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WORLD



● Nepalese climber Purja among 6 still missing after Pakistan avalanche; 4 bodies recovered

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NATION



● VHP, seers condemn oppn's saffron-robe protest outside Parliament, seek MPs' expulsion

● No need for agitation, K'taka pursuing all legal measures, min tells BJP

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DIPHU, KARBI ANGLONG, SATURDAY, AUGUST 1, 2026

PAGES 8

PRICE ₹ 8

PM helping us by sending money, by empowering me to announce whatever is necessary: Himanta ● Govt to seek quick disposal of claims of losses, moratorium to flood-hit people

Crucial meeting with insurance cos, NBFCs on Aug 5

GUWAHATI, July 31: The Assam government on Friday decided to approach insurance companies and non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) for expeditious disposal of claims and providing a moratorium to their customers from the four districts which have been badly affected by the floods this year, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said.

Assessment of damage to houses, livestock, etc., is expected to be completed shortly, and the government will try to ensure that funds for repair are disbursed at the earliest, he added.

The announcement came a day after the CM said that he chaired a special meeting of the State Level Bankers' Committee (SLBC), in which it was decided that a six-month moratorium would be offered to all flood-affected people in



four districts for repaying loans.

At least 80 people have died and more than 2 lakh people have been affected in the deluge in the state so far. Four districts -- Sivasagar, Chariadeo, Jorhat and Golaghat --

have been impacted the most.

Addressing the media after chairing a Cabinet meeting here, Sarma said, "We discussed at length on how to provide more relief to the people at this crucial

time."

He said it was decided to convene a meeting with both private and government insurance companies on August 5 to urge them to expeditiously settle claims against insured damaged vehicles, livestock, etc.

"For the four districts of Sivasagar, Chariadeo, Jorhat and Golaghat, we will request them to collect the claims themselves and settle them at the earliest," he added.

The CM further said the government will also meet the NBFCs on August 5 with the request to grant a moratorium and such benefits to borrowers from these four districts.

"Just as the banks have extended a six-month moratorium on loans or the term for loan repayment after our meeting with them yesterday, we (CONTD. ON PAGE 2)

Assam flood toll reaches 80, over 2 lakh people affected



GUWAHATI, July 31: The toll in Assam floods has increased to 80 with two more fatalities, while eight districts and 2.12 lakh people remained affected, officials said on Friday.

The state government has announced a six-month moratorium on repaying all types of loans availed by flood-affected people, while also demanding a support package from the Centre for the

relief and rehabilitation of people ravaged by an unprecedented deluge.

The officials said that both the latest deaths were reported from Sivasagar district. With these, the toll in this year's deluge has mounted to 80.

A total of 21 revenue circles and 437 villages in eight districts of Golaghat, Sivasagar, Biswanath, Chariadeo, Kamrup (Metropolitan), Jorhat, Dhemaji and Nagaon continued to be affected by the floods.

The number of impacted people was at 2,12,400, with Chariadeo being the worst-hit with nearly 80,000 people affected, followed by Sivasagar (71,000) and Jorhat (40,000).

The flood situation has improved since Wednesday, when seven districts and more than three lakh people were affected. The administration (CONTD. ON PAGE 2)

Assam Cabinet approves two new reserve forests, compressed biogas policy

GUWAHATI, July 31: The Assam Cabinet on Friday approved declaring two new jungles as reserve forests, thereby increasing the protected green cover in the state, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said.

The council of ministers also gave its nod to the Assam Compressed Biogas Policy, for a framework to convert the state's organic waste into clean energy.

Addressing a press conference after chairing a Cabinet meeting, Sarma said, "Notification of Rakhyasini proposed reserve forest

and Tharko Nalbari proposed reserve forest, both in Goalpara district, as Reserve Forest has been approved. This will increase the green cover of the state."

The Assam Compressed Biogas Policy also got the green signal of the Cabinet, he said, adding that it will lead to a comprehensive framework designed to convert the state's organic waste into clean energy.

The Commissionerate of Industries and Commerce will be the nodal agency for single-window clearance (CONTD. ON PAGE 2)

Arunachal CM calls for cooperation among NE states for child safety

ITANAGAR, July 31: Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu on Friday called for stronger regional cooperation among North Eastern states to address emerging threats facing children, including human trafficking, online exploitation, substance abuse, child marriage, and cross-border vulnerabilities.

Addressing the inaugural session of the two-day North East State Commissions for Protection of Child Rights (NE SCPCR) Convention 2026 here, Khandu described the gathering as a historic milestone, marking the first time child rights

bodies from all eight northeastern states have assembled on a unified platform, an official statement from CMO said.

Stressing that child welfare is the true benchmark of good governance, the chief minister said the success of any government cannot be measured solely by economic growth or infrastructure development, but by how effectively it safeguards its most vulnerable citizens.

Highlighting Arunachal Pradesh's welfare initiatives, Khandu said over 15,500 girls have benefited from higher education financial assistance under the 'Dulari

Kanya' Scheme with an investment exceeding ₹ 38 crore. He added that ₹ 3.3 crore has been earmarked under the Girls Health & Hygiene Scheme for 2026-27 to support more than 25,000 beneficiaries.

On maternal and child health, Khandu said that over 38,000 women have received support under the Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana, while Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2.0 cover more than 1.8 lakh women and children. Under Mission Vatsalya, over 2,500 vulnerable children receive sponsorship, with 2,479 beneficiaries (CONTD. ON PAGE 2)

21 infiltrators identified in Assam, action initiated: CM

GUWAHATI, July 31: Twenty-one illegal migrants have been identified by Assam police and appropriate action taken against them, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said.

He, however, did not specify the action initiated against them or in which place they were identified.

"Not everyone is a Dhurandhar, especially in Assam!" Sarma said in a post on X on Thursday, referring to the Hindi spy movie.

"21 illegal infiltrators, tested their mettle to survive illegally in Assam but were promptly identified by the OGs in the game- @assam-police and appropriate action was initiated to neutralize the threat they posed," the CM added. Nearly 2,100 (CONTD. ON PAGE 2)



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RBI asks banks to install fake currency detection machines at branches along international borders

MUMBAI, July 31: The Reserve Bank on Friday directed banks to ensure that their branches in the districts with international borders are equipped with note authentication/sorting machines, as it found that efforts of some of the lenders were not adequate for the detection of counterfeit currency.

The central bank, through a master direction issued in April, prescribed comprehensive instructions to the banks on detection, reporting, and monitoring of counterfeit notes.

The banks are mandated to train all their employees handling cash about the security features of genuine banknotes to enable them for detecting counterfeit notes.

Further, all banknotes received by the bank shall be examined for authenticity through machines, counterfeit notes should be impounded in all cases, and in no case the counterfeit note shall be returned to the tenderer or destroyed at the bank.

All detected Fake Indian Currency Notes (FICNs) has also to be reported, as per prescribed guide-



lines.

"However, an analysis by the Reserve Bank suggests that efforts of some of the banks in the matter were not adequate," the central bank said in a circular, which asked the banks to review their processes so as to further

strengthen their capacity and preparedness to identify, impound and report FICNs effectively.

The banks have also been advised to undertake certain specific measures.

In addition to the existing instructions, "the banks shall ensure

that the branches in the districts with international borders are equipped with note authentication/sorting machines", the circular said.

As per the instructions issued in April, all bank branches/identified back offices should be equipped with ultra-violet lamps/ note sorting/ authentication machines to facilitate the detection of counterfeit notes.

The RBI has also asked banks to adopt a focused and target-based approach for conducting awareness and/ or refresher programmes for cash handling staff on the security features of genuine banknotes and detection of FICNs.

"It shall be ensured that all the cash handling staff of the bank are imparted training positively by October 31, 2026," the circular said.

The lenders have also been asked that their Forged Note Vigilance (FNV) cells should analyse the FICN data of their bank to identify hotspots (if any), monitor trends and focus their outreach and capacity-building efforts accordingly. (PTI)

ITC Q1 profit declines 15.6 pc to ₹ 4,508.79 cr; non-cigarette FMCG posts robust growth

KOLKATA, July 31: Diversified conglomerate ITC Ltd on Friday reported a 15.6 per cent decline in its consolidated profit for the June 2026 quarter to ₹ 4,508.79 crore, as higher expenses and the impact of a sharp increase in excise duty on cigarettes weighed on profitability, even as its non-cigarette FMCG business delivered strong double-digit growth.

The Kolkata-headquartered company posted a consolidated profit of ₹ 5,343.41 crore in the April-June quarter a year ago, according to a regulatory filing.

Revenue from operations rose 27.64 per cent to ₹ 29,523.3 crore in the first quarter of FY27 from ₹ 23,129.35 crore a year earlier, while revenue from the sale of products increased 27.82 per cent to ₹ 29,409.82 crore.

The company said the quarter was marked by heightened uncertainty in the operating environment due to the ongoing conflict in West Asia, which triggered a sharp increase and volatility in crude oil and crude-linked commodity prices, besides causing significant trade and supply chain disruptions.

ITC's total expenses jumped 48 per cent year-on-year to ₹ 24,809.95 crore during the quarter. Total consolidated income, including other income, rose 26.74 per cent to ₹ 30,179.01 crore.

The company also flagged the impact of a steep hike in excise duty on cigarettes during the quarter, saying it adopted a calibrated strategy to protect market share and limit migration to illicit trade.

ITC said it implemented more than 30 interventions in a short span to re-architect and strengthen its cigarette portfolio across price points, including value-accretive offerings and leveraging key trademarks.

According to the company, staggered and agile pricing actions helped protect its consumer franchise while mitigating the risk of volume migration to illicit trade. However, the company did not clarify whether the entire burden of the higher excise duty had been



passed on to consumers.

The higher excise incidence also impacted profitability during the quarter.

Meanwhile, the company's non-cigarette FMCG business continued to deliver strong growth.

Revenue from the FMCG-Others segment rose 15 per cent year-on-year to ₹ 6,687 crore, driven by robust demand across packaged foods, dairy products and personal care categories.

Profit before interest and taxes (PBIT) for the segment increased 21 per cent to ₹ 485 crore, while segment EBITDA margin expanded by 55 basis points year-on-year, excluding the impact of Sresta Natural Bioproducts.

Category-wise, dairy, snacks, noodles and frozen snacks recorded growth of over 20 per cent during the quarter. Personal care products posted mid-teen growth, while notebook sales witnessed a strong rebound aided by premiumisation.

The company's digital-first and organic products portfolio achieved an annual revenue run rate of around ₹ 1,500 crore.

ITC said inflation in key raw materials such as fuel, edible oil, soap noodles and packaging materials, driven by the West Asia conflict, was mitigated through strategic inventory cover, com-

modity hedging and price-volume rebalancing initiatives.

On the broader business environment, the company said demand across both rural and urban markets remained resilient during the quarter, although imported inflation remains a key concern in the near term. India is currently witnessing a significant monsoon deficit and lower kharif sowing levels compared with the corresponding period last year.

"Additionally, spatial and temporal variations in monsoon would remain a key monitorable. A protracted conflict in West Asia, alongside emerging El Nino conditions that may weaken monsoons and intensify heatwaves, could weigh on growth, inflation and the current account," ITC said.

The company, however, maintained that India's macroeconomic fundamentals remain resilient, supported by proactive policy measures, sustained public capital expenditure, stable monetary conditions and initiatives to attract foreign investment.

ITC also highlighted the robust performance of its group companies, led by ITC Infotech, Surya Nepal, Sproutlife Foods and ITC Hotels.

Shares of ITC Ltd settled 1.51 per cent lower at ₹ 280.95 apiece on the BSE. (PTI)

Contd. from Page 1...

Crucial meeting with

will urge the NBFCs to provide similar benefits too," he said.

Sarma said assessment of damages caused to houses is being done in the worst-hit districts and is expected to be completed within a day or two, so that disbursement of ₹ 15,000 per family as interim relief can be done within August.

Assessment of affected students eligible for book purchase grants is also being undertaken, he added.

While distribution of free textbooks has already commenced, money from the Chief Minister's Relief Fund for the re-distribution of free school uniforms in the districts will be done on Saturday, Sarma added.

He said that the assessment of permanent damage to public infrastructure will start from August 7, and it will be carried out in a mission mode so that it is completed in 10 to 15 days, and funds for repair can be released by the month's end.

"I will visit Sivasagar and Charaideo before the launch of the assessment," Sarma added.

He further said that the Cabinet approved ₹ 2 to 3 lakh for the repair and desilting of schools in these two districts, and will ensure that classes can resume at the earliest.

"From September one, damage to roads, embankments, etc. will be assessed, which will require more funds for repair," the chief minister added.

Responding to a section questioning Prime Minister Narendra Modi for not visiting Assam during the floods, Sarma said, "These are questions to be debated. Yesterday, when the governor went to visit the affected areas, some were criticising that the officials had to get busy with him."

He claimed that the state is in constant touch with the PM and the Union Home Minister Amit Shah, and they have extended support in all ways.

"The PM is helping us by giving bank moratorium, sending money, by empowering me to announce whatever is necessary...if the question is about his presence or his support, so far we are getting his full support," Sarma said, adding: "We won't be commenting further on the matter."

On reports claiming that activities in Nagaland led to the flood fury in downstream Assam districts, Sarma said, "At this stage, I cannot comment. Nagaland is also under floods, and they are also suffering. These things can be discussed when the present situation is over." (PTI)

Assam flood toll

was operating 112 relief camps and relief distribution centres in four districts, taking care of 75,583 affected people at present.

Multiple agencies such as the Army, NDRF, SDRF, Fire & Emergency Service, police and civil agencies are engaged in rescue and relief operations.

Crop area of 17,198.09 hectares has been submerged across Assam, while embankments, roads, bridges and other infrastructure have also been damaged by flood waters.

Meanwhile, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said a special meeting of the State Level Bankers' Committee (SLBC), attended by representatives from the RBI, NABARD, SBI and all other commercial banks, decided on a relief scheme for the customers who availed loans in Sivasagar, Charaideo, Jorhat and Golaghat districts.

"The SLBC decided that a moratorium of six months will be offered to all flood-affected people in these districts," he added.

Sarma further said that the tenure of loans availed by all flood-affected people can be extended from one year up to seven years in all banks, depending on the type of debt.

He also said the state government placed its demand for a support package before the Inter-Ministerial Central Team (IMCT), which concluded its four-day tour of flood-devastated districts in Upper Assam on Wednesday.

Sarma said the state government also demanded recognition of the Upper Assam floods as an "atypical, high-intensity, rapid-onset event" with flexible norms for damage assessment and assistance. (PTI)

21 infiltrators identified

illegal foreigners have been deported, expelled or sent back from Assam to various countries in the last 10 years, and 2,023 of them were from Bangladesh, the Assembly was informed by the government recently. (PTI)

Arunachal CM calls

getting monthly financial assistance of ₹ 4,000. He also cited round-the-clock support mechanisms including Child Helpline 1098, Women Helpline 181, and One Stop Centres across all 25 districts.

Stating that issues like trafficking and digital exploitation cross state borders, Khandu urged civil society, families, educational institutions, and law enforcement agencies to work in tandem, urging delegates to translate convention deliberations into tangible outcomes for the region's children.

A commemorative NE SPCPR Convention Souvenir was also released during the event.

The convention is being chaired by Arunachal Pradesh Women & Child Development minister Dasanglu Pul. Also present were Home Advisor Mutchu Mithi, WCD Advisor Tsering Lhamu and Tawang MLA Namgye Tsering. (PTI)

Assam Cabinet approves

for time-bound projects execution, the CM said.

The Cabinet also approved the Assam Legal Metrology (Government Approved Test Centre) Rules, 2026, to implement self-certification by manufacturers and third-party certification of weighing and measuring instruments to reduce compliance and regulation burden.

The Assam Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Sub-Ordinate Service (Amendment) Rules, 2026, were also given approval by the Cabinet, Sarma said.

It will regulate recruitment and service conditions of veterinary field assistants to ensure transparency, merit-based selection and uniformity in recruitment and service conditions, he added. (PTI)

ICICI Prudential launches 10-year life cover option under iProtect Smart Plus

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, July 31: ICICI Prudential Life Insurance has introduced a 10-year life cover option under its ICICI Pru iProtect Smart Plus term insurance plan, aimed at customers seeking financial protection for defined short-term liabilities such as home loans, education expenses and business loans.

According to the company, the new option enables customers to avail of a higher life cover at comparatively lower premiums during periods when their financial responsibilities are at their peak.

The plan also includes complimentary health and wellness services valued at up to ₹67,100, an instant claim payout of ₹3 lakh, and a 100 per cent payout upon the diagnosis of a terminal illness.

Commenting on the launch, Manikandan Rajamani, Chief of Distribution at ICICI Prudential Life Insurance,

said the company continues to focus on providing protection solutions aligned with customers' changing financial needs at different stages of life.

He said the introduction of the 10-year policy term expands the company's protection portfolio by combining affordability with meaningful financial security.

Rajamani said the insurer recorded a claim settlement ratio of 99.3 per cent and an average death claim settlement turnaround time of one day during the first quarter of FY2026-27.

The company said it settled ₹1,306 crore in death claims and paid ₹3,360 crore towards maturity and survival benefits during the first quarter of FY2026-27.

During FY2025-26, it settled ₹5,149 crore in death claims and disbursed ₹15,363 crore as maturity and survival benefits to policyholders.

HDFC Bank's CSR initiatives impact over 10.77 crore lives

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, July 31: HDFC Bank has said its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives have positively impacted more than 10.77 crore people across all 28 States and eight Union Territories, with its flagship programme Parivartan continuing to expand its footprint across the country.

According to the bank's Integrated Annual Report 2025-26, HDFC Bank spent ₹1,316.18 crore on CSR initiatives during the financial year, an increase of more than ₹248 crore over the previous year.

The bank's cumulative CSR investment under the Parivartan programme has now reached approximately ₹7,492 crore since its inception.

The bank said its flagship Holistic Rural Development Programme (HRDP) has expanded to cover more than 11,000 villages, up from over 10,430 villages a year earlier.

The programme focuses on rural infrastructure, water conservation, agriculture, livelihoods, education, healthcare, sanitation and community development.

HDFC Bank also expanded its work in remote border areas, extending its CSR coverage to 498 border villages, compared with 298 villages in the previous year.

The initiatives support rural electrification, livelihood enhancement and improvements in agriculture, education and healthcare infrastructure.

Commenting on the bank's CSR initiatives, Kaizad Bharucha, Deputy Managing Director of HDFC Bank, said the Parivartan programme continues to focus on creating sustainable, community-driven development through partnerships with local institutions and organisations.

He said the expansion of the rural development programme and outreach to border villages reflected the bank's commitment to ensuring inclusive growth.

The bank said its CSR initiatives are organised under six key focus areas—rural development, education, skill development and livelihood enhancement, healthcare and hygiene, financial literacy and inclusion, and natural resource management.

Among the achievements highlighted in the report, the bank said it has awarded more than 36,300 scholarships, established over 3,460 SMART schools, created 930 community libraries, provided skill training to over 9.6 lakh people, benefited more than three lakh individuals through healthcare initiatives, and reached over 75 lakh people through its 'Vigil Auntie' digital fraud awareness campaign.

Under its natural resource management initiatives, HDFC Bank said it has created 16,091 water conservation structures and installed more than 80,527 solar lights across the country.

The bank stated that its CSR initiatives are aligned with 10 of the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and are aimed at promoting inclusive and sustainable development.

VINYL WRAPPING IN INTERIOR OF TOILETS, GANGWAY AND DOORWAYS

E-Tender Notice No. M-TSK-2026-31; Dated: 29-07-2026. Tender No.: M-TSK-2026-31. Name of work: Vinyl wrapping in interior of toilets, gangway and doorways in 50 LHB Coaches primarily maintained at Coaching Depot Dibrugarh. Location of work: Dibrugarh and Tinsukia. Tender Value: ₹61,45,720/-.

Earnest Money: ₹1,22,900/-; Last date and time for submission of tender: 20-08-2026 at 13:00 hrs. Date and time of opening of tender: After 15:00 hrs. of 20-08-2026. Website particulars where complete details of the tender can be seen and downloaded: www.irps.gov.in

Sr. DME, Tinsukia

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NAME CHANGE

I have Changed my name from Mohd Arif Uddin to Arif Uddin by swearing a notarial affidavit at Srimanta Sankardevnagar, Hojai (Assam)

Arif Uddin
Vill-Moudnaga Pathar,
PO-Borhahar,
PS-Murajhar,
Dist-Hojai (Assam)

AFFIDAVIT

My actual name is Aleka Jan, C/O-Omar ALI, recorded in my Aadhar card and Voter ID card and in other relevant documents also. But in my passbook Assam Gramin Bank, Kharuabandia Branch account no. 7149020001076 wherein my name recorded as Alekzan Begum, C/O-Omar ALI in place of Aleka Jan, C/O-Omar ALI. Both Aleka Jan, C/O-Omar ALI and Alekzan Begum, C/O-Omar ALI is Correct one and Same Person.

Yours faithfully
Aleka Jan
C/O- Omar ALI
Vill. Garmari (Pathuria)
PO. Radhamadhab Hat,
Ps. Mankachar.
Dist. South Salmara Mankachar.
Pin-783131

AFFIDAVIT

I, Razikul Islam, D.O.B.- 12-02-1999, S/O - Asrab Ali, R/O- Vill- 2 No Gagalmari, P.O- Gagalmari, P.S.- Mayong, Dist.- Morigaon (Assam) have corrected my name from Rajikul Islam to Razikul Islam through an Executive Magistrate at Morigaon on 21.07.2026. Razikul Islam and Rajikul Islam is the same and one person.

AFFIDAVIT

I Sri Pranab Barman resident of Matikhola Dimasa Gaon, Howraghat, Karbi Anglong would like to mention that in my daughter Aadhaar Card bearing No. 531580936750, her name wrongly recorded as Desri Daundlangtha instead of her correct name Dishri Barman and my name also wrongly recorded as Kishan Daundlangtha instead of correct name Pranab Barman. This is true.

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RAILWAY NOTIFICATION
NO. EL/CON/NFR/HQ/OHE/EIG/DSR-MLVM/2026-27/CN/225
Dated: 29-07-2026
CAUTION NOTICE

Introduction of 25 KV AC Traction on Dhansiri (Excl.) to Molvom (Incl.) of Lumding.

WARNING TO ROAD USERS REGARDING HEIGHT GAUGES AT LEVEL CROSSING GATES

It is notified for information of public that in connection with introduction of 25 KV AC Traction on and from the date(s) mentioned against the following section(s) of Lumding Division of Northeast Frontier Railway, height gauges have been erected at all the level crossings with clear height of 4.78 meters above road level with a view to prevent loads of excessive height from coming in contact or dangerous proximity to "LIVE" traction wires.

Section	Date
Dhansiri (Excl.) to Molvom (Incl.)	08-09-2026

Public are hereby notified to observe the height specified above for the purpose of loading vehicles and to see that the loads carried in Road Vehicles do not infringe the height gauges under any circumstances. The dangers to a load of excessive height are as follows:-

1. Danger to height gauge and consequent obstruction to the road and the Railway line.
2. Danger to the materials or equipment carried and/or the vehicle itself.
3. Danger of fire and risk of life due to contact with or dangerous proximity to the live conductor.

Dy. Chief Electrical Engineer/HQ (CON), Maligaon
NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY
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PUBLIC NOTIFICATION
No. EL/CON/NFR/HQ/OHE/EIG/DSR-MLVM/2026-27/PN/224 Date: 29-07-2026. Notice is hereby given to all users of Railway line and premises situated on the completed section of the under-noted lines Dhansiri (Excl.) to Molvom (Incl.) section of Lumding Division of Northeast Frontier Railway that the 25 KV, 50 HZ, AC single-phase overhead traction wires along with Power Supply installation at new location will be energized on or after the date specified against the section on and from the same date the overhead traction line and traction installation shall be treated as live at all times and no unauthorized person shall approach or work in the proximity of the said overhead line.

Section	Railway	Division	Kilometer	Date of Energization
Dhansiri (Excl.) to Molvom (Incl.)	North-East Frontier Railway	Lumding Division	From KM 00/00 To KM 31/412	08-09-2026

Dy. Chief Electrical Engineer/HQ (Con)/Maligaon
NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY
(Construction Organisation)
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EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

No: EO/Medical/DBRT/03 OF 2026-27 Dated: 29-07-2026
Chief Medical Superintendent, N.F. Railway, Tinsukia, on behalf of the President of India, invites Expression of Interest (EOI) for Radiological Investigations / Pathological Investigations centers at CGHS rates for railway beneficiaries of Tinsukia Division under Divisional Railway Hospital, N.F. Railway, Dibrugarh for a period of 02 years.

The Interested Diagnostic Centres may download the details from the website of: <http://www.nfr.indianrailways.gov.in>. For further queries, contact office of Chief Medical Superintendent, Divisional Railway Hospital, Dibrugarh- 995755506.

Time Line
1. Issue of EOI (Expression of Interest).
2. Venue - CMS Office, Divisional Railway Hospital, Dibrugarh.
3. Last date of submission of proposal - 12-08-2026 time 13:00 hrs.
4. Date of opening of the proposal - 12-08-2026 time 15:30 hrs.

Chief Medical Superintendent, Dibrugarh
NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY
Serving Customers With A Smile

Political convention in Diphu on August 10 to deliberate on proposed platform Leaders initiate move to form new regional party for hill districts

HT Bureau

DIPHU, July 31: The process of forming a new regional political party for the hill districts of Karbi Anglong, West Karbi Anglong and Dima Hasao has begun, leaders associated with the initiative announced at a press conference held at the Chandrasing Teron Memorial Club in Lorulungso on Friday.

Addressing the media, former All Party Hills Leaders Conference (APHLC) spokesperson Angtong Engti Kathar said a political convention would be held in Diphu on August 10 to deliberate on the formation of the proposed regional party.

Engti, who was expelled from the JI Kathar-led APHLC following the 2026 Assam Assembly elections, said there was an urgent need for a strong regional political force to safeguard the interests of the people of the hill districts.

Claiming that the Autonomous State Demand Committee (ASDC) no longer functioned as an effective



regional political force, he alleged that there was no strong opposition to raise issues relating to corruption and governance in the BJP-led Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council (KAAC).

He said the proposed party would seek to provide a credible regional platform capable of voicing public concerns and protecting the rights of the people.

Engti said the August 10 convention would be attended by ex-

alleging that the BJP-led KAAC had failed to fulfil the aspirations of the people and that development benefits were reaching only a select section.

He further alleged that corruption and nepotism had become widespread in the council and claimed that land was being handed over to corporate interests.

According to him, a new regional political force was necessary to safeguard the land, natural resources and autonomy of Karbi Anglong.

Describing the proposed convention as an open forum, Rongpi invited all like-minded individuals and organisations concerned about the future of the hill districts to participate in the deliberations.

Among those present at the press conference were Longminder Rongphar, Saising Rongpi, convener of the Joint Coordination Committee for Protection of Autonomy (JCCPA), and Rasong Engti.

perelled APHLC members and other regional leaders.

Invitations have also been extended to former leaders associated with the ASDC movement, former Members of Parliament and Members of the Legislative Assembly, and members of the ASDC Socialist Group led by Sarsing Engng.

Former Karbi Students' Association (KSA) president Robindro Rongpi also stressed the need for a strong regional political platform,

BTC Secretariat reviews governance and administrative discipline

HT Correspondent

KOKRAJHAR, July 31: The Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) on Friday held an interaction meeting with officers and employees of the BTC Secretariat and the BTC Legislative Assembly (BTCLA) to discuss administrative discipline, good governance and measures to improve the functioning of the Secretariat.

The meeting, held at the BTCLA Auditorium in Kokrajhar, was chaired by BTC Deputy Chief Rihon Daimary and attended by Executive Members Derhasat Basumatary and Lwmsrao Daimary, Adviser to the BTC Chief Rabinson Muchahari, Additional Principal Secretary Pranjit Kumar Wary, General Administration Department Secretary Bhaskar Jyoti Manta, Personnel Department Secretary Pami Brahma, along with other senior officers and staff.

Addressing the gathering, Daimary conveyed the vision and directives of the BTC Chief for strengthening administrative effi-

ciency and discipline within the Secretariat.

He said strict adherence to official discipline was essential for ensuring smooth administration and transforming the BTC Secretariat into a model institution.

He stressed the importance of punctuality and regular attendance, maintaining a citizen-friendly and professional work environment, ensuring cleanliness of the Secretariat complex and expediting the implementation of the e-Office system.

He said he would personally monitor the implementation of these initiatives and urged all employees, including Grade III and Grade IV staff, to discharge their responsibilities with dedication and accountability.

Calling for collective efforts, the Deputy Chief urged officers and staff to work sincerely towards strengthening governance and accelerating the overall development of the Bodoland Territorial Council.

Executive Member Derhasat Basumatary highlighted the im-

portance of adhering to the provisions of the Memorandum of Settlement (MoS), 2003 for the effective functioning of the Secretariat.

He said the Principal Secretary is the competent authority for the creation of posts and matters relating to the appointment, transfer and posting of Grade III and Grade IV employees.

He also stressed the need for timely meetings of the Departmental Promotion Committee (DPC) to ensure transparent and merit-based promotions.

Executive Member Lwmsrao Daimary called upon officers and staff of both the BTC Secretariat and the BTCLA Secretariat to uphold the vision and aspirations of the BTC Chief through dedicated service and effective implementation of government policies and programmes.

The meeting concluded with an interactive session during which officers and employees shared suggestions with the Deputy Chief on improving administrative efficiency and public service delivery.

Road accidents decline in Nagaon amid stricter enforcement

HT Correspondent

NAGAON, July 31: Road accidents in Nagaon district witnessed a significant decline in July, with the district administration attributing the improvement to stricter enforcement against traffic violations and intensified road safety awareness campaigns.

According to figures presented at the monthly meeting of the District Road Safety Committee, chaired by Deputy Commissioner Devashish Sharma on Friday, the number of road accidents fell from 118 in June to 84 in July.

The number of casualties also declined during the period. While 22 people were killed and 158 injured in road accidents in June, the figures for July came down to 13 deaths and 92 injuries.

Expressing satisfaction over the reduction, Sharma said every road accident resulting in loss of life was a matter of concern and stressed that the administration's objective was to minimise accidents and make the district as safe as possible.

He directed the Transport Department to continue public awareness campaigns on traffic rules while intensifying enforcement against traffic violations.

He noted that the use of parking locks to curb illegal parking had been among the measures adopted during the month.

The Deputy Commissioner also instructed the National Highways and Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd (NHIDCL) and the Public Works Department (PWD) to ensure timely road repairs, proper road markings and installation of reflectors at vulnerable locations to enhance road safety.

He further asked the Traffic Police to intensify action against heavy commercial vehicles, particularly trucks, parked along National Highways.

During the meeting, officials reviewed each road accident reported during the previous month, analysed the causes and discussed preventive measures to reduce the likelihood of similar incidents in future.

The meeting was attended by Senior Superintendent of Police Partha Pratim Das, Additional Superintendent of Police Abhutan Pegu, District Transport Officer Seemanta Bora, executive engineers of the PWD Road Divisions, representatives of NHIDCL and contractors engaged in road construction projects.

Missing Bokajan village headman found dead in Dhansiri forest

HT Correspondent

BOKAJAN, July 31: The body of Borsing Engng, village headman (Gaoon Burha) of Dillai Kania Engng village in Karbi Anglong, was recovered from a forested area near Adivasi village in Dhansiri, police said on Friday.

Engng, who also earned his livelihood as an auto-rickshaw driver, had reportedly been missing after leaving for a trip on July 28.

According to local sources, he was last seen with Laudung Basumatary, who had allegedly hired his auto-rickshaw to travel to an undisclosed destination.

His auto-rickshaw, bearing registration number AS09BC1825, was also reported missing after his disappearance.

Concerned over his prolonged absence, family members and local residents launched a search before his body was discovered concealed in dense vegetation near Adivasi village.

Police were informed immediately and a team reached the spot to conduct an inquest and send the body for post-mortem examination. The exact cause of death is yet to be ascertained.

However, local residents have expressed suspicion of foul play and urged the authorities to conduct a thorough investigation.

Police have registered a case and launched a search for Laudung Basumatary, who is being sought for questioning in connection with the investigation.

Further details are awaited as the investigation progresses.

AASU seeks extension of summer vacation in flood-hit Jorhat

HT Correspondent

JORHAT, July 31: The Jorhat district unit of the All Assam Students' Union (AASU) has urged the education authorities to extend the ongoing summer vacation by at least a week in view of the extensive damage caused by floods to schools and the hardships faced by students across the district.

The appeal was made to Inspector of Schools (Jorhat) Buly Gogoi Bhuyan ahead of the scheduled reopening of schools on August 1 after the month-long summer vacation.

According to AASU, a delegation of the students' body met the Inspector of Schools on Friday and requested that the vacation be extended to allow students and educational institutions sufficient time to recover from the impact of the floods before classes resume.

Official sources said that more than 300 schools across the district's five revenue circles have been affected by the floods, while over 24,000 students have been impacted by the deluge.

Confirming the development, Inspector of Schools Buly Gogoi Bhuyan said the matter had been brought to the notice of the Jorhat Deputy Commissioner for consideration.

KAAC launches national sericulture technology campaign in Diphu



HT Bureau

DIPHU, July 31: The Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council (KAAC) recently launched Mera Resham Mera Abhimaan 2.0, a national mega sericulture technology transfer campaign, at Resham Bhawan in Diphu to promote scientific silk farming and improve productivity among farmers.

The programme was inaugurated by Kache Rongpi, Executive Member of KAAC in charge of the Sericulture Department.

It was organised by the Central Muga Eri Research and Training Institute under the Central Silk Board (CSB) in collaboration with the KAAC Sericulture Department.

The campaign aims to bridge the gap between scientific research and field-level practices by promoting modern sericulture technologies such as V-I mulberry cultivation, precision drip irrigation and mechanised silkworm rearing.

The nationwide 100-day cam-

paign, running from June 22 to September 30, covers 218 major sericulture districts across 27 states and Union Territories, accounting for over 95 per cent of India's raw silk production.

Addressing the inaugural session, Rongpi said that while hill communities have traditionally reared eri silkworms, farmers in Karbi Anglong have increasingly taken up muga, tasar and mulberry silkworm cultivation.

She said commercial silkworm rearing offers significant economic returns and urged farmers to adopt scientific methods to improve productivity and income.

She also informed that 240 silkworm rearing houses were constructed in the district under the Silk Samagra Scheme 1.0 of the Central Silk Board in 2025.

Similar infrastructure would be created for farmers during the current year under the same scheme, she added.

Extension Officer Longki

Timung said the campaign seeks to create awareness among farmers about scientific silkworm rearing practices and is being conducted across Karbi Anglong and West Karbi Anglong.

He said the programme would provide farmers with technical guidance to improve production and profitability.

Scientists Bhaskar Ghosh and Silpa Saikia of the Central Silk Board, Jorhat, served as resource persons and conducted training sessions on scientific rearing techniques, host plant management, pest and disease control, integrated farming practices and methods to enhance farm income.

Ghosh said Karbi Anglong has considerable potential for sericulture because of its vast land suitable for cultivating host plants such as mulberry, castor and som, adding that year-round silkworm rearing could significantly improve the economic condition of farmers in the district.

The programme concluded with an interactive session during which experts responded to farmers' queries on silkworm diseases, fodder management, feeding practices and scientific rearing techniques.

Among those present were Roshmi Teronpi, Chairperson of the KAAC Sericulture Department; Deori Ronghang, Joint Secretary in charge of Sericulture, KAAC; Ronghong Rongphar, Additional Director of Sericulture; and Jagat Rabha, Superintendent of Sericulture.

Mother, three-year-old daughter missing from WKA

HT Correspondent

KHERONI, July 31: A young woman and her three-year-old daughter have been reported missing from West Karbi Anglong district, prompting an appeal from their family and local organisations to help trace them.

The missing woman has been identified as Jishma Chetry, who, according to family members, left her residence at Langthat-Amang village on July 20 along with her three-year-old daughter, saying she was going to a bank in Kheroni for some urgent work.

The two, however, did not return home and have remained untraceable since then.

Family members, led by her husband Kharsing Terang, have conducted extensive searches in and around Kheroni and other nearby areas, but no information regarding their whereabouts has been obtained so far.

With all efforts proving unsuccessful, the family has appealed to the public to come forward with any information that may help locate the missing mother and child.

Volunteers distribute essential supplies to affected families in Sivasagar and Jorhat

NFR Bharat Scouts & Guides provide flood relief in Upper Assam

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, July 31: Members of the Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) Bharat Scouts & Guides have organised a flood relief campaign to assist families affected by the recent floods in Assam, collecting and distributing essential supplies as part of the humanitarian initiative.

A Flood Relief Collection and Distribution Booth was set up at the NFR Headquarters in Maligaon from July 27 to 31 to collect relief materials for flood-affected families.

The campaign was inaugurated by the Principal Chief Personnel Officer (PCPO) of NFR in the presence of senior railway officials and members of the Bharat Scouts & Guides.

According to NFR, railway employees and members of the Scouts & Guides actively participated in the drive by contributing essential relief materials.

As part of the outreach programme, members of the NFR Bharat Scouts & Guides, Mariani District Association, distributed relief materials among flood-affected families in Sivasagar and Jorhat districts.

The volunteers also interacted with local residents while ensuring that relief supplies



reached those in need.

NFR stated that the initiative reflected the core values of the Bharat Scouts & Guides movement, including service, compassion and community welfare, while reaffirming the railway's commitment to supporting people dur-

ing natural disasters.

The railway said it would continue to undertake humanitarian initiatives aimed at assisting affected communities and contributing to relief, rehabilitation and community resilience across the Northeast.

Good Samaritan rescues injured pregnant woman after ambulance crash

HT Correspondent

HAFLONG, July 31: A Bolero driver was widely praised for his timely intervention after rescuing a pregnant woman and two others following an ambulance accident near Gurubari, about 25 km from Haflong.

According to reports, Darsing Phangchu, a resident of Boro Langphang village, was travelling with his pregnant wife in an ambulance belonging to L&T Company at Lonku to Haflong Civil Hospital for her scheduled ultrasound examination when the vehicle met with an accident, leaving the occupants injured, on Thursday.

At the scene, a passing Bolero driver, later identified as Lalthirjem Hrangkhoh, a resident of Lungkhok near Haflong, immediately stopped to assist the victims.

Realising the urgency of the situation, he shifted the injured passengers into his vehicle and rushed them to Haflong Civil Hospital for treatment. Hospital sources said the pregnant woman is in a stable condition and receiving medical care.

Her unborn child is also reported to be out of danger.

Her husband, Darsing Phangchu, sustained a fracture to his left hand and is undergoing treatment.

The driver's prompt response has been widely appreciated by residents, many of whom said his presence of mind and humanitarian gesture helped avert a greater tragedy. Lalthirjem Hrangkhoh is employed with a construction firm stationed at Gunjung in Dima Hasao.

Golaghat observes Desh Bhakta Divas

HT Correspondent

GOLAGHAT, July 31: The Golaghat district administration, in collaboration with the Directorate of Information and Public Relations (DIPR), observed Desh Bhakta Divas 2026 to commemorate the 87th death anniversary of eminent freedom fighter, orator and nationalist leader Deshbhakta Tarun Ram Phukan at the conference hall of the District Commissioner's office recently.

The programme began with a welcome address by Hemanga Kashyap, Officer-in-Charge of the DIPR, followed by the ceremonial lighting of the lamp and floral tributes to Tarun Ram Phukan by Deputy Commissioner Biswajit Phukan, senior district officials, heads of departments and other dignitaries.

Speaking on the occasion, Deputy Commissioner Biswajit Phukan and filmmaker and writer Dinesh Gogoi highlighted Tarun Ram Phukan's significant contribution to India's freedom movement. They recalled his patriotism, leadership and multifaceted personality, noting that his ideals continue to inspire generations.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

The only true wisdom is in knowing you know nothing
- Socrates

Escalation of Iran-US war

The Iran-US war has dangerously escalated all of a sudden when there were indications of resumed talks between the combatants post a lull in US strikes over Iran. The extension of the conflict to a major oil producing country, Saudi Arabia, had pushed oil prices immediately by 5% and pushed the price to over \$88 per barrel. A militant group in Iraq, which is described as a proxy for Iran, has been attacked by a joint force of US-Saudi command. The militant group, Popular Mobilisation Front, has suffered heavy casualties and a large number of people have been injured. The US Central command has officially annulled the joint action from US and Saudi Arabia against Iran-linked Shia forces in Iraq. The attack has been vehemently condemned by the Iranian state as a violation of Iraqi sovereignty. Iraq, meanwhile, has spoken against the attack and has cancelled a major visit by the Iraqi prime minister to Saudi Arabia. The country's president has also come down heavily on the joint attack on Iraqi soil. The oil spike should cause fresh worries to India as supply constraints would further aggravate. Already, the vicious turn in the Russia-Ukraine and attacks in the Black Sea ports had further hurt Russian supplies. Indian purchases of Russian crude have also come under pressure and become more uncertain. As it appears, the sudden attack on Iran-backed Shia militants based in Iraq has complicated the Iran-US war in several dimensions and brought a major country in the region directly into the conflict.

The joint US-Saudi operation has now re-ignited a long festering enmity between two traditional rivals — Shia Iran and Sunni Saudi Arabia. The two countries have been jostling for influence and power as regional players among the Muslim countries of the Middle East. The immediate provocation for Saudi involvement in an attack on Iran backed militia headquarters in Iraq are the repeated attacks on Saudi oil facilities in the country as well as attacks on Saudi ships passing through the Gulf of Oman. Additionally, Saudi Arabia was attacked by Houthi militants repeatedly. The PMF, based in Iraq, was organised to fight the Islamic State militants and reclaim lands won over the ISIS operatives in 2014. After the defeat of the ISIS forces, the Iraqi militants were absorbed in the overall security forces of the country.

Nevertheless, the PMF, constituted mainly with Iran-linked Shia Muslims, continued to act as an extended arm of Iranian war planners in its regional operations. The Shia operatives of the militia groups had acted on orders from Iran. The Jordan attacks and renewed fusillades against Saudi oil facilities and other targets followed the day the Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu, met Donald Trump. Until recently, the relations between the two had turned a full circle from bonhomie to apparent stand-off.

Assam Accord and the Citizenship Debate

The Assam Accord stands as a monumental milestone in the historical trajectory of Assam, capturing a defining chapter of collective resistance, political negotiation and unfulfilled promises. Signed on August 15, 1985, in New Delhi, this historic agreement materialized between the Government of India, the Government of Assam, and leading organizations of the Assam Movement—namely the All Assam Students' Union (AASU) and the Asom Gana Parishad (AGP). This accord successfully concluded a turbulent six-year mass movement whose core objectives centered on identifying and expelling illegal foreign nationals residing in Assam while securing the linguistic, cultural, and national interests of indigenous Assamese communities. Yet, as August 15, 2025, marked four full decades since its inception, the complete implementation of the accord remains stubbornly incomplete, anchoring the question of citizenship at the very center of Assam's political, social, and cultural existence. This persistent dilemma continues to generate deep anxiety and instability among the populace, constantly reminding the region of an era defined by fervent public mobilization. Comprehending the foundational backdrop of the Assam Accord requires an unflinching look at the socio-political and economic realities of the Assam Movement, a period spanning from 1979 to 1985 that was nothing short of a profound crisis for the region. During these years, the people of Assam, galvanized primarily by student leadership, mounted a formidable resistance against unchecked illegal immigration. Given Assam's unique geographical positioning—specifically its porous proximity to erstwhile East Pakistan, now modern-day Bangladesh—waves of migrants crossed into the state, fundamentally fracturing its demographic composition. The numerical and cultural weight of the indigenous populace eroded sharply, threatening native languages, heritage, and everyday livelihoods. Such conditions triggered an existential panic among citizens who felt their cultural identity, historical traditions, and economic security slipping away under the weight of demographic shifts. The All Assam Students' Union channeled this raw public fury and collective aspiration into an organized campaign where sheer mass participation, combined with relentless yet non-violent protest, cornered the central government and forced authorities to the negotiation table. The resulting accord partially acknowledged

local grievances, yet the flawed execution and lingering ambiguities of its terms have cast a long, complicated shadow over the state's modern landscape, leaving generations to grapple with the structural fallout of an agreement that promised much but delivered selectively.

Three core pillars anchored the architecture of the Assam Accord: the identification and deportation of foreign nationals, the safeguarding of Assamese cultural, linguistic, and social identity, and the charting of a robust path toward economic development. Clause 5 of the accord laid down detailed protocols for foreign national identification, designating January 1, 1966, as the baseline year where individuals entering prior to this date were regularized. Conversely, those arriving between January 1, 1966, and March 25, 1971, were to be detected as foreigners, stripped of voting rights, and subjected to eventual expulsion procedures, while anyone crossing the border after midnight on March 25, 1971, faced immediate deportation. These directives drastically complicated citizenship politics, leading to Section 6(A) being subsequently bolted onto the Citizenship Act to accommodate these provisions and singling out Assam with a distinct temporal cut-off. This decision provoked bitter resentment among indigenous communities, who viewed the influx permitted during the 1966–1971 window as dangerously vast, and decades of simmering discontent over this clause have continuously stoked the fires of the citizenship debate. Administrative inertia, a chronic lack of political will, and poor coordination between federal and state authorities have repeatedly crippled the execution of the accord's various clauses, causing progress on the identification and removal of foreigners to crawl at a snail's pace. Under Clause 5, the updating of the National Register of Citizens (NRC) was undertaken to forge a reliable roster of legitimate inhabitants, but the exercise devolved into a labyrinthine, highly controversial ordeal. When the final NRC list dropped in 2019, roughly 19 million names sat on the cutting room floor, sparking fierce disputes over neutrality, clerical accuracy, and procedural transparency. Bureaucratic blunders, missing documentation, and alleged political interference resulted in the exclusion of numerous indigenous citizens, deepening public alienation. Com-

pounding this, the practical deportation of identified foreigners hit a brick wall due to international diplomatic realities, as the absence of a formal repatriation treaty signed with Bangladesh leaves expelled individuals languishing in administrative limbo and steadily erodes public faith in governance.

Citizenship remains a permanent battleground in Assamese politics, heavily influenced by the separate legal pathway carved out via Section 6(A) of the Citizenship Act that recognized March 25, 1971, as the legal threshold. Indigenous groups argued fiercely that this cutoff legitimized demographic invasion, escalating matters in 2012 when bodies like the Assam Sammilana Mahasangha petitioned the Supreme Court, demanding that 1951 be reinstated as the original baseline year because any later date compromises native survival. Although the Supreme Court ultimately upheld the 1971 cutoff in 2024, the verdict triggered deeply fractured reac-

natural resources sluggish and trapping the region's vast economic potential behind bureaucratic red tape. Bridging this gap requires aggressive promotion of local industries, agricultural modernization, and dynamic job creation for the youth—priorities historically neglected by shifting political administrations that have failed to synchronize federal and state developmental efforts.

The unfulfilled trajectory of the Assam Accord is further compounded by vulnerabilities in Clauses 8 and 9, which targeted the issuance of formal citizenship certificates and the ironclad sealing of international borders. Bureaucratic red tape and missing archival papers during certificate distribution stranded countless native families outside safety nets, while despite barbed-wire fencing and heightened Border Security Force deployments, illegal infiltration persists due to the labyrinthine geography of riverine borders and delicate geopolitical equations. Four decades on, these structural gaps cast a long shadow, magnified heavily by the passage of the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) in 2019 which poured gasoline on the fire by extending pathways to citizenship for specific non-Muslim religious minorities arriving from neighboring countries prior to December 31, 2014. Critics immediately denounced the legislation as a direct dagger to the heart of the Assam Accord, warning of catastrophic demographic consequences that triggered massive street protests uniting students, intellectuals, and common citizens in a roaring reaffirmation of regional self-preservation. The political fallout of the accord birthed the Asom Gana Parishad, an entity that once redefined regionalism and captured state power in 1985 with high hopes of fulfilling the accord's mandate, though internal factionalism, political compromises, and fractured central alliances have since dimmed its electoral dominance. Ultimately, forty years on, the Assam Accord reads like an unfinished manuscript where chronic paralysis in executing foundational clauses keeps the state's social fabric raw and restless. Resolving this deep-seated crisis demands genuine administrative overhaul, unshakeable political integrity, and sincere federal cooperation, because only through the rigorous, honest execution of the accord's original mandates can Assam secure its historical identity, honor its indigenous populace, and stride toward a stable, prosperous tomorrow.

DEGREE OF THOUGHT

By: HIMANGSHU RANJAN BHUYAN

Recent Deluge in Upper Assam and the Ways to Mitigate it

By: Diganta Baruah

The recent floods in Shivasagar, Charaideo, Nazira and Jorhat along with the Dikhou River in Dichang, Darika and Janji have devastated villages, people and animals. Sorrows of flood affected people are unimaginable. Most people have become homeless. It will be a huclean task for the victims to rebuild their home and dream houses buried by the sediments of the flood. The deluge has made people financially insecure for about a number of years.

The local population have cited valid reasons such as stone quarries and illegally mined coal and mining in the mountains of Nagaland as the main source of this deluge. Landslides caused by heavy rains during the monsoon season and the flow of debris like rock and sand accompanied with flood water flooded the entire Shivasagar and Charideo Districts as well as some parts of Jorhat District too. The common people suffered the consequences of the illegal and irrational devouring by some deadly crooks involved with illegal mining activities in Nagaland. The areas which are devastated particularly by this horror are Bihubari, Nepalkhuti, Chantak, Kamal Chapri, Ligitpukhuri and its surrounding areas. The Nepalkhuti and Kamalchhapri of Bihubari are completely destroyed. It remained as a mystery how this deluge happened which is unprecedented in the history of upper Assam which befell upon the people leading to mass destruction of the dwelling places, houses, people and animals.

In the year 2019, the legal authority informed the administration (which was not implemented) about the possibility of a deluge to be caused by the illegal mining activities fearing that these illegal mining activities would one day bring disaster to the people of upper Assam Districts like Shivasagar, Charaideo, etc. But today what we have seen and witnessed is that common masses suffered unimaginably because of the consequences of not taking proper action in the past despite



the warnings from the legal and competent authority.

Another thought which is stirring at the moment is that Assam is anyway a riverine state. It's a well known fact that the Dayang Project, the Suwasiri Project and the NEEPCO dams are holding Assam and its people hostage to floods.

Where will the people who have nothing to say about their land, livestock and resources restart their lives anew all over now? Isn't it a question of serious thought to ponder about by all of us? Many people, NGOs, organisations have been helping the flood victims since the deluge affected the masses of Shivasagar and Charaideo Districts as well as Jorhat District of upper Assam.

It's high time for the government to take drastic measures to remove the sediments immediately in its plan to stand by the flood victims from August onwards. Moreover, instead of the aid announcements houses of flood ravaged people should be built soon on humanitarian grounds. Basic amenities to children and students should be provided. Provision of capital to each household affected by this deluge for generating a source of income must be considered urgently because those people who have little capital can be greatly benefited by the capital provided so that they can start their livelihood all over again.



On the other hand, everyone affected by the floods and those flood victims who took loans from various banks should be given loan waiver. There should not be any kind of distinction between rich and poor while extending help to the flood affected people. No political party should resort to mud-slinging games during these difficult times of floods and they should stand unitedly forgetting their political differences at the pedestal of humanity. Ironically, the Government of Assam has set a target of collecting Rs 12 crores for flood relief. The Government of Assam should put pressure on the Central Government for extending a large amount as a flood relief to the people of our state Assam.

The Government of our beloved state Assam should act decisively to stop the anti-people activities like cutting of mountains and illegal mining of coal in consultation with the Government of Nagaland. Furthermore, the price hike of essential commodities should not happen during this period. Not only the flood victims, but also the common people will not be able to deal with the price hike of essential commodities during this time of their lives. Surprisingly, no minister of the Government of India has stood by the flood victims so far. Isn't this a sheer neglect from the Central Government during this harrowing period for the flood affected people of our beloved state Assam? There are precedents for the Government of India to respond immediately in conflict situations. We, the people of Assam, think the Central Government should declare this disaster as a National Disaster. The government and the people should be visionary and work for the public interest and the future.

A well drawn out disaster management plan should be framed by consulting with the stakeholders of the flood management fellows of the world at large so that the people of our beloved state Assam don't have to suffer the devastating consequences of flood anymore again in future.

Rescuing education after the deluge

By: Lalit Nath

The recent catastrophic floods in Upper Assam have unleashed widespread havoc across Shivasagar, Charaideo and Jorhat districts. Beyond destroying homes, roads, bridges and property, the deluge has pushed the academic life and future of thousands of students into severe uncertainty. Thousands of households and livestock have been severely affected, while nearly 300 school buildings have suffered extensive damage. Schools that escaped inundation were urgently converted into relief camps for displaced citizens. Consequently, classrooms meant for teaching are currently housing hundreds of flood-affected people.

The sudden, ruthless onset of the floods left poor and middle-class families in tea garden areas and rural belts with virtually no time to evacuate safely. Students bore the direct brunt of this crisis. Their essential academic assets—textbooks, notebooks, computers, examination admit cards, mark sheets and registration certificates—were entirely swept away or destroyed by the swirling waters. Furthermore, July is typically the summer vacation period, during which students prepare at home for their upcoming mid-term examinations. This unexpected disaster has completely disrupted the academic calendar across all three districts. Disconnected from their studies, students will face immense difficulty completing their syllabus on time once schools reopen, adversely impacting their performance in upcoming examinations.

Even as floodwaters recede, destitute families are struggling to afford new study materials for their children. Reopening and rehabilitating these schools poses a major challenge for the administration and the Education Department. Knee-deep silt in classrooms, along with ruined furniture, contaminated drinking water and damaged sanitation facilities, makes the environment entirely unfit for learning.

The situation is particularly dire in the school networks across the tea gardens of Charaideo and the riverine rural areas of Jorhat and Shivasagar. Deprived of alternative learning mechanisms, students in these remote pockets face a grim, uncertain future. Additionally, disrupted power supplies and broken mobile networks have rendered online education virtually impossible in rural regions. This directly impairs preparation for crucial Board examinations as well as national-level competitive tests such as NEET, JEE and CUET. Through no fault of their own, bright students from these regions risk falling behind in the competitive arena.

Natural disasters do not merely cause physical and material damage; they inflict deep psychological trauma on young minds. The harrowing experiences in relief camps across Charaideo and Nazira, the sight of cherished books floating away and an uncertain future have instilled deep anxiety and despair among students. Most dangerously, there is a heightened risk of an alarming surge in school dropout rates across the rural and tea garden belts of Shivasagar, Charaideo and Jorhat. Finan-



Affected students will soon receive free textbooks and uniforms, while damaged school infrastructure will be repaired or rebuilt. Crucially, the department has committed to issuing duplicate copies of lost academic documents—including certificates, admit cards, mark sheets and registration cards—free of charge.

cially broken families may be forced to push their children into child labour or early employment rather than sending them back to school.

To revive the education sector and restore students' aspirations, the Education Department has already announced several promising immediate measures. Affected students will soon receive free textbooks and uniforms, while damaged school infrastructure will be repaired or rebuilt. Crucially, the department has committed to issuing duplicate copies of lost academic documents—including certificates, admit cards, mark sheets and registration cards—free of charge.

While these immediate relief measures

are commendable, the government and district administrations must implement long-term, structural interventions to safeguard the region's educational ecosystem. First, a tailored academic calendar should be introduced for flood-affected areas, utilising Sundays and scheduled holidays for extra classes to cover the lost curriculum. Second, parallel to general relief materials, every flood-affected student should urgently receive a basic 'Flood Kit' containing textbooks, notebooks, and essential stationery.

Third, school premises must be thoroughly disinfected to create a safe, hygienic environment, alongside regular counseling sessions to help students overcome flood-induced psychological trauma. Finally, for a permanent solution, school buildings in flood-prone zones should be reconstructed on elevated platforms or stilts structures, while dedicated community relief shelters should be constructed at the Panchayat level to prevent schools from being used as relief camps during emergencies.

The students of Shivasagar, Charaideo, and Jorhat have consistently brought academic pride to Assam. However, this devastating natural calamity threatens to derail their potential and overshadow their futures. They require more than temporary relief—they need sustained structural support, mental health intervention and disaster-resilient educational infrastructure. Prompt execution of these measures is essential to ensure that the youth of Upper Assam can overcome this trauma and pursue their goals with renewed confidence.

An expert guide to getting a job in PR

By: Lottie O'Connor

The PR industry might have a reputation as one long party, but there's a lot more to a career in communications than champagne and lunches. Competition for jobs can be fierce, particularly in the graduate market where getting that first foot on the career ladder can be a daunting prospect. Here is what a panel of industry experts had to say about standing out from the crowd.

Hone your writing skills

If you want a career in communications, you need to be able to get your point across quickly and concisely. You'll need to be adaptable, able to write for different audiences and aware of appropriate tones, messaging and mediums. Michael Rosen, PR and communications director for FTI Consulting, describes it as "telling stories."

"You may be writing press stories and articles, or creating content for blogs and social media. You need to be imaginative and be able to persuade people to come with you on your journey," he explains.

Promote yourself

"There is no better PR you can do in this industry than PR for yourself," says Sam Holl, client service director at Kindred Agency. If you want to get paid for promoting brands, the best way to prove your worth is to perfect your own brand.

"Be confident in your ability, be bold with your CV and get out there and make sure people know who you are," Holl concludes.

Your online presence is important, but so is your offline activity. "Make sure you are networking as much as possible, attending talks and events," says Lisa McCabe, PR manager for the British Red Cross. "You never know where you might meet that useful contact."

Be careful on social networks

"People do check it – especially LinkedIn and Facebook," says Rosen. "Make sure it presents you in a positive light. It's hard enough to get a job in the first place, so don't give an employer any reason to have doubts about you."

"PR is all about reputation building and in current times social media is a huge part of that," agrees Katy Foster from the Public Relations Consultants Association's

(PRCA) PR Apprenticeship Scheme. "Like it or not a personal social media account can reflect badly on you professionally, so be conscious of what is associated with you online."

Immerse yourself in the media

"An understanding of the media landscape, both off and online is key, as these are the people you'll be pitching your stories and ideas to," McCabe emphasises. You'll be able to pitch more appropriate stories to journalists and be better placed to understand what works for different media organisations if you stay at the cutting edge of the action.

A good understanding of the media is also essential for job interviews. "Be hungry for information – read the news – have an understanding of current affairs and the wider world. I always ask at interview what newspapers people read, and what three things have struck them recently from the news agenda," says Tracey Barrett, founding director of BlueSky PR.

Qualifications are good – but skills and experience are better

"Work experience, on the job training, is what's really important for me as an em-

ployer, more so than a degree," says Emma Streets, PR and social media director for Turn Key. "I've worked with people previously that have skipped university and gone straight into practical work experience. They have climbed all the way up the ladder."

While our panel agreed that a degree can definitely help you stand out, employers are equally interested in volunteering, work experience and transferable skills you've learned in other industries.

"Lots of admin skills are transferable, particularly to junior positions," says Koray Camgoz, public relations and policy officer at the Chartered Institute of Public Relations.

"Internships are also great way to get a foot in the door and gain vital experience," adds Julia Meighan, executive chairman of VMA Group.

Research your prospective employer

PR has countless different avenues, from cutting edge consumer agencies to in-house jobs at large corporate firms. This is one industry where the one size fits all approach simply won't cut it.

"Always tailor your applications to the



employer. Find out about their clients, their work and stalk them on LinkedIn. They will want to know why you want to be in PR and why you want to work for them in particular," says Foster.

"Research the area you want to enter into within PR and comms, as each varies with regard to your day-to-day workload and future opportunities. Then carefully consider your key skills, strengths and areas of expertise, mapping them to the role," advises Meighan.

Be creative

This is a very creative industry, where original ideas and creative thinking are hugely valued. Think about how you present yourself to a potential employer and see if you can think of a different way to communicate your skills rather than simply sending a typed CV.

"We had a great example of someone a couple of years ago who sent us their CV in the style of an old-fashioned telegram," says Holl. "It was very good – we picked up the phone straight away." (Courtesy: The Guardian)

APGCL Recruitment 2026 – 66 AM & JM Vacancy, Online Apply

Name of Post	Assistant Manager and Junior Manager
No of Posts	66 posts
Qualification	Degree/ Diploma in Engg.
Age Limit	21 to 38 years
Application Fee	Rs 47.2/- or Rs 297.20/-
Start Date	22nd July 2026
Last Date	21st/ 23rd August 2026

APGCL Recruitment 2026

Assam Public Service Commission (APSC) has released two (2) employment notifications for the recruitment of 66 Assistant Manager and Junior Manager posts under Assam Power Generation Corporation Limited (APGCL). This is an excellent opportunity for candidates looking to build their career in power sector.

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

APGCL Recruitment Details

1. Assistant Manager
No of posts: 35 posts
Discipline-wise vacancy:
Electrical: 10 posts
Mechanical: 6 posts
Information Technology: 3 posts
Instrumentation: 2 posts
Civil: 10 posts
Human Resource: 4 posts
Scale of Pay: Rs 37,300.00- 1,12,000.00, GP: Rs 14,200.00

Educational Qualification:

Assistant Manager (Electrical, Mechanical, Information Technology, Instrumentation, Civil):

Candidates must have a Full time Bachelor of Engineering (B.E)/Bachelor of Technology (B.Tech) degree in respective branch of engineering should be from University/institution approved by All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) and the course duration should be of minimum 4 years after HSSLC or equivalent or 3 years after completion of full time Diploma course in Engineering from any Govt./Govt. recognized/AICTE approved Polytechnic/institution or 2 years (Base) + 2 Years (Diploma) + 2 Years (Engineering) course from Govt./Govt. recognized/AICTE approved institution.

Percentage of Marks: A minimum of 60% marks in the qualifying examination of B.E/ B.Tech for the said post is required. However, in respect of SC/ST candidates, minimum 50% marks must in the qualifying examination of Bachelor Degree.

Assistant Manager (Human Resource):

Candidates must have a 02 (Two) years full time degree of Master in Business Administration (MBA/post Graduate Diploma in Management (PGDM) with specialization in (Human Resource Management/Personnel Management/ Industrial Relations) from any Indian University/ institution approved by AICTE/UGC).

Percentage of Marks: A minimum of 60% marks in the qualifying in the examination of MBA/PGDM for the said post is required. However, in respect of SC & ST candidates, minimum 55% marks must in the qualifying examination of MBA/PGDM Degree.

2. Junior Manager

No of posts: 31 posts
Discipline-wise vacancy:
Electrical: 12 posts
Mechanical: 6 posts
Information Technology: 2 posts
Instrumentation: 2 posts
Civil: 9 posts
Scale of Pay: Rs 25,000.00- 92,000.00, GP: Rs 12,100.00

Educational Qualification:

Candidates must have a Full time 3 years Diploma course (after HSLC or equivalent) in respective branch of engineering from any Govt./Govt. recognized/AICTE approved Polytechnic/institution or 2 years (Base) + 2 Years (Diploma) course from Govt./Govt. recognized/AICTE approved institution.

Percentage of Marks: A minimum of 60% marks in the qualifying examination of Diploma course for the said post is required. However, in respect of SC/ST candidates, minimum 50% marks must in the qualifying examination of full time Diploma course.

Other Criteria of APGCL Recruitment

Citizenship: Candidates must be Indian Citizens as defined in Articles 5 to 8 of the Constitution of India.

Residency:

(i) The candidate must be a permanent resident of Assam.
(ii) The candidate must produce PRC issued in Assam for educational purpose/ Employment Exchange Registration certificate as proof of residency along with the online application form.

Small Family Norms: The candidates have to submit a declaration regarding "The Small Family Norms" in Form-A at the time of applying for the post.

Age Limit

The candidates should not be less than 21 (Twenty-One) years of age and not more than 38 (Thirty-Eight) years of age as on 1st January 2026.

Age Relaxation: The relaxation of upper age limit for reserved categories are as follows:

Category	Age Relaxation
OBC-NCL	3 years
SC/ST	5 years
PwBD	10 years

Application Fee of APGCL Assistant Manager Recruitment

Application Fee: The category-wise application fee is as under	
Category	Amount
General	Rs 297.20
OBC/MOBC	Rs 197.20
BPL	Rs 47.20
SC/ST/PwBD	Rs 47.20

How to Apply for APGCL Recruitment?

Interested and eligible candidates may apply online for these posts by visiting at official recruitment portal of Assam Public Service Commission. They may follow below mentioned steps .

- Scroll down, go to Important Web-Links section .
- Click on Online Application Form link .
- A new webpage will be opened.
- Enter all your personal and educational details as required .
- Upload your passport sized photograph and signature and other required documents.
- Pay the application fee as per your category and at the end click on submit button.
- Don't forget to take a print of submitted application form .

Important Dates of APGCL Vacancy 2026

- Starting date of submission of online application: 22nd July 2026 (JM)
- Last date of submission of online application: 21st August 2026 (JM)
- Starting date of submission of online application: 24th July 2026 (AM)
- Last date of submission of online application: 23rd August 2026 (AM)

PNB LBO Recruitment 2026 – 545 Local Bank Officer Posts

Name of Post	Local Bank Officer (LBO)
No of Posts	545 posts
Qualification	Graduate
Age Limit	20 to 30 years
Application Fee	Rs. 59/-/ Rs. 1180/-
Start Date	20th July 2026
Last Date	9th August 2026
PNB LBO Recruitment 2026	

Punjab National Bank (PNB) has released a recruitment notification for the recruitment of 545 Local Bank Officer (LBO) posts in Junior Management Grade Scale-I (JMGS-I). This is an excellent opportunity for aspiring candidates who want to build their career in banking sector. The no of vacancy in Assam is 85 posts.

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

PNB Recruitment Details

Name of post: Local Bank Officer (LBO), JMGS-I Scale
No of posts: 545 posts
No of posts in Assam: 85 posts
Pay Scale: Rs. 48480-2000/7-62480-2340/2-67160-2680/7-85920
Application mode: Online

For other recruitment related news in Punjab National Bank, pl visit our page of Punjab National Bank Recruitment .

State-wise LBO Vacancy

The state-wise vacancy distribution is as follows-

State	Mandatory Language	Vacancies
Andhra Pradesh	Telugu	4
Gujarat	Gujarati	77
Karnataka	Kannada	78
Maharashtra	Marathi	67
Telangana	Telugu	41
Tamil Nadu	Tamil	51
West Bengal	Bengali	80
Jammu & Kashmir	Urdu/Dogri/Kashmiri	9
Ladakh	Urdu/Purgi/Bhoti	2
Arunachal Pradesh	English	4
Assam	Assamese/Bodo	85
Manipur	Manipuri/Meitei	6
Meghalaya	Garo/Khasi	8
Mizoram	Mizo	5
Nagaland	English	5
Sikkim	Nepali/Sikkimese	5
Tripura	Bengali/Kokborok	18
Eligibility Criteria of PNB LBO Recruitment		

State-wise application: Candidates will have to apply for vacancy of one state only. A candidate applying against vacancy of one state will not be eligible to apply against vacancy of any other state.

Age Limit: Age of the candidates must be between 20 to 30 years as on 1st July 2026.

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

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Private job listings
Online test preparation
Bank job alerts

- # Scheduled Caste/ Scheduled Tribe: 5 years
- # Other Backward Classes (Non-Creamy Layer): 3 years
- # Persons With Disabilities: 10 years

Educational Qualification: Candidate should be a Graduate in any discipline from a University/ Institution recognized/approved by Government of India or its regulatory bodies as on 9th August 2026.

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.

Experience: Candidates must possess a minimum of one-year post - qualification work experience in Clerical/ Officer Cadre in any Scheduled Commercial Bank or Regional Rural Bank listed in Second Schedule of Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Act, 1934, amended from time to time as on 9th August 2026.

Local Language Proficiency: Candidates must be proficient (reading, writing & speaking) in the specified local language of the state for which they are applying.

Application Fee: Candidates have to pay an application fee as mentioned below:

Category	Fee
SC / ST / PwBD	Rs. 59/-
Others	Rs. 1180/-

How to Apply for Punjab National Bank Recruitment ?

Interested and eligible candidates may apply online for these posts by visiting at official recruitment portal of Punjab National Bank. They may follow below mentioned steps.

- Scroll down, go to Important Web-Links section .
- Click on Online Application Form link .
- A new webpage will be opened.
- Enter all your personal and educational details as required .
- Upload your passport sized photograph and signature and other required documents.
- At the end, pay the application fee and click on submit button .

Important Dates of PNB Local Bank Officer Recruitment 2026

- Starting date of submission of online application: 20th July 2026
- Last date of submission of online application: 9th August 2026
- Tentative Date of Online Test: August 2026/ September 2026

Selection Process

The selection process for the post of Local Bank Officer shall be conducted in following four phases.

- I. Online Written test
- II. Screening
- III. Language Proficiency Test and
- IV. Personal Interview

Online Written Test

Subjects	No. of Questions	Maximum Marks	Time allotted
Reasoning & Computer			
Aptitude	25	25	35 minutes
Data Analysis & Interpretation	25	25	35 minutes
English Language	25	25	25 minutes
Quantitative Aptitude	25	25	35 minutes
General/Economy/Banking			
Awareness	50	50	50 minutes

There will be negative marking for wrong answers. One – fourth of the marks assigned to each question will be deducted for each incorrect answer. Candidates will have to score minimum qualifying marks of 40% for General/EWS category and 35% for Reserved category in each section.

Screening

The online application and documents submitted by the written test qualified candidates shall be scrutinized by Bank prior to the conduct of Language Proficiency Test (if required)/ Interview to examine whether the candidate fulfils required eligibility criteria.

Local Language Proficiency Test

Candidates who have not studied the local language of the State for which they have applied as a subject in 10th or 12th standard will be required to appear in the Local Language Proficiency Test (LLPT). The LLPT will be of qualifying nature, and candidates must secure the minimum qualifying marks as prescribed by the Bank. The LLPT will assess a candidate's reading, writing and speaking proficiency in the concerned local language.

Personal Interview

All candidates shortlisted after qualifying the Online Written Test, including those who have studied the concerned local language in 10th/ 12th standard or those required to appear for the LLPT, shall be called for the Personal Interview. Number of candidates to be called for Interview shall be decided by the Bank based on performance of candidates in the Online Written Test and Language Proficiency Test. Personal Interview will be of 50 marks. Minimum qualifying marks in interview shall be 45% i.e. 22.50 for SC/ST candidates & 50% i.e. 25 for other candidates.

The final selection shall be based on the combined performance of the candidates in the Online Written Test and Personal Interview, subject to qualifying in the LLPT (where applicable) and fulfilling the eligibility criteria and document verification requirements.

VisionQ Guwahati Recruitment 2026 – 2 Office Assistant & Office Boy Posts

VisionQ Coaching Institute, Guwahati has released an employment notification for the recruitment of 2 Office Assistant and Office Boy posts. Interested and eligible candidates may check this article for detailed official notification, educational qualification, age limit, salary details, and application procedure to be followed.

VisionQ Coaching Institute is one of the most trusted coaching institutes in the region and is considered a leading destination for APSC and UPSC coaching in Guwahati.

VisionQ Guwahati Recruitment Details

1. Office Assistant

No of posts: 01 post
Pay: ₹10,000 – ₹15,000 per month (Negotiable based on experience and performance)
Age Limit: 21–30 years (Only Male)
Educational Qualification & Experience: Graduate/Post Graduate in any discipline. Proficiency in English/Hindi/Assamese will be an added advantage.

2. Office Boy

No of posts: 01 post
Pay: ₹8,000 – ₹10,000 per month (Negotiable based on experience and performance)
Age Limit: 21–30 years (Only Male)
Educational Qualification & Experience: N/A.
Walk-in Date & Time: To be notified through Mail or Phone.
Application Fee: Nil .

How to Apply for VisionQ Guwahati Recruitment ?

Interested and eligible candidate can submit their applications vide this link .
Last date of submission of application: 10/08/2026 .

About VisionQ Coaching Institute, Guwahati

VisionQ Coaching Institute is one of the most trusted coaching institutes in the region and is considered a leading destination for APSC and UPSC coaching in Guwahati. The institute also provides coaching for SSC, Bank, Railway, and CTET/ATET examinations through its centres located at Silpukhuri and Jalukbari.

Backed by a strong academic foundation and experienced faculty, VisionQ focuses on delivering quality education with a personalized approach. The institute aims to develop a competitive attitude among students through structured guidance, concept clarity, and continuous mentorship, helping aspirants achieve success in various government examinations.

60,000 cross into Spanish territory of Ceuta, at least 34 die after border breach



CEUTA, July 31: Some 60,000 migrants have entered Spain's Ceuta from Morocco in the past 24 hours, Ceuta's president says. That is equivalent to 70 per cent of the city's regular population.

At least 34 migrants have died in the process.

"The situation that Ceuta is going through is absolutely unsustainable," said Juan Jesús Vivas on Friday. The border crisis boiled over Thursday and continued on Friday with security forces clashing with migrants on the Moroccan side of the border.

Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez condemned the breach of

territory.

At the same time, large groups of migrants walked back from Ceuta toward Morocco to return home.

Rachid Sbihi, who leads a local workers association representing Civil Guard officers, called the situation a "serious humanitarian crisis," saying thousands of migrants, including unaccompanied children, were left sleeping in parks and on sidewalks, while others roamed the streets aimlessly.

"People are still entering. The reinforcements, including Spanish military troops, that have arrived are only helping the injured and other humanitarian efforts," he said. "It's chaotic."

Among the 18 who died, many drowned, Sbihi said, but some were also killed in a stampede to cross the breakwater fence at Tarajal beach, an urban beach near a border checkpoint with Morocco.

Ahmed Karim, a 33-year old Moroccan, said he had crossed into Ceuta because of the lack of jobs in his country.

"Many people want to go to Europe, America, but they don't have the opportunity," Karim said. (AP)

ISLAMABAD/KATHMANDU, July 31: Nepal's veteran mountaineer Nirmal Purja was among six climbers still missing after an avalanche struck an expedition on Pakistan's Broad Peak, where rescuers recovered four bodies and continued search operations despite adverse weather, officials said on Friday.

Broad Peak (8,051 metres), located in the Karakoram range near K2, is the world's 12th-highest mountain and is considered one of the most challenging peaks to climb.

The avalanche struck the mountain at an altitude of around 7,000 metres on Thursday, sweeping away a 10-member climbing team that had begun its summit push, according to the Alpine Club of Pakistan (ACP).

The climbers -- six from Nepal, one Pakistani, one Omani, one American and one Chinese -- went missing at around 9 am local time following the avalanche.

ACP President Major General



Irfan Arshad said four bodies have been recovered during the rescue operation.

He identified two of the deceased as Oman's Nadhira Ahmed Abdullah Al Harthy and Nepal's Pur Bahadur Gurung. The identities of the other two bodies are yet to be officially confirmed.

Besides Purja and Gurung, the other Nepalese climbers were Kili Pemba Sherpa, Nima Sherpa, Nawang Thindu Sherpa and Gyalu Sherpa.

The other missing climbers were Sohail Sakhi of Pakistan, Wang Zhong of China and Mallory Geis of the United States.

Search and rescue operations are underway, but bad weather has severely affected efforts, with helicopters facing operational constraints in the mountainous terrain, according to officials.

Purja, 43, is regarded as one of the world's leading high-altitude mountaineers.

A former member of Britain's Brigade of Gurkhas and the Royal Marines' elite Special Boat Service, he has set several mountaineering records since becoming a full-time climber and expedition guide.

In 2019, he created history by climbing all 14 mountains above 8,000 metres in just six months and six days under his "Project Possible" expedition.

In 2021, he was part of the team of 10 Nepali climbers that made the first successful winter ascent of K2.

Nepal's Minister for Tourism, Culture and Civil Aviation, Khadak Prasad Paudel, expressed concern over the incident and said the government was in regular contact with the Pakistani authorities.

"Deeply concerned by the reports of an avalanche and the loss of contact with Nirmal Purja 'Nims Dai' and fellow Nepali climbers in Pakistan," Paudel said in a social media post.

"We are in regular contact with the Pakistani authorities and receiving updates on the situation. Our thoughts are with the climbers and their families. We remain hopeful for their safe return," he said. (PTI)

EU to crack down on AI deepfakes, illicit imagery and hacking with new team in Brussels

BRUSSELS, July 31: The European Union rolled out a new team on Friday to rein in AI companies across the world, in one of the most aggressive regulations the high-tech sector has so far faced as fears rise over the risks the rapidly advancing technology poses to people, politics and prosperity.

Brussels aims to track the use of AI models for violations of its new regulations, like the publishing of sexually explicit material, fake photos and videos, and cyber threats to public infrastructure. When the bloc's AI Act comes into force on Sunday, AI companies will be required to make clear to consumers with labels or digital watermarks that chatbots or imagery are generated with AI.

"As enforcement begins, we are taking an important step towards AI that people and businesses can understand and trust, and whose benefits are shared widely across our society," said Henna Virkkunen, the EU chief for tech sovereignty, on Friday.

The European Commission said in a statement that new regulations also include "systemic risks" posed by AI like "chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear incidents, loss of control, cyber offence, harmful manipulation and threats to fundamental rights."

The team is the latest move in the 27-nation

EU's "tech sovereignty" strategy that welds landmark digital regulations with economic ambition that has seen over the past week billions of euros in fines on Big Tech companies as well as record investment in AI infrastructure inside the bloc.

The rollout comes on the heels of shocking AI safety failures that rattled the nascent industry. Political leaders worldwide are now weighing control of the technology with market leadership. Anthropic said on Friday its artificial intelligence models hacked into three other organisations during testing, just days after ChatGPT maker OpenAI raised concerns over AI controls after it disclosed its rogue models hacked another company.

The EU is now expanding its AI Office in Brussels with an additional 38 people who will begin monitoring AI companies, from the new firms to the American and Chinese tech titans like OpenAI and DeepSeek.

Those companies must "document certain information," said the European Commission, the bloc's tech enforcer, which reserves the right to interview AI company staff during investigations. It has also launched a Whistle-blower Tool for tech workers and a Compliance Tool for tech users to confidentially alert authorities to illegal conduct. (AP)

Death toll from southwestern Japan quake climbs to 34



KUMAMOTO (JAPAN), July 31: The death toll climbed to 34 from a powerful earthquake in southwestern Japan that set off an explosion at a mall, toppled a factory chimney and flattened homes, the Kumamoto prefectural government said on Friday.

The magnitude 7.1 earthquake hit Japan's southern main island of Kyushu on Tuesday.

Officials said 34 deaths had been confirmed as related to the disaster, with one more death still under investigation. On Thursday authorities said more than 80 people had been injured, five of them seriously.

Searchers continued to work in the Kumamoto area on Friday, including at the site of the collapsed mall. (AP)

Hamas says it's reached agreement to disarm, significant move that will face major challenges

CAIRO, July 31: Hamas reached an agreement to disarm, officials told The Associated Press on Friday, a significant move that could help end the war in Gaza — but one that will face many hurdles and could take a long time to achieve, if at all. The group agreed to a road map as long as Israel also makes concessions, including ending hostilities and withdrawing its troops from the Palestinian territory, according to a Hamas official and a regional official.

Israel has not commented on the deal, which US President Donald Trump announced hours earlier.

It comes nine months after a US-brokered ceasefire to end the fighting between Israel and the group was signed.

That 20-point ceasefire plan calls on the militant group to surrender its weapons and destroy its vast network of tunnels. It also envisions Israeli forces withdrawing from Gaza, the arrival of a new technocratic Palestinian government, the deployment of a security force known as the International Stabilization Force and the rebuilding of the battered Palestinian enclave.

But negotiations between Israel and Hamas over the implementation of the next phase of the ceasefire deal had largely deadlocked — and disarmament was a major sticking point.

Disarming would represent a sea change for Hamas, whose founding charter calls for armed resistance against Israel, and which sees its arsenal, including rockets, anti-tank missiles and explosives, as lying at the heart of its identity.

"The agreement will be carried out in carefully structured phases," Trump said on social media. "As disarmament is completed, Israeli forces will withdraw, and the International Stabilization Force will work with a new Palestinian police force to take responsibility for Gaza being safe for its residents and its neighbours."

A copy of the agreement obtained and verified by The Associated Press said that all police weapons will be transferred to the US-backed Palestinian technocratic committee, known as the National Committee for the Administration of Gaza, upon its arrival in the enclave. It's not clear when that would

happen since it is contingent on other steps.

A process to decommission and store heavy weapons, military production sites and tunnels will begin after the arrival of the Palestinian committee and the deployment of the ISF. The process will be linked to an Israeli withdrawal, in phases, from the areas under its control in Gaza, according to the agreement.

In a statement Thursday, an Israeli official said that there will be no Israeli withdrawal from the areas it holds in Gaza — which account for about 60 per cent of the territory — before the militant group is disarmed and the strip demilitarised. The statement was made on condition of anonymity in line with government protocol.

A person with knowledge of the situation said that Israel is fully involved, but it's not a signatory to the deal, which is between Hamas and several countries helping to negotiate and guarantee the ceasefire. The person spoke on condition of anonymity in order to discuss the agreement. The deal's guarantors are the US, Turkey, Egypt and Qatar. (AP)

Myanmar's president outlines policy road map, criticises ASEAN peace plan

BANGKOK, July 31: The head of Myanmar's military-backed government on Friday marked his government's first 100 days in office with a speech defending his record and outlining a five-year road map for his administration, which faces ongoing conflict and international criticism.

President Min Aung Hlaing, the former army chief who had originally seized power in 2021 from a civilian government, was sworn in as president in April following an election that critics said was designed to entrench the military's grip on power.

Addressing more than 900 lawmakers, officials and military representatives at Parliament in the capital, Naypyitaw, he said his government had laid "important foundations" since taking office by pursuing two priorities — restoring peace and stability and promoting national development.

Min Aung Hlaing said he would spend two years accelerating efforts to build a modern and developed nation based on democracy and a federal system, followed by another three years carrying out build-up at full speed.

He also said special elections would be held in 2027 in constituencies across 102 townships that were unable to vote during the three-phase election held late last year because of armed conflict.

He said the government would continue implementing the military's conscription law while strengthening the armed forces and police as they fight pro democracy activists and ethnic minority rebels throughout much of the country. He noted that his administration had invited armed groups fighting the military to lay down their weapons and had held talks with 13 ethnic armed groups.

At the same time, Min Aung Hlaing criticised a five-point consensus reached by Southeast Asian leaders in 2021 to end Myanmar's civil strife, saying it had been issued without the agreement of all member states and that the regional bloc had discriminated against Myanmar. ASEAN had asked Myanmar to immediately end the violence, and dialogue among contending parties to be brokered through an ASEAN special envoy. (AP)

Coal mine blast in Pakistan kills at least 18 miners, traps 24 others

QUETTA, July 31: An explosion inside a coal mine in southwest Pakistan killed at least 18 miners and trapped 24 others underground in what officials believed to be life-threatening conditions as rescuers raced to reach them.

The blast on Thursday was apparently triggered by a buildup of methane gas and occurred on the outskirts of the Baluchistan provincial capital, Quetta, government mine inspector Ghani Baloch said.

The bodies of the seven miners initially were recovered hours after the deadly blast, and emergency responders later found 11 more bodies, officials and a provincial disaster management agency said in a statement. Baloch said rescue operations would continue until all the trapped miners were found, but he indicated that officials believed the death toll likely would rise further.

"The chances of finding anyone alive diminish after methane gas explosions because oxygen levels drop to zero, and rescuers are also proceeding cautiously inside the mine," Baloch said.

Authorities were handing over the bodies to their families for burial, while relatives of those still trapped waited anxiously for news, Baloch said. (AP)

Trump-branded commemorative passports will become available across the US

WASHINGTON, July 31: Americans outside the nation's capital will soon be able to get limited-edition US passports that feature a picture of President Donald Trump and celebrate America's 250th birthday, the State Department said Thursday.

The department's 27 passport agencies nationwide will start offering the special travel documents next month. They previously had only been available at the Washington, D.C., passport office for in-person applicants.

Trump, whose stern portrait is emblazoned on an inside page, is the first living president featured in the travel document.

The passports are the latest instance of Trump having his name and likeness added to buildings, documents and other highly visible tributes. His image is on a gold-finished commemorative coin celebrating the

country's founding that the US Mint has begun producing, and there are efforts to put Trump's signature on all new US paper currency, also a first for a sitting president.

"In response to overwhelming demand, the Department of State is making an additional 250,000 of the special commemorative passports available to the public," it said in a statement. "Americans all across the country will now have the opportunity to apply for one of these additional special passports, known as the Patriot Passport."

Passport offices in Centennial, Colorado; Chicago; Dallas; Detroit; New Orleans; New York; and Stamford, Connecticut, will offer the Trump passports at one-day special events starting Aug. 8. The list will grow to include other passport offices throughout August.

Those who want the special passport must apply in-person on the day specified on the department's passport website. Those wanting a traditional passport must apply on different days.

The commemorative passport features Trump's picture over a gold imprimatur of his signature to an interior page, while the cover carries the words "United States of America" in bold gold print at the top and "Passport" at the bottom — a reversal of the current standard cover.

In addition, a small gold laminate American flag, with the number 250 encircled by stars, is at the bottom of the back cover.

The only presidents featured in current US passports are in a double-page depiction of Mount Rushmore in South Dakota — George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Theodore Roosevelt and Abraham Lincoln. (AP)

'The gravity on the moon is low and there is no wind to blow the dust away' Discarded SpaceX rocket on high-speed collision course with moon



CAPE CANAVERAL (US), July 31: A drifting SpaceX rocket is on a collision course with the moon after launching a pair of lunar landers more than a year ago.

The rocket's upper stage will unintentionally slam into the moon on Wednesday, carving out a crater and sending up a plume of dust and rubble that scientists — and skygazers — are eager to observe.

Space tracking expert Bill Gray predicts an impact of 5,400 mph (8,700 kph) — seven times the speed of sound — near Einstein Crater on the moon's sunlit western limb. With the action unfolding in the wee hours, the eastern portions of the US and Canada, and much of South America should have the best views.

While scientists are not too concerned

about this particular piece of space junk, it highlights the growing threat as more and more items cram into orbit.

"Things are getting crowded up there," said Gray, who plans to view the aftermath from New Brunswick, Canada.

It was never SpaceX's intent to hit the moon. But space experts said the crash could have been avoided if the upper stage had been nudged into orbit around the sun.

It will be the second dead rocket known to crash into the moon accidentally. A Chinese rocket segment dug out a pair of craters on the lunar far side in 2022.

Lucky for astronomers, the upcoming smashup will occur on the moon's near side, packing the equivalent energy of three tons of TNT.

The impact flash, lasting less than a second, will probably be too dim to see, according to experts. But the stream of ejected material could stretch for several miles (kilometres) into space and remain visible to telescopes for tens of minutes.

"The gravity on the moon is low and there is no wind to blow the dust away," said Los Alamos National Laboratory's Benjamin Fernando, who's encouraging observations by professionals and amateurs alike.

"Part of the reason for our interest in this event is to figure out how much of a hazard debris impacts pose to future astronauts," he added in an email.

Fernando anticipates an impact crater nearly 90 feet across and 16 feet deep (27 metres across and 5 metres deep), too small to see from Earth but visible to spacecraft.

NASA's Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter and South Korea's Danuri lunar orbiter will gather before-and-after shots of the crash scene. Danuri will stray within a mile or two (a few kilometres) of the SpaceX rocket just two minutes before impact, according to Fernando and his team.

The abandoned rocket segment — measuring some 40 feet (12 metres) and weighing around 10,000 pounds (4,500 kilograms) — hoisted two private lunar landers on January 15, 2025. (AP)

No.TBDB/15th FC/47/2024-25/3672

TENDER NOTICE

The B.D.O. Tihu-Barama Dev. Block has been invited Sealed tender affixing a non-refundable Court fee stamp of Rs. 8.25 (Rupees eight & twenty five) only in the prescribed form against the following scheme from the Govt. registered Contractors/Firms of appropriate class. The tenders will be received in the Office of the undersigned up to 2.00 PM on 24/08/2026 and will be opened on the same date & place at 3.00 P.M.

Sl. No.	Name of works	Tender Amount (Approx)	Cost of Tender Paper	Time of Completion of Work
1	Const. of Community Toilet at Murmela Aunihati Village (AC-128534240)	17,85,833.00	Rs. 500/-	3(three) Months from the date of issue of F.W.O.
2	Const. of Community Toilet at Kaljar (AC-128534269)	17,85,833.00	Rs. 500/-	3(three) Months from the date of issue of F.W.O.
3	Const. of Community Toilet at Alagiar near Alagiar Alari Sports Club (AC-128604112)	17,85,833.00	Rs. 500/-	3(three) Months from the date of issue of F.W.O.
4	Const. of Village RCC Slab Culvert on Mahkhuli Village to NH-31 near Mahanta Basumatary's house (AC-128501151)	8,00,000.00	Rs. 500/-	3(three) Months from the date of issue of F.W.O.
5	Const. of Village RCC Slab Culvert on Kharua to Batabari Village road near Arga Deury House at Kharua Batabari (AC-128501060)	6,00,000.00	Rs. 500/-	3(three) Months from the date of issue of F.W.O.
6	Const. of Village RCC Slab Culvert on Kharua Bilpar to Kharujan road near RB house (AC-128501041)	850,000.00	Rs. 500/-	3(three) Months from the date of issue of F.W.O.
7	Const. of Village RCC Slab Culvert on Kaljar Katobari to Barama Barbari link road near SS house (AC-128501000)	6,00,000.00	Rs. 500/-	3(three) Months from the date of issue of F.W.O.
8	Const. of Village RCC Slab Culvert on Kadamtala Garmara road to Bhakatpara Namghar road at Kadamtala (AC-128500971)	8,00,000.00	Rs. 500/-	3(three) Months from the date of issue of F.W.O.
9	Const. of Village RCC Slab Culvert on Hemkanta Baro house to Karnal Ramchiary near Newla Baro house at no1 Batachara (AC-128500943)	6,00,000.00	Rs. 500/-	3(three) Months from the date of issue of F.W.O.
10	Const. of Village RCC Slab Culvert on Chapra Madrassa road to Ajit Ramchiary house near Bulu Ali house at Chapra (AC-128495058)	8,00,000.00	Rs. 500/-	3(three) Months from the date of issue of F.W.O.
11	Const. of Village RCC Slab Culvert on Barama Alagiar road to Haren Barman house at Deulguri near Apurba Barman house (AC-128495037)	8,50,000.00	Rs. 500/-	3(three) Months from the date of issue of F.W.O.
12	Const. of Village RCC Slab Culvert on Alagiar Deulguri to Charanpara Rabha Supa At Alagiar (AC-128495008)	7,50,000.00	Rs. 500/-	3(three) Months from the date of issue of F.W.O.

The Tender not accompanied by the Earnest Money Deposit(EMD) is liable to be rejected

Terms and condition details may be seen at the Office Notice board. Tender papers may be obtained from the office of the undersigned in any period of mentioned working days on payment of non refundable Rs. 500.00 (Rupees Five hundreds) only in cash for each Tender paper.

Sd/-
Block Dev. Officer cum Chairman,
Tender Committee, Tihu-Barama Dev. Block, Barama

IPR(BTC)/C/2026-27/973

'The VHP is also considering legal action against them'

VHP, seers condemn oppn's saffron-robe protest outside Parliament, seek MPs' expulsion

NEW DELHI, July 31: The VHP on Friday condemned a "skit" performed in the Parliament complex by saffron-clad Independent MP Pappu Yadav and other opposition MPs to highlight the alleged theft of donations at the Ram temple in Ayodhya, claiming the demonstration insulted Hindu religious sentiments.

Several prominent seers and office-bearers associated with the Ram temple and Ayodhya's religious institutions also hit out at the protest and demanded the expulsion of the MPs involved, and urged President Droupadi Murmu and Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla to cancel their membership.

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and former party chief Rahul Gandhi were part of the protest against the theft of donations.

Protesting in front of Makar Dwar of Parliament, the lawmak-



ers raised 'Chadhawa chor, gaddi chhodh'. The MPs kept donation boxes in front of the Makar Dwar steps and Independent MP Rajesh Ranjan, popularly known as Pappu Yadav, sat with the boxes.

As part of the skit, the MPs, including Rahul Gandhi, put money inside the boxes, as Yadav, clad in saffron robes, slipped money into his pockets to symbolise the alleged theft at the Ram temple.

In a video statement, VHP international joint general secretary Surendra Jain alleged that Congress-backed Yadav, Gandhi and other MPs of the Congress and the Samajwadi Party staged a "vulgar" protest by wearing the attire of Hindu saints. He appealed to the Lok Sabha speaker to take strict action against the MPs.

"The VHP is also considering legal action against them. We re-

quest the Lok Sabha speaker to take the strictest possible action against them so that no one dares insult Hindu faith in this manner," Jain said.

He alleged that the protest had hurt the sentiments of Hindus and insulted the saint community.

"By wearing the attire of a saint, they have not only insulted saints but also hurt the religious sentiments of Hindus. The people of the country will not forgive them," he alleged.

Drawing a parallel with the Ramayana, Jain said, "Just as Ravana disguised himself as a saint to abduct Sita, are they now trying to hijack Hindu faith by assuming the attire of a saint? That will never be possible."

Jain also challenged the opposition leaders to "dress up as a maulvi or a priest and mock those religions", alleging that they can target only Hindu beliefs. (PTI)

BJP alleges human rights violations by Pakistan in PoJK

JAMMU, July 31: The BJP alleged on Friday that serious human rights violations are occurring in Pakistan-occupied Jammu and Kashmir (PoJK), accused Pakistan of targeting civilians and urged the international community and Jammu and Kashmir political parties to speak out against the alleged atrocities.

The BJP said Pakistan's security forces are targeting civilians, including women and children, in PoJK and alleged that the global community has failed to respond.

"The situation has deteriorated in PoJK significantly. Innocent civilians, including women and children, are allegedly being targeted, but unfortunately the international leadership and organisations have remained silent," Jammu and Kashmir BJP spokesperson Dr Tahir Chowdhary told a press conference here.

Flanked by other party spokesperson Dr Abhijeet Singh Jasrotia, he alleged that videos circulating from PoJK showed residents appealing for international intervention and questioned why regional political parties, including

the National Conference, People's Democratic Party and Congress, had not condemned the alleged incidents.

"I ask the leaders of these parties why they are not speaking openly against the atrocities being committed on the people of PoJK," he said. Reiterating the BJP's stand that PoJK is an integral part of India, Chowdhary claimed that an increasing number of people in the region identified with India after witnessing development on the Indian side of Jammu and Kashmir.

"The people of PoJK openly raise slogans in favour of India and express their desire to reunite with India. This growing inclination towards India has created fear within Pakistan's establishment," he said.

He alleged Pakistan was attempting to suppress such sentiments by restricting access to essential supplies, including food and medicines. He asserted the BJP remained committed to the reunification of PoJK with India.

Jasrotia, while recalling the events surrounding the 1947 conflict in Mirpur, alleged that many civilians suffered during the tribal

No need for agitation, K'taka pursuing all legal measures, min tells BJP

BENGALURU, July 31: Karnataka Water Resources Minister Ramalinga Reddy on Friday criticised the BJP's protest near the KRS Dam over the Cauvery water-sharing issue, saying there was no need for the agitation as the state was pursuing all legal and political measures to safeguard its interests.

The Cauvery Water Management Authority on Thursday upheld the Cauvery Water Regulation Committee's recommendation of releasing 3,500 cusecs of water to Tamil Nadu for the next 15 days.

Karnataka had underlined the severe drought situation prevailing in the state due to scanty rainfall.

"There was no need for the BJP to hold a protest near the Krishna Raja Sagar (KRS) Dam. I don't know why they are protesting. We have approached the authorities keeping in mind the interests of our state and our farmers," Reddy told reporters here.

Stressing the need for political unity on issues concerning Karnataka's interests, he said, "Whenever issues concerning our land,



CAUVERY ISSUE

water and language arise, all of us must display unity. Even when the BJP was in power, we extended our support to them on issues like this. I don't know why they are protesting. Have we said that we are going to release water?"

His remarks came as BJP leaders, led by state president B Y Vijayendra, staged a protest near the KRS Dam in Mandya against the Congress government over the Cauvery water sharing issue.

Reddy said the government had invited the Leader of the Opposition and leaders of all political parties to discuss the issue, as

protecting the state's interests remained its priority. On Karnataka's water availability, the minister said there was no immediate concern over drinking water, though the situation remained challenging because of deficient rainfall and the need to conserve water.

"If you consider the water available in all our four reservoirs together, there will also be losses. We need

about 3.5 TMC of water every month for drinking purposes. If it rains, there will be no problem at all," he said. Recalling previous years, Reddy said more than 360 TMC of water had flowed downstream during 2022 and 2025 due to heavy rainfall, with Tamil Nadu utilising part of it while the remainder flowed into the sea.

"This year, rainfall has been deficient. Had it not rained 15 to 20 days ago, we would have faced problems even for drinking water. Since that rainfall occurred, we do not foresee any drinking water shortage this year," he said. (PTI)

Dotasra takes indirect swipe at Gehlot over induction of BAP workers at his residence

JAIPUR, July 31: Signs of internal discord surfaced in Rajasthan Congress on Thursday after Pradesh Congress Committee (PCC) chief Govind Singh Dotasra took an apparent swipe at former chief minister Ashok Gehlot over the induction of nearly 300 Bharat Adivasi Party (BAP) workers at the latter's residence instead of the party headquarters.

The episode unfolded after former minister Mahendrajeet Singh Malviya, who recently returned to the Congress from the BJP, brought a group of BAP workers to Gehlot's residence, where they were welcomed into the party.

During the event, some workers raised slogans demanding that Gehlot be made chief minister for the fourth term. The workers were later taken to the PCC headquarters by Malviya, where Dotasra, without naming Gehlot, described this as attempts at "personal branding".

"If someone wants to work for his own branding, he is welcome to do so. Govind Singh Dotasra works for the Congress. As long as I am in the Congress, I will work for the party, not for the branding of any individual," Dotasra told re-

porters without naming anyone.

During the welcome programme at the PCC, Dotasra also cautioned Malviya against raising slogans projecting any individual as chief minister. "Do not raise chief minister slogans here," he said.

Later, Dotasra told reporters that the party has already paid the price for such tendencies of projecting someone as the CM.

On questions over the joining of BAP workers at Gehlot's residence instead of the PCC headquarters, Dotasra said the induction had been carried out by Malviya and not by the former chief minister.

He also remarked that it was Malviya's decision where to take the workers and that his own responsibility was to welcome party workers at the Congress office. Taking a light-hearted dig at Malviya in his presence, Dotasra said the former minister had also returned to the Congress after leaving the BJP.

"Without the Congress, he could neither become an MLA nor an MP after joining the BJP. I had also recommended that he be taken back into the Congress because he accepted his mistake," Dotasra said. (PTI)

Noisy scenes in T'puram Corpn as council clears jailed BJP councillor's leave



THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, July 31: Noisy scenes were witnessed at the Thiruvananthapuram City Corporation council meeting on Friday after the ruling BJP secured approval for a six-month leave for its councillor, R Sugathan, who is currently lodged in jail under the KAAPA.

The move triggered strong protests from the opposition.

The leave application of the Vazhot-tukonam ward councillor was passed with the support of the BJP members and independent councillor Sudheesh.

Mayor V V Rajesh exercised his casting vote in favour of the application after it secured the support of 51 members in the 101-member council.

The opposition UDF and LDF members staged protests inside the council hall by raising slogans against what they termed an attempt to protect a councillor jailed under the Kerala Anti-Social Activities (Prevention) Act (KAAPA).

Opposition members stood in front of the Mayor's podium and continued their protest, alleging that the move was illegal and undemocratic.

During the meeting, UDF leader K S Sabarinadhan questioned the Mayor under which provision of the Kerala Municipality Act the leave was being granted to a councillor lodged in preventive detention.

LDF parliamentary party leader S P Deepak alleged that the Mayor was

shielding a KAAPA detainee through an illegal and anti-democratic move and said the opposition would launch a legal fight against the decision.

Addressing a press conference after the council meeting, Mayor Rajesh said Sugathan had submitted a leave application, which was duly approved by the council in accordance with the Kerala Municipality Act.

He said the application received the support of the ruling front and independent councillor Sudheesh.

Rajesh said he exercised his casting vote as the Mayor had a responsibility to protect the membership of an elected representative.

The Mayor further said based on the request of the jailed councillor, a circular had been issued by the state Home Department which clearly states that he can protect his councillorship if a leave application is submitted to the council and if that is accepted.

According to him, Sugathan submitted the application to the Viyyur Jail Superintendent, who forwarded it through the proper channel to the Corporation by post. Sources said the jailed councillor would have faced disqualification if he had remained absent from Friday's council meeting without obtaining sanctioned leave. (PTI)

No factionalism in Punjab Congress, claims Baghel

FATEHGARH SAHIB, July 31: Punjab Congress in-charge Bhupesh Baghel dismissed reports of factionalism in the state unit on Friday, saying the media and a few individuals were exaggerating the issue, while asserting that all party leaders would work together under the leadership of Rahul Gandhi.

Addressing a press conference in Fatehgarh Sahib, Baghel said he had met with all senior Punjab Congress leaders, including former chief minister Charanjit Singh Channi, and submitted his report to the party high command. He said Channi's meeting with Congress general secretary KC Venugopal further clarified that the entire state leadership would remain united.

Responding to questions about Channi and Punjab Congress president Amrinder Singh Raja Warring holding separate programmes in Barnala and Faridkot, Baghel said both are senior leaders carrying out their responsibilities according to their schedules, and they are united in supporting those injured in the recent alleged lathi-charge on students. Regarding the controversy involving Channi's brother, Dr Manohar Singh of Bassi Pathana, who is associated with INTUC, Baghel said leaders who contested elections as independents against

the Congress would not be invited to party programmes.

He said while INTUC is affiliated with the Congress, its members are not necessarily official party members.

Targeting the Centre, Baghel alleged that the lathicharge on students in Delhi during the July 20 Cockroach Janta Party-led march to Parliament occurred under the Union Home Ministry's jurisdiction. He said instead of the Home Minister, BJP president JP Nadda met the students, claiming this reflected differences between the Prime Minister and the Home Minister, alleging that other ministers were now presenting bills in Parliament.

Baghel also said there was "substance" to speculation that the 2027 Punjab Assembly elections could be held ahead of schedule.

He cited the national census beginning on January 1 and the Kumbh Mela starting on January 14 as factors that could lead to early polls. Speaking on the occasion, Punjab Congress president Amrinder Singh Raja Warring claimed that around 40 to 45 Aam Aadmi Party MLAs, apprehensive about being denied party tickets, had already held a meeting, though the matter was not being discussed publicly. (PTI)

Punjab to expand mental health fellowship under anti-drug campaign

CHANDIGARH, July 31: The Punjab government said on Friday it will open applications in early August for the second cohort of its Leadership in Mental Health Programme (LMHP), an initiative aimed at strengthening mental healthcare and rehabilitation under its anti-drug campaign, Yuddh Nashean Virudh.

Launched in February 2026, the programme is described by the government as India's first fellowship dedicated to tackling substance abuse through mental health leadership. Thirteen fellows from the inaugural batch are currently working across Punjab to strengthen mental healthcare services and support rehabilitation efforts.

The government plans to induct 10 fellows and seven senior associates in the second cohort to build a statewide network of trained professionals covering all 23 districts. Operating under the Department of Health and Family Welfare in collaboration with the state's Data Intelligence and Technical Support Unit, the programme trains professionals from fields such as psychology, public health and social work.

Fellows commit to a two-year tenure and receive training in psychosocial interventions, relapse prevention, programme management, community-based rehabilitation and leadership. The training is conducted with support from the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), Mumbai. (PTI)

PDP's Iltija Mufti seeks relief for apple growers hit by Srinagar-Jammu NH closure



SRINAGAR, July 31: PDP leader Iltija Mufti on Friday alleged that apple growers in Kashmir are facing significant losses due to the closure of the Srinagar-Jammu national highway for maintenance. Iltija urged Union Minister of Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari to expedite the highway work.

"Unfortunately, much like last year, Kashmiri apple growers are suffering immense catastrophic losses again because the Qazigund highway is closed yet again for 'maintenance'. Why is it that road

repairs happen only during harvest season? Horticulture provides a dignified livelihood to lakhs of Kashmiris. Request @nitin_gadkari to ensure road work is expedited," she said in a post on X.

The PDP leader interacted with fruit transporters at Qazigund along the national highway and urged the administration to reopen the highway as soon as possible. The 250-km national highway, which is the only all-weather road linking Kashmir with the rest of the country, was closed for vehicular traffic on Friday

to facilitate widening of the carriageway and removal of overhanging debris at vulnerable locations between Udhampur and Banihal.

"Why are trucks carrying Kashmiri apples being stopped at Qazigund? Apple growers are already facing immense challenges. Such disruptions only add to their hardship and deserve an immediate explanation and resolution," Iltija stated. Speaking to PTI Videos, the PDP leader claimed that apple produce has been rotting for two days at Lower Munda in Qazigund because trucks were not allowed to travel on the highway.

"The police stopped us here; they didn't allow us to proceed. And they are giving us this excuse that road maintenance is going on here. Why is it that in the entire year, road maintenance begins at the exact time when it's peak season for apple growers trying to send their fruit to market? It's very strange," she said. (PTI)

Maharashtra govt edits online-only order, allows ministers to opt for print newspapers

The July 30 GR had, however, made an exception for Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis

MUMBAI, July 31: The Maharashtra government on Friday partially rolled back its decision to discontinue print newspapers and magazines to deputy chief ministers and ministers, allowing them to opt for either online or physical subscriptions.

The General Administration Department (GAD) made the revision a day after announcing that, from September 1, ministers would have to rely only on online subscriptions for newspapers and periodicals, with the expenditure to be borne by their respective administrative departments.

The revision said that paragraph 3 of the Government Resolution (GR) issued on July 30 has been modified. It said that instead of requiring deputy CMs, ministers and ministers of state to obtain "online subscriptions" for newspapers and



magazines at their offices and official residences, they may now obtain newspapers and periodicals through "online or printed subscriptions, or whichever is convenient".

The correction effectively restores the option of receiving physical newspapers for deputy CMs, ministers and ministers of state, re-

versing the online-only arrangement introduced through Thursday's GR.

Under the original decision, the GAD had said the existing system of centrally procuring and supplying printed newspapers and magazines to the offices and official residences of deputy chief ministers, ministers and ministers of

state would end from September 1.

It had directed ministers to obtain online subscriptions instead, with the cost to be met by their respective administrative departments from office expenditure after submission of bills.

The July 30 GR had, however, made an exception for Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, allowing the continued supply of printed newspapers and magazines to his office and official residence, with the expenditure to be borne by the GAD. A GAD official had on Thursday said that the annual expenditure on newspapers and periodicals was around Rs 22 lakh, of which the CM's Office accounted for about Rs 12,000 to Rs 15,000 per month. The official had said ministers were being given a month's time before the new system came into effect. (PTI)

Preeti Pawar, Ankush Panghal through to finals with dominating wins



GLASGOW, July 31: India's Preeti Pawar (54kg) and Ankush Panghal (80kg) sailed into the Commonwealth Games final, putting up dominant displays in their last four rounds here on Friday.

Preeti out-punched Zambia's Catherine Mwape 5-0 while Ankush Brushed aside Joshua Ofori by a similar margin.

The 22-year-old from Bhiwani, Preeti, who is an Asian Games bronze medalist, powered to a 5-0 win to set up a clash with Canada's Scarlett Delgado, who defeated England's Lauren Mackie 4-1 in her semifinal bout.

The Indian outpuncher Mwape for most of the bout, cleverly drawing her in for effective counter-attacks with her left straight being particularly effective.

"I am very happy that I have managed to do what I prepared for. I have to give my best tomorrow (Saturday) for the gold medal. I never take my opponents lightly, and always prepare in detail with my coaches. I am happy

that I am able to implement those plans," Preeti told PTI after her win. Mwape struggled to connect throughout and was beaten almost every time Preeti launched her combination strikes. The Zambian's struggles were evident from the three eight counts she faced in the first two rounds.

Such was Preeti's dominance that all five judges marked 10-8 in her favour in the second round.

With the bout out of her grasp, Mwape spent the last three minutes evading the pounding from Preeti, who sailed through without having to work too hard.

Ankush was equally dominant against Ofori, who resorted to repeated clinching after being comprehensively outboxed in the opening two rounds.

Although the Canadian launched an all-out attack in the beginning of the second round, the Indian soaked up the pressure with ease before countering with crisp combinations to seal a one-sided 5-0 verdict. (PTI)

Prez Tirkey says wasn't consulted; Sec gen insists all were aware



HI meltdown amid jersey furore

NEW DELHI, July 31: The furore over the Indian hockey teams' new saffron jerseys has triggered a bit of wrangling within Hockey India with President Dilip Tirkey calling it a decision that was taken without his knowledge and secretary Bhola Nath Singh insisting that "all officials were aware" of the change.

The Indian hockey teams, traditionally attired in blue, will be donning saffron kits during the World Cup in the Netherlands and Belgium starting August 15. The change in the uniform's colour, which was announced on July 27, invited scathing criticism from former players such as Vasudevan Bhaskaran, Viren Rasquinha, Ajit Pal Singh and Pargat Singh among others.

All of them questioned the logic behind such a move, asserting that it would affect the team's identity built over decades.

Till yesterday, HI, including Tirkey, maintained that it was a purely technical call to avoid visual similarity with the blue turf on which games are played. The body stated that the colour similarity affected "on-field clarity and visibility for the players".

However, in an internal mail to HI officials, Tirkey stated that the decision was taken "without being placed before the Executive Board for

discussion and without my prior knowledge."

"I request the concerned HI officials to provide me with a written clarification at the earliest, outlining the basis for the decision, the process followed and the circumstances under which the change was approved and implemented. This will enable me to respond appropriately and accurately," he said in the mail.

The said explanation has been sought by the Odisha government, which is the primary sponsor of the team.

"I have also been asked by the Government of Odisha to provide clarification regarding the matter. I therefore request the concerned Hockey India officials to provide me with a written clarification at the earliest which will enable me to respond appropriately and accurately," Tirkey said.

HI secretary Bhola Nath Singh, however, maintained that HI merely implemented what the players had demanded after due consultation.

"The decision to change the colour was circulated in our internal group, so all officials should be aware about it. We never thought it would be such a big issue. There was no outside pressure on us from anywhere to make the

colour change. It is being unnecessarily politicised," Singh told PTI.

Asked whether HI would rethink the decision, Singh said, "I alone can't take decisions, there is a president and other office-bearers, we need to sit and discuss. At the end of the day it was the demand of players and coaches and we obliged."

"The players and coaches also need to be spoken to. We never thought it would be such a big issue."

Justifying the position he took on Thursday, Tirkey, in his email, said that he did that to avoid any controversy ahead of the World Cup.

"The matter has since attracted considerable media attention and unfortunately political interpretation in certain quarters. With the WC (World Cup) approaching, I have publicly clarified that the change was purely a sporting decision so that the focus remains on the team and its preparations," he said.

Tirkey insisted said the choice of saffron colour is not his concern but the decision should have been taken in consultation with the elected leadership.

"My concern is not with the choice of saffron itself. A decision of this significance, involving the identity and representation of our national team should ideally have been discussed with the elected leadership and the EB board members before implementation," he said in the email.

"This is not to attribute blame but to ensure transparency, accountability and adherence to our established decision making processes going forward," he insisted.

A reliable source said that following the backlash HI officials have sent an email to Odisha government on July 30. The source also said that a separate mail has been sent by Tirkey to HI Director General Cdr R K Srivastava seeking his clarification. When contacted, a member of the body's EB told PTI that he had had no prior information about this decision and came to know of it only after the jersey was launched on social media. (PTI)

Bumrah clears fitness test to play in Sri Lanka Test series

NEW DELHI, July 31: India pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah has been cleared to play next month's two-Test series against Sri Lanka by the BCCI's Centre of Excellence in Bengaluru.

Bumrah was picked subject to fitness as he had suffered an impact injury during the recent ODI series against England. He had to sit out of the third ODI at Lord's due to the injury.

"Jasprit Bumrah has recovered from his impact injury. He has cleared the fitness Tests mandated by the COE. Hopefully he will be available for both games as he is integral to the team's plans," a senior BCCI official told PTI on conditions of anonymity.

The two-Test series against the islanders will get underway on August 15 in Galle, and the second match will be played in Colombo from August 23.

India need to win seven of their remaining nine Tests of this World Test Championship cycle in order to remain in contention for a summit clash berth.

Winning the Sri Lanka series by a 2-0 margin is very important before embarking on an away series against New Zealand which is expected to be a tough assignment.

Already, India are without the services of Harshit Rana, and Nitish Reddy, who are out with hamstring and quadriceps injuries respectively.

Washington Sundar has been ruled out of the first Test with a hamstring injury and Akash Deep is in the middle of a long lay-off following stress reactions on his back. (PTI)

Former AC Milan defender Franco Baresi dies at 66

MILAN, July 31: Franco Baresi, the former AC Milan defender and World Cup winner with Italy, has died. He was 66.

His death was announced on Friday by Milan, the soccer club where he spent his entire 20-year playing career. No cause of death was given.

"The entire history of AC Milan is in tears," Milan said.

In August 2025, Baresi underwent surgery to remove a pulmonary nodule and subsequently began a course of immunotherapy.

His last public appearance was at the opening ceremony for the Milan Cortina Winter Olympics in February, when along with former Inter Milan defender Giuseppe Bergomi, he carried the torch into the San Siro — the stadium he formerly played in.

"Announcing the loss of someone who embodied the heart and soul of AC Milan, is incredibly difficult," the club said. "But everyone at the club and all the Milanisti must live up to Franco Baresi's memory. We must be strong and gather every bit of energy, even at this saddest of times."

"His example and integrity will be forever etched into the Club's DNA, just as his iconic number 6 shirt is," Milan added. "The con-

lences AC Milan extends to Franco Baresi's family at such a difficult time are shared by every Rossonero, who feels this loss as their own."

One-club player

Baresi, who was widely regarded as one of the best defenders of all time, was a true one-club player. He progressed through the ranks at Milan and made his first team debut at the age of 17, in April 1978.

He chose to stay with Milan even after it was relegated to Serie B — for the second time in three seasons — in 1982, just before he helped Italy win the World Cup that summer, and was given the captaincy at the age of just 22.

Baresi made more than 700 appearances for the Rossoneri, captaining the team to global dominance in the late 1980s and early 1990s. With Milan, Baresi won three Champions League trophies, six Serie A titles, two Intercontinental Cups, three European Supercups and four Italian Supercups.

First jersey to be retired

As well as the 1982 World Cup, Baresi also helped Italy finish runner-up in the 1994 competition — although he was one of three Azzurri players to miss a penalty in the shootout defeat to Brazil in the final. Baresi finished runner-up to

teammate Marco van Basten in the Ballon d'Or awards in 1989.

When Baresi retired in 1997, Milan also retired his No. 6 jersey — which was a first for Italian soccer. The club also held a celebration match in his honor, featuring many soccer stars Baresi had played with and against.

Baresi was made honorary president of Milan in 2020.

"Italian soccer has lost one of its legends," Italian soccer federation president Giovanni Malagò said, labeling Baresi "an extraordinary champion who wore only two shirts for his entire career: those of Milan and Italy."

"We will have a tribute to remember him the next time the national team plays," Malagò added.

Inter Milan's Baresi

It could have all been so different for Baresi and Milan, however. Baresi had trials at Inter when he was younger but he was rejected by the Nerazzurri, who opted to sign his older brother Giuseppe Baresi, with Franco Baresi going on to join the youth team of their fierce city rivals.

Giuseppe also captained his team and the image of the two Baresi brothers exchanging pennants before kickoff became the symbol of the Milan derby throughout the late 80s. (AP)

FIFA adviser on White House's World Cup panel resigns

NEW YORK, July 31: Senior FIFA adviser Carlos Cordeiro, who represented the soccer body on the White House Task Force for the World Cup, resigned Friday in protest at its private equity plan.

"I cannot stand by while FIFA considers selling a stake in the World Cup," Cordeiro, a former Goldman Sachs banker, said in a statement resigning as adviser to FIFA President Gianni Infantino that urged other senior FIFA staff to speak out.

Cordeiro often joined Infantino on working visits to meet U.S. President Donald Trump at the White House in recent years.

"Let me be clear. I had no involvement in this proposal, and I oppose it unequivocally," Cordeiro, the former U.S. Soccer Federation president said, calling the \$20 billion commercial subsidiary "a bad deal for football."

"Football has been central to my life, and after more than 35 years in banking, I understand both the value of this asset and the consequences of giving part of it away," he said. "That is why this proposal should be rejected."

Infantino has proposed spinning off FIFA's commercial businesses — including World Cups and Club World Cups for men and women — into a \$20 billion subsidiary with 20% owned by private investors. (AP)

Cabinet approves ₹ 29,000 crore five-year outlay for Khelo India; increases funds for NSFs too



NEW DELHI, July 31: Calling it the most ambitious sports development programme since independence, the union cabinet on Friday approved an expanded Khelo India Scheme and enhanced the budget for Assistance to the National Sports Federations (ANSFs) with a combined outlay of ₹ 36,441 crore covering the next five years.

The government has allocated ₹ 29,054 crore to the Khelo India Scheme that aims to build a pool of talented athletes at the grassroots level as India bids to become a global sporting hub by hosting the 2030 Commonwealth Games and bidding for the 2036 Olympics.

The assistance to NSFs has been pegged at ₹ 7387 crore over the next

five years. The existing budgetary allocation for the Assistance to National Sports Federations (NSFs) for the year 2026-27 stood at ₹ 425 crore.

"The approved outlay is nearly eight times that of the previous Khelo India Scheme, reflecting the Government's commitment to making sports a cornerstone of youth development, nation-building and India's emergence as a global sporting powerhouse," read a statement from the government.

Khelo India was launched in 2017 and has been receiving the lion's share of allocation from the union sports budget annually. The scheme currently has close to 2800 athletes on its roster and they are provided government funding for nutritional and training needs through scholarships.

A nationwide network of Khelo India Centres of Excellence (KI-CoEs), Khelo India Accredited Academies (KIAAs), Khelo India Centres (KICs) and Youth Sports Companies (YSCs) of the Armed Forces is currently in operation to train athletes.

To strengthen the school sports ecosystem, the government has introduced two new initiatives — Khelo India Feeder Schools (KIFS) and Khelo India Utkrisha Vidyalayas (KIUV) — which will

"integrate sports with mainstream education and enable early identification and systematic nurturing of talented children."

The Assistance to National Sports Federations (ANSF) Scheme for the period 2026-31 will financially support athletes' coaching, modern equipment, international exposure, engagement of foreign experts and participation in major international competitions. The scheme is designed help NSFs conduct camps and tournaments.

"It will also support sports cooperation with countries of the Global South and promote India's indigenous sports internationally," the government stated.

"Special emphasis has been placed on expanding opportunities for women athletes, para-athletes, indigenous sports, and sports as a tool for peace, inclusion and community development."

"The scheme also provides support for organising the National Games and hosting major international sporting events in India," it added.

The scheme also envisages a unified digital sports platform on which athlete databases, infrastructure, competitions, coaching resources, talent assessments, funding and Fit India participation would be integrated. (PTI)

On comeback trail, discus thrower Seema collects CWG bronze

GLASGOW, July 31: Indian discus thrower Seema Kaliramna, who overcame post-pregnancy arthritis to resume her sporting career just last year, clinched a bronze medal at the Commonwealth Games here despite marginally falling short of her personal best in the event.

Compatriot Nidhi Rani ended fourth in the same competition on Thursday.

Seema produced the medal-winning throw of 58.65m in her third attempt and went on to foul the remaining three chances. Jamaica's Samantha Hall won the gold with a throw of 61.66m, while Canada's Julia Tunks took silver with 60.67m.

"I could not achieve my personal best but I was determined to do well," Seema said after the event, referring to the 59.73m effort she achieved in the National Inter-State Senior Athletics Championships held in Bhubaneswar earlier this year.

The 27-year-old from Haryana's Bhiwani returned to the sport after taking a break to manage post-pregnancy complications that included arthritis and a knee injury. Her son is now four years old. Seema is also pursuing a PhD in Physical Education from Bhiwani's Chaudhary Bansi Lal University. (PTI)

Beyond the throwing circle: Motherhood, arthritis and Seema Kaliramna's bronze

She hurled the discus to career-best 59.73 metres at the Indian Championships earlier this year

GLASGOW, July 31: Childbirth is often described as an athlete's toughest comeback. For the Commonwealth Games bronze medalist Indian discus thrower Seema Kaliramna, the real battle began after she became a mother.

Weeks after giving birth to her son Rudra in 2022, Seema developed arthritis, an inflammatory disease that attacked the very joints a discus thrower relies on to generate power. The pain was so severe that lifting everyday objects became difficult, let alone hurling a one-kilogram disc across a field.

Four years later, she stood on the Commonwealth Games podium.

"After pregnancy, I had arthritis due to which a lot of complications came," the 27-year-old told PTI.

The comeback was anything but straightforward.

Her husband, Ravinder Kaliramna, a former national champion whose own career ended prematurely because of injuries, suddenly found himself coaching



an athlete whose greatest opponent was no longer inside the throwing circle.

"I didn't even know such a thing existed," he said. "We were so clueless. I did a lot of research, tried Ayurveda because this is something that is not curable, one can only manage it."

The couple changed everything.

"She had to avoid sour food like ache and lemon. We started including things in her diet that

were beneficial for her. "All her joints hurt. She couldn't lift anything. Slowly, slowly she started working out."

The progress came in inches rather than metres.

Before motherhood, Seema's personal best stood at 48.08 metres. She returned to competition in 2024. She hurled the discus to career-best 59.73 metres at the Indian Championships earlier this year. In Glasgow, her bronze winning throw was 58.65m.

While rebuilding her body, Seema was also working towards a PhD in Physical Education at Chaudhary Bansi Lal University in Bhiwani.

Her research examines how imagery and self-talk influence athletic performance, concepts that became deeply personal as she navigated rehabilitation.

"My paper is also on visualisation and manifestation. How thinking negatively or positively can affect an athlete," she said.

Motherhood, meanwhile, reshaped every aspect of her life beyond sport.

"My son is getting older. He wants to be with us. It is difficult," she said.

Before she left for Scotland, Rudra had only one request.

"He said, 'Mummy, please bring a medal.' That's his toy."

Daughter of a former basketball player and javelin thrower, who served in the Indian Army, Seema has balanced sport, academic research and raising a young child without the security of a job.

"I don't have a job," she said. (PTI)

IN MEMORIAM



HIRAK JYOTI DAS
(10-10-1993 — 03-07-2026)

Today (01-08-2026), on the 1st monthly death ritual (religious occasion), we fondly remember you and offer our warm homage. You will always remain in our hearts.

Sri Arun Ch. Das (Father)
Smt. Bhanu Das (Mother)
Sri Anup Jyoti Das (Elder Brother)
& our family members

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