mohammad Amin Shera (21), residents of Patan district; Mohammad Abdul Rahman Savdi (22), a resident of Navsari district; and Bilal Durani Mohammad Ammar Ghagha (18), a resident of Madhya Pradesh.

A case has been registered against the eight accused under sections 13 (punishment for unlawful activities), 17 (punishment for raising funds for terrorist act), 18 (punishment for conspiracy), 38 (offence relating to membership of a terrorist organisation) and 39 (offence relating to support given to a terrorist organisation) of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act. Sections 148 (conspiracy to commit offences punishable by section 145) and 61 (criminal conspiracy) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) were also invoked against them. (PTI)

## Tharoor recalls past security concerns amid Adani's proposed MSC stake transfer

**THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, July 3:** Amid controversy over the proposed selling of 49 per cent stakes in the Adani Vizhinjam Port Private Limited (AVPPL), the concessionaire of the port, to the Switzerland based shipping major, MSC, Congress MP Shashi Tharoor on Friday recalled that the project had failed to secure bidders several times under both the UPA and NDA governments because of concerns over the possible involvement of Chinese companies.

The Thiruvananthapuram MP said any stake transfer would require the concurrence of both the central and Kerala governments, as the port is a strategic national asset and national security considerations remain paramount.

"You might remember that before the tender for the project was approved, 3-4 times the bids had failed due to the possibility of involvement of Chinese companies in the process.

"As a result, both the Congress

and BJP governments at the Centre had not given approval. So, no final decision should be taken without the concurrence of the governments. That is my view also," he said.

Tharoor said that while no one was against the growth and development of the port, it has to be taken forward in accordance with the concession agreement entered into with the state government.

"Only after both the central and state governments grant their respective clearances can such a sale or transfer of shares be approved. That is the usual legal procedure. That is what both Chief Minister V D Satheesan and opposition leader Pinarayi Vijayan have said," Tharoor told reporters in Delhi.

"So, let the process go on," he added. He further said that the state has a vested interest in the port as it gave the land and it was built with the intention of catering to all shipping companies in the world.

"There should not be a situation



in the future that only the ships of MSC can come here. We want it to continue as a multi-shipping line port," he said.

At the same time, he clarified that no one was being opposed and growth of the port is necessary.

"But the growth has to comply with the law and by respecting the stipulations in the concession agreement. That is the only way to

move forward. The government will decide after studying all aspects," he said.

State Industries Minister P K Kunhalikutty said that no one should jump to conclusions merely based on controversies. He said that Satheesan has already made it clear that there was no information from the side of the Adani group regarding the share transfer. (PTI)

## 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of India-Japan diplomatic ties to be celebrated with cricket, art, anime events in 2027

**NEW DELHI, July 3:** A friendship cricket match, a platform to catalyse direct linkages between Indian business clusters and Japanese regional banks, and a host of other colourful activities to promote art, culture of the two countries and people-to-people ties will be held to mark the 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties between India and Japan next year.

The two governments, in cooperation with their respective stakeholders, will celebrate 2027 as the 'India-Japan Year of Shared Horizons', the Ministry of External Affairs announced on Thursday. Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Japanese counterpart Sanae Takaichi also spoke about the 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries, during the latter's visit to India that concluded on Friday.

The MEA in a statement said, "Both sides will work together in planning and holding commemorative programmes, throughout the

year and across the nations, with particular participation of the youth of both countries."

The week of April 28, 2027 will be designated as the "India-Japan Week" to mark the establishment of diplomatic ties through coordinated outreach activities, it said.

India-Japan relations were elevated to Global Partnership in 2000, Strategic and Global Partnership in 2006, and Special Strategic and Global Partnership in 2014.

"After World War-II, India did not attend the San Francisco Conference but decided to conclude a separate Peace Treaty with Japan on 28 April 1952, marking the beginning of diplomatic relations.

"Since then, India-Japan relations have evolved into a comprehensive partnership spanning political, defence, economic, science and technology, education, and cultural ties," according to a note on the India-Japan bilateral relations, published on the MEA website in August 2025.



The MEA, in its statement issued on July 2 after the 16th India-Japan annual summit here, shared the broad details of the events which would be hosted as part of the platinum jubilee celebrations.

A logo and theme competition will be launched, inviting the people of both countries to envision the future of the India-Japan Special Strategic and Global Partnership, it said.

"Building on the growing resonance of Japanese manga, anime and gaming among Indian youth and India's emergence as a major hub for animation, gaming, comics and immersive creative technologies, IMAGE-75 will be launched to support people-to-people exchanges and promote co-creation in such areas," the statement said.

RASA-75 will be launched as a year-long India-Japan arts and cul-

ture journey celebrating the colours, sounds, movements and living traditions of both countries, bringing together performing, visual and traditional arts practitioners, cultural institutions, and young creators from both countries, the MEA added.

Also, a Buddhist delegation from Japan will be invited to India to undertake a spiritual tour of the important Buddhist sites, it said.

Such initiatives will serve to highlight the civilisational and spiritual ties between India and Japan and promote Buddhist tourism from Japan to India.

Events will also span the fields of business, sports and science and technology.

"SPORT-75 will be launched to promote human exchanges and co-operation between India and Japan in the field of sports, taking note of India's ambition to host the Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2036.

"Celebrating cricket as an emerging bridge of friendship between the peoples of India and

Japan, an India-Japan friendship cricket match will be organised during the Aichi-Nagoya Asian Games 2026 as a curtain-raiser to the 75th anniversary celebrations," the MEA said.

Further, both sides will launch 'Cricket Kizuna-75', under which two coaches from India will visit Japan for conducting a week-long cricket bootcamp for budding Japanese cricketers, further strengthening youth and sporting exchanges between India and Japan. The India-Japan sports week will be held in February 2027, including an Ekiden (a team relay running) event in Delhi-NCR to promote India-Japan collaboration in sports, the ministry said.

To generate ideas for the next phase of the Special Strategic and Global Partnership, academics, experts, industry and youth voices will be brought together to develop policy recommendations for both governments towards a peaceful, prosperous, resilient and sustainable shared future. (PTI)

## HC denies advance bail to DMK MLA over remarks against TVK

**CHENNAI, July 3:** The Madras High Court on Friday dismissed the anticipatory bail petition filed by DMK MLA Anitha R Radhakrishnan, who apprehended arrest in connection with his speech on June 20 against the ruling TVK.

Justice G K Ilanthiraiyan dismissed the petition filed by the Tiruchendur MLA.

In his petition, Radhakrishnan submitted that on June 20, a meeting was conducted by DMK and the grievance of the public was addressed. The meeting was presided by him and the critical analysis of the resentment faced by the general public owing to the actions of the ruling government was put forth by him in the meeting.

Being a veteran politician and sitting MLA, he only addressed about the welfare of the state whereas the complaint was said to have lodged owing to "political vendetta". The complaint was purely a political recrimination, he claimed.

Subsequently, he was picked up by the local police. (PTI)

# Relief, restoration ordered for flood-hit Namchi in Sikkim

**GANGTOK, July 3:** Namchi District Collector Anupa Tamling on Friday directed all departments to launch relief and rehabilitation measures in flood-hit Lingi-Paiyong area, with priority on restoring road connectivity and essential services, officials said on Friday.

A flash flood caused by incessant rains occurred in the area on June 28, washing away bridges, damaging roads, and snapping the connection to many villages in the area. The directions came during an emergency review meeting, a day after the district collector inspected the flood-affected areas.

According to a statement, the DC stressed that the situation required "the utmost urgency" and instructed all departments to work in close coordination to speed up relief and restoration efforts.

The collector directed clearing of landslide-hit roads, restoring



connectivity and expediting temporary bridge construction.

The Forest Department was asked to identify timber for temporary log bridges and remove vulnerable trees posing risks to public safety, the statement said.

To ensure uninterrupted essential supplies, the Food and Civil Supplies Department was in-

structed to assess food grain stocks and coordinate the timely transportation of relief materials.

With schools set to reopen, officials were also directed to construct temporary log bridges at Kau Khola and arrange online classes in coordination with the Education and ICDS departments until normal access is restored.

The Health and Family Welfare Department was asked to establish a medical relief camp, prioritising pregnant women, children, senior citizens and other vulnerable residents.

Recognising Lingi's importance as a major milk-producing area, the DC directed the Sikkim Co-operative Milk Producers' Union Limited, in coordination with the Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Services Department, to set up a temporary milk collection centre to ensure uninterrupted procurement and transport.

The Agriculture Department was tasked with repairing damaged irrigation channels, assessing crop losses and extending assistance to affected farmers, while the Jal Jeevan Mission and Power Department were instructed to restore drinking water and electricity services without delay. (PTI)

# SDF says it never entered into any electoral or political alliance with BJP in Sikkim

**GANGTOK, July 3:** The Sikkim Democratic Front (SDF) on Friday said the party has never entered into any electoral or political alliance with the BJP and has always upheld its independent political identity. SDF Spokesperson Yojna Khaling Rai in a statement strongly rejected allegations that it had either "sold" its MLAs to the BJP or maintained a political alliance with the saffron party, asserting that both claims were "false and politically motivated".

The statement came amid the political row triggered by SDF president Pawan Chamling's recent remark that "We won't let Sikkim become another Manipur." "The SDF has never sold its MLAs to the BJP, nor has it ever entered into a political alliance with the BJP. Political defections have been a recurring reality across India and cannot be equated with the party leadership 'selling' elected representatives. Such alle-

gations against the SDF are baseless and ignore historical facts," Khaling said.

Defending Chamling's statement, the SDF said the remark was intended as a warning against political instability and was rooted in concerns over recent national developments. The party alleged that the ruling SKM's growing proximity to the BJP had become increasingly visible, while maintaining that the SDF had always safeguarded Sikkim's identity, constitutional rights and political independence during its 25 years in power.

The SDF also argued that political defections have occurred repeatedly in Sikkim and across the country, making it unfair to single out the party over legislators switching sides after elections. It reiterated that maintaining cordial relations with the Union government while in office was a constitutional obligation and should not

be misconstrued as a political alliance.

Reaffirming its stand, the SDF said it would continue to prioritise the interests, identity and constitutional rights of the people of Sikkim over political expediency.

The SDF has never compromised its principles for political convenience. It has always upheld its independent identity and remained committed to the mandate and trust bestowed upon it by the people of Sikkim, the statement said.

Today, the SDF remains the only political party firmly rooted in the aspirations and interests of the Sikkimese people. Ever since the SDF openly questioned the BJP's policies and statements, a narrative has been promoted claiming that the SDF itself was responsible for bringing the BJP into Sikkim. Such claims ignore historical facts and rely solely on political propaganda, it added. (PTI)

# Arunachal minister urges Centre to hand over strategic road project to BRO



**ITANAGAR, July 3:** Arunachal Pradesh Law, Legislative and Justice Minister Kento Jini has urged the Centre to hand over the newly declared strategic Akajan-Likabali-Bame (ALB) Road project to the Border Roads Organisation (BRO), as it has expertise in managing difficult border terrains.

In a letter addressed to Union Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari on Thursday, Jini, while expressing gratitude to the Centre for declaring the ALB road as a 'strategic road', bat-

ted for BRO at a time when the portion of the Likabali-Basara-Bame-Aalo stretch remains cut off due to rain-triggered landslides and flash floods.

He emphasised that the corridor serves as a socio-economic lifeline for seven border districts of the state, including Lower Siang, Leparada, West Siang, Shi Yomi, Siang, Upper Siang, and Upper Subansiri.

Jini, who represents the Aalo East assembly constituency in West Siang, highlighted the major

landslide at the Siji block point recently, which is still cut off, stranding thousands of commuters and cutting off vital connectivity to the seven districts. Seeking the Road Transport and Highway Ministry's intervention, Jini requested that the BRO be reinstated as the implementing agency for the project.

He said the road was originally constructed, managed, and maintained by the BRO before being transferred to the National Highways and Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited (NHIDCL) during 2014-15.

"Considering the proven track record, expertise, efficiency, and strategic importance of the project, it is believed that BRO would be the better organisation to implement the project efficiently within the stipulated time frame," Jini said in his letter.

He added that bringing back the BRO would ensure quality work, allowing the intended benefits of the strategic corridor to reach the public without further delays. (PTI)

# Two militants arrested in Manipur



**IMPHAL, July 3:** Security forces arrested two militants belonging to proscribed outfits from two districts of Manipur, police said on Friday.

A 45-year-old active cadre of the banned People's Liberation Army was apprehended from Sanjenbam Khullen in Imphal East district on Wednesday, a police statement said.

The security forces also arrested a 44-year-old member of the outlawed Prepak from Nagamapal Kangjibi Leirak in Imphal West district on the same day, it said.

In another operation, the police seized a cache of arms, explosives and ammunition from Wakha Ching area under the Porompat Police Station limits in Imphal East district on Thursday, the statement said.

Security forces have been conducting search operations and area domination in the fringe and vulnerable localities across Manipur since ethnic violence broke out three years ago. (PTI)

# 4 months after death, Manipur BJP MLA Valte will be laid to rest today

**CHURACHANDPUR, July 3:** Manipur BJP MLA Vungzagin Valte's mortal remains will be laid to rest on Saturday, over four months after he died of injuries he had suffered during the onset of ethnic violence in the state three years ago.

Valte, a three-time legislator from Thanlon constituency, will be buried at a cemetery in Dorcas Veng village in Churachandpur district at around 1.30 pm.

according to a Zomi Council statement issued on Friday.

The body of the 61-year-old BJP leader belonging to the Zomi community has been kept in Churachandpur District Hospital since it was brought from Delhi in February. Valte had been battling with serious injuries he had sustained during a mob attack in Imphal's Nagamapal area when ethnic violence broke out in May 2023, and went to Delhi for medical treatment.



legislator, including engagement with the Centre, the state government, and other authorities on issues of justice and accountability, causing the delay in the burial, sources in the community said.

The ZCC recently resolved to hand over Valte's mortal remains to his family to enable them to perform his final rites, they said.

The ZCC's demands included a time-bound investigation by NIA or CBI into the attack on the MLA leading to his death, and the grant of Union Territory status with a legislature for the Kuki-Zo majority areas of Manipur, which he perceived as the only way towards the development of the community on par with others, sources said.

Valte had written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi explaining the importance and the need for a separate administration. At least 260 people have been killed and thou-

# Nagaland gets first UIDAI Aadhaar Seva Kendra as enrolment lags national average



**DIMAPUR, July 3:** Nagaland's first UIDAI Aadhaar Seva Kendra was inaugurated here on Friday, marking a major step towards improving population enrolment in the state.

The centre, located at Purana Bazaar near the labour department office, was inaugurated by the advisor for tribal affairs and election, H. Tovihoto Ayemi, in the presence of deputy director general, UIDAI regional office, Guwahati, Ngachan Zimik, and other officials.

Addressing the programme, Zimik said Aadhaar enrolment in the state stands at only 67 per cent, leaving about 33 per cent of the population yet to be enrolled, compared to the national Aadhaar saturation of around 99 per cent. He said Dimapur has achieved about 95 per cent Aadhaar enrolment, while Kohima stands at around 68 per cent, and most other districts range between 59 and 63 per cent, indicating substantial work remains to achieve universal coverage.

He expressed confidence that the new Aadhaar Seva Kendra would significantly contribute to improving enrolment across the state.

Highlighting another major concern, Zimik stressed the importance of mandatory biometric updates for children aged between 5 and 15 years.

He said timely biometric updates are essential to prevent Aadhaar suspension and ensure uninterrupted access to the services.

Tovihoto described the inauguration as the fulfilment of a long-cherished dream for Nagaland and said the centre would make Aadhaar services more accessible to the public.

He underscored the growing importance of Aadhaar in accessing education and government services, noting that children require Aadhaar for school admissions, scholarships and various entrance examinations.

He also acknowledged that despite the existence of around 150 to 160 Aadhaar enrolment centres across the state, Nagaland's enrolment rate remains below expectations. (PTI)

# Sikkim, Bengal CMs hold talks to boost connectivity, development

**GANGTOK, July 3:** Sikkim Chief Minister Prem Singh Tamang called on his West Bengal counterpart Suwendu Adhikari in Kolkata and held talks on connectivity, healthcare and public welfare, an official statement said here. Tamang congratulated Adhikari on assuming office and extended his best wishes for a successful tenure before the two leaders discussed a series of long-pending issues affecting both

states on Thursday, it said.

Among the major decisions was the approval for the establishment of Suswastha Bhawan Sikkim at the SNT Complex in Siliguri. The proposed facility will provide accommodation and essential support to patients from Sikkim and their attendants undergoing medical treatment in Siliguri. The West Bengal CM also directed the concerned department to

issue the necessary permissions for the project.

The West Bengal government agreed to double the countersignature permit quota for Sikkim-registered taxis operating in West Bengal from 3,000 to 6,000. The decision is expected to significantly benefit taxi operators while improving passenger movement and connectivity between Sikkim and Siliguri. The two chief ministers also reviewed the after-

math of the devastating 2023 Glacial Lake Outburst Flood (GLOF), which led to heavy sediment deposition along the Teesta river and caused extensive damage to National Highway-10. Both governments agreed to jointly pursue scientific sediment management through dredging of the Teesta to help restore and safeguard the vital transport corridor, the statement added. (PTI)

# Climate change disrupting Nagaland's farming cycle: Chief Secretary

**KOHIMA, July 3:** Nagaland Chief Secretary Sentiyanger Imchen on Friday said climate change is disrupting the state's traditional agricultural calendar, making it imperative to adopt climate-smart technologies and renewable energy to secure rural livelihoods.

Addressing the inauguration of the 'Women-led enterprises for a climate-smart Nagaland' trade facilitation fair here, Imchen said erratic rainfall has significantly altered the state's farming cycle.

He noted that sowing, which traditionally began in early April, is now being delayed until June, often resulting in crop losses due to inadequate rainfall.

Calling for an urgent transition to a low-carbon economy, he stressed that renewable energy -- particularly solar power -- must become an integral part of rural enterprises to help communities adapt to changing climatic condi-



tions while improving productivity and incomes. Imchen also said that although the self-help group (SHG) movement has empowered thousands of rural women, many entrepreneurs continue to face challenges in accessing modern technology, institutional finance, markets, and business support.

"It is a collective governance and societal responsibility to build an enabling ecosystem capable of

translating local skills and resources into viable, self-sustaining businesses," he said.

The fair, organised by the Nagaland State Rural Livelihood Mission (NSRLM) in partnership with the SELCO Foundation, showcases 19 exhibition stalls featuring clean-energy technologies and financing solutions for sectors such as weaving, horticulture, piggy, bamboo, and food processing. (PTI)

# Rio inaugurates 16 sports infrastructure projects in Nagaland

**HT Correspondent**

**DIMAPUR, July 3:** Nagaland Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio virtually inaugurated 16 sports infrastructure projects under the state youth resources & sports department at the chief minister's residential complex in Kohima on Friday in the presence of Union minister for youth affairs & sports Mansukh Mandaviya.

Addressing the gathering, Rio said the state government has put in place a long-term strategy to transform sports in Nagaland.

He stated that the vision is to develop sports infrastructure on par with the best in the country and provide sportspersons with world-class training to help them excel and bring glory to both the State and the nation.

He said the inauguration marked more than the opening of new buildings, as it also created new opportunities for the people of the State.

Although the projects were inaugurated virtually across different locations, he described the occasion as a milestone that everyone would cherish. Highlighting the growing significance of sports, Rio said sports have evolved beyond recreation into a vibrant industry capable of generating employment and creating new opportunities.

He added that by fostering a strong sporting culture, strengthening the capacity of coaches and trainers, and providing greater exposure to athletes, the State can nurture sporting talent and build a brighter future.

The projects comprise four under the Khelo India scheme and 12 state-funded initiatives aimed at strengthening sports infrastructure across Nagaland. The newly inaugurated facilities include multipurpose halls, indoor sports halls, futsal grounds and administrative infrastructure spread across several districts of the state.

# NCC Cadets display exemplary resolve at annual camp in Itanagar

**ITANAGAR, July 3:** The 1 Arunachal Pradesh Battalion National Cadet Corps (NCC) concluded its 10-day Combined Annual Training Camp (CATC-68) and Yuva Aapda Mitra Scheme (YAMS) programme, showcasing exemplary resolve despite heavy monsoon disruptions, an official statement said on Friday.

The camp, which was held from June 24 to July 3 at the Rajiv Gandhi Government Polytechnic College (GGPC) in Itanagar, was conducted under the aegis of the NCC Group Headquarters, Tezpur.

A total of 247 NCC cadets participated in the intensive programme under the leadership of the Commanding Officer of the 1 AP Battalion NCC, supported by 10 military personnel, four Associate NCC Officers (ANOs), and a Caretaker Officer (CTO), it said.

Demonstrating undeterred spirit, cadets braved hazardous road conditions and undertook lengthy detours due to weather-induced disruptions to reach the venue from remote hometowns across the state, the



report said. It said the participants' morale received a significant boost during the camp, with the visit of Brigadier Mayank Vaid, Commander of NCC Group HQ Tezpur, who interacted with the cadets and commended their determination.

The 10-day module aimed to familiarise the cadets with the discipline, routine, and ethos of military-style camp life.

The report said the comprehensive curriculum offered a balanced blend of foundational military training and personality development activities, including

physical training, fieldcraft, battlecraft, small-arms firing, musketry, weapon displays, sword drills, yoga, games, and lectures by distinguished personalities. A key highlight of the camp was the specialised training under the Yuva Aapda Mitra Scheme, designed to equip the youth with vital disaster preparedness and emergency response skills.

Certified instructors from the Arunachal Pradesh State Disaster Management Authority (SDMA) provided structured, practical training in basic disaster response, relief and rescue operations, and emergency management techniques tailored to handle regional crises like floods, cloudbursts, and earthquakes.

To foster camaraderie and relieve the cadets from the rigorous training schedule, the battalion introduced a 'Survival Day' and a 'Fun Day' towards the end of the camp. These activities promoted teamwork and cultural integration, allowing cadets to share and appreciate traditional regional cuisines in an engaging environment, the report added. (PTI)

# Mizoram cracks down on fake GST registrations

**AIZAWL, July 3:** The Mizoram government has launched a crackdown on fraudulent Goods and Services Tax (GST) registrations, after detecting multiple applications with forged documents, officials said.

A statement issued by the state taxation department on Friday said that following a scrutiny, several suspicious GST registrations in which applicants "either furnished unverifiable documents or provided business addresses where no commercial activity existed" were uncovered.

The irregularities were detected during risk-based scrutiny, data analysis and physical verification conducted by the department, it said. Action is being initiated under the provisions of the Mizoram Goods and Services Tax Act, 2017, the statement said. (PTI)

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<b>PRESS NOTICE INVITING TENDER</b>	
The Executive Engineer, PWD, Udalguri (R&B) Division, Udalguri on behalf of Governor of Assam invites bids from approved and eligible Contractors registered with Public works Department (Roads), Assam/Contractors registered with Bodoland Territorial Council in the category of Class-I (A,B & C), Class-II and Class-III for 3 (three) Nos. of works for bids amounting to Rs. 13,26,802.00 (approx) (Rupees thirteen lakh twenty six thousand eight hundred two) only.	
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# Ramos, Ronaldo score as Portugal rallies to beat Croatia 2-1

**TORONTO, July 3:** At 41, Cristiano Ronaldo will get another match in a Portugal uniform, thanks to a penalty he scored, a stoppage time header by Goncalo Ramos, and a VAR ruling the Croatia team still doesn't understand.

Ramos headed in the winner as Portugal beat Croatia 2-1 in a wild finish that also included a Croatian goal disallowed for offside just before the final whistle in a World Cup round of 32 match on Thursday night.

The game featured a match-up of 40-somethings — Ronaldo, in his sixth World Cup, and Croatia's Luka Modrić, making his fifth bid for a tournament title.

Ronaldo tied things up in the 68th minute on a penalty kick that gave the megastar his first knock-out stage goal at the World Cup before being subbed out in the 81st minute.

"I never felt any of that (fear)," he said. "Yes, nervous. But as always, you have to be very positive for things to go well."

Still, it was Ramos who gave Portugal the victory and a berth in the round of 16.

"I love that type of moment, I love that type of games," he said. "I want to play every game like that."

Portugal moves on to face Spain on Monday.



"First half we dominated the game. In second half after the goal we get a little bit panic, but this is football," Ronaldo said. "After the penalty, I think it was a little bit better for us. We created a few chances and I think at the end of the day we deserved to win the match."

In a postgame interview with Fox, Ronaldo proudly turned around to show that he was wearing a Diogo Jota jersey and his No. 21, one year after his teammate died in a car crash.

"We knew this before the game. It was a so special moment. We speak today to our group, the coincidence of life. It's unbelievable."

Things got weird after Ramos scored. With Portugal and its fans still enthralled with his goal, Croatia

thought it had tied things up 2-2 in the very last moments. But after a 2 1/2-minute delay, Mario Pasalic was called offside as VAR ruled no goal. Croatia fans threw bottles on the field and whistled in protest.

Croatia midfielder Petar Susic said, "the referee said he didn't see (anyone) touch the ball, he said that he had a sensor in that ball," that caused the offside ruling. "For me, it's a regular goal."

Portugal coach Roberto Martinez said it was, indeed, the chip in the ball that triggered the decision.

"I need to tell them (Croatia fans) the message is very clear: The balls now have a chip, and it's very clear that's why the VAR intervened," he said. "It's not a sub-

jective opinion."

Croatia opened the scoring in the 53rd minute when Ivan Perisic scored off a cross from Josip Sanisic.

Ronaldo, booed loudly by Croatia fans every time he touched the ball, got his chance from the spot after Nikola Vlasic was called for a holding foul inside the box. Portugal's megastar hitched his step and converted down the middle as the goalkeeper went to his right.

Modrić led Croatia to second- and third-place finishes in 2018 and 2022, and the match carried the weight of the two aging stars each trying to realize the dream of winning the World Cup. Modrić is 40.

The men, who were teammates at Real Madrid, shared a few smiles and an embrace ahead of the coin toss before the match. The two met on the pitch after the match, hugged and exchanged a few words.

"I played with Luka so many years," Ronaldo said. "We're nearly the same age. I think he's a legend of football. He's still a legend of football."

Croatia coach Zlatko Dalić said this was "probably" Modrić's last World Cup, but added, "only God knows what will happen in the next four years. We'll see. We'll talk about it in Croatia." (AP)

# Captain Sciver-Brunt's stirring 75 leads England into Women's T20 World Cup final



**LONDON, July 3:** Captain Nat Sciver-Brunt's awe-inspiring knock of 75 after an injury led England past South Africa and into the final of the Women's Twenty20 World Cup on Thursday.

Sciver-Brunt and former skipper Heather Knight rescued England from 23-3 with a 133-run partnership — the highest ever in a World Cup knockout match — to set South Africa a forbidding 170 target in The Oval semifinal.

South Africa, which chose to chase, had the life squeezed out of it and saw the writing on the wall as early as the 11th over after the great Marizanne Kapp was just the third out. By then the run rate required was already at 11 per over for the finalist in the previous two T20 World Cups.

No. 2-ranked England won by 40 runs and will face No. 1 Australia in the final at sold-out Lord's on Sunday. It's the first time since

2010 that both teams in the final are unbeaten. England put up 169-5 and South Africa was shrunk to 129-8 in front of a women's T20 semifinal record attendance of 21,128. Sciver-Brunt retired hurt against Ireland on June 16 due to tightness in the calf she tore in April. While missing England's last three group games, the captain threw everything into getting fit for the semifinals, including uncommon treatment using electromagnetic energy.

She replaced Sophie Dunkley, England's second highest run-scorer, and was called on just seven balls into the match as pacers Shabnim Ismail and Kapp gave South Africa a dream start of three wickets inside four overs.

Ismail became the first woman to reach 50 career wickets in T20 World Cups and Kapp bowled Danni Wyatt-Hodge, the highest ever run-scorer in a single World Cup. But as Kapp and Ismail

bowled out, their teammates were preyed on by Sciver-Brunt and Knight, who share more than 600 international caps.

South Africa lost both of its reviews trying to get rid of Sciver-Brunt on 2 and 14. She reached her eighth fifty in a T20 World Cup, tying the record with New Zealand's Suzie Bates and Australia's Beth Mooney. Knight followed.

"I was nervous," Sciver-Brunt said. "The occasion gets quite big so that increases the nerves, and I have missed a few games. But as soon as the warmup started I managed to switch back on to game-time and just enjoyed myself out there. Heather and I... with our experience, we put our heads together and got the job done."

Nonkululeko Mlaba removed both batters in the 19th over; Sciver-Brunt for 75 runs from 47 balls including 50 from boundaries and Knight for 58 from 47.

The partnership of 133 from 90 surpassed the previous best in a World Cup knockout match of 122 not out between Beth Morgan and Claire Taylor for England against Australia at The Oval in the 2009 semifinals. That stand helped to set the benchmark for the previous highest successful chase at 164.

South Africa had to make 170. Its chances plunged as captain Laura Wolvaardt, Annerie Derksen and Kapp were removed cheaply. Opener Tazmin Brits endured until the 15th over but for a too-slow 45-ball 51. (AP)

## Herman Kruis appointed Pakistan's national hockey coaching advisor

**LAHORE, July 3:** The Pakistan Hockey Federation on Friday roped in the 70-year-old Dutchman Herman Kruis as their National Hockey Coaching Advisor, just weeks after appointing Olympian Tahir Zaman as the Director of High Performance.

Kruis, who has worked in India and the Netherlands previously, will help the PHF in developing young talent and preparing teams for major international events on a two-year contract.

"As National Hockey Coaching Advisor, he will guide the PHF in strengthening the entire ecosystem of Pakistan hockey," the PHF said in a statement.

The interim PHF chief Mohyuddin Ahmad Wani said that the appointment of Kruis marks the first step in its comprehensive strategy to revive Pakistan hockey.

Wani said Kruis was hired after the PHF had shortlisted eight candidates for the position and carried out a proper evaluation.

The governing body has taken these decisions after Pakistan flopped miserably in the FIH Pro League events, losing 15 matches on the trot including twice against India last month in the UK.

"More world-class coaches and specialists will be hired in the coming months," Wani said.

Wani said the PHF is also in the process of hiring a sports psychologist from South Africa and a physical trainer from Australia.

"We are trying our best to overcome this difficult phase of Pakistan hockey by bringing in experienced professionals from around the world." (PTI)

## Ireland will be more acceptable as opposition after series win over India: CI chief O'Donnell

**BENGALURU, July 3:** Cricket Ireland president Bryan O'Donnell believes that the "impactful" T20 International series win over India recently will transform the national team into a "more acceptable opposition" globally, and open avenues for challenging assignments.

Ireland stunned India 2-0 recently at Belfast to register their first ever series win over the reigning T20 world champions in any format.

"Well, it's going to be fairly instantaneous because it is a huge lift for our players and on that basis, they will probably become available in other areas of the game," O'Donnell told PTI.

"A huge amount of impact because it elevates the players. It lifts the potential performance of Irish cricket hugely," he added.

But the real impact of the win over a storied opponent, O'Donnell thought, will be the changed perception around Irish cricket.

"I think we would be more acceptable as opposition than we may have been heretofore. So, you know, it is a moving elevation.

"It is showing a return on the level of input

that Cricket Ireland are willing to put into the game in this country with the help of the ICC and all of these people. At present, a large investment is going on into the infrastructure surrounding Irish cricket," he said.

O'Donnell hoped that the strong Irish presence in the upcoming European T20 Premier League will benefit the country's cricket.

"Absolutely. Providing the opposition is of a certain level, you know, it has to be beneficial and it is also opening potential for other income streams for the players in the higher echelons of the game." He felt involvement of legends like Steve Waugh, Rahul Dravid and R Ashwin in the ETPL will help Irish players learn the game's nuances.

"They will learn from observation. They will learn from meeting these legends and picking their brains and possibly pick up tips for the benefit of our players. They (Irish players) are very anxious to move with the game and have the game up to speed in this country.

"So, if that can carry forward to all the play-

ers, all the way down the line, then I think we're on a progress path," he said.

Indian-born pacer Jai Moondra was the star of Ireland's series win over Shreyas Iyer's side, and O'Donnell was happy to welcome more ex-pats into the Irish cricketing environment.

"We're open to all talent providing they would qualify as such either through living in Ireland or through the relationship of grandparents or aunts and uncles, etc. as are required. Yes, we're an open book.

"We want to move on in world cricket. And if people turn up that are going to lift us, yes, certainly we're interested," he said. O'Donnell placed his faith in new Ireland head coach Gary Wilson, who replaced Heinrich Malan immediately after the series victory over India.

"Gary has 260-odd caps for Ireland. We need to invest in our own resources and have them proved. It is all just part of a cycle that we are trying to, not force through, but trying to pay dividends in terms of Cricket Ireland's investment in this area within the game." (PTI)

## Promising signs for India as men's foil team earns Asiad spot at Asian Senior Fencing C'ships

**NEW DELHI, July 3:** India ended without a medal at the recently-concluded Asian Senior Fencing Championships, but the hosts still had a significant takeaway, with the men's foil team securing direct qualification for the upcoming Asian Games — an achievement that could strengthen the country's prospects in the sport going forward.

The 24-member Indian contingent, competing at the continental event hosted in the country for the first time, showed steady progress against Asia's fencing powerhouses. Several fencers pushed top teams like Japan and South Korea close, narrowly missing podium finishes by just a point or two, underlining the growing competitiveness of Indian fencing at the international level. Rajeev Mehta, the secretary-general of the Fencing Association of India (FAI) and the Fencing Confederation of Asia (FCA), said the home team gained valuable experience from the event. "Hosting the Senior Asian Fencing Championships for the first time is a watershed moment that will permanently redefine the trajectory of Indian sports. Our fencers have given a very good performance on home soil, proving they can match strides with the world's absolute elite.

"This tournament provides unprecedented exposure to world-class pressure under the eyes of home fans. The experience gained here, alongside the Men's Foil team securing direct qualification, lays down a definitive foundational path for our athletes." (PTI)

## Ahead of 2nd T20I, Samson's inconsistency, Tilak's approach under radar

**MANCHESTER, July 3:** With Vaibhav Sooryavanshi breathing down his neck, Sanju Samson will be under pressure to turn the frequent busts in his performance graph into consistent booms as India take on England in the second T20 International here on Saturday.

The first game was abandoned after India posted a healthy 189 for 7 at the Chester-Le-Street in Durham, riding on half-centuries from Abhishek Sharma and skipper Shreyas Iyer.

However, the focus of attention during the next few games would be Sanju Samson and whether he can weather the Sooryavanshi storm that is building up on the

sidelines.

In an alternate universe, three back-to-back match-winning knocks in India's T20 World Cup triumph would have given Kerala's most "globally followed" sporting icon a cushion for a year.

But with Indian cricket discovering the generational talent of Sooryavanshi, Samson's margin for error has become minimal and the T20 World Cup halo alone can't save him.

With Abhishek Sharma smashing his way to 49 and 59 in two of the last three games, the pressure is entirely on Samson to get some runs under his belt.

In the opening game that was

washed out, Samson looked miserable scoring a single run off seven balls and not for once did it seem that he is trying to take the high-risk high-reward route.

The technical flaws in Samson's game don't inspire a lot of confidence when he plays on seaming tracks. Ireland's unheralded Jai Moondra, who actually hails from Rajasthan's Tonk, had exposed his frailties during successive games with deliveries that moved off the surface.

In case of Samson, the occasional high scores have always been flanked by a series of low returns on either side and that has been his biggest bane. (PTI)

## Gukesh rises to joint second spot in Grand Chess Tour Croatia

**ZAGREB (CROATIA), July 3:** World champion D Gukesh made good use of his white pieces to beat Dutch Grandmaster Anish Giri in the final game of the day to rise to joint second spot after the second day of the Zagreb leg of the Grand Chess Tour here.

Iranian Grandmaster Firouzja Alireza is at the top by extending his lead by a huge three points.

With 10 points in his kitty out of a possible 12, Alireza is far ahead of his rivals — Vincent Keymer of Germany, Maxime Vachier-Lagrave of France, Deac Bogdan-Daniel of Romania and Gukesh, who all have identical seven points.

Another half point behind are India's R Praggnanandhaa, Giri and Nodirbek AbduSAT-torov of Uzbekistan while Croatia's Ivan Saric and Dutchman Jorden van Foreest are at the bottom of the table with just two points apiece.

Gukesh made most of his opportunities against Giri in a Ruy Lopez exchange variation.

For once, the Dutch Grandmaster of Nepalese origin was seen lost from his prep book as Gukesh launched an attack against his king and never looked back.

Winning an exchange, the youngest ever world champion did nothing wrong in wrapping up a fine victory.

The day could have been better for Praggnanandhaa but Alireza simply had the Caissa on his side.

After reaching a probable draw out of a game that had fluctuating fortunes, Praggnanandhaa was the last one to make a blunder and lost from what was a theoretically drawn endgame.

Earlier in the day, Gukesh started off with an uncharacteristic loss against Bogdan-Daniel but followed it up with a win over Foreest. (PTI)

## Child before star: The delicate balancing act of fast-tracking sporting prodigies

**NEW DELHI, July 3:** The scoreboards see runs. The selectors see talent. The public sees a phenomenon. But somewhere beneath the helmet and behind the growing celebrity is a 15-year-old still negotiating the uncertainties of adolescence.

As India celebrates the astonishing rise of batting prodigy Vaibhav Sooryavanshi and eagerly awaits his debut, another conversation is quietly unfolding beyond his audacious strokeplay and remarkable poise.

It is a conversation that elite sport has wrestled with for decades: when extraordinary children enter an adult world, how does one ensure that exceptional talent does not come at the expense of a normal and ordinary childhood? There are no easy answers.

If merit alone determines selection, Sooryavanshi deserves to be where he is. His recent performances in the IPL and other tournaments have made that case emphatically.

Yet the arrangements surrounding his maiden senior tour are a reminder that cricket's newest sensation is still legally a child.

The BCCI has allowed his parents to accompany him, while safeguarding regulations in England require separate changing-room arrangements for minors.

A boy considered mature enough to face international fast bowlers, but young enough to need the protection that child-

hood demands.

For leading sports psychologist Keerthana Swaminathan, that distinction should never be forgotten.

"A 15-year-old is still a child before he's a star. But we end up interchanging that. We end up thinking he's a star first and then a child," Swaminathan told PTI.

"We need to make sure we understand what we can expect from a child. Obviously, they have to have the scope to make mistakes.

"Understanding that they are children first before performers would be really helpful because, when they are performing, they already have to work on a hundred other things. They have to work on their own emotional and mental stability. This is a very high-pressure scenario," she said.

Those words perhaps capture the dilemma better than any statistic.

From cricket to tennis, football to gymnastics, every generation has marvelled at youngsters capable of competing against athletes far older and physically stronger.

Some have justified every expectation placed upon them. Others have discovered that talent alone is not enough to navigate the emotional demands of early fame.

Indian cricket itself has witnessed teenage debuts before.

Sachin Tendulkar was just 16 when he walked out to face Pakistan's fearsome pace attack in 1989. History would re-



member him as perhaps the greatest batsman of his generation.

Yet Tendulkar's arrival belonged to another era. There were no social media clips dissecting every innings, no round-the-clock television ecosystem hungry for constant headlines and instant opinions, and no broadcaster commitments and promotions. Praise travelled slower. So did criticism.

Today's teenage prodigies grow up in an environment where every shot, every dismissal and every facial expression can become public property within minutes.

That, Swaminathan believes, changes the psychological landscape.

"I don't think protection is the only way to go. Now that he's also in this space, the media is going to talk. Social media is going to talk. Some people are going to

talk.

"Parents can't take away the sadness or the anger, but they can lend a shoulder and equip children with the tools they need to deal with those emotions," she pointed out.

Modern sports science increasingly echoes that thinking.

Studies in sports psychology suggest that early success itself is not the problem. Rather, the greater risks arise when extraordinary expectations, relentless scrutiny and an athlete's identity become inseparable from sporting performance. Researchers have also highlighted the importance of supportive family environments, balanced development and allowing young athletes the freedom to make mistakes without defining themselves solely through results.

History offers enough reminders that the road from prodigy to champion is rarely straightforward, although there are cases when a teenage talent has charted a sustained career graph.

Women's tennis, in particular, has witnessed remarkable youngsters whose journeys became cautionary tales as much as sporting fairy tales.

Jennifer Capriati became one of the biggest names in world tennis while still in her teens. The enormous expectations that accompanied her rise were followed by personal struggles before she remarkably rebuilt her career to become a multi-

ple Grand Slam champion.

Tracy Austin conquered the sport as a teenager, only for injuries to curtail what many believed could have become one of the game's greatest careers.

Their stories are not evidence that early success is inherently harmful. They are reminders that precocious talent often walks hand in hand with extraordinary pressures. Cricket, too, has seen teenage sensations whose careers unfolded in dramatically different ways.

Some, like Tendulkar, fulfilled every promise and more. Others, including Prithvi Shaw, announced themselves with promise but found sustaining that trajectory at the highest level far more challenging, illustrating that early success guarantees neither longevity nor fulfilment. For Swaminathan, the responsibility extends well beyond the athlete. She believes parents, coaches and sporting systems must remember that children process success and failure differently from adults.

"I've worked quite a bit with parents and coaches. I believe in creating environments where athletes can thrive, where children can actually thrive. Somewhere something gets lost in communication. We end up talking to children like we would talk to a 20-year-old or a 30-year-old. But we forget that they're actually 15-year-olds," she said. (PTI)