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- North Korea slams US-South Korea military drills, threatens to exercise self-defence
- UK launches new 24-week asylum appeals target for faster deportations

8 NATION

- Had Modi been PM in 1947, no damage would have been done: Adityanath
- NEET paper leak case: Delhi court allows CBI's plea seeking further probe



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Himanta to hoist National Flag in Guwahati ● Admin hopeful incident-free celebrations

State to celebrate I-Day amid tight security

GUWAHATI, Aug 14: Security has been tightened across Assam ahead of Independence Day, with preparations underway for celebrations across the state, officials said on Friday.

A tight vigil is being maintained following calls by militant outfits, including ULFA(I), to 'boycott' the national day celebrations.

The Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) has also undertaken special security measures ahead of the celebrations.

"Security has been tightened at all celebration venues, vital installations, public places and other areas to ensure smooth conduct of Independence Day events," a police official said.

"Patrolling is being carried out to ensure there is no disruption of



the events. We are confident of an incident-free Independence Day," he said.

Special watch is also being kept

along inter-state borders to thwart any untoward attempts, the official added.

Chief Minister Himanta Biswa

Sarma will hoist the national flag at Khanapara field in Guwahati, while ministers and senior officials will lead programmes at different venues across the state.

Militant outfits ULFA(I) and NSCN/IMPRN have called for a boycott of Independence Day celebrations in Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur and Nagaland.

The outfits, refraining from calling a 'general strike' as in previous years due to the ongoing flood situation in parts of the state, have urged people not to participate in the celebrations and to boycott them.

The Railway Protection Force (RPF) of NFR has strengthened security arrangements to ensure the safety and security of passengers, trains and (CONTD. ON PAGE 2)

Assam flood toll rises to 104 with one more death; over 78,000 people affected

GUWAHATI, Aug 14: The death toll in Assam's floods rose to 104 on Friday with one more fatality, while the number of people affected by the deluge also increased marginally to over 78,000, according to an official bulletin.

The number of flood-affected districts remained unchanged at seven, the Assam State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA) said.

One death was reported from Sivasagar district in the last 24 hours, taking the toll in this year's floods to 104.

Flood waters continued to affect 20 revenue circles and 313 villages across Nagaon, Golaghat, Sivasagar, Kamrup, Hojai, Jorhat and Lakhimpur districts.

Golaghat was the worst-hit district with 30,778 people affected,

Bhutanese king expresses solidarity with Assam flood victims

GUWAHATI, Aug 14: The king of Bhutan, Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuk, expressed solidarity with the people of adjoining Assam, which faced a devastating flood that claimed the lives of 103 people so far. The monarch of the Himalayan kingdom also highlighted the shared vulnerability of the region to the consequences of global climate change and the need to confront it in the times to come.

Thanking the neighbouring nation for its support, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma affirmed the historical ties of Assam and Bhutan. "The people of Bhutan join me in conveying our heartfelt condolences to Your Excellency and the (CONTD. ON PAGE 2)

followed by Nagaon with 26,292

and Sivasagar with 12,480.

On Thursday, around 77,500 people were affected across the seven districts.

The administration was operating 31 relief camps, where more

than 5,000 displaced people had taken shelter. Another 37 relief distribution centres were also functioning.

A total of 8,268.71 hectares of crop area remained submerged, while (CONTD. ON PAGE 2)

Assam govt to provide ₹ 2 lakh each to those injured in Arunachal firing incident

GUWAHATI, Aug 14: The Assam government on Friday announced ₹ 2 lakh financial assistance to each of the 11 people injured in alleged firing by miscreants from Arunachal Pradesh along the interstate border in Dhemaji district over land encroachment issues.

The amount will be handed over on Saturday, Assam Education Minister Ranaj Pegu said.

Pegu had earlier visited the injured at the Assam Medical College and Hospital in Dibrugarh.

"My sincere gratitude to HCM @himantabiswa for providing financial assistance of Rs 2 lakh each to the 11 persons from Bodoti village under Ming Mang GP in Dhemaji district, who were injured in the gunfire incident along the Assam-Arunachal Pradesh border on August 10. The assistance cheques will be handed over to the injured persons tomorrow,"

Pegu said in a post on X.

In another post, the minister said he met the injured at the AMCH to assess their health condition.

"Today, the surgery for one injured person has been completed, and the surgery of another who sustained eye injuries will be performed day after tomorrow. The doctors have assured that all the injured are currently out of danger and they will be discharged soon," Pegu added.

Following the firing incident, Takam Mising Porin Kebang (TMPK), the apex student organisation of Assam's Mising community, had on Wednesday launched an indefinite economic blockade against Arunachal Pradesh. The protesters on Thursday night agreed to temporarily lift the blockade, issuing a 48-hour ultimatum to nab the four accused in the firing incident and hand them over to the Assam Police. (PTI)

Forty-five per cent of surveyed Indians viewed the US favourably

Indians, Pakistanis view each other as greatest threat: Pew Research

WASHINGTON, Aug 14: A large section of Indians and Pakistanis view each other as their greatest threat, reflecting the deep-entrenched distrust between the two neighbours, a new survey has found.

According to American think tank Pew Research, 54 per cent of surveyed adults in India described Pakistan as their greatest geopolitical threat, followed by China at 21 per cent.

Similarly, 43 per cent of Pakistanis saw India as their greatest threat while 24 per cent each held the same views about Israel and China.

Pakistanis clearly point to China (75 per cent) as their most important ally and, to a lesser degree, to Saudi Arabia (12 per cent).

About a third of Indians say Russia is their top

ally (36 per cent), while 16 per cent name the US. Roughly a third of Indians did not answer the question.

Despite the camaraderie between US President Donald Trump and Pakistan's army chief Asim Munir, only 15 per cent of Pakistanis hold a favourable opinion about the US. An overwhelming 90 per cent had a favourable view about China.

Pew Research found that only 12 per cent of Pakistanis had confidence in Trump to do the right thing in world affairs, while 83 per cent held similar views about China's President Xi Jinping.

Indians held much more positive views of Russia (58 per cent (CONTD. ON PAGE 2)

Scars of Partition won't be forgotten; none will be allowed to harm India again: Himanta

GUWAHATI, Aug 14: Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Friday said that the scars of Partition "forced upon" India by the Muslim League will not be forgotten and no one will be allowed to "harm the nation again".

He made the assertion while paying tributes to those who lost their lives in the riots following the country's Partition.

"We will never forget the scars of the forced Partition which the Muslim League inflicted on Maa Bharti, taking the lives of countless innocent souls," Sarma said in a social media post.

"On #PartitionHorrorsRemembranceDay, we remember all who laid their lives & pledge to never let anyone harm the nation again," he added.

The BJP-led NDA central government has been observing August 14 as the 'Partition Horrors Remembrance Day' since 2021 in remembrance of those who lost their lives in riots after the country's division and the ensuing exodus.

The country will celebrate its Independence Day on Saturday. (PTI)



স্বাধীনতা অমর

অসম চৰকাৰ

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“উৰ উৰ উৰ উৰ অভভেদী উৰ
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সবাৰে উপৰে উৰ
অ' মোৰ
তিনি বৰণীয়া ভাৰতৰে পতাকা।”

—ৰূপকোঁৱৰ জ্যোতিপ্ৰসাদ আগৰৱালা

দেশৰ ৮০ সংখ্যক স্বাধীনতা দিৱস উপলক্ষে
মহান স্বাধীনতা সংগ্ৰামীসকলক শ্ৰদ্ধা জনাই
অসমবাসীলৈ আন্তৰিক শুভেচ্ছা জ্ঞাপন কৰিছোঁ

ড° হিমন্ত বিশ্ব শৰ্মা
মুখ্যমন্ত্রী, অসম

DIPR/D/HLT/19/15-Aug-26

তথ্য আৰু জনসংযোগ সঞ্চালকালয়, অসমৰ দ্বাৰা প্ৰচাৰিত

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অসম বার্তা ছাবস্ক্ৰাইব কৰিবলৈ ৭৬৩৬৮৩৪৯৪৩ ত Assam লিখি ৱাটছএপ কৰক

WPI inflation eases to 9.78 pc in July on softening in fuel prices

NEW DELHI, Aug 14: Wholesale price inflation softened month-on-month for the first time in nine months to 9.78 per cent in July on easing in fuel and food prices.

Wholesale price index (WPI)-based inflation was 9.87 per cent in June.

This is the first time since October 2025 that WPI inflation has fallen month-on-month. The softening in July numbers is mainly on account of lower inflation in fuel & power even as inflation in primary articles and manufactured products accelerated.

"Across groups, mineral oils (containing petroleum products), food articles, manufacture of basic metals, non-food articles, manufacture of food products, and manufacture of chemicals and chemical products have been major drivers of WPI inflation in July 2026," the commerce and industry ministry said while releasing the monthly Wholesale Price Index (WPI) data on Friday.

Wholesale inflation in fuel and power dropped to 20.05 per cent in July, as against 27.41 per cent in June.

Inflation in food articles too eased marginally to 5.44 per cent



in July from 5.49 per cent in June. However, manufactured products saw an uptick in inflation at 8.29 per cent in July, as against 7.48 per cent in June.

As per the data, the output Producer Price Index (PPI) - which the government has said will eventually replace the WPI in about 5 years -- remained unchanged at 9.6 per cent YoY in July vis-a-vis June.

Output PPI saw lower inflation in manufacturing and mining, but higher agriculture and electricity PPI nullified those gains.

In a research note, Barclays said

the direction of the WPI has reversed and WPI inflation should soften in coming months as global prices seem to have peaked.

"In our view, WPI inflation has peaked and gradual and modest disinflation from hereon should continue, in line with relatively lower global commodity prices in general and crude oil price in particular (since June)," Barclays said.

The war in West Asia war which began on February 28 and the resultant blockade of the Strait of Hormuz, through which the major-

ity of crude oil is imported into India, has kept WPI elevated with pressure on global crude and fertiliser costs.

ICRA Principal Economist Rahul Agrawal said the moderation in July WPI was not broad-based and was entirely led by the fuel and power group whereas all the other groups witnessed a hardening in their inflation prints vis-a-vis June 2026.

"Looking ahead, we anticipate a larger easing in the WPI inflation to below 9.5 per cent in August, after peaking at 9.9 per cent each during May-June 2026. Nevertheless, prints are likely to remain elevated through much of the year, with an average WPI inflation forecast of around 8.5 per cent for FY27," Agrawal said.

The WPI data is in contrast to the retail inflation numbers released earlier this week. The consumer price index based retail inflation rose to 4.45 per cent in July from 4.38 per cent in June, on high food prices.

The Reserve Bank of India's Monetary Policy Committee, earlier this month, kept benchmark policy rates unchanged at 5.25 per cent and has projected retail inflation at 5 per cent for FY27. (PTI)

Stock markets end lower amid geopolitical uncertainty; Nifty down for 4th day

MUMBAI, Aug 14: Market benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty ended lower on Friday as elevated oil prices and the prolonged US-Iran impasse weighed on investor sentiment.

The 30-share BSE Sensex dropped 70.71 points, or 0.09 per cent, to settle at 78,009.25. During the day, it declined 395.59 points, or 0.50 per cent, to 77,684.37.

The 50-share NSE Nifty dipped 29.85 points, or 0.12 per cent, to end at 24,366.

From the Sensex pack, Asian Paints, InterGlobe Aviation, NTPC, Power Grid, State Bank of India and HCL Tech were among the major laggards.

Bharti Airtel, Adani Ports, ICICI Bank and Titan were among the winners.

Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, advanced 0.17 per cent to USD 87.15 per barrel.

"Indian equity markets ended largely unchanged on Friday, struggling to build on supportive global cues as persistent uncertainty surrounding the US-Iran standoff and the Strait of Hormuz kept investors cautious heading into the weekend. Despite a softer US inflation reading and record closes on Wall Street, elevated crude oil prices and the absence of any diplomatic breakthrough continued to cap risk appetite," Ponnudi R, CEO of Enrich Money, an on-line trading and wealth tech firm, said.

Geopolitical tensions remained the dominant market driver, he added.

"Indian equity markets ended



lower on Friday as renewed geopolitical tensions in the Middle East pushed crude oil prices higher, overshadowing the positive global cues from Wall Street's record close. A notable positive for the domestic market was the Nifty-50's ability to defend the 24,325 support zone for the second consecutive session," Hariselman Radhakrishnan, Founder & CEO of HST Wealth, a Research Analyst firm, said.

The BSE SmallCap Select index declined 0.65 per cent and the MidCap Select index dipped 0.13 per cent.

Among sectoral indices, Housing Finance declined 1.40 per cent, MidSmall Private Banks Quality Tilt 0.58 per cent, MidSmall Private Banks 0.46 per cent, Oil & Gas 0.45 per cent, Energy 0.44 per cent and Services 0.39 per cent.

Hospitality jumped 1.49 per cent, Telecommunication climbed 0.86 per cent, Insurance 0.21 per cent and Consumer

Durables 0.17 per cent. On the weekly front, the BSE benchmark declined 489.92 points, or 0.62 per cent, and the Nifty dipped 204.65 points, or 0.83 per cent.

In Asian markets, South Korea's Kospi, Japan's Nikkei 225 and Shanghai's SSE Composite index ended higher, while Hong Kong's Hang Seng index settled lower.

Markets in Europe were trading mostly higher.

US markets ended in positive territory on Thursday.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 510.69 crore on Thursday, according to exchange data.

On Thursday, flag-end buying helped the Sensex end the session in the positive territory. The 30-share index settled 113.61 points, or 0.15 per cent, higher at 78,079.96. The Nifty was marginally down by 40.10 points, or 0.16 per cent, to end at 24,395.85, registering its third day of decline. (PTI)

Salesforce, Tripura govt to skill over 10,000 learners

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, Aug 14: Salesforce and the Directorate of Information Technology (DIT), Government of Tripura, have announced a collaboration to expand access to digital skills and strengthen workforce readiness across the State.

The initiative, announced at the Destination Tripura Business Conclave 2026 in Agartala, aims to reach more than 10,000 learners by 2027 and support Tripura's broader digital transformation agenda. Students, youth, government employees and entrepreneurs will be provided access to Salesforce's online learning platform, Trailhead. The collaboration seeks to equip participants with practical digital and technology skills needed for an AI-driven economy.

Through curated, self-paced learning programmes for beginner and intermediate learners, participants will have access to guided learning paths covering customer relationship management (CRM), business analysis, technology fundamentals and other areas.

Salesforce will also provide online orientation resources

to help participants navigate the platform and support them through their learning journey.

The Directorate of Information Technology will identify participants through government departments, educational institutions and skill development agencies while creating awareness and expanding access to the programme across Tripura. The initiative builds on the State's ongoing investments in digital governance, innovation and entrepreneurship. Tripura is developing the Tripura IT and Data Ecosystem Zone (TIDEZ) in Agartala, along with a planned IT Park and AI Centre of Excellence, while expanding technology use in public administration.

The State has also expanded its e-Office initiative from the State Secretariat to all three tiers of the Panchayati Raj system in just over a year.

Kiran Gite, IAS, Secretary, Information Technology, Government of Tripura, said the partnership marked an important milestone in the State's digital journey and would help equip students, government employees and entrepreneurs with future-ready skills.

HDFC Bank launches 'Vigil Aunty Says - Laziness Saves' campaign

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, Aug 14: HDFC Bank has launched 'Vigil Aunty Says - Laziness Saves', a fraud awareness campaign aimed at encouraging customers to pause before responding to suspicious digital requests.

Ahead of the country's 80th Independence Day, the campaign brings together popular Indian stand-up comedians and Vigil Aunty, HDFC Bank's social media character on digital fraud awareness, to highlight the message that taking a moment before acting can help prevent fraud.

The seven-episode comedy special will begin streaming exclusively on JioHotstar from August 15. The campaign focuses on a common tactic used across different forms of digital fraud—creating a sense of urgency to make victims act without thinking.

The episodes address fraud scenarios including fake OTP requests, phishing links and digital arrest scams, encouraging people to pause rather than react immediately to suspicious messages, calls or requests. The series features stand-up comedians Aakash Gupta, Gaurav Kapoor, Ramkumar Natarajan, Harsh Gujral, Sonu Venugopal, Munawar Faruqui and Kenny Sebastian, Ravi Santhanam, Chief Marketing Officer and Group Head, HDFC Bank, said fraudsters use panic and urgency to manipulate people into making quick mistakes and that the campaign seeks to communicate fraud awareness through comedy. Conceptualised by the bank's creative agency FCBKinnect, the pan-India campaign is aimed at digital banking and online payment users across age groups, with particular focus on Gen Z and digital-first audiences.

LG rolls out Independence Day offers under 'Trust of the Nation' campaign

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, Aug 14: LG Electronics India has launched its 'Trust of the Nation' campaign on the occasion of Independence Day, offering a range of promotional benefits on select televisions, home appliances and audio products.

The campaign seeks to highlight LG's longstanding association with Indian consumers while making its AI-powered, connected and energy-efficient products more accessible during the festive season.

According to the company, consumers can avail themselves of up to 26 per cent cashback, capped at ₹30,000, on select debit and credit cards, along with fixed EMI options starting at ₹888 and zero down payment on select models.

Other offers include a three-year warranty on select LG TVs, up to 30 per cent discount on LG soundbars purchased with select 4K TVs and up to 20 per cent discount on



LG Best Care annual maintenance contracts.

Commenting on the campaign, Sanjay Chitkara, Director and Co-Chief Sales & Marketing Officer, LG Electronics India Limited, said the initiative celebrates the trust Indian consumers have placed in the company over the years and aims to make newer AI-powered technologies and smarter living experiences more accessible.

The offers are available for a limited period at LG Brand Shops, leading retail outlets, LG's official website and authorised online channels.

Reliance, Rolls-Royce to partner to develop indigenous combat engine for AMCA



NEW DELHI, Aug 14: Reliance Industries and Rolls-Royce on Friday said they intend to jointly develop a sovereign combat engine for the Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft (AMCA) programme, marking a bid by India's largest private-sector company and Britain's storied aero-engine maker to build indigenous fighter-jet propulsion capability in the country.

The two companies, in a joint statement, said they would explore forming a dedicated Aerospace Gas Turbine Complex in India, envisioned as a centre of excellence for power and propulsion technology, covering design, development, manufacturing, testing, production and through-life support of combat engines.

The proposed partnership would combine Britain's storied aero-engine maker's technology and expertise with Reliance's technology, manufacturing and execution capabilities to develop the AMCA engine in India.

The announcement frames the tie-up as advancing Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's push for the country's defence sector to produce an indigenous engine to power its fighter jet programme, part of the broader "Atmanirbhar Bharat", or self-reliant India, initiative.

"India's strategic autonomy requires sovereign capability in critical technologies," Anant Ambani, executive director of Reliance Industries, said in the statement.

He said the partnership would combine Rolls-Royce's propulsion expertise with Reliance's "technology, man-

ufacturing, scale and execution capabilities" to build an aero-engine ecosystem in India that could become "self-reliant and, over time, globally competitive".

Rolls-Royce Chief Executive Officer Tufan Erginbilgic said the alliance brings together "our century-long heritage in advanced engineering and proven engine expertise" with Reliance's standing in Indian industry, calling it "a major milestone towards building a robust, self-reliant aerospace ecosystem in the country".

The companies said the venture could also open the door to broader collaboration in defence, civil aerospace and new power and propulsion systems, beyond the AMCA engine itself.

The AMCA is India's indigenous fifth-generation stealth fighter programme; developing a domestically produced engine for it has been a longstanding goal of the country's defence establishment, which currently relies on foreign suppliers for fighter engines.

The strategic intent announcement does not itself constitute a signed joint venture or contract; the companies described it as a step toward exploring the formation of the proposed gas turbine complex.

Reliance, led by chairman Mukesh Ambani, is India's largest private-sector company by revenue, with businesses spanning oil-to-chemicals, retail, digital services and media.

Rolls-Royce, listed in London, has operations in 47 countries and serves customers, including airlines, aircraft lessors, armed forces, navies, and marine and industrial clients.

Neither company disclosed financial terms, a timeline, or details of ownership structure for the proposed gas turbine complex.

The proposed Aerospace Gas Turbine Complex would aim to develop end-to-end capabilities in India spanning design, development, manufacturing, testing, production and through-life support, the companies said.

The partnership could also open opportunities for wider collaboration across defence, civil aerospace and new power and propulsion systems, they said. (PTI)

NEW DELHI, Aug 14: For the first time, the Department of Posts on Friday delivered the National Flag via drone from Mandi to Rehardhar in Himachal Pradesh, showcasing a unique fusion of patriotism, public service, and technological innovation. The initiative was carried out virtually by the Union Minister of Communications and Development of North Eastern Region, Jyotiraditya Scindia, on the eve of Independence Day, an official release said. Witnessing the live drone take-off from Mandi Head Post Office, the minister interacted with postal officials and the drone operator.

The drone subsequently landed at Rehardhar Branch Post Office, where the postal team received the parcel carrying the Tiranga and formally handed it over to an army veteran, adding a special significance to the occasion.

Scindia said that the journey of the 'Tiranga' through the skies of Himachal Pradesh represented the spirit of a new India, determined to overcome geographical barriers and reach every citizen.

India Post is contributing to the 'Har Ghar Tiranga' cam-

paign by making the National Flag available for delivery to citizens across the country, enabling people to participate in the celebration of national pride from their homes.

The drone delivery from Mandi to Rehardhar demonstrates how emerging technology can complement India Post's extensive physical network and strengthen last-mile connectivity, particularly in remote and difficult terrains.

By exploring drone-based mail transmission, the Department of Posts is seeking innovative solutions to ensure that postal and public services can reach citizens even where conventional modes of transportation pose challenges, the release said. The Department of Posts has planned the deployment of drone-based mail transmission across 150 identified routes in Himachal Pradesh and Assam.

The initiative is aimed at strengthening connectivity and facilitating efficient mail delivery across difficult terrains. It reflects the ethos of 'Dak Sewa, Jan Sewa' and its continuing endeavour to use innovation and technology to connect citizens and serve the nation, the release added. (PTI)

Contd. from Page 1...

State to celebrate I-Day

railway property, an official statement said.

Heightened vigil is being maintained at stations, on-board trains and across railway premises, with RPF personnel undertaking extensive patrolling and surveillance, it said.

Additional attention is being accorded to sensitive and vulnerable locations to prevent any untoward incident and ensure a safe and secure travel environment.

As part of the intensified security measures, comprehensive checking and frisking drives are being conducted at railway stations and trains, covering passenger areas, waiting halls, platforms, circulating areas and other strategic locations.

"RPF teams, assisted by trained sniffer dogs, are carrying out thorough checks of passenger luggage, unattended articles and sensitive areas. Security personnel have been strategically deployed at important locations, while regular public announcements are being made to sensitise passengers and urge them to immediately report any suspicious person, object or activity to railway authorities," the statement added.

Passengers have also been requested to remain vigilant, refrain from accepting articles from unknown persons and extend full cooperation to security personnel during checking.

Preparations for the statewide celebrations were reviewed by senior government officials earlier this week, with a special focus on security arrangements.

The meeting, jointly chaired by the chief secretary and DGP and attended via videoconference by senior district officials, reviewed logistical arrangements and security measures, including anti-sabotage measures, enhanced surveillance of vital installations, intelligence-sharing among agencies, round-the-clock monitoring of designated venues, route sanitisation, strengthened checking mechanisms and strict adherence to established protocols. (PTI)

Assam flood toll

42,105 animals were affected, the bulletin said. Flood-related damage to infrastructure, including houses, roads and bridges, was also reported from the affected areas, it added. (PTI)

Bhutanese king expresses

people of Assam, in particular those who have lost their families and homes in the recent floods. We offer our prayers in memory of the deceased," he said in a letter addressed to Sarma, which was shared with the media on Friday. The king noted that the "increasing frequency and severity of such disasters across our region is a stark reminder of our shared vulnerability to the consequences of a changing global climate challenges that we face together, and must continue to confront in the times ahead".

"Despite the great loss and damage, Your Excellency's strength and resolve in leading the state's response in this time of crisis is admirable," he added, in the letter dated August 3.

The king said Bhutan stands in full solidarity with the people of Assam and extended its wholehearted support and friendship as the state works to rebuild and recover. Sarma, expressing his gratitude for the solidarity, said in a social media post, "Deeply touched by the warm words and message of support from His Majesty, The King of Bhutan, Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck, as Assam recovers from the recent floods."

He highlighted the "relationship of exceptional warmth" shared by Assam and Bhutan, "connected by history, nurtured by geography and strengthened by generations of friendship between our people".

"On behalf of the people of Assam, I convey my heartfelt gratitude to His Majesty and the people of Bhutan for standing with us in solidarity and friendship in this difficult hour," the chief minister added. (PTI)

Indians, Pakistanis view

favourable) and President Vladimir Putin (51 per cent confidence) than Pakistanis do -- 39 per cent and 32 per cent respectively. Just 23 per cent of Indians view China positively, while 25 per cent trust Xi Jinping's global leadership. Forty-five per cent of surveyed Indians viewed the US favourably, while 39 per cent expressed more confidence in Trump. The survey among adults in four South Asian nations -- India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka threw up varying results.

An overwhelming majority of Sri Lankans (79 per cent) express a positive view of India, compared with 42 per cent of Bangladeshis and 7 per cent of Pakistanis. Sixty-three per cent of Sri Lankans name India as their most important ally, while Bangladeshis and Pakistanis most often name India as their greatest threat.

In the US, 45 per cent of Americans view India favourably, while 50 per cent view it unfavourably. As many as 50 per cent of Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents have a favourable view of India, compared with 42 per cent of Republicans and Republican leaners.

Over 54 per cent of Americans surveyed say that India's global influence in recent years has stayed about the same, while 30 per cent say it is getting stronger. Another 13 per cent say India's influence has been getting weaker. (PTI)

ENGINEERING WORKS AT LUMDING DIVISION
E-Tender Notice No. LMG/Engg/48 of 2026. Dated: 10-08-2026. E-tenders are invited by the undersigned for the following work: **SN. 1. Brief Description of Item:** Construction of Goods circulating area, Goods Office, Merchant room, Labour room with drinking water facility, CCTV and Electrification of Goods Office at Ditokcherra. **Tender Value:** ₹15,25,80,212.48. **Earnest Money:** ₹30,51,600.00. E-tenders will be closed at 15.00 hrs. on 07-09-2026 and opened at 15.00 hrs. on 08-09-2026. The complete information with tender documents of above e-tender will be available upto 15.00 hrs. of 07-09-2026 in website <http://www.irps.gov.in>. **DRM Works, Lumding**
NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY
"Serving Customers with a smile"

PROVISION OF MANPOWER FOR ASSISTANCE
E-Tender Notice No. LMG/Engg/37 of 2026. Works tenders through "E" Tendering system for and on behalf of the president of India are invited for the works as detailed below:- **Name of work:** Provision of Manpower for assistance in night monsoon, cold weather patrolling, hot weather & vulnerable locations watch man in Lumding-Chandranathpur section Under the jurisdiction of Sr.DEN/III/Lumding. **Tender Value:** ₹3,50,25,618.25/- **Earnest Money:** ₹3,25,100/- **Date & time of closing of tender:** At 15.00 hrs. on 28-08-2026 & opening at 15.00 hrs. on 29-08-2026. The complete information with tender documents of above e-tender will be available upto 15.00 hrs. on 28-08-2026 in the website www.irps.gov.in. **DRM (W), Lumding**
NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY
"Serving Customers With A Smile"

AFFIDAVIT
I, Muskan Begum, D/O- Abdul Rahim, R/O vill- Chakarabasti, P.O.- Chakarabasti, P.S.- Dalgaoon, Dist - Darrang (Assam), do hereby solemnly affirm and declare that I am a permanent resident of the above noted address and citizen of India by birth. That my daughter's actual and correct name is Moni Aktar. That my daughter's name has been recorded in her Aadhaar card vide SL No. 9405 7804 0046 as Sajina Begum in place of Moni Aktar. That Moni Aktar and Sajina Begum are the same and one person.
Sd/-
Muskan Begum

AFFIDAVIT
Vide affidavit of Executive Magistrate, Morigaon, Assam I do hereby declare that My father actual and correct name is Sadananda Das @ Soda Nanda Das and Sadananda Das is the same and one person who is my father.
Sima Das
W/O- Nitesh Roy
D/O- Sadananda Das
R/o vill- Jagiroad Ghunusha Habi
P.O.- Jagiroad
P.S.- Jagiroad
Dist-Morigaon,
Assam pin-782410

BJP-EKADC observes Partition Horrors Remembrance Day in Diphu

Tiranga Yatra taken out as BJP observes Partition Remembrance Day and Har Ghar Tiranga campaign

HT Bureau

DIPHU, Aug 14: The BJP-East Karbi Anglong District Committee (BJP-EKADC) observed Partition Horrors Remembrance Day (Vibhajan Vibhishika Smriti Divas) in Diphu on Friday as part of the nationwide programme of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), along with the Tiranga Yatra and Har Ghar Tiranga campaign.

A Tiranga Yatra was taken out from the Atal Bihari Vajpayee Bhawan, the BJP-EKADC office, to the second gate of the Assam Rifles Training Centre (ARTC) on the Diphu-Manja road.

The procession was led by Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council (KAAC) Chief Executive Member and BJP leader Tuliram Ronghang, BJP-EKADC president Roland Killing, general secretary Sarsing Phangcho and Diphu MLA Niso Terangpi.

Speaking on the occasion, Ronghang said the Har Ghar Tiranga campaign had completed five years since its launch in connection with the 75th Independence Day celebrations.



He said the campaign, envisioned by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, sought to inspire citizens to hoist the national flag at their homes and strengthen their emotional bond with the Tricolour.

BJP-EKADC president Roland Killing said three programmes were organised as part of the observance. The Tiranga Yatra was aimed at fostering a sense of na-

tional belonging and love for the motherland, while Partition Horrors Remembrance Day was observed to commemorate the victims of Partition.

Killing said the observance served as a reminder of the circumstances surrounding Partition and the "divide and rule" policy of the British.

He said Partition created divi-

sions along communal and religious lines and caused immense suffering to millions of people.

A silent procession was also organised as a mark of respect to those who lost their lives and suffered during Partition.

A large number of BJP office-bearers, elected representatives, party workers and supporters participated in the programmes.

Sivasagar MLA attributes flooding to alleged unregulated coal and stone mining in Nagaland Akhil Gogoi questions cloudburst claim behind July 19 floods

HT Correspondent

SIVASAGAR, Aug 14: Sivasagar MLA Akhil Gogoi on Friday questioned the Assam government's claim that a cloudburst in Mon district of Nagaland was responsible for the devastating floods that affected Sivasagar and Charaideo districts on July 19.

Addressing a press conference here, Gogoi, citing IMD data, claimed that rainfall in the specific area was less than 100 mm on the day.

Referring to the Chief Minister's statement on cloudburst, he said such an event would require more than 100 mm of rainfall within an hour and alleged that the government's explanation had created a misleading impression about the cause of the floods.

Gogoi instead attributed the disaster to what he described as rampant coal and stone quarrying in the area and the formation of large artificial water-filled lakes as a result of mining activities.

He alleged that these water bodies breached following incessant rainfall in the preceding days, contributing to the flooding. The MLA presented satellite images which, he claimed, showed extensive coal and stone mining activities in the area.

According to him, the images showed JCBs and excavators digging large ponds created through coal mining on both banks of the Dikhow river, besides continued rock and coal extraction in the hills and disputed areas.

Gogoi also alleged that several individuals were involved in the coal and stone mining activities and named Pawan Daga, Abu Hussain, Halim Ali, Zakir



Hussain, Deepak Agarwal and Nirmal Jain, claiming that they were being sponsored by a person he identified as Metlao Kanyak of Nagaland.

He referred to Article 371(A) of the Constitution, saying it provides for ownership of land by local communities in Nagaland, and claimed that no permission had been granted by the Central government for coal mining. Gogoi further said that stopping the transportation of coal and stone extracted in Nagaland through Assam would automatically curb the mining activities.

BJP-EKADC hails KAAC delegation's Delhi meetings



HT Bureau

DIPHU, Aug 14: The BJP-East Karbi Anglong District Committee (BJP-EKADC) has appreciated the initiative of Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council (KAAC) Chief Executive Member and Rongkhang MLA Tuliram Ronghang and his delegation to meet Union ministers in New Delhi to seek greater central assistance for the development of Karbi Anglong and West Karbi Anglong.

Addressing a press conference at the Atal Bihari Vajpayee Bhawan here recently, BJP-EKADC president Roland Killing said the delegation, led by CEM Ronghang and comprising MP Amarsing Tisso and MLAs Lunsing Teron, Habbey Teron, Surjyo Rongphar and Niso Terangpi, had been in New Delhi from August 7 to 13.

Killing said the delegation met several Union ministers and apprised them of the problems, requirements and developmental needs of the two hill districts.

It also sought greater assistance through Centrally sponsored schemes and expedited consideration of the Constitution (125th Amendment) Bill, 2019, with a view to strengthening resources for infrastructure and rural develop-

ment in Sixth Schedule areas.

According to Killing, the delegation met Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju on August 8 and discussed possible assistance for the development of the districts. It also met Civil Aviation Minister Ram Mohan Naidu Kinjarapu and sought early establishment of a Greenfield airport in Karbi Anglong.

Killing said an airport in the district would improve connectivity and benefit students travelling outside the region for education, patients requiring treatment elsewhere, families travelling for various purposes and businesspersons.

The delegation also met Union Home Minister Amit Shah and urged him to initiate tripartite talks involving the Centre, Assam government and representatives of the hill districts for granting an Autonomous State, a long-standing demand of the region.

It further urged the Home Minister to ensure full implementation of the provisions of the Memorandums of Settlement (MoS-I and MoS-II) signed with Karbi armed groups in 2011 and 2021 respectively.

The delegation also met Union Minister of State for Home Affairs

Nityanand Rai and sought expedited consideration of the Constitution (125th Amendment) Bill, 2019, besides raising pending issues concerning Karbi Anglong and Dima Hasao.

Killing said the delegation met Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari and sought expedited implementation of road connectivity projects in Karbi Anglong and West Karbi Anglong.

It also met Union Tribal Affairs Minister Jai Oram and sought continued Central support for education, healthcare and overall development in tribal areas, including sanctioning of more Eklavya Model Residential Schools for tribal students.

"Within these seven days in New Delhi, the delegation led by the CEM has utilised its time fruitfully by meeting Union ministers and placing before them the developmental needs of Karbi Anglong and West Karbi Anglong," Killing said.

The BJP-EKADC president lauded the delegation, particularly CEM Ronghang, for what he described as his efforts, enthusiasm and commitment towards securing greater development opportunities for the people of Karbi Anglong.

Killing expressed hope that more such delegations would visit New Delhi and secure greater priority and support from the Centre for development in the hill districts.

BJP-EKADC vice-president Hundorsing Kramsa, office secretary Amit Kemprai, and Minority Morcha vice-president and GIN-FED chairman Tongthang Thouthang were also present at the press conference.

District Council Court Registry begins functioning in Diphu

HT Bureau

DIPHU, Aug 14: Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council (KAAC) Chief Executive Member (CEM) Tuliram Ronghang on Friday, attended the commencement of the Registry of the District Council Court at Diphu and formally inaugurated the Registry rooms in the presence of CEM advisers, council officials and other distinguished persons.

August 14, 2026, has been notified as the "Appointment Day" for the Registry and published in the official Gazette of Assam vide Gazette Notification No. 22 dated June 3, 2026.

With effect from the Appointment Day, the Registry of the District Council Court has commenced its judicial and administrative functions, including the receipt, scrutiny, registration and processing of cases and petitions falling within the jurisdiction of the court in accordance with applicable laws, rules, customary law and practice directions of the court.

The District Council Court stated that members of the public, advocates and litigants intending to institute proceedings before the court may approach the Registry during notified working hours for filing and other procedural requirements.

The commencement of the Registry marks a significant institutional development in the administration of justice under the Autonomous District framework.

It is intended to provide a structured forum for the recognition, preservation and adjudication of rights arising under the customary laws and practices applicable within the districts, the court authority said.

NFR announces further train cancellations, rescheduling

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, Aug 14: Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) has announced further changes in train services amid ongoing restoration work near New Harangajao station following the settlement of railway tracks on Lines 1 and 2.

Train operations in the Lumding-Badarpur Hill section are being maintained through Line 3 with enhanced safety measures.

In view of the restoration work, NFR has announced the cancellation and rescheduling of several services.

Train No 15617 Guwahati-Dulabcherra Express, scheduled to commence its journey on August 15 and Train No 15618 Dulabcherra-Guwahati Express, scheduled for August 16, have been cancelled.

Train No 15615 Guwahati-Silchar Express, commencing its journey on August 15 and Train No 15616 Silchar-Guwahati Express, scheduled for August 16, have also been cancelled.

Several trains have been rescheduled.

Train No 15650 Narangi-Agartala Express on August 15 will depart Narangi at 10:30 pm, while Train No 15649 Agartala-Narangi Express will depart Agartala at 11:30 pm.

Train No 15609 Guwahati-Sairang Express will depart Guwahati at 11:30 pm, while Train No 15610 Sairang-Guwahati Express will depart Sairang at 9:30 pm, both on August 15. Train No. 15626 Agartala-Deoghar Express commencing its journey on August 15 has been rescheduled to depart Agartala at 11 pm.

Train No 15611 Rangiya-Silchar Express will depart Rangiya at 11:30 pm on August 15, while Train No 15612 Silchar-Rangiya Express will depart Silchar at 5 am on August 16.

Train No 15641 Silchar-New Tinsukia Express, commencing its journey on August 15, has been rescheduled to depart Silchar at 4:10 am on August 16.

'Drug-Free Youth, Developed India' programme held

HT Correspondent

NAGAON, Aug 14: A day-long district-level programme on the theme "Drug-Free Youth, Developed India" was organised at Lanka Krishna Bora B.Ed. College by the Hojai District My Bharat Centre on Friday to raise awareness among young people about substance abuse and promote the vision of a drug-free India.

The programme was organised as part of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's appeal to create greater awareness among the youth against substance abuse and encourage their participation in building a drug-free society.

The event began with the lighting of lamps in memory of late artist Zubeen Garg.

Dr Mostafizur Rahman, Principal of the college, formally inaugurated the competitions and urged students to play an active role in creating a drug-free society and nation.

A series of competitions, including debate, painting, group dance, slogan writing, poetry recitation, street play, music and reel-making, were organised as part of the programme.

Around 200 students from various educational institutions across the district participated.

Prizes were distributed by Dr Mostafizur Rahman, Dr Tara Shankar Debnath, Dhananjay Talukdar, accountant of My Bharat Centre, Nagaon and Hojai, MSW Coordinator of Nagaon University Randip Nandi, dance trainer Tapan Bhattacharjee and others.

The programme was anchored by My Bharat Centre resource person Abu Sadique Kabir.

NFR steps up security vigil ahead of Independence Day

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, Aug 14: Ahead of the 80th Independence Day celebrations, the Railway Protection Force (RPF) of Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) has strengthened security arrangements across the zone to ensure the safety of passengers, trains and railway property.

Heightened vigil is being maintained at railway stations, on-board trains and across railway premises, with RPF personnel conducting extensive patrolling and surveillance.

Additional attention is being given to sensitive and vulnerable locations to prevent any untoward incident and ensure a safe travel environment during the Independence Day period.

As part of the intensified security measures, comprehensive checking and frisking drives are being conducted at stations and on-board trains, covering passenger areas, waiting halls, platforms, circulating areas and other strategic locations.

RPF teams, assisted by trained sniffer dogs, are carrying out checks of passenger luggage, unattended articles and sensitive areas.

Security personnel have also been deployed at important locations, while regular public announcements are being made to sensitise passengers and urge them to report any suspicious person, object or activity to railway authorities.

Nutritional support provided to 60 TB patients in Morigaon

HT Correspondent

JAGIROAD, Aug 14: The Morigaon district administration organised a nutritional support programme for tuberculosis (TB) patients at the District TB Centre, Morigaon, on Friday as part of the TB Mukta Bharat Abhiyaan and Nishkay Mitra initiative.

Nutritional food packets were distributed among 60 TB patients with support from Tata Semiconductor Assembly and Test Pvt Ltd. (TSAT), Jagiroad. The programme coincided with the celebrations of the 80th Independence Day. Morigaon District Commissioner Srishti Singh, Additional Deputy Commissioner Dr Nilakshi Baishya, the Joint Director of Health Services and other officials of the Health Department attended the programme.

OBITUARY

With profound grief and immense sorrow, I inform you of the passing of my beloved eldest brother, Dr. Motilal Numisa, former Director of Health & Family Welfare, Government of Assam.

He also served the sporting and cultural community in various capacities, including as President and General Secretary of Dimasa Sahitya Sabha, Vice President of Assam Football Association, and Senior Vice President of Karbi Anglong Sports Association (KASA).

His passing is an irreparable loss to our family and to all those whose lives he touched through his dedicated service.

May his departed soul rest in eternal peace.

Om Shanti.

Bodoland University holds anti-ragging orientation for students

HT Correspondent

KOKRAJHAR, Aug 14: Bodoland University organised an interactive session-cum-student orientation on anti-ragging at the Jyhwla Nileswar Brahma Auditorium on August 14, with more than 500 students from various academic departments participating.

The programme was organised as part of Anti-Ragging Week to sensitise students to the harmful consequences of ragging, promote awareness of preventive measures and reinforce the importance of maintaining a safe and inclusive campus.

Vice-Chancellor of Bodoland University attended the programme as the chief guest and keynote speaker.

Prof Jatin Sarmah, Rector, and Dr Prahlad Basumaty, Registrar (i/c)-cum-Director of Students Welfare, attended as guests of honour.

Prof Hiloljyoti Singha, Dean, Faculty of Science and Technology, Prof Sanghamitra Choudhury, Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences, and the Branch Manager of the university's SBI branch were

also present.

A skit performed by students highlighted the adverse impact of ragging on mental well-being, academic life and self-confidence.

The performance conveyed the message that every student deserves to feel safe and supported within the university community.

Addressing the students, the Vice-Chancellor described Bodoland University as having a friendly and peaceful campus environment and highlighted the cooperative and supportive nature of students and people of the Bodoland region.

He urged students to uphold unity, kindness and mutual respect and work together to ensure that the campus remains ragging-free.

Prof Jatin Sarmah said the university campus provides a friendly and peaceful environment for students, faculty members and non-teaching staff.

He encouraged freshers to approach seniors, teachers, administrative staff and friends whenever they encounter difficul-



ties and assured them of support and guidance.

Dr Prahlad Basumaty said the programme formed part of the university's continuing efforts to maintain a safe, disciplined and ragging-free campus.

He urged senior students to support and guide freshers and informed students that they could approach the Director Students Welfare Office, members of the Bodoland University Students Union or the concerned university authorities with their

QUOTE OF THE DAY

The happiness of your life depends upon the quality of your thoughts — Marcus Aurelius

Future of MSMEs in India

The protesters at Jantar Mantar, whose protest is now over for the time being, had good reason to be angry. The NEET paper leaks are one symptom; the deeper problem is youth unemployment. Young and educated Indians account for a significant share of the unemployed, while underemployment remains widespread. At a time when AI-driven disruption is threatening existing jobs, the government must find ways to create new ones. The Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Development (Amendment) Bill, 2026, recently placed in the Parliament, could help. The MSME sector employs more than 320 million people, making it the country's second-largest employer after agriculture, and offers a potential outlet for frustrated young Indians. India's 63 million MSMEs are the backbone of its industrial economy. The Economic Survey 2025–26 shows they account for approximately 31% of GDP, 35% of manufacturing output and 49% of exports. Yet India's MSME base remains largely informal, fragmented and concentrated in low-value activities. Although the Bill addresses delayed payments, dispute resolution and some compliance burdens, smaller firms continue to struggle with access to affordable credit and compliance with GST, labour, environmental and tax regulations. India could learn from China and the United States, both of which nurtured networks of smaller enterprises as they developed into manufacturing powerhouses.

The US and China did not build dominant industrial economies one firm at a time. They built clusters: specialised ecosystems in which suppliers, skilled labour, capital and applied research operate in close proximity. Three examples illustrate this. North Carolina's Research Triangle saw Duke, UNC Chapel Hill and NC State anchor biotechnology and pharma clusters from the 1980s, letting university research feed a commercial ecosystem. When competing and complementary firms cluster together, technical knowledge circulates faster than through formal channels—via technicians changing jobs, informal conversations between suppliers and customers, and shared service providers. This tacit learning is hard to transmit across distance. A single firm in an isolated location struggles to attract specialised talent, since taking a job there means betting on one employer. A cluster of 20 firms turns the same location into a labour market. Clusters become self-reinforcing: more firms attract more skilled workers, who attract more firms. Isolated MSMEs cannot create this virtuous cycle alone.

Shared infrastructure and lower fixed costs: Testing laboratories, effluent-treatment plants, cold-storage facilities, design centres and logistics hubs all carry high fixed costs that a single small firm cannot justify alone, but become affordable when spread across hundreds of co-located enterprises. This may be the most direct route to competitiveness for India's MSMEs, most of which are too small to individually afford the quality certification, R&D facilities and export logistics global markets demand.

Picturing freedom in Indian newspapers

Long before television brought history into living rooms and digital media made images instantaneous, newspapers offered millions of Indians their most immediate window onto the freedom struggle. Readers not only followed political events but increasingly saw the people and moments shaping the nation's destiny. Photographs of Mahatma Gandhi—at the spinning wheel, on the march and among ordinary people—gave a familiar human face to mass resistance. Images of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, from his Congress years to his leadership of the Indian National Army, projected another powerful vision of defiance and freedom. Alongside them appeared Bhagat Singh's resolute portrait and images of protest, the Bengal Famine, the INA trials and, finally, Independence. Indian newspapers were doing more than illustrating the news: they were helping a nation see its struggle for freedom.

The transformation did not happen overnight. Nineteenth-century newspapers relied largely on engravings, lithographs and drawings because reproducing photographs remained technically difficult. The development of halftone printing in the 1880s made photographic reproduction alongside ordinary text increasingly practical. In India, advances in photoengraving, block-making and printing gradually enabled newspapers to use photographs more regularly. Upendrakishore Ray Chowdhury's pioneering experiments in halftone reproduction and block-making stand out as an important example of indigenous innovation in this technological transition. Such advances helped prepare the ground for photographs to become reproducible news rather than occasional visual embellishments. By the early twentieth century, photography was becoming an increasingly important element of newspaper journalism, just as the national movement was gathering mass momentum.

Newspapers used this emerging medium in ways that reflected their political character. In Bengal, 'Amrita Bazar Patrika' combined nationalist advocacy with increasing visual reporting of leaders, movements and public events. In western India, the 'Bombay Chronicle' was regularly incorporating photographs by the 1920s, including Congress sessions, political leaders and demonstrations; its journalism under Benjamin Guy Horniman also symbolised resistance to colonial censorship. In Madras, 'The Hindu' represented a more measured, documentary tradition, combining sustained coverage of the national movement with photographic reporting. Different in



From Gandhiji's Salt March and Bhagat Singh's iconic portrait to Netaji and the Bengal Famine, photographs carried through the pages of Indian newspapers did more than record history. They brought the freedom struggle before millions of readers, transforming distant events, national leaders and human suffering into a shared visual experience of a nation moving towards independence.

temperament and geography, these newspapers showed how photography was entering the political vocabulary of the Indian press.

Its power became dramatically evident in 1943. On 22 August, 'The Statesman' broke through wartime restraint by publishing stark photographs of Bengal Famine victims whose suffering could no longer be reduced to official statements or statistics. Under editor Ian Stephens, such visual evidence transformed public understanding of the catastrophe, stimulated relief efforts and intensified criticism of the colonial administration. The images demonstrated with extraordinary force how photography could expose a humanitarian reality that censorship and official narratives had obscured. From Delhi, 'Hindustan Times'

was regularly publishing photographs by the late 1930s and early 1940s, while in Bengal, 'Anandabazar Patrika' brought nationalist politics to a vast Bengali readership while participating in the expanding culture of visual journalism. Photography was becoming not merely illustration, but evidence and an instrument of public conscience.

Nor was this transformation confined to the metropolitan English-language press. In Kerala, 'Mathrubhumi' brought Gandhian politics, social reform and the national movement before Malayalam readers through photographs of leaders, public meetings and movements such as the Vaikom and Guruvayur Satyagrahas. Gandhi received particular visual attention, while portraits of national figures, including Subhas Chandra Bose, connected Kerala's political awakening with the wider struggle. 'Malayala Manorama' likewise incorporated photographs into political reporting, although its suppression by the Travancore Government in 1938 interrupted that record until 1947. In Telugu journalism, 'Andhra Patrika' made news photographs a regular part of political reporting. Circulation through village libraries carried such images beyond urban subscribers into collective reading spaces in smaller towns and villages.

Some photographs travelled beyond the events they recorded to become enduring symbols. Few did so more powerfully than images of Gandhi during the Salt March of 1930. As he walked from Sabarmati to Dandi, press photographers recorded the familiar fig-

ure with his staff, the disciplined procession and gathering crowds. Reproduced in leading newspapers, these photographs transformed civil disobedience into a visual narrative of mass resistance far beyond Gujarat.

A year earlier, Bhagat Singh's famous hat portrait had demonstrated the power of a single newspaper image: published in 'Bande Mataram' and soon afterwards in 'Hindustan Times', it helped turn the young revolutionary's face into an enduring symbol of defiance.

A different visual language emerged around Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose and the INA. Photographs of Bose reviewing INA troops projected military discipline and armed resistance, while their circulation, particularly during the INA Trials of 1945–46, strengthened his presence in the public imagination. From Gandhi walking towards Dandi and Bhagat Singh's resolute portrait to Bose standing before the Azad Hind Fauj, newspaper photography gave India memorable visual symbols of resistance.

The influence of these photographs lay in making politics immediate and personal. They allowed readers to encounter the faces, crowds, suffering and determination behind the news. Repeated images made national leaders recognisable far beyond the places they travelled, while photographs of marches and demonstrations revealed the scale of popular participation. Images could also challenge official narratives: the Bengal Famine photographs exposed what statistics and censored reports could conceal. As newspapers circulated beyond cities into smaller towns and shared reading spaces, photography helped create a common visual memory of the struggle. It gave geographically dispersed readers a visual vocabulary through which national events could be recognised as part of a shared political experience.

Those photographs have long outlived the immediate news they accompanied. Today they form part of India's visual memory of freedom—a record of leaders and ordinary people, mass movements, suffering, resistance and liberation. Their value lies not only in what the camera captured, but in the newspapers that selected, printed and carried them to readers. The Indian press thus helped transform photography from an illustration of events into a witness to history. The freedom struggle was fought in streets, villages, prisons and political forums; through newspaper photography, it was also fought in the public imagination, one printed image at a time.

India's journey to freedom

By: Himangshu Ranjan Bhuyan

The roots of India's struggle for independence can be traced back to the gradual political, economic and territorial expansion of the British East India Company during the eighteenth century. Following the pivotal Battle of Plassey in 1757 and the subsequent Battle of Buxar in 1764, the British East India Company effectively transformed itself from a commercial trading entity into an aggressive imperial power over the Indian subcontinent. Over the following decades, the colonial administration implemented stringent land revenue policies, such as the Permanent Settlement in Bengal, the Ryotwari system and the Mahalwari system, which systematically dismantled traditional agrarian structures and impoverished the rural peasantry. Concurrently, British economic policies prioritised the extraction of raw materials to fuel the Industrial Revolution in Great Britain while flooding Indian markets with cheap, machine-made manufactured goods. This policy led to the deliberate de-industrialisation of India's flourishing handicraft and textile sectors, destroying centuries-old artisanal communities and causing widespread economic distress. The profound dissatisfaction generated by these oppressive policies was not confined to agrarian and industrial workers; regional rulers, tribal communities and local feudal lords also found their autonomy eroded by aggressive annexation strategies like the Doctrine of Lapse introduced by Lord Dalhousie. These cumulative grievances erupted into localised resistance, including the Santhal Rebellion and various peasant uprisings, before culminating in the historic Great Revolt of 1857, often recognised as the First War of Indian Independence. Triggered by widespread unrest among Indian soldiers or sepoy, in the East India Company's army over the introduction of greased cartridges and broader religious and cultural insensitivities, the rebellion spread rapidly across northern and central India. Legendary leaders such as Rani Lakshmbai of Jhansi, Tatya Tope, Nana Saheb and Kunwar Singh rallied around the symbolic authority of the aging Mughal Emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar. Although the uprising was ultimately suppressed by the British due to superior military logistics, lack of centralised coordination among Indian forces and regional fragmentation, it dealt a decisive blow to the East India Company. In response, the British Parliament enacted the Government of India Act 1858, which formally abolished Company rule and transferred direct political control of the Indian subcontinent to the British Crown, ushering in the era of the official British Raj and laying the emotional and structural foundation for modern Indian nationalism.

The transition from East India Company rule to direct administration under the British Crown inaugurated a period of institutional consolidation, social reform and intellectual awakening across India. The introduction of modern Western education and English as the medium of instruction, originally intended to create a class of loyal administrative clerks, unintentionally cultivated a new intelligentsia steeped in European political philosophy, democratic concepts and constitutional governance. This educated middle class began to realize that India's economic backwardness and political subordination were direct consequences of colonial exploitation, prompting early efforts at organised political mobilisation. The culmination of these early political efforts was the establishment of the Indian National Congress in December 1885 in Bombay, spearheaded by figures such as Allan Octavian Hume, Womesh Chandra Bonnerjee, Dadabhai Naoroji and Gopal Krishna Gokhale. During its initial "Moderate Phase," the Congress relied primarily on constitutional methods, petitions and persuasive dialogue to demand administrative reforms, greater representation for Indians in legislative councils and an end to the "Drain of Wealth"—a concept masterfully articulated by Dadabhai Naoroji to explain how Indian revenues were systematically siphoned off to Britain. However, the slow pace of colonial reform and the growing arrogance of imperial authorities created widespread frustration among younger nationalist leaders. This discontent reached a flashpoint in 1905 when Viceroy Lord Curzon announced the Partition of Bengal, an administrative decision designed deliberately to divide the nationalist stronghold

along communal lines between a Hindu-majority west and a Muslim-majority east. The partition sparked the intense Swadeshi and Boycott Movements, wherein millions of Indians pledged to boycott foreign goods, burn imported cloth and foster indigenous industries, educational institutions and cultural expressions. This era saw the dramatic emergence of the "Extremist" faction within the Congress, led by the famous triumvirate of Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Lala Lajpat Rai and Bipin Chandra Pal—collectively known as Lal-Bal-Pal—who asserted that self-rule or Swaraj was an inherent right rather than a colonial concession. Although political ideological differences led to the temporary Surat Split within the Congress in 1907 and the British government sought to deepen communal divisions by supporting the formation of the All India Muslim League in 1906 and introducing separate electorates via the Morley-Minto Reforms of 1909, the momentum of nationalist consciousness could not be contained. By the time World War I broke out, movements like the Home Rule League, launched by Tilak and Annie Besant, along with the historic 1916 Lucknow Pact uniting the Congress and the Muslim League, demonstrated that Indian political aspirations had permanently evolved beyond mere administrative concessions toward a unified demand for self-determination.

The arrival of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi on the Indian political landscape in 1915, following his successful resistance against racial discrimination in South Africa, marked a revolutionary turning point in the freedom struggle. Gandhi transformed what had been an elite political movement into a vibrant mass campaign by introducing the philosophical principles of Satyagraha (truth-force) and Ahimsa (non-violence). His early local interventions in Champaran, Kheda, and Ahmedabad demonstrated the power of passive resistance in addressing the grievances of peasants and industrial workers. However, the end of World War I brought severe economic hardship and imperial repression rather than the expected political concessions. The passage of the draconian Rowlatt Act in 1919, which permitted the indefinite detention of political suspects without trial, triggered widespread anger and nationwide protests. This tension culminated in the tragic Jallianwala Bagh massacre in Amritsar on April 13, 1919, where British troops under Brigadier-General Reginald Dyer fired indiscriminately upon a peaceful gathering of unarmed civilians, killing hundreds and forever shattering Indian faith in British justice. In response, Gandhi launched the Non-Cooperation Movement in 1920 in tandem with the Khilafat Movement, calling upon Indians to surrender government titles, boycott British courts, educational institutions and legislative assemblies and embrace indigenous Khadi cloth. The movement witnessed unprecedented mass participation across every layer of society until Gandhi abruptly suspended it in February 1922 following the violent Chauri Chaura incident, where a mob set fire to a police station. The suspension created a temporary political vacuum, during which radical revolutionaries such as Bhagat Singh, Chandrashekhar Azad, Rajguru, Sukhdev and Ram Prasad Bismil sought to overthrow colonial rule through targeted armed actions, inspiring the youth with their supreme sacrifices. Nationalist politics regained momentum in 1927 with the boycott of the all-British Simon Commission, leading to the landmark 1929 Lahore Session of the Congress, chaired by Jawaharlal Nehru, where the historic resolution for Poorna Swaraj (Complete Independence) was formally adopted. To achieve this goal, Gandhi initiated the Civil Disobedience Movement in March 1930 with the iconic 240-mile Salt March to Dandi, defying the oppressive British monopoly on the basic necessity of life and sparking nationwide defying-the-law protests that demonstrated the moral bankruptcy and administrative vulnerability of the colonial state.

The outbreak of the Second World War in September 1939 plunged the British Empire into a profound political and existential crisis, accelerating the final phase of India's freedom struggle. Without consulting elected Indian representatives, Viceroy Lord Linlithgow unilaterally declared India's entry into the war, prompting the immediate resignation of provincial Congress ministries across the country in protest against imperial authoritarianism. Recognising the strategic importance of securing Indian cooperation against the Axis powers,

the British government dispatched the Cripps Mission in 1942, offering post-war dominion status; however, this proposal was rejected by Indian leaders as a compromise that failed to address immediate independence. Frustrated by imperial intransigence, Mahatma Gandhi and the All India Congress Committee launched the historic Quit India Movement in August 1942, issuing the uncompromising directive of "Do or Die" to demand the immediate withdrawal of British power. The British administration responded with ruthless force, arresting the entire top tier of nationalist leadership overnight, banning political organisations, and unleashing severe military repression. Despite the arrest of its leaders, the movement transformed into a spontaneous, leaderless mass rebellion, characterised by widespread strikes, sabotage of transport and communication networks and the temporary establishment of parallel nationalist governments in regions like Satara, Ballia and Midnapore. Simultaneously, Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose provided a dramatic alternative vision for liberation by escaping house arrest and traveling to East Asia to organise the Indian National Army (INA) or Azad Hind Fauj. Partnering with local populations and Axis forces, Bose established the Provisional Government of Free India and marched toward India's northeastern frontier with the stirring battle cry "Chalo Delhi". Although the INA's military campaign was halted at Imphal and Kohima due to logistics and changing war fortunes, the subsequent public trials of INA officers at the Red Fort in 1945 sparked immense public outrage across religious lines. The trial triggered widespread sympathy, culminating in the Royal Indian Navy Revolt of February 1946 in Bombay, where Indian sailors mutinied against British officers. This naval rebellion, along with rising unrest in the army and air force, made it unmistakably clear to the war-weary British government that it could no longer rely on the armed forces to enforce colonial dominance over an awakened population.

Faced with severe domestic economic exhaustion, military unreliability and unrelenting civil unrest in India, the newly elected British Labour government under Prime Minister Clement Attlee determined that maintaining colonial control over the subcontinent was no longer viable. In 1946, the Cabinet Mission was dispatched to negotiate the terms of a peaceful transfer of power and formulate a constitutional framework for a united India. However, decades of colonial divide-and-rule strategies, coupled with intensifying political rivalries between the Indian National Congress and the All India Muslim League, led to an insurmountable deadlock over the distribution of power. The Muslim League's call for "Direct Action Day" in August 1946 triggered devastating communal violence in Bengal and Punjab, convincing leaders that a unified state was politically unfeasible without prolonged civil war. Consequently, Viceroy Lord Mountbatten presented the partition plan in June 1947, culminating in the passage of the Indian Independence Act by the British Parliament. At the stroke of midnight on August 15, 1947, India finally achieved its long-cherished independence, ending nearly two centuries of colonial subjugation as Jawaharlal Nehru delivered his historic "Tryst with Destiny" address. Yet, this triumph was accompanied by the profound tragedy of Partition, which divided the subcontinent into India and Pakistan, triggering one of the largest and most violent mass human migrations in recorded history.

Amidst this chaotic transition, the nation faced the monumental task of integrating over 500 semi-autonomous princely states into the national framework—a feat masterfully accomplished through the political firmness, diplomatic skill and vision of Deputy Prime Minister Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. To establish a durable sovereign architecture, the Constituent Assembly, guided by the drafting committee under the brilliant leadership of Dr BR Ambedkar, spent over two years meticulously framing the Constitution of India. Enacted on January 26, 1950, the Constitution declared India a sovereign democratic republic, guaranteeing fundamental rights, secular governance, social justice and universal adult suffrage to all citizens. Through decades of selfless sacrifice, diverse ideological movements and unwavering mass participation, India's freedom struggle not only dismantled a mighty empire but also laid the resilient democratic foundation for the mod-

Assam's role in the independence movement of India

By: Diganta Barooah

After the Treaty of Yandabu on 24th February, 1826, an Assamese named Gomdhar jumped into the first freedom movement. The Sepoy Mutiny of 1857 is known as the Indian Independence Struggle. On 24th February, 1826, a treaty was signed between the King of Burma and the British Commander-in-Chief. The treaty ended the most expensive war the British had ever completed. 15,000 British and Indian soldiers were killed in the Anglo-Burmese War. When they arrived at the village of Yandabu on the banks of the Iravati River, the Manas were forced to sign the treaty on the terms offered by the British forces and the Manas began to disappear. The British then went to war with Burma twice more and in 1885 annexed the whole of Burma.

The freedom struggle of Assam can be divided into four phases from 1828 to 1942. Kanaklata was a teenager at that time of Quit India Movement of 1942. On 8th August of that year, at a meeting in Bombay, Gandhiji announced the British proposal to leave India. As a result, on August 9, the British government arrested many prominent Congress leaders, including Gandhiji. There was a wave of agitation across the country. People of all religions participated extensively regardless of caste, religion or race in the historic Quit India Movement of 1942.

They stood up against the British. The British government arrested the leaders of the movement and all those who participated in that movement. Leaders and stalwarts of people in Assam also went to jail. Jyoti Prasad Agrawala took charge of the agitation in Tezpur at that time. Thousands of people joined. The British committed indescribable torture against the protesters and arrested them. At that time, the courts and police stations were the centers of political power. Therefore, it was decided to hoist the Congress flag at the court house and police station in Tezpur under the leadership of Jyoti Prasad Agrawal. A volunteer force was formed for this purpose. From that volunteer force, the Death Force, initiated with the mantra 'Korim baa Morim' (Do or Die) was formed. Eighteen-year-old Kanaklata Barua bravely joined the death force without anyone's objection. She was the first member of the death squad.

This movement took the form of a mass movement. After the British annexation of Assam as a result of the Treaty of Yandabu, the rebellion was launched by Gomdhar Konwar, Jiram Dulia Barua, etc. of Assam to regain the lost independence. They tried unsuccessfully to capture the capital Rangpur from the British and were imprisoned by the British.

Then the rebellion led by Pioli Phukan and Jiram Dulia Barua resurfaced. So in 1830, Pioli Phukan and Jiram Dulia Barua were hanged by the British Imperial Forces. In 1839, the Tsingfao revolted

and destroyed an arsenal of British troops and killed several officers. The British suppressed it with harsh hands and hanged Maniram Dewan and Pioli Phukan in Jorhat.

The British government increased land rents in an exploitative manner and launched a massive agitation in Assam. The uprising of Peasants in Assam was born in the year 1861 at Phulguri in Nagaon and in 1894 Peasant's uprising happened at Patharughat in Darang district. There were Peasant uprisings in Rangia, Nalbari and Bajali and about 140 peasants were killed and many others were injured for life in the Police firings at Patharughat in Darang district. 27 people were also killed and many injured in police firings during the peasant uprising in Rangia of Kamrup District.

It was during this period that the National Congress was formed in 1885 and Assam leaders too joined in the Congress. The peasants held meetings in various districts of Assam like Darang, Kamrup, Sivasagar, Lakhimpur etc. and protested against the injustices of the British for imposing high land revenue on the poor peasantry class of Assam. The trio of Karmabir Nabin Chandra Bordoloi, patriot Tarun Ram Phukan and Kuladhar Chaliha were the pillars of the Assam Congress at that time. Most of the Congress leaders of Assam spent most of the year of 1922 in jail along with Gandhiji and other leaders of the country. From 1922 onwards, the movement intensified. In 1930, the Congress and its volunteer force were formed. They were able to inspire the revolutionary consciousness of the people with their patriotic songs of Rupkonwar Jyoti Prasad Agrawala and Ambikagiri Raichoudhury. From 1930 to 1934, the British government arrested and fined more than 2,000 people in Assam.

In August 1942, the Congress widely promoted the Quit India Movement under the 'Korim baa Morim' (Do or Die) ideal. They arrested Maulana Taibullah, Bishnuram Medhi, Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed, Debeshwar Sarma, Gopinath Bordoloi, Siddhi Nath Sarma and most of the Congress leaders. They took the movement to the streets.

The victims were identified as 16-year-old teenager Kanaklata Barua and a young colleague Mukunda Kakati who were leading the procession while hoisting the tricolor flag at Gohpur police station in the undivided Darang district. On September 20 of the same year, more than 24 people were killed in police firings. Finally, on 15th of August 1947 - India gained its long cherished and much desired independence under its own flag as per the Constitution. Today, on the 80th Independence Day, we are able to stand proudly under our national flag because of the sacrifices of our forefathers and the able leadership of the leaders of that bygone era of our beloved nation.

JAI HIND!
VANDE MATARAM!

Why are new employees appointed from 2022 to 2026 not transferred in Haryana?

By: Dr Vijay Garg

The primary objective of the Haryana government's online transfer policy is to ensure transparency, equal opportunity, fairness and administrative efficiency in transfers. The online system was implemented to minimize the potential for arbitrary administrative discretion, favoritism and disparate treatment and to provide eligible employees with the opportunity to participate in the transfer process and submit their preferences under clear rules. However, the success of any policy is determined not simply by the formulation of rules but by their logical, consistent and fair implementation. In this context, the issue of employees appointed between 2022 and 2026 demands serious consideration.

The most important question is: when all teachers appointed during this period are required to participate in the mandatory online transfer process, why are employees appointed during the same period in other departments being left behind? If teachers can be included in the policy's mandatory participation, there must also be a clear, objective and rational basis for a separate arrangement for other eligible employees appointed during the same period. The demand here is not for an employee to be transferred to a location of their choice but for an equal opportunity to participate in the process if eligible, to exercise their options and to be considered according to the rules.

In this context, provisions such as the cut-off date of May 23, 2025, the "notional category" and the "first online transfer drive for each cadre" used in the 2026 Model Online Transfer Policy become important. To understand these provisions, it is necessary to examine the actual administrative history of the respective cadre. If a cadre is conducting its first online transfer drive in 2026, its situation may be different from that of a cadre that has been conducting online

transfer drives since 2017. Therefore, it is necessary to examine the actual policy history of all cadres before applying the same cut-off to all cadres.

The question of equality isn't limited to teachers and other departments. The situation of employees being allocated offline positions despite the implementation of an online transfer policy and the conduct of online transfer campaigns in some departments also warrants serious consideration. The example of Haryana's Animal Husbandry Department is significant in this context. The department has implemented an online transfer policy for the VLDA cadre since 2020 and two online transfer campaigns have already been conducted under it. According to departmental information, approximately 50 percent of VLDA cadre employees appointed after 2020 were allocated offline positions. If this figure is corroborated by departmental records, the government should clarify the basis for such widespread offline station allocation despite the already existing online transfer policy and campaigns.

The issue becomes even more serious when such employees' appointment letters or station allocation documents stipulate that they must participate in the next online transfer campaign. If the government itself stipulated that employees must participate in the next online transfer process when assigning them offline stations, then excluding the same employee from the online campaign based on a new interpretation or order later raises serious questions of administrative justice and legitimate expectation.

If an employee accepted such a condition and assumed charge at an offline station, it was a natural expectation that he or she would be required to participate in the next online transfer process. If the same employee is subsequently excluded from that process, it becomes not merely a matter of transfer but a question of policy consistency and administrative credibility. Clarity is essential between the

condition initially set by the government and its subsequent interpretation.

In particular, the status of employees who have previously participated in online transfer campaigns should be seriously considered. They followed the government's prescribed procedures, provided options and participated in the online system. If employees appointed between 2022 and 2026 are not compulsorily included in the current campaign, the choices and opportunities of employees who have already participated in the online process will certainly be affected. In such a situation, it is natural to question what significance their previous participation will have in the current process. Making an employee a part of the online system first and then limiting their options in the next process under the same system raises questions about policy consistency.

It should also be clarified that the right to transfer and the opportunity to participate in the transfer process are different things. Involving an employee in the online process, soliciting their options and considering their claim in accordance with regulations does not guarantee transfer to their preferred location. The final decision may be based on established criteria such as vacancies, eligibility, cadre status, priority and administrative exigencies. Therefore, including eligible employees in the process does not weaken administrative control but rather strengthens transparency.

This is where the Model Online Transfer Policy of 2026 comes into play. If this policy is intended to provide a model and uniform principles for online transfers, then its core principles—transparency, eligibility, equal opportunity, a process for granting options and a systematic decision—should apply to all employees in similar circumstances. If this is a policy specific to teachers, its limitations should be clear but if it is being presented as a comprehensive model, the rationale for excluding employees in similar circum-

stances in other departments should also be explained.

The government should make public the cadre-wise facts surrounding this entire matter. The number of online transfer drives conducted in each cadre since 2017, the years in which employees were given the opportunity to participate, the status of employees appointed between 2022 and 2026, which employees were assigned offline stations and whose appointment letters stipulated participation in the next online process—all these facts should be clearly disclosed. This will allow the dispute to be resolved on a factual basis rather than through emotional accusations.

The cut-off date of May 23, 2025, also needs to be clarified. The government should specify what constitutes the "first online transfer drive for each cadre" and the status of cadres that have consistently conducted online transfer drives since 2017. Similarly, the impact of the notional category on existing participants and new employees appointed between 2022 and 2026 should also be clarified.

Ultimately, this isn't just a cut-off date or a technical category dispute. The real question is one of equal opportunity, policy consistency and administrative justice. If all teachers appointed from 2022 to 2026 are required to participate in the mandatory online transfer process, the reason for excluding eligible employees from other departments during the same period must be clear. If online campaigns have been conducted twice in a department, yet employees are assigned offline stations and their appointment letters stipulate mandatory participation in the next online process, then excluding them from that process later is also reconsiderable.

The credibility of the online transfer policy can only be maintained if the rules do not vary by department, employee, or situation. The government should prioritise the spirit of the policy over technical interpretations, equal opportunity over



departmental differences and current eligibility over past involvement. Transfer is not a right to grant an employee a desired posting but providing eligible employees the opportunity to participate in a fair process is a fundamental principle of administrative justice.

Ultimately, the question is simple: when teachers appointed between 2022 and 2026 are being compulsorily included in the online transfer process, why not provide the same opportunity to other eligible employees appointed during the same period? When an employee's appointment letter stipulates that participation in the next online process is mandatory, why should they later be excluded from that process and when an online transfer policy is already in place in a department and campaigns have already been conducted under it, why not consider that department's entire policy history when determining employee status?

These questions require clear, written and reasoned answers. The true test of an online transfer policy is whether it is merely online or whether it is also truly equitable, transparent, timely and fair.

If deficiencies persist in the interpretation and implementation of the Model Online Transfer Policy, instead of achieving the policy's objective, disputes may escalate and matters may reach the courts. Varying interpretations across departments, ambiguity regarding eligible employees, inconsistent treatment of old and new appointments and contradictions between online and offline allocations increase the likelihood of judicial disputes. This impacts administrative time and resources, and employees face prolonged

uncertainty and psychological distress.

Therefore, the need is not to repeatedly launch new online transfer drives but to establish a clear, foolproof, and truly model policy. Eligibility, cut-offs, notional categories, prior online participation, the status of employees with offline stations, and employees appointed between 2022 and 2026 should be clarified for all departments and cadres. Where necessary, conditions contained in old orders and appointment letters should also be honored. Once the rules are clear, the entire process should be completed in a timely manner, so that employees can focus on their work without the fear, uncertainty, and constant news of transfer drives.

The objective of the Model Online Transfer Policy should not only be to accept online applications but also to create a fair system that provides equal opportunity to eligible employees, considers their preferences in accordance with the rules, protects administrative needs and completes the entire process in a timely manner. Only then will employees be able to receive new stations according to their eligibility and prescribed standards and they will be relieved of the mental stress caused by frequently changing interpretations and incomplete transfer processes.

After all, a good policy provides solutions rather than creating conflict, builds trust rather than increasing uncertainty, and allows employees to work with peace of mind rather than being constantly burdened by the transfer process. This is the true test of an online transfer policy—is it merely online, or is it also truly equitable, transparent, timely, and fair?

AAU Jorhat Recruitment 2026 – 33 Posts @ KVKs, Online Apply

Name of Post	Senior Scientist & Head, Subject Matter Specialist, Farm Manager, Programme Assistant, Assistant, Stenographer, Driver, and Supporting Staff
No of Posts	33 posts
Qualification	Graduate/ Post Graduate/ Matriculation, etc
Age Limit	Varies with post
Application Fee	₹1000/- (₹ 500/- for reserved categories)
Start Date	27th July 2026
Last Date	26th August 2026.

AAU Jorhat Recruitment 2026

Assam Agricultural University (AAU), Jorhat has released an employment notification for the recruitment of 33 Senior Scientist & Head, Subject Matter Specialist, Farm Manager, Programme Assistant, Assistant, Stenographer, Driver, and Supporting Staff posts under Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVKs) of Assam Agricultural University. Interested and eligible candidates may check this article for detailed official notification, educational qualification, age limit, salary structure and application procedure to be followed.

Last date of submission of online application for these posts is 26th August 2026.

AAU Jorhat Recruitment Details

1. Senior Scientist & Head
No of posts: 03 posts
Pay: Level-13A
Essential Qualification: Doctoral degree in the relevant field of Agriculture/Animal Science/Fisheries/Community Science/Horticulture/Sericulture with 8 years' experience (excluding the period spent obtaining the Ph.D.) as Scientist/Lecturer/Extension Specialist or an equivalent position in Pay Band 3 (Rs. 15,600-39,100) with grade pay of Rs. 5,400/6,000/7,000/8,000 (6th CPC), with contributions to research/teaching/extension education evidenced by published work/innovations and impact.

Desirable: Specialization in implementing extension education programmes.

2. Subject Matter Specialist (SMS)
No of posts: 14 posts
Pay: Level-10
Essential Qualification: Master's degree in Agriculture/Animal Science/Fisheries Science from a recognized University.

3. Farm Manager
No of posts: 04 posts
Pay: Level-6
Essential Qualification: Bachelor's Degree in Agriculture/Animal Science/Fishery Science/Horticulture/Sericulture from a recognized University.

4. Programme Assistant (Lab Technician)/ Programme Assistant (Computer)
No of posts: 02 posts
Pay: Level-6
Essential Qualification:
Lab Technician: Bachelor's Degree in Agriculture/Animal Science/Fishery Science/Community Science/Horticulture/Sericulture from a recognized University.
Computer: Bachelor's Degree in Computer Science/Computer Application/ IT from a recognized University.

5. Assistant
No of posts: 04 posts
Pay: Level-6
Essential Qualification: Bachelor's Degree in any subject from a recognized University with 5 years' work experience in Accounts and establishment.

6. Stenographer Grade-III
No of posts: 01 post
Pay: Level-4
Essential Qualification: Bachelor's degree from a recognized University with working knowledge of computer (minimum 6-month Diploma in Computer Application). Candidates must also clear a dictation test in English at 80 w.p.m. for 10 minutes and transcribe it on computer within 50 minutes.

7. Driver
No of posts: 02 posts
Pay: Level-3
Essential Qualification: Passed HSLC or equivalent examination from a recognized board. Must have driving license for both heavy and light vehicles (subject to a practical skill test) and two years' driving experience.
Desirable: one-year trade certificate from ITI and experience in motor mechanic work.

8. Supporting Staff Grade-I
No of posts: 03 posts
Pay: Level-1
Essential Qualification: Matriculation or equivalent pass or ITI pass.
Other Criteria of AAU Jorhat Recruitment

Residency: The candidates who are permanent residents of Assam should only apply except Post 1.

Age Limit: Post-wise age limit is as mentioned below.

Post	Upper Age Limit (as on 01.01.2026)
Senior Scientist-cum-Head	47 years
Subject Matter Specialist, Programme Assistant (Lab. Technician), Programme Assistant (Computer), Farm Manager	38 years
Assistant, Stenographer Grade-III, Driver, Supporting Staff	40 years

Age Relaxation: Age relaxation for reserved categories will be as per the norms of Govt. of Assam. There is no upper age limit for in-service candidates of AAU.

Application Fee: Category-wise application fee is as under.

Category	Application Fee
UR/OBC	Rs. 1000/-
SC/ST/PWD	Rs. 500/-

Fee can be paid online mode only.

How to Apply for AAU Jorhat Recruitment ?

Interested and eligible candidates may apply online for these vacancy through online mode by visiting official AAU Jorhat Portal. Candidates may follow below mentioned steps to apply.

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

Important Dates of AAU Jorhat Non-Teaching Posts Recruitment 2026

- Starting date of submission of online application: 27th July 2026
- Last date of submission of online application: 26th August 2026

Dima Hasao Judiciary Recruitment 2026 – 2 Peon Vacancy

Name of Post	Peon
No of Posts	2 posts
Qualification	Class VIII passed
Age Limit	18 to 40 years
Application Fee	N/A
Start Date	11th August 2026
Last Date	26th August 2026

Dima Hasao Judiciary Recruitment 2026

District & Sessions Judge, Dima Hasao, Haflong has released a recruitment notification for the recruitment of 2 Peon Vacancy in the establishment of District & Sessions Judge, Dima Hasao. Minimum educational qualification for these posts is Class VIII passed.

Interested and eligible candidates may check this article for detailed official notification, educational qualification, age limit, salary details, and application procedure to be followed and apply in offline mode latest by 26th August 2026.

Vacancy Details

Name of post: Peon
No of posts: 2 posts (1 post is for Bunglow Peon)
Category-wise vacancy details:
UR: 1
SC: 1
Pay: Pay Band: ₹12,000 – ₹52,000, Grade Pay: ₹3,900
Name of organisation: District & Sessions Judge, Dima Hasao, Haflong
Mode of application: Offline
Eligibility Criteria
Citizenship: Candidates must be an Indian Citizen as defined in the Article 55 of the Constitution of India.

Employment Exchange Registration: Candidates should have a valid Registration of Employment Exchange of Assam.

Age Limit: The age of the candidate should be between 18 to 40 years as on 1st January 2026.

Age Relaxation: Upper age limit is relaxation as per existing Government guidelines for reserved category candidates.

Educational Qualification: Minimum educational qualification is Class VIII passed. HSSLC passed or above qualified candidates are not eligible.

How to Apply Dima Hasao Judiciary Recruitment ?

Applications in Standard Form with self attested copies of testimonials regarding qualification, age, caste, Employment Exchange Registration Card etc. alongwith 3 (Three) copies of recent passport size photographs duly signed by the candidate on the reverse side should reach the following address on or before 26th August 2026 during office hours.

District & Sessions Judge,
Dima Hasao, Haflong,
PO & PS: Haflong,
Pin: 788819.

• Name of the post applied for should be prominently indicate on the top of the envelope containing the application.

• Candidate should also provide email address and mobile number in the application, without fail.

• Candidates may also submit their applications by dropping them in the drop box kept in the District Court Building at Jatinga on all working days between 10 AM and 5 PM.

Important Dates

- Starting date of submission of application: 11th August 2026
- Last date of submission of application: 26th August 2026

NHM Recruitment 2026 – 2204 Staff Nurse Posts, Online Apply

National Health Mission (NHM), Assam has released an advertisement for the recruitment of 2204 Staff Nurse Posts under National Health Mission (NHM), Assam for engagement on contractual basis. Interested and eligible candidates may check this article for detailed official notification, educational qualification, age limit, and application procedure to be followed.

It is an excellent opportunity for candidates looking for Nurse Jobs in Assam, Staff Nurse Jobs in Assam, Nursing Career in Assam, etc.

NHM Assam Recruitment Details

Name of post: Staff Nurse
No of posts: 2204 posts
Nature of engagement: Contractual
Name of organisation: National Health Mission (NHM), Assam
Educational Qualification: Candidates must be B. Sc. Nursing/ GNM Course passed from any nursing school / institution recognized by Indian Nursing Council and registered with "Assam Nurses' Midwives' and Health Visitors' Council".
Experience: Not mentioned.
Pay: Rs. 20,000/- per month

Age Limit

Age Limit: Candidates age must be up to 40 years as on 01st January 2026. The age limit of the candidates will be calculated on the basis of the Matriculation/ HSLC Admit Card or Pass Certificate issued by a recognized Board/ Council and no other document shall be accepted in lieu of the mentioned documents.

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

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

Application Fee: No fee is required to be paid .

NHM Assam Zone-wise Details of Districts

Candidates may submitted Zone wise preferences of districts as per details mentioned below.

Zone	Districts
Barak Valley	Cachar, Hailakandi, Sribhum (Karimganj)
Central Assam	Morigaon, Nagaon, Hojai
Lower Assam	Bajali, Baksa, Barpeta, Bongaigaon, Chirang, Dhubri, Goalpara, Nalbari, Kamrup(M), Kamrup, Kokrajhar, South Salmara, Tamulpur
North Assam	Biswanath, Darrang, Sonitpur, Udalguri
Upper Assam	Charaideo, Dhemaji, Dibrugarh, Golaghat, Jorhat, Lakhimpur, Majuli, Sivasagar, Tinsukia

How to Apply for NHM Assam Recruitment?

Interested and eligible candidates may apply through online mode by visiting the NHM Assam's official website <https://nhm.assam.gov.in>. Candidates may fill up their online application by following below mentioned steps.

- Scroll down, go to Important Web-Links section.
- Click on the "Online Application Form".
- A new webpage will be opened.
- Select your desired post and fill all personal and educational details and upload necessary documents.
- Next submit the application form.
- At the end, take a print out of the application form.

Important Dates of NHM Assam Vacancy 2026

- Starting date of submission of online application: 1st August 2026, 3 PM
- Last date of submission of online application: 15th August 2026, 11:59 PM

The US and South Korean militaries are to start their annual large-scale drills Monday

North Korea slams US-South Korea military drills, threatens to exercise self-defence

SEOUL, Aug 14: North Korea on Friday threatened to exercise its right to self-defence in a statement that slammed the upcoming US-South Korean military drills as a war rehearsal that would be more provocative than last year.

The US and South Korean militaries are to start their annual large-scale drills Monday and have described the scope of this year's training as similar to past years.

The allies have said the Ulchi Freedom Shield exercises are meant to strengthen their readiness against North Korean threats and reiterated that they are defensive in nature.

The North Korean warning signals the country could conduct more weapons tests in coming days after its neighbors detected two ballistic missile launches off North Korea's east coast in the past week.

North Korea hasn't commented on the launches, but outside ex-



perts assess they were likely meant to protest the US-South Korean drills or upgrade weapons systems.

In a statement carried by state media Friday, North Korea's Foreign Ministry called the US-South Korean training "a rehearsal for an aggressive war" that is triggering a different level of instability in the region.

"It is our consistent principle of ensuring security to respond to a new level of a threat with a new level of a deterrent," the statement said. North Korea "will more clearly express its stance on the enemies to cope with any threats and challenges through the responsible and decisive exercise of the right to legitimate self-defence."

North Korea also said the drills would be of a "more serious provocative nature and dangerousness than last year" and involve all the military assets and war-fighting modes of the US and South Korea, a claim that those countries haven't said.

Analysts say North Korea has often used its adversaries' military drills as a pretext to ramp up weapons testing activities to expand its nuclear and missile arsenals and promote public support of leader Kim Jong Un.

Kim has ignored the US and South Korea's offers to resume diplomacy and focused on taking steps to bolster his nuclear arsenal since his summitry with US President Donald Trump broke down in 2019.

Experts say Kim will likely eventually aim to use his advancing nuclear program to win greater US concessions such as extensive sanctions relief. (AP)

UK launches new 24-week asylum appeals target for faster deportations

LONDON, Aug 14: Immigrants with no right to be in Britain will be deported faster as a new 24-week target on asylum appeal decisions is enforced, the UK Home Office said on Friday.

Starting this week, the First-tier Tribunal will be expected to hear new asylum and immigration appeals from non-detained foreign national offenders (FNOs) and individuals in receipt of asylum support and accommodation within 24 weeks. This is intended to speed up the removal of those whose asylum appeal is unsuccessful, cutting costs by freeing up space in British taxpayer-funded accommodation and generating savings of an estimated 6.9 billion pounds.

"For too long, asylum and immigration appeals have been plagued by delays, leaving taxpayers to foot the bill while cases drag on for months and sometimes years," said Anna Turley, UK Minister for Border Security and Asylum.

"This new 24-week target will see cases resolved faster, reduce reliance on taxpayer-funded ac-



commodation and speed up the removal of those with no right to be in the UK," she said.

According to the latest Home Office estimates from the past year, Indians have the lowest grant rate of just 1 per cent in the UK's asylum ranking, which is led by nationals of Sudan (93 per cent) and Eritrea (87 per cent).

The new 24-week target will apply to asylum appeal cases submitted to the First-tier Tribunal from August 12. Currently, the average wait time for a case to be de-

cided by a judge is 67 weeks.

As official estimates indicate over 150,000 appeals are still waiting to be heard, the Home Office admitted that wider reform is needed to ensure the system can deal with cases more quickly and "prevent it from becoming a barrier to removal".

The issue of housing an ever-increasing flow of asylum seekers is among the most serious issues facing the British government, with Prime Minister Andy Burnham pledging a "fairer" system. (PTI)

Heavy rain causes flooding near Tokyo that kills at least 5 and strands travellers



TOKYO, Aug 14: Record-breaking rainfall that pounded cities east of Tokyo overnight flooded roads and dozens of homes, stranded thousands of people, caused power outages and left at least five people dead and one missing. The Japan Meteorological Agency downgraded its most severe warning for heavy rain in more than a dozen municipalities in Chiba prefecture as rain subsided Friday morning but forecast more rain later in the day.

Photos and television footage showed widespread damage after daylight, with

homes, cars and parts of railway tracks flooded with muddy water.

The Ground Self-Defense Force said it dispatched buses to pick up about 4,000 stranded people who stayed overnight at the Soga train station, a local route that also serves Tokyo Disney, an operation finished later Friday. The theme park did not report any damage.

Thousands of people who were stuck overnight at the Narita airport serving the Tokyo region gradually left as train service partially resumed Friday morning with delays.

Flights in and out of Narita were operating normally Friday, with many people returning home at the end of Japan's Bon Buddhist holiday week.

Hundreds of people took shelter overnight at the Chiba prefectural government building.

The prefecture said five people were found dead and another person was missing. The victims included a man found floating on a flooded road in Ichikawa city and a woman who had been stuck in a flooded car in Sakura city. Two people were presumed dead after being pulled from flooded cars in Kashiwa city and in Chiba.

More than 170 homes were flooded in the prefecture and more than 300 people were taking shelter at public facilities as of Friday afternoon, Chiba officials said.

The torrential rain and flooding also knocked out power to about 18,000 homes Friday morning, down from 68,000 earlier, according to the TEPCO Power Grid.

Record-breaking rainfall of 11.5 centimetres (4.5 inches) fell in just one hour in Chiba City and 9.7 centimetres (3.8 inches) fell in one hour in Sakura, which was also a record. JMA forecast official Takuya Hosomi told a televised emergency news conference that unprecedented levels of rainfall were recorded. (AP)

Indian-origin man pleads guilty to accessing child sexual abuse material, faces 20 years in jail

WASHINGTON, Aug 14: An Indian-origin man has pleaded guilty in a federal court in New Jersey to accessing child sexual exploitation material involving a prepubescent minor, the Department of Justice said in a statement.

Abhishek Vijayakumar, a resident of Hasbrouck Heights in New Jersey, knowingly accessed the illicit material in March 2024, it said.

Investigators found more than 200 images, including one depicting the sexual abuse of a three-year-old child by an adult male, while reviewing his electronic devices. Assistant Attorney General A. Tysen Duva of the Justice Department's Criminal Division said the guilty plea entered Wednesday was another step forward in the continued fight against child sexual exploitation.

"The FBI will continue its relentless quest to identify and stop those who abuse and exploit children," said Special Agent in Charge Stefanie Roddy of the FBI's Newark Field Office.

Roddy said the guilty plea was a bitter-sweet victory as it acknowledged the victimisation of the children depicted in the material possessed by Vijayakumar. (PTI)

Russian drones kill woman, 9-year-old son at home as Ukrainian civilian casualties rise

KYIV, Aug 14: Russian jet-powered drones struck a home in northern Ukraine on Friday, killing a 29-year-old woman and her 9-year-old son, officials said.

The strike came a day after the United Nations said July was the deadliest month for Ukrainian civilians since the weeks following Moscow's all-out invasion of its neighbour more than four years ago.

At least 437 civilians were killed and 2,610 wounded last month, the UN monitoring mission in Kyiv said, as Russia escalated its bombing of Ukrainian towns and cities.

Overall, since Russia's invasion on Feb 24, 2022, UN human rights monitors say the war has killed at least 16,874 civilians, including 820 children, and wounded 51,273 injured, including 3,126 children.

"Every month this year the number of killed and injured civilians has increased. That trend accelerated sharply in July," said Danielle Bell, head of the UN human rights monitoring mission in Kyiv.

"The number of civilian casualties in July was the highest we documented in a single month since March 2022."

The Russian strike in northern Ukraine's Sumy region early Friday also wounded four other people, including the dead boy's father and grandmother, who were hospitalized with severe burns, the regional military administration chief Oleh Hryhorov said.

In Ukraine's eastern Donetsk region, a Russian glide bomb demolished six floors of a 10-story apartment block, killing one person and wounding 16 others, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said.

Russia is launching around 220 glide bombs every day against settlements near the front line in eastern and southern Ukraine, Zelenskyy said in a social media post Friday.

Russian forces crush settlements with the brute force of 3,000-pound (1,300-km) glide bombs, artillery, missiles and drones, then send in infantry units to attack the exposed defenders. The tactic has rendered many towns and villages uninhabitable.

In all, Russia attacked 12 Ukrainian regions overnight,

wounding dozens of people, Zelenskyy said.

Ukrainian forces, meanwhile, extended their long-range strike campaign against Russian infrastructure, hitting the port of Ust-Luga in the Leningrad region north of Moscow and starting a brief fire, its governor Alexander Drozdenko said.

Ust-Luga is one of Russia's largest oil and gas export terminals located more than 800 km from Ukraine.

It has been a frequent target of Ukrainian drone attacks this summer, as Kyiv seeks to undermine Russian oil exports that provide Moscow with vital revenue for its war effort.

Ukraine also launched another attack on the premises of Wildberries, Russia's biggest online retailer, which Kyiv says helps supply the Russian military.

The attack damaged a wall of a Wildberries warehouse in the Tver region north of Moscow, the region's acting governor Vitaly Korolyov said.

Wildberries reported "insignificant damage" and said the goods stored at the site were not damaged.

The Russian Defence Ministry said Friday its air defences overnight intercepted 553 Ukrainian drones over 18 Russian regions, as well as occupied Crimea and the waters of the Azov and the Black seas.

NATO fighter jets shot down a drone that entered Latvian airspace in the early hours of Friday, the Latvian army and an official for the military alliance said.

Latvian authorities did not say what the origin of the drone was but said it had entered Latvia "as a result of Russian electromagnetic warfare".

Several drones have previously crossed the border into Latvia. Most of them are thought to be Ukrainian drones that strayed off course due to Russian electronic jamming.

Two Italian Eurofighter jets were scrambled to tackle the drone and one of them shot it down, NATO spokesperson Allison Hart said.

Two Turkish fighter jets were also deployed, she said.

Residents in five municipalities in eastern Latvia were warned about the threat to airspace and told to take shelter. (AP)

Another Taliban official killed in attack in Afghanistan as takeover anniversary nears

KABUL, Aug 14: The mayor for Afghanistan's northeastern Badakhshan province has been killed in an explosion, officials said, the second high-ranking official of the Taliban administration to be the target of deadly attacks in the region in the past two weeks.

Habib Ur Rahman Mansoor was killed in the blast in the provincial capital of Faizabad late on Thursday while he was in his vehicle, the Interior Ministry said, without providing further details on the attack.

A senior official on Friday also confirmed the killing, which comes as the Taliban prepare to mark the fifth anniversary of their sweeping back to power on Aug 15, 2021, following the withdrawal of US and other NATO forces.

The official spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorised to speak publicly on the incident.

Two weeks ago, a pair of gunmen shot and killed Zabihullah Amiri, Badakhshan's director of information and culture, as he headed from a local district to Faizabad. His security guards im-

mediately opened fire on the attackers, killing one and capturing the other, officials said.

There was no information on the motive for the attacks.

Targeted killings of high-ranking Taliban officials have been rare but not unknown since the Taliban seized power.

In December 2024, the country's refugee minister, Khalil Haqqani, was killed in a suicide bombing in the capital Kabul. Haqqani was the uncle of Interior Minister Sirajuddin Haqqani, who leads a powerful network within the Taliban.

In June 2023, a car bomb in Faizabad killed Badakhshan's deputy governor, Nisar Ahmad Ahmadi, as well as his driver.

A regional affiliate of the Islamic State group, known as the Islamic State in Khorasan Province, claimed responsibility for the attack, as well as a suicide bombing that struck a memorial service for the deputy governor days later, killing at least 13 people.

In March 2023, the governor of the northern province of Balkh was killed in a bomb attack on the governor's office. (AP)

Nigel Farage beats Count Binface in widely mocked election

LONDON, Aug 14: Nigel Farage beat trash-can-wearing comic candidate Count Binface on Friday, regaining a seat in Parliament he quit a month ago to trigger the widely mocked special election.

Farage, leader of the anti-immigration Reform UK party who some see as a possible next prime minister, abruptly quit his seat in July amid an investigation into whether he failed to report a 5 million pound (USD 6.7 million) gift from a crypto billionaire overseas.

He said he would run for the open seat to prove he had voters' support, and regain it with 63 per cent of the vote. Binface, who finished in second, won about 27 per cent. The election, held on the hottest day of the year so far, had a turnout of 44 per cent.

Binface, a serial candidate who has challenged prime ministers past and present, became the default challenger in a field of 34 candidates after the major parties boycotted the campaign as a political stunt by Farage. Farage declared victory in the early morning and did not attend the official declaration where he would have had to stand alongside the other candidates, many of them running joke campaigns.

Farage said he didn't attend because police told him about an "organised campaign to disrupt and degrade the result." A spokesperson for Reform said there was a "credible threat" against him, though police disputed that.

"We have a proportionate and robust policing operation to ensure the safety and security of all participants in the count," an Essex police spokesperson said.

Binface ran on a wacky platform that included a

vow to "cut your taxes, and raise everyone else's," build one affordable home and nationalise singer Adele. The victory by Farage showed his strong support in the Clacton area on the east coast of England, but it doesn't ensure he'll be able to keep the seat.

An investigation by a parliamentary watchdog that was suspended when he stepped down is likely to resume and could still lead to Farage being forced out of parliament to face yet another election.

Parliament's standards watchdog is investigating an undeclared donation to Farage in 2024 from Christopher Harborne, a Thailand-based cryptocurrency billionaire. Farage says he didn't need to declare the money because it was a personal gift he used to fund his security and came before he was elected.

However, newly elected lawmakers must declare gifts worth more than 300 pounds (USD 400) received in the previous year if they are related to political activities. When he stood down on July 7, he described the scrutiny as an "establishment hit job" and a media-driven "witch-hunt."

Farage, who was a major player in getting Britain to vote to leave the European Union a decade ago, has had strong polling nationally, though his numbers have slipped during months of scrutiny of his finances.

Farage's gambit to resign and run again backfired when other parties refused to play ball, and he was left facing a massive field of independent and small-party candidates, including novelty acts such as Howling Laud Hope of The Official Monster Raving Loony Party and Marcus White from the Everyone is God Party. (AP)

Trump orders Navy to return to older system of launching jets off aircraft carriers

WASHINGTON, Aug 14: President Donald Trump is ordering the US Navy to remove the advanced system used to launch fighter jets from its newest type of aircraft carrier and return to using older steam catapults that he has long said he prefers, according to a directive issued Thursday. The new mandate would likely cost billions of dollars and revert the Navy's most advanced ships to a system that takes more sailors to operate and is more difficult to maintain.

The memo directs the Pentagon and the Navy to present Trump with plans to remove the Electromagnetic Aircraft Launch System, also known as EMALS, within two months. It also says the Ford-class carrier's electromagnetic weapons elevators should be replaced.

The move comes after years of Trump railing against the new, magnetically powered catapult system that shoots fighter jets off the deck of the carriers. It also comes at a time when the US military is trying to find funding from Congress for all its desired equipment and as the Navy is struggling to fill its ships with enough sailors.

Trump's ire with the new technology goes back to at least 2017 in his first term, when he claimed the new system is "not good" and

"doesn't have the power" of the older, steam systems in an interview with Time magazine. "You're going to goddamned steam," Trump said at the time. The topic has frequently come up since then at rallies and other events.

While Trump is looking to roll back the latest technology, the newest Chinese aircraft carriers employ electromagnetic catapults and France said it plans to use the system on its new carrier. Trump's memo directs the fourth Ford-class carrier, the USS Doris Miller, to be the first ship to include the new changes. That will leave the USS Gerald R. Ford, as well as the forthcoming USS John F. Kennedy and USS Enterprise, untouched.

However, redesigning an already finalized ship for such a major system change will not be an easy task. General Atomics, the company that makes EMALS, told The Associated Press in an email that the decision not to proceed with the system on the USS Doris Miller "warrants careful reconsideration."

Trump's memo that mandates the removal of the system also noted that one of the issues facing shipbuilding is the Navy's constant design changes, "which have resulted in cost growth, delays, and cancellations." (AP)

US special forces ready to step up combat drills in Philippines

MANILA, Aug 14: American special operations forces are ready to step up warfighting-readiness exercises with counterparts in the Philippines and other countries in Asia to further strengthen a security alliance and help deter a major conflict in the region, a US military official said Thursday.

Adm Frank Bradley, commander of the US Special Operations Command, is in the Philippines after a trip to South Korea. He will then head to Japan for talks with military officials.

He is the latest American military top brass to visit key Asian allies in recent weeks to reassure them of Washington's commitment to the region given the US preoccupation with the war in Iran.

Bradley's command, which has about 80,000 personnel and is based at MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa, Florida, undertakes the US military's most sensitive and dangerous covert operations. The majority of his forces are deployed in more than 80 coun-



tries worldwide, Bradley said.

He discussed with Filipino counterparts the Philippine military's continuing effort to modernise, intensify combat exercises with the US and other allies and broaden an arc of security alliances to deter China's increasingly hostile actions in the South China Sea.

China and smaller rival claimant states, including the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei and Taiwan, have been locked in tense territorial

standoffs for decades in the disputed waters but confrontations have particularly flared between Chinese and Philippine forces.

Washington has repeatedly warned of its obligation to defend the Philippines, its oldest treaty ally in Asia, if Filipino forces come under an armed attack.

A cohesive alliance of countries, which each invest in their defense and regularly stage joint combat-readiness drill to brace for contingencies, was the best deterrent against a major conflict, Bradley said.

"The best way to deter conflict is by being able to demonstrate convincingly to any adversary who may want to start a conflict that they won't be able to win it," Bradley told The Associated Press in Manila late Thursday.

"Where we have strong alliance structures... conflict has not come to it," he said. "Together, we are stronger, and together, we can prevent

those conflicts from coming to us."

Large-scale combat exercises between US and Filipino forces have involved more allies and friendly nations such as Japan, Australia, Canada and France in recent years and have focused on the Philippines' territorial defence in the South China Sea. US Special Forces commandos have participated in those annual combat drills, as well as smaller warfighting exercises with Filipino counterparts in western Philippine provinces facing the South China Sea and in the northernmost island province of Batanes, which lies near Taiwan.

US Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth first disclosed a plan to stage joint US-Philippine special forces operations training in Batanes when he visited Manila last year and said the Trump administration would work with allies to ramp up deterrence against threats across the world, including China's aggression in the South China Sea. (AP)

Indefinite bandh in Arunachal Pradesh's Lekang over recruitment eligibility rules

ITANAGAR, Aug 14: An indefinite bandh called by community-based organisations, students' unions, and NGOs in Lekang circle of Arunachal Pradesh's Namsai district began on Friday morning to protest the state cabinet's recent decision on uniform eligibility criteria for government recruitment.

The shutdown, which commenced at 5 am, disrupted normal life as protesters enforced road blockades at key entry points, including Banka Bridge, Bordumsa Gate, and Dirak Gate.

The new framework makes permanent residence, Arunachal Pradesh Scheduled Tribe (APST), or indigenous status, along with proficiency in at least one indigenous tribal language, mandatory for applicants.

The Arunachal Pradesh Public Service Commission (APPS) and the Arunachal Pradesh Staff Selection Board (APSSB) have been directed to integrate these provisions into upcoming recruitment cycles for direct recruitment to Group A,



B, and C posts. Protesting leaders contended that the policy threatens the livelihood of genuine non-APST residents who hold valid domicile and resident certificates.

Horojit Morang, a representative of the agitating organisations, criticised the cabinet's decision as 'unconstitutional' and cautioned that opening the state's existing reservation framework to legal scrutiny could have adverse consequences.

Citing the Supreme Court's landmark 1992 ruling in the Indra

Sawhney v. Union of India case, Morang warned that judicial intervention could jeopardise the state's existing reservation quotas.

"If tomorrow somebody files a PIL and the reservation is struck down or reduced to 50:50, the unions and organisations which demanded such changes will have to take responsibility," he said, adding that the administration and the All Arunachal Pradesh Students' Union (AAPSU) were aware of the potential legal ramifications.

Under the state's existing 80:20 reservation arrangement, 80 per cent of vacancies are earmarked for APST candidates, while 20 per cent are allocated for non-APST aspirants.

Bandh enforcers expressed apprehension that scrapping this arrangement would render domicile-holding candidates from Lekang circle, many of whom are indigenous inhabitants possessing historical land survey records dating back to 1968, ineligible for state jobs.

Before launching the strike, the protesting bodies submitted a memorandum to Chief Minister Pema Khandu on August 12.

The representation urged the state government and the Joint High-Powered Committee to review historical records and domicile status before finalising the policy, ensuring that genuine domicile or resident certificate holders of Lekang are not excluded from public employment opportunities. (PTI)

Khandu remembers Partition victims, urges people to learn from history

ITANAGAR, Aug 14: Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu on Friday remembered the millions who suffered during the Partition of India, paying tributes to those who lost their lives and honouring the courage of people who rebuilt their lives after being uprooted from their homes.

On 'Partition Horrors Remembrance Day', Khandu said the nation must never forget the immense suffering caused by Partition and must ensure that such a tragedy is never repeated.

"We remember the millions who endured unimaginable suffering, displacement and loss during the Partition of 1947," Khandu said in a social media post.

"We pay tribute to those who lost their lives, honour the courage of those who rebuilt their lives from nothing, and remember the painful lessons of our history," the chief minister said.

Khandu stressed the importance of remembering the tragic events and drawing lessons from them for the future.

"May we never forget. May we



never repeat," he said. Deputy Chief Minister Chowna Mein also remembered the victims of Partition and said the tragedy remains one of the most painful chapters in the country's history.

"Today, we bow our heads in solemn remembrance of the countless lives lost, families torn apart, and the deep scars left by the Partition of 1947, a tragedy that remains one of the most painful chapters in our history," Mein said in a social media post. He said remembering the stories of those who lived through Partition should strengthen the country's commitment to peace,

unity and compassion.

"As we remember their stories, let us reaffirm our commitment to peace, unity, and compassion," Mein said. The deputy chief minister added that the legacy of the people who endured Partition should continue to guide society towards a more humane and harmonious future.

On 'Partition Horrors Remembrance Day', observed on August 14, sufferings caused by the Partition of India in 1947 is remembered as millions of people were displaced and families were separated amid widespread violence. (PTI)

Security tightened across Nagaland ahead of Independence Day



KOHHIMA, Aug 14: Security has been intensified across Nagaland ahead of Independence Day celebrations, police said on Friday.

Speaking to PTI, Additional DGP (Law and Order) Sandeep M Tamgadge said the security situation is under control and expressed confidence that the celebrations would pass off peacefully without any untoward incidents.

On the call by the Naga Students' Federation (NSF) and its constituent organisations to boy-

cott the celebrations over 'Vande Mataram' being made mandatory, Tamgadge said the appeals were voluntary.

The NSF reiterated its opposition to the singing of 'Vande Mataram' during the August 15 celebrations.

NSF president Mteisuding told reporters that the federation was not opposed to national symbols but objected to 'Vande Mataram', saying it conflicted with faith and beliefs.

He said the NSF had decided, with the consent of its members, to boycott the celebrations in protest against the revised instructions issued by the Centre.

The federation had accordingly advised student communities across Nagaland not to participate in the August 15 programmes, he said. The NSF's stand came as Nagas observed their 80th Independence Day on Friday, a day ahead of India's Independence Day. The federation reiterated its long-standing position on the Naga political issue and called for unity among Naga political groups.

Tamgadge said police had not received any official complaint of anyone being forcibly prevented from attending Independence Day celebrations.

"If there is any such complaint, action will be initiated," he said.

Stressing that Independence Day was a national event, he appealed to all sections of society to participate in the celebrations. (PTI)

Sikkim: Guv, CM lead 'Tiranga Yatra' in Gangtok

GANGTOK, Aug 14: Governor Om Prakash Mathur and Chief Minister Prem Singh Tamang led a 'Tiranga Padayatra' in Gangtok on Friday.

Carrying the national flag and raising patriotic slogans, State cabinet ministers, MLAs, government and police officers and students joined the march, which began at MG Marg and concluded near Manan Kendra.

At Manan Kendra, the State Culture, Home, and Information and Public Relations departments jointly organised a programme featuring a documentary on the Partition.

Addressing the gathering, Governor Mathur described 'Vande Mataram' as a song that embodies the consciousness of the nation and the spirit of patriotism.

"Today reminds us of the integrity and unity of our country. While 150 years of 'Vande Mataram' remind us of the energy of the mantra that inspired the freedom struggle, 'Vibhajan Vibhishika Smriti Diwas' reminds us of a painful chapter of history and inspires us to preserve peace and harmony," he said.

Mathur said the programme was not merely a commemoration but an opportunity to remember the legacy of the freedom struggle, patriotism and national unity that shaped the country.

Mathur said the national flag was inseparable from India's freedom struggle and represented both pride and responsibility. (PTI)

Partition divided Zo-Chin people, triggered one of largest mass migrations: Mizoram Guv

AIZAWL, Aug 14: Mizoram Governor Vijay Kumar Singh on Friday said the Partition of India in 1947 not only triggered one of the largest mass migrations in history but also divided the Zo-Chin people across newly created political boundaries.

Addressing a Partition Horrors Remembrance Day programme organised by the state Art and Culture Department at Vanapa Hall here, Singh said the division of the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) resulted in a large number of Zo-Chin people being separated from one another.

The ethnic Zo community, also known as the Chin-Kuki-Mizo groups, comprises several tribes that share close cultural and ethnic ties. They are spread across northeastern India, the CHT in Bangladesh and Chin State in Myanmar.

Describing Partition as one of the most painful chapters in India's history, the governor said millions of people were forced to leave behind their homes and properties, while families and communities were torn apart and countless lives were lost.

An estimated 10 to 14 million people were compelled to migrate during Partition, Singh said, adding that the boundaries were drawn in



haste, leaving "deep and permanent scars" on people and communities.

"Today is not an occasion to reopen old wounds or to assign blame. Rather, it is a day to remember the victims, honour their resilience and draw enduring lessons from history so that such a tragedy is never permitted to recur in our nation," Singh said.

The governor urged schoolchildren to remember that India is one nation and its people share a common national identity.

He said the country could achieve greater progress if its people remained united while setting aside their differences. (PTI)

Manipur CM appeals for peaceful, harmonious existence

IMPHAL, Aug 14: Manipur Chief Minister Y Khemchand Singh on Friday appealed to the people of the state to promote peaceful and harmonious coexistence, saying the pain caused by any crisis is the same for everyone.

Speaking at a Partition Horrors Remembrance Day programme here, Singh said the Partition of 1947 resulted in the loss of countless lives and widespread destruction of property.

He said those who survived the tragedy and reached India rebuilt their lives, adding that the day serves as a reminder to look forward rather than dwell on the past.

Singh said he was deeply touched to hear the concerns of a group of internally displaced persons (IDPs) from an area bordering Churachandpur district, who said they could return to their homes

only during the daytime as they lacked the confidence to stay there overnight.

"The pain felt by the people due to any crisis is the same," he said.

Singh reiterated his appeal to the people of the state to promote peaceful and harmonious coexistence. Governor Ajay Kumar Bhalla said the Partition of 1947 was not merely a territorial division but a human tragedy.

"There are moments in the nation's history that are marked by celebrations. There are others that call upon us to pause, remember and reflect," he said.

Bhalla also said the government of India declared August 14, 1947 as Partition Horror Remembrance Day in 2021 to show that the sufferings, sacrifice and displacement endured during Partition would remain part of our national memory. (PTI)

Facts surrounding Tripura DGP's death to be known shortly, says police officer

AGARTALA, Aug 14: The facts surrounding the death of Tripura DGP Anurag Dhanekar will be known 'very shortly,' with investigators exploring technical inputs and scientific evidence to crack the case, a police officer who heads the probe team said on Friday.

Dhanekar, who had led the CBI probe into the alleged Rs 13,000-crore Punjab National Bank fraud involving diamondaire Nirav Modi and the reinvestigation into the 1984 anti-Sikh riots, was found hanging in the washroom attached to his chamber at the state police headquarters here on July 20. Four days after the incident, the state government constituted a three-member team headed by West Tripura district SP Namit Pathak. Later, it was expanded to a ten-member team amid demands for a judicial probe by opposition parties.

Agartala, the capital of Tripura, also serves as the administrative headquarters of the West Tripura district.

"The probe into the DGP Anurag Dhanekar is going on. We are leaving no stone unturned to crack the case. The special team is exploring technical inputs and scientific investigation. The facts surrounding the case will be known very shortly," Pathak told reporters.

He added that the police will take strong action if anyone is found involved in the incident. Pathak said a foolproof security arrangement has been put in place in West Tripura district to ensure peaceful celebrations of Independence Day.

"The police and other security agencies -TSR, CRPF, CISF, BSF and Assam Rifles- are working closely to ensure foolproof security in the entire district for the Independence Day celebrations," he said. Pathak said joint patrolling is being carried out along the border areas while security has been beefed up at the airport, railway stations and bus stops to thwart any untoward incident. (PTI)

Nagaland church council opposes move to make singing of 'Vande Mataram' mandatory



KOHHIMA, Aug 14: A council of churches in Nagaland said it would oppose any directive or practice that seeks to make the singing of 'Vande Mataram' compulsory, particularly for those belonging to the Christian community, asserting that "patriotism must never be reduced to compulsory conformity".

In a statement, Nagaland Baptist Church Council general secretary Rev Dr Mar Pongener and secretary for social concern Dr Villo Naleo on Thursday said it fully respects India's national symbols, patriotic sentiments and constitutional values. However, it maintained that matters involving faith, religious conviction, conscience and identity require sensitivity and respect.

The church body said India's constitutional framework is founded on liberty, equality, pluralism and freedom of conscience, arguing that national unity should not be equated with uniformity.

"Patriotism must never be reduced to compulsory conformity," the church council said, emphasising that a citizen's love for the nation cannot be measured solely by participation in a prescribed patriotic expression.

It also stressed that India's diversity of faiths, cultures, languages, traditions and convictions is a defining feature of the country, and urged the state and public institutions to exercise restraint and sensitivity when national symbols or practices carry different meanings for different

communities.

The church council appealed to all stakeholders to remain peaceful and cautioned against hostility, intimidation, confrontation and actions that could deepen social or communal divisions.

According to the Nagaland Baptist Church Council, coercion may result in "outward compliance but cannot create genuine loyalty, conviction or a sense of belonging".

It called for dialogue, mutual understanding, accommodation and respect for conscientious objection.

The council appealed to the government and its authorities, educational institutions, student organisations, churches, civil society groups and the wider public to approach the issue with "wisdom, restraint and constitutional sensitivity."

In a first for Independence Day celebrations, 'Vande Mataram' will be rendered at the Red Fort complex in New Delhi during the 79th anniversary of the historic occasion on August 15, followed by the recitation of the National Anthem at the grand event.

The mega function is set to commemorate 150 years of the enduring legacy of the National Song, 'Vande Mataram', and "celebrate the energy, aspirations and pivotal contribution of 'Yuva Shakti' in driving India's journey towards Viksit Bharat by 2047", the defence ministry said on Thursday. (PTI)

No.DPRD/BTC/15th FC-Tied-IX/TMP-12/2026/ Dated Kokrajhar the 7th August 2026

PRESS NOTICE

The Director, P&RD, BTC, Kokrajhar invites bids for work "Const. of Solar Powered Standalone DW facility with Odex System at Patkijuli (Activity Code-128526761) " under the award of 15th FC (Tied Grant) for the year 2025-26 during 2026-27, for A/A amount of **Rs.26,50,000/-** (Rupees twenty six lakh fifty thousand) only from the registered contractors of Class-II (A,B & C) category of Assam PWD (Roads)/ (Building)/PHED, BTC.

Details may be seen at website <http://assamtenders.gov.in> and also at the Office of the undersigned during office hours.

Sd/-Director,
Panchayat& Rural Development,
BTC, Kokrajhar

IPR(BTC)/C/2026-27/1221

No.DPRD/BTC/15th FC-Tied-IX/TMP-11/2026/ Dated Kokrajhar the 7th August 2026

PRESS NOTICE

The Director, P&RD, BTC, Kokrajhar invites bids for work "Const. of Solar Powered Standalone DW facility with Odex System at Nonke Darranga (Activity Code-128526278) under the award of 15th FC (Tied Grant) for the year 2025-26 during 2026-27, for A/A amount of **Rs.26,50,000/-** (Rupees twenty six lakh fifty thousand) only from the registered contractors of Class-II (A, B & C) category of Assam PWD (Roads)/ (Building)/PHED, BTC.

Details may be seen at website <http://assamtenders.gov.in> and also at the Office of the undersigned during office hours.

Sd/-Director,
Panchayat& Rural Development,
BTC, Kokrajhar

IPR(BTC)/C/2026-27/1219

NO.SCDB/15th FC-504/PM/2020-21/18

SHORT NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Dated: 4/08/2026

Sealed tender affixing a non refundable court fee stamp of Rs. 8.25 (Rupees eight & twenty five paise) only with a validity period of 180 days, which will subsequently be to be converted and drawn up in the printed F-2 form are invited from the registered contractors of Class -II (ABC), Class- II and Class- III category of Assam PWD (Roads & Building), according to their eligibility for submitting tenders for the works under 15th FC (Tied & untied Grant) for the year 2025-26 during 2026-27 as stated below. The tenders will be received by the undersigned up to 1.30 PM on 27/08/2026 and will be opened on the same date & place at 2.P.M.

SL No.	Name of works	Estimate Amount	Tender Value	Time of completion
1	Const. of HP Culvert at Satipur Silpota Sasanghat (Activity Code:128442285).	Rs. 10,00,000/-	Rs. 10,00,000/-	3 month
2	Const of RCC Culvert at Tangabari (Activity Code:128442436).	Rs. 10,00,000/-	Rs. 10,00,000/-	3 month
3	Const. of Box Culvert at Hatidhura village (Activity Code:128431242).	Rs. 10,00,000/-	Rs. 10,00,000/-	3 month
4	Const. of Box Culvert near Ashok house at Bengtol Kunguri (Activity Code:128436342).	Rs. 10,00,000/-	Rs. 10,00,000/-	3 month
5	Const. of Box Culvert near Hogom house at BK Noyapara village (Activity Code:128436351).	Rs. 10,00,000/-	Rs. 10,00,000/-	3 month
6	Const. of Box Culvert at Memorambari village (Activity Code:128436323).	Rs. 10,00,000/-	Rs. 10,00,000/-	3 month
7	Const. of Box Culvert at Bashbari Garjasali (Activity Code:128431115).	Rs. 9,00,000/-	Rs. 9,00,000/-	3 month
8	Const. of Box Culvert near Fishery tank at Ranipur village (Activity Code:128436350).	Rs. 10,00,000/-	Rs. 10,00,000/-	3 month
9	Const. of Box Culvert at No.2 Salbari Middle village (Activity Code:128436337).	Rs. 9,00,000/-	Rs. 9,00,000/-	3 month
10	Const. of Box Culvert at Khagrabari village (Activity Code:128436317).	Rs. 10,40,000/-	Rs. 10,40,000/-	3 month
11	Const. of Box Culvert at No. 1 Balapara near Aoujhar house (Activity Code:128436331).	Rs. 10,00,000/-	Rs. 10,00,000/-	3 month
12	Const. of Community Toilet at Balajhar (Activity Code:128531830).	Rs. 17.85,833/-	Rs. 17.85,833/-	3 month
13	Const. of Community Toilet at Ranipur village (Activity Code:128531870).	Rs. 17.85,833/-	Rs. 17.85,833/-	3 month

Details NIT may be seen in all working days during office hours in the office of the undersigned. Tender papers will be issued to the contractors or their authorized representatives from 4/08/2026 to 27/08/2026 in the office of the undersigned on payment of .03% cost of tender paper in the form of demand draft from any Nationalized Bank duly pledged in favour of the Principal Secretary, BTC, Kokrajhar, Payable at Kokrajhar.

IPR(BTC)/C/2026-27/1273

Sd/-Block Dev. Officer,
Sidli-Chirang Dev. Block,Sidli

'All Hindu villages were forcibly given to Bangladesh'

Had Modi been PM in 1947, no damage would have been done: Adityanath

LUCKNOW, Aug 14: Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Friday blamed the Congress for Partition and asserted that had Narendra Modi been the prime minister of India then, there would have been no damage to the nation.

He also said that if a person like Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel were the prime minister at that time, nobody would have been able to disintegrate India.

Speaking at a function in Lucknow to mark the horrors of the 1947 Partition, Adityanath held the Congress "truly responsible for the Partition" and subsequent massacre.

"Had Narendra Modi been the prime minister of India at the time of Independence, nobody would have been able to damage India in the slightest," he said.

"If a person like Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel were the prime minister at that time, nobody would have been able to disintegrate India ... The country had to pay a heavy price for the cowardice of these Congress members - a character you all witnessed during the CAA protests," he added.

The BJP leader also alleged that in 1947,



Pakistan got the share of land which it never even asked for.

Sindh was a Hindu-dominated and Sindh-dominated area, which was forcibly handed over to Pakistan; similarly, Punjab-dominated Punjab was handed over, he claimed.

"Bengal was Bengali-dominated. All Hindu villages were forcibly given to Bangladesh. This shameful act was committed by the Congress, which was extra-ter-

restrial power and treating the country as its personal property and a family legacy. He also said that the country became a "slave" due to infighting and caste, region, and language divisions.

"When such infighting exists, then conspiracy easily creeps in," he said. Adityanath said India continues to pay for the mistakes of Partition in the form of terrorism, Naxalism, Maoism, and extremism.

He also sought to discredit Congress's contributions to the freedom struggle. "This also draws our attention to the silence we have all maintained regarding that pre-1947 conspiracy. Yet, even today, these people move before society, acting as if they were the ones who created India, and that without them, India would not have come into existence. It is a truly strange situation," he said, as he termed Partition the "darkest chapter of humanity."

"Every institution in the country came to bear the name of that very clan. Every single institution was named after that clan, and we all stood by silently, merely watching. What are they doing even today? What are their actions like now?" he said about Congress. (PTI)

NEET paper leak case: Delhi court allows CBI's plea seeking further probe



NEW DELHI, Aug 14: A Delhi court on Friday allowed the CBI's plea seeking further investigation in the NEET paper leak case.

The agency's prosecutor told the court that fresh digital evidence has emerged and the Central Forensic Science Laboratory (CFSL) reports have revealed some crucial aspects, necessitating a deeper look into the case.

The prosecutor said the CBI needs to investigate the involvement of individuals not yet listed as accused and asserted that the 13 accused have no locus standi to oppose the application. Special Judge Ajay Gupta permitted the agency to conduct further probe.

Counsel for some accused had opposed the plea. The court had taken cognisance of the CBI's charge sheet on August 12, saying there is "overwhelming incriminating material" to prima facie suggest that the 13 accused, including subject experts PV Kulkarni (Chemistry), Manisha Sanjay Havaldar (Physics) and Manisha Gurunath Mandhare (Biology) formed a syndicate to leak and circulate the question paper for illegal monetary gain.

The National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (Undergraduate) or NEET-UG is conducted by the NTA for medical aspirants. (PTI)

Centre avoided discussion during Monsoon Session: Congress



SHIMLA, Aug 14: The Congress on Friday attacked the central government, saying it was not the opposition that was running away from discussion during Parliament's Monsoon Session, rather the government was avoiding the opposition's questions.

The party's national spokesperson Kuldeep Rathore said that the opposition plays a crucial role in a democracy and has fulfilled its responsibility. He claimed that the attitude of the prime minister and the home minister regarding their presence in Parliament this time raises questions.

Despite being present in the Parliament complex, the home minister simply sat in his office and left, avoiding responses to important issues in the House, he alleged.

Rathore, who is also the former state Congress chief, said that the opposition wanted answers from the home minister in Parliament regarding events such as the students' protest at Delhi's Jantar Mantar and the alleged lathi-charge. He alleged that the government feared the opposition would raise these issues in the House, making it difficult for the government to provide answers.

"While the opposition typically questions the government in a democracy, the situation this time saw the ruling party itself protesting against the opposition," he said and described this as a sign of the government's "nervousness".

Holding the ruling party responsible for the disruption of parliamentary proceedings, he said that the onus of running the House lies with the government and it should have taken the opposition into confidence and facilitated discussions on important issues.

He alleged that agreeing to a discussion only when the session neared its end was merely a political gimmick and resulted in a waste of public money.

Rathore supported Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's stance regarding the student agitation and the alleged lathi-charge. He said that the government should have answered to the people of the country regarding the use of force in Delhi. He also alleged that attempts were made to vitiate the atmosphere in order to discredit the protest. (PTI)

Mayawati slams 'purification' of Kharage speech site in Haldwani, calls for police action

LUCKNOW, Aug 14: BSP chief Mayawati on Friday condemned the alleged "purification" of a stage in Haldwani after Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, a Dalit, addressed a gathering there, and called it condemnable and deeply concerning.

The former Uttar Pradesh chief minister also demanded that the state government take action against the casteist and feudal elements responsible for the act.

"The nation was appraised of this incident yesterday through Parliament. This matter is highly condemnable and deeply concerning," she said on X.

The alleged "purification" took place at Ramila Maidan in Uttarakhand where Kharge had made a speech on August 8.

In the Rajya Sabha, the Congress president claimed that people associated with the BJP carried out the "purification" and demanded that they be booked under the Untouchability Act and jailed.

Union Minister J P Nadda also condemned the act, he said. (PTI)

Rahul Gandhi's arrogance turning into madness: BJP

NEW DELHI, Aug 14: The BJP on Friday slammed Congress leader Rahul Gandhi for his remarks on Prime Minister Narendra Modi's handling of foreign policy, saying it seems his "arrogance" is now turning into "madness".

"The nation must decide whether what Rahul Gandhi has done is merely the childish antics of a frustrated, deranged and envious person consumed by jealousy towards Modi, or the nefarious act of an individual serving as an instrument in a systematic conspiracy orchestrated by forces across the border," BJP spokesperson Sudhanshu Trivedi told reporters here.

The Congress and Gandhi have emerged as a "challenge" to the country's "healthy democracy", he charged.

This came a day after Gandhi referred to the BJP-RSS as a "bunch of jokers" who have no understanding of India and scoffed at Prime Minister Narendra Modi's



handling of foreign policy which he claimed was all about hugging leaders.

Speaking at the Rachnatmak Congress National Convention here on Thursday, he also said it has somehow been ingrained in Modi's mind that foreign policy is about hugging leaders.

Gandhi then hugged Rachnatmak Congress chief Sandeep Dikshit in a bid to demonstrate what the current government's foreign policy was about.

"Imagine the ignorance..."

where did he get the idea that foreign policy was about hugging leaders?" he said.

Dikshit then asked Gandhi, "Ek cheez poochh sakta hoon? Meloni samajh ke toh nahi pakda tha?"

Gandhi responded by saying, "I have not reached there yet." Trivedi condemned Gandhi's remarks, terming them "rude and indecent".

"What Rahul Gandhi has said makes it evident that his arrogance is now turning into madness. He appears to be losing his mental balance," the BJP Rajya Sabha MP said, when asked.

Use of such "rude, indecent and condemnable language" by Gandhi shows he is probably crossing "all kinds of extremes out of frustration" now, Trivedi charged.

"Until now, it seemed that he was competing with Maoist and Muslim League leaders. Now it seems he is competing with the comedians who make reels of abuses and profanity," the BJP leader added. (PTI)

Build bridges of trust, don't repeat mistakes of past: JK LG to youth

SRINAGAR, Aug 14: Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Friday urged the youth of the Union Territory to learn from the painful memories of Partition, reject enmity and communal bitterness, and ensure that the mistakes of the past are never repeated.

Addressing a gathering at Tagore Hall here during the observance of 'Partition Horrors Remembrance Day', Sinha said Partition was not merely a chapter of history but a living memory of millions of families, and called upon the youth to "build bridges of trust".

"The youth of Jammu Kashmir must ensure that the mistakes of the past are never repeated in the future. Where walls were once raised, you must build bridges of trust and construct a Viksit Bharat that is inclusive," he said.

The event was marked by collective remembrance and a reaffirmation of national unity.

Sinha paid heartfelt tribute to citizens who endured unimaginable suffering during the Partition of 1947, saying their sacrifices continued to inspire generations.

He said the wound of Partition continued to exist as a pain in the collective consciousness of every Indian.

"Decades after the partition, their sac-

rice reminds us that the wound remains unhealed, lingering as a generational pain in India's collective soul. On Partition Horrors Remembrance Day, we are not merely recalling the past but we are giving voice to those millions whose voices were taken away from them. I wish to reiterate with firm resolve that we will not allow their pain to be buried in the dust of history," he said.

Remembering those who suffered during Partition was a duty towards humanity, he said, stressing the need to preserve their memories with "complete truthfulness, honesty, and utmost sensitivity".

"I believe that their stories are an indelible chapter of our national consciousness, and their sacrifice will forever remain alive in the soul of Mother India," Sinha said. The LG urged the people of JK to treat the occasion as a day of introspection and national resolve, and called upon youth, farmers, workers and women to rise with courage and determination and turn the pace of time towards progress and harmony.

He said people who rebuilt their lives after Partition with courage and resilience had enriched India's social fabric and cultural heritage with their historic traditions and values.

"Today's occasion is an opportunity to acknowledge the pain of the past and strengthen our unwavering commitment to peace, harmony and national unity. This day reminds us that only the lessons of history can make the future secure and humane," he said.

Sinha noted that Partition divided families and displaced communities from Pakistan-occupied Jammu Kashmir and Chhamb. He also paid tribute to those who faced decades-long discrimination within the Union Territory due to Article 370, saying Prime Minister Narendra Modi ended their suffering and granted them equal rights like any other citizen of the country.

The LG also paid tribute to countless families who sacrificed during the tribal invasion in the months following Partition.

"Within a few months of partition, enemies of the nation carried out terror attack under the cover of tribal invasions. Indian army and people fought bravely. The struggle and sacrifice of countless families are an integral part of the collective memory of Jammu Kashmir. Today, I humbly pay tribute to the patience, hard work, and unbroken patriotism of all those families," he said. (PTI)

Kashmiri Pandits' security in Valley must not be overlooked: Omar

SRINAGAR, Aug 14: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Friday said those responsible for security in Jammu and Kashmir should not take the terror threats to Kashmiri Pandit workers in the Valley lightly.

"We have been hearing time and again that militancy has ended (in J-K), that now no one (terrorist) is left. But then this threat (comes), so where is this threat from? And those who are responsible for security arrangements, they should not take these threats lightly," Abdullah told reporters here.

He called for action against those behind the reported threats, and called for full security arrangements for the Kashmiri Pandits working in the valley.

"One or two years ago, targeted killings happened, particularly against the minority community. How many names should I take of those who were targeted? Even many employees were preparing to flee from here. They were kept in their camps after being almost arrested. Gates were locked. (PTI)

Adityanath slams Shivpal's remark on making Azam Home Minister if SP wins 2027 polls

LUCKNOW, Aug 14: Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Friday took a jibe at senior Samajwadi Party leader Shivpal Yadav's recent comment that "if voted to power, Azam Khan would be made the Home Minister".

"Today, the Samajwadi Party speaks for the very person (Azam Khan) who sought to establish a university named after an individual (apparently referring to Mohammad Ali Jauhar) responsible for opposing the country's independence and for the Partition of India. They even declare that if they come to power, they will appoint him as Home Minister. Of course, they know he will not actually assume office, but look at the shameful nature of their mindset -- they want to incite riots all over again," Adityanath said.

The chief minister was speaking at a function organised in Lucknow to mark the horrors of the Partition.

On Wednesday, senior Samajwadi Party leader Shivpal Yadav said the jailed former UP minister Azam Khan will be made the Home Minister if the SP forms the government in the state in the 2027 UP Assembly elections.

Yadav met Azam Khan and his younger son Abdullah Azam Khan at the district jail in Rampur for an hour, and he met his wife



at the jailed leader's residence.

He later visited Jauhar University with Azam Khan's elder son, Aadeb Azam Khan, and addressed a press conference there. Yadav said Mohammad Jauhar University would be one of the party's issues in the 2027 Uttar Pradesh Assembly elections.

Yadav said officials responsible for action against Azam Khan and the university would be punished when the Samajwadi Party returns to power in Uttar Pradesh.

Yadav had alleged that the government had registered "false cases" against Azam Khan and his family and said he had come to Rampur to stand by the university. (PTI)

BJP protests absence of women ministers in Karnataka Cabinet

BENGALURU, Aug 14: BJP legislators on Friday staged a protest inside the Vidhana Soudha premises over the absence of women ministers in the recently expanded D K Shivakumar Cabinet.

Calling the ruling Congress "anti-women", they raised slogans against the state government.

State BJP president B Y Vijayendra led the protest. He was joined by Leader of Opposition in the Karnataka Legislative Assembly R Ashoka, Leader of Opposition in the Legislative Council Chalavadi Narayanaswamy and other legislators, including women.

The BJP legislators gathered near the Nada Devi Bhuvaneswari statue at the entrance to the Vidhana Soudha premises and later marched towards the building.

Launching a strong attack on the Congress government, Vijayendra said women constitute 50 per cent of the population and should be given equal opportunities and ade-

quate representation.

He claimed that the Narendra Modi-led government at the Centre took steps to provide 33 per cent reservation for women, which the Congress and Rahul Gandhi opposed.

"But in Karnataka, the Congress government itself is insulting the women's community by denying them representation," Vijayendra alleged.

He said dropping a woman minister's name after announcing her proposed induction into the Cabinet was "insulting".

Vijayendra said there were reports that a woman would be inducted into the Cabinet, but her name was later dropped.

He recalled that Karnataka was the land of Basavanna, the 12th-century social reformer, and the birthplace of Akka Mahadevi, the 12th-century social reformer and poet.

"Such a state should have set an example for the entire country. But

it is extremely unfortunate that, for the first time in the state's history, the Legislative Assembly session is being held without a single woman minister in the Cabinet," he alleged.

He said the BJP strongly condemned the Congress government for "insulting" the women of Karnataka by denying them representation.

Ashoka criticised the government, alleging that it had "betrayed women" by not giving even a single woman a place in the Cabinet.

"For the first time in the history of Karnataka, the Cabinet has been formed without giving priority to women. We strongly condemn the stance of the anti-women Congress government, which does not grant rights and due respect to women," he claimed in a post on X.

Shivakumar was sworn in as CM along with 13 ministers on June 3, following Siddaramaiah's resignation on May 28. (PTI)

Harsimrat Badal thanks PM Modi, Shah for extending support in difficult time

CHANDIGARH, Aug 14: Shiromani Akali Dal leader and MP Harsimrat Kaur Badal on Friday thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah for extending their support in this "difficult time" for her family following the attack on her husband and SAD chief Sukhbir Singh Badal in Nanded.

Both Modi and Shah had enquired about the condition of Sukhbir Badal following the attack on him inside a gurdwara on the outskirts of Maharashtra's Nanded town on Thursday.

Sukhbir Badal was rushed to a private hospital in the city, where he is currently undergoing treatment.

"Truly grateful, Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri @narendramodi ji for your personal call to inquire about Sardar Sukhbir Singh Badal ji's health and for your good wishes for his speedy recovery following the dastardly attack on him



inside a Gurudwara Sahib in Nanded, Maharashtra.

"Your concern, support and wishes during this difficult time mean a lot to all of us in the family, our party and to the people of Punjab. I am deeply touched by your kind gesture. I am also grateful to you for taking immediate cognisance of the incident and directing

central investigating agencies to coordinate with Maharashtra police in the probe," Harsimrat Kaur posted on X.

Thanking Shah, Harsimrat, in another post, wrote, "I sincerely thank Hon'ble Union Home Minister Shri @AmitShah ji for reaching out to me to inquire about Sukhbir Singh Badal ji's health

following the attack on him inside a Gurudwara in Maharashtra."

"I am grateful for your personal concern and for your words of reassurance during this difficult time. Thank you for your commitment to ensuring an effective probe into this painful incident which is a grave violation of the fundamental tenets of the great Sikh religion," she said in her post.

While referring to the attack on the party chief, senior SAD leader and former Minister Daljit Singh Cheema said the party's "Punjab Bachao" rallies will be held as scheduled. Cheema said "nothing can dent the courage and determination of the party to keep speaking and fighting for Panth, Punjab and Punjabis".

He said, "all conspiracies to sabotage the unprecedented resurgence of the party will be defeated with the grace of Akal Purakh, the great Guru Sahiban and sangat". (PTI)

Delhi govt trying to make national capital most dynamic urban economy of India: CM Rekha Gupta



NEW DELHI, Aug 14: Chief Minister Rekha Gupta said on Friday that her government is trying to make the National Capital the most dynamic urban economy in the country.

Speaking at the Bhartiya Vyapar Mahotsav held at Bharat Mandapam here, she said the country is growing fast, and Delhi also needs to keep pace as its growth engine. Highlighting trade and business as strong bases for the Viksit Bharat vision, she said India, earlier considered a consumer economy, is now recognised as a trusted manufacturing hub and a reliable global supply chain.

She said the clear vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and policy changes implemented after 2014 underpin this change.

The chief minister said India's expanding network of free trade agreements has allowed domestic businesses and industrialists to expand their reach in international markets. Now, instead of mere economic growth, the talk is about economic transformation through a digital push, she said.

Before 2014, there were just 100 start-ups in the country; that number has now grown to over 2.5 lakh. Technology has completely transformed, Gupta said, citing examples like the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) and Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT), which have grown exponentially over the years. (PTI)

Three shooters of Tillyu gang arrested, two pistols and 11 cartridges recovered

NEW DELHI, Aug 14: The Delhi Police Special Cell has arrested three alleged shooters from the Tillyu Tajpur-Kaushal Chaudhary-Gurvinder Baba gang and recovered two semi-automatic pistols and 11 live cartridges, averting suspected extortion attempts, an officer said on Friday.

Police identified the accused as Hemant alias Monu (33), Nayan Aggarwal (25) and Durgesh Rai alias Devil (22), all residents of Delhi. The officer said the accused were arrested after more than 10 days of surveillance and developing human intelligence regarding active gang members operating in Delhi-NCR. Hemant and Aggarwal were apprehended near a district park in Paschim Vihar on August 2 following a tip-off, while Durgesh was arrested on August 8, the officer said.

Police recovered a semi-automatic pistol and eight live cartridges from Hemant and Aggarwal, and subsequently recovered another pistol and three cartridges. (PTI)

Uttarakhand: 7 dead in Chamoli tunnel tragedy, search on for 3 missing

CM visited Pipalkoti on Friday and reviewed the relief and rescue operations

GOPIESHWAR, Aug 14: Specialist rescue teams on Friday raced against time to reach the three people who went missing after debris and water entered a tunnel under construction at a hydroelectric project site in Uttarakhand's Chamoli district, killing seven people.

Twenty-two people were trapped inside the three-kilometre tunnel when the water rushed in around 7 pm on Thursday, according to District Disaster Management Officer N K Joshi.

The incident occurred at the Tehri Hydro Development Corporation's (THDC) Vishnugad-Pipalkoti hydroelectric project in Mayapur (Pipalkoti), when landslides and subsidence caused debris and water to fill half of the tunnel, trapping the workers inside.

A report released by the State Emergency Operations Centre on



Friday said 19 workers were pulled out of the tunnel during the relief and rescue operation that continued throughout Thursday night. Of these, seven people were dead, and 12 others were injured.

A search is underway for the remaining three workers, whom authorities suspect are trapped 1.8 kilometres inside the tunnel. Authorities have deployed machines to remove debris and pump out

Mukesh Singh, a resident of Chamoli; Durga Sharma, Vijay Hansda and Jitendra Kumar, residents of Uttar Pradesh; and Lokeshwar and Bhuneshwar, residents of Chhattisgarh.

The missing persons have been identified as Lucas Topno, a resident of Jharkhand, and Chetan Poyam and Devnath, residents of Chhattisgarh.

According to the report, the injured, Sunil Dewan, Harbil Gudiya, Kamda, Nirshtar Bhingra, Vinod Rawna, Dina Bagra, Khela Ram Bisra, Subeg Singh, Tilakraj and Pen Singh, are being treated at the district hospital in Gopeshwar.

Among them, Harbil Gudiya, Kamda, Nirshtar Bhingra, Vinod Rawna, Dina Bagra and Khela Ram Bisra are from Jharkhand; Subeg Singh is from Punjab; Tilakraj is from Himachal Pradesh and Sunil Dewan and Pen Singh are from Chhattisgarh. (PTI)

Cong leader Venugopal seeks more Onam special trains to Kerala

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, Aug 14: AICC general secretary K C Venugopal on Friday urged Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw to operate more special trains to Kerala during the Onam season, saying the services announced so far were inadequate.

Venugopal, chairman of the Public Accounts Committee, held discussions with Vaishnaw and sought additional trains from Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Hyderabad and Bengaluru to major railway stations in Kerala on August 23 and 24, according to a statement. He said seats on regular trains from major cities to Kerala had already been booked, with even waitlisted tickets unavailable on several services.

This was causing difficulties for workers, students and families living outside the state to return home for harvest festival Onam, resulting in severe travel hardships, he said. Venugopal said he had raised the issue with the Union Railway Ministry on several occasions and also submitted a letter to the minister seeking urgent action in view of the difficulties faced by passengers. (PTI)

China-linked cyber fraud syndicate busted in Delhi, four arrested

NEW DELHI, Aug 14: The Delhi Police has busted a China-linked cyber fraud syndicate allegedly involved in supplying mule bank accounts to foreign fraudsters and arrested four people, including an account supplier, an agent and an account holder, an official said on Friday.

The accused were arrested from Haryana and Uttar Pradesh during an investigation into a cyber fraud in which a man was allegedly duped of ₹ 12 lakh after being lured with a work-from-home job, police said.

The arrested accused have been identified as Geetam Singh (29), Dhruv (21), Anuj Sharma (27) and Gagan Yadav (26), a senior police officer said. The cyber fraud syndicate was allegedly involved in supplying mule bank accounts to foreign fraudsters operating work-from-home task-based scams, the official said.

According to the police, the victim was initially asked to deposit security money for completing online tasks and was promised attractive returns. When he tried to

withdraw his purported earnings, the fraudsters allegedly demanded additional payments on various pretexts, resulting in a loss of ₹ 12 lakh.

An e-FIR was registered on July 17 and further investigation was launched. During the investigation, the police analysed communications and found that the IDs used by the fraudsters were linked to IP addresses geolocated to China, the officer said.

Analysis of the money trail showed that part of the cheated amount was transferred to a bank account belonging to Yadav, which had been provided to the victim by the foreign fraudsters.

"Technical surveillance led police to Singh, who admitted to supplying mule accounts to China-based cyber fraudsters and converting proceeds of cyber fraud into USDT, a cryptocurrency, in exchange for commission," said the police officer.

The police said chats recovered from Singh's mobile phone showed communication with China-based fraudsters. He dis-

closed that the account had been arranged through Dhruv.

A subsequent raid in Ghaziabad led to Dhruv's arrest and recovery of nine bank passbooks, five SIM cards and a register containing records of commissions received for supplying bank accounts.

Dhruv told police that Sharma had assisted Yadav in opening the bank account and arranging the SIM card linked to it. Sharma was subsequently arrested in Noida, and a mobile phone containing chats related to commission payments was recovered, the police said.

Yadav was later arrested from Etawah in Uttar Pradesh. He allegedly admitted receiving commission for providing his bank account to the syndicate.

The police said the accused facilitated the operation by procuring mule accounts, arranging SIM cards, routing and layering the cheated money and converting the proceeds into cryptocurrency to conceal the money trail. Further investigation is underway to identify other members. (PTI)

Two injured as portion of chawl collapses in Thane



THANE, Aug 14: Two persons were injured after a portion of a room in a 25-year-old chawl collapsed on them in Maharashtra's Thane city in the wee hours of Friday, civic officials said.

The incident occurred around 2.45 am at Ramchandra Nagar Chawl in the Brahmand area of Manpada, said Yasin Tadv, chief of the Regional Disaster Management Cell (RDMC) of the Thane Municipal Corporation (TMC).

A portion of one of the rooms in the chawl collapsed, and the ground beneath the structure also caved in, he said. Two residents sustained injuries to their legs, the official said, adding that nine residents of the chawl were advised to temporarily relocate, as the remaining portion of the structure was deemed dangerous. (PTI)

CJP to launch its 'School Thik Karo' campaign from Dipke's village in Hingoli

CHHATRAPATI SAMBHAJINAGAR, Aug 14: The Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) will launch its 'School Thik Karo' campaign, aimed at improving infrastructure and accountability in rural government schools, from its founder Abhijeet Dipke's village in Hingoli district of Maharashtra on the Independence Day.

The campaign will be launched from Santuk Pimpri village at 7.30 am, an official release said on Friday.

Talking to reporters here after returning from Delhi, Dipke said, "I will commence the 'School Thik Karo' campaign in my village and request the sarpanch there to repair the local government school and make sure that the school has the basic amenities like benches and drinking water."

"We have formed teams who will visit villages and request people and sarpanchs to take steps to improve the condition of schools, because we want to get this done with everyone's participation," he added.

When asked about a Tiranga Yatra rally organised here in presence of Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis, Dipke said, "Such rallies should take place on the occasion of our Independence Day. But attention should also be given to education because we have been getting videos that show girls complaining that they have to walk seven kilometers to reach their schools and there is no road."

While making an announcement about the campaign earlier, Dipke had appealed to the sarpanchs of the respective villages to take a lead and repair the government schools in their areas to ensure that these institutions have basic amenities for the students studying there.

He also urged people to visit the schools of their children and report to the CJP if they find anything lacking.

In a social media post, Dipke earlier said, "Kids in villages shouldn't be pleading for basic facilities at school after 80 years of Independence! As a country, we have failed rural kids in the worst possible way. This Independence Day, CJP will launch the 'School Thik Karo' campaign to improve Govt schools in villages." (PTI)

Akal Takht jathedar condemns Haryana Police lathi-charge, tear gas on Sikh protesters in Ambala

AMRITSAR, Aug 14: Akal Takht Sahib Jathedar Giani Kuldeep Singh Gargajj has condemned the Haryana Police lathi-charge and use of tear gas shells against Sikh protesters in Ambala.

He said it was extremely unfortunate that while the Haryana government was holding talks with the Sikh community on the one hand, "it suddenly attacked them on the other". He termed the action extremely unfortunate and unjust.

Jathedar Gargajj said that besides Haryana Gurdwara Management Committee president Jagdish Singh Jhinda, several Sikh devotees were injured in the incident.

He spoke to Jagdish Singh Jhinda over phone to enquire about his health and that of the injured Sikhs and to take stock of the prevailing situation.

Jhinda told the Jathedar that it was not right for the police to attack the Sikh devotees in this manner while talks with the government were underway.

The Jathedar said that if the government had wanted, the matter could have been resolved peacefully and amicably through dialogue. He said that when talks were underway, the sudden use of force by the government was wrong and the circumstances leading to the action should be investigated.

Haryana Police on Thursday evening resorted to tear gas and cane charge to restore traffic on Delhi-Amritsar National Highway after protesters blocked the road in Ambala demanding action against an anti-Khalistani terrorist front chief for attempting to run over some people with his car recently.



The vehicular traffic on the key NH44 was restored only after about six hours. About six cops were also injured as a police team was attacked during the operation to clear the highway blockade in Ambala Cantt.

The Sikh community leaders were demanding a case be registered against International Anti-Khalistani Terrorist Front (IAKTF) Gursimran Singh Mand, alleging that he attempted to run over certain individuals with his car on August 5.

Mand was allegedly assaulted by a mob outside Gurdwara Shri Panjokhra Sahib in Ambala on the evening of August 5, in which he sustained minor injuries, and his car was damaged.

On August 8, several members of the Sikh community had held a dharna outside the Panjokhra police

station here following detention of two Sikh youths in connection with the assault.

The Akal Takht Jathedar questioned whether anti-Sikh forces had deliberately infiltrated the peaceful protest in Ambala by sending mischievous elements to discredit the protest and provoke the police into taking action.

He said this possibility should be seriously investigated.

The Jathedar said the situation could have been avoided if the Haryana government had, in time, taken appropriate legal action in accordance with Sikh sentiments against those accused of "crushing and seriously injuring Sikh devotees at Gurdwara Panjokhra Sahib".

Jathedar Gargajj said the Haryana government should respect the sentiments of the Sikh community, immediately release the arrested youths and arrest those accused of injuring devotees by crushing them with their vehicle into the congregation at Gurdwara Panjokhra Sahib.

He said the government should resolve the entire matter through dialogue with Sikh leaders in the state "instead of creating a situation of confrontation".

He also directed the Sikh community in Haryana to remain united and organised, and said that any struggle should be conducted strictly within the bounds of discipline and in a peaceful manner.

He further stressed that it should be ensured that no mischievous elements participate in the Sikh protest. (PTI)

Himachal govt grants remission to 433 convicted prisoners ahead of Independence Day

SHIMLA, Aug 14: The Himachal Pradesh government has granted remission to 433 convicted prisoners ahead of Independence Day, with three prisoners set to be released solely due to the sentence reduction, a spokesperson said on Friday.

The remission has been granted to eligible convicted prisoners under the applicable provisions of law on the occasion of 80th Independence Day.

Of the 1,025 convicted prisoners lodged in various jails across Himachal Pradesh, 433 with good conduct were found eligible for sentence reduction through the remission. The spokesperson said three convicted prisoners would be released solely on account of the remission granted on Independence Day.

Under the remission rules, prisoners sentenced to life imprisonment or more than 10 years will get three months' remission, while those sentenced to five to 10 years will receive two months' remission.

Those serving sentences of three to five years will get 45 days' remission, those sentenced to one to three years will receive 30 days, and prisoners serving six months to one year will get 15 days' remission. (PTI)

Noida: Teenager kills father, dies by suicide by jumping before metro train

NOIDA, Aug 14: A 16-year-old boy allegedly killed his father and later died by suicide by jumping in front of a metro train at Sector 52 station here, police said on Friday.

The incident occurred on Wednesday, when the teenager allegedly killed his father, Raju Sharma, a tutor, and subsequently went to the metro station, they said.

According to preliminary investigation, the teenager had been living with his father in the rented accommodation in Garhi Chaukhandi village for about three months and was depressed over his father's alleged harsh behaviour and his mother's absence.

Police said the boy's mother had left Raju after the COVID-19 pandemic and was living separately.

"Early Wednesday morning, while his father was asleep, he killed Raju. Afterward, he went to the Sector-52 Metro station, where he attempted to take his own life by jumping in front of a train," police said.

The Sector 49 police station received information through Dial-112 that a boy had jumped before a train at the Metro station. Metro staff and security personnel rushed him to a nearby hospital, where doctors declared him dead.

The deceased later identified as the 16-year-old boy, son of Raju Sharma and a resident of Sector 73 in Noida. After



completion of the inquest proceedings, his body was sent for post-mortem and later handed over to his mother and maternal uncle, police said.

The discovery of Raju's body came later. Arun, Raju's brother, approached police outposts at Parbhala and Garhi Chaukhandi seeking help in locating his brother's rented accommodation.

Late Thursday night, police and Arun reached the rented room after receiving information about a foul smell emanating from the premises near Tikona Park in Garhi Chaukhandi. Raju's body was subsequently recovered and sent for post-mortem after completion of the inquest proceedings.

Further investigation is underway, police said. (PTI)

Bihar CM hoists tricolour at official residence under 'Har Ghar Tiranga' campaign



PATNA, Aug 14: Bihar Chief Minister Samrat Choudhary on Friday hoisted the tricolour at his official residence here as part of the 'Har Ghar Tiranga' campaign.

The nationwide campaign initiated by the Union government encourages citizens to hoist the national flag at their homes, offices and workplaces.

"Today, on Prime Minister Narendra Modi's call for 'Har Ghar Tiranga', I hoisted the national flag in remembrance of the

martyrs of India's Independence struggle," Choudhary said in a social media post with photographs of the event.

He also urged people to hoist the national flag at their homes and become a part of this "mega campaign of patriotism".

"Upload your pictures with the tricolour on social media to take this public participation programme to every home," the CM said. Choudhary also participated in a

'Tiranga Yatra' at Ambedkar Chowk in Munger, his home district, a statement issued by the CMO said.

"The tricolour is a symbol of the country's unity, integrity and pride. The 'Har Ghar Tiranga' campaign is an important initiative to instil respect for the country, patriotism and a sense of national unity among citizens," he said in Munger.

Meanwhile, senior NDA leaders, including Bihar ministers Ashok Choudhary and Vijay Kumar Sinha, Union minister Nityanand Rai and Lok Sabha MP Ravishankar Prasad, also participated in 'Tiranga Yatras' in various districts of Bihar.

While Prasad took part in a three-km long 'Tiranga Yatra' from ANS College to SDO office in the Barh subdivision of Patna, Rai marched from Mohiuddin Nagar legislative assembly area in Samastipur's Ujiyarpur. (PTI)

Bus narrowly escapes landslide near Solan-Bilaspur border in Himachal

SHIMLA, Aug 14: Occupants of a bus in Himachal Pradesh had a narrow escape following a landslide near the Bilaspur-Solan border between Bharatnagar and Nalag.

The Himachal Road Transport Corporation (HRTC) bus was about to cross the stretch where the landslide took place.

Heavy traffic was on the road when the landslide struck but there were no casualties. A video of the incident has surfaced on the internet, showing people running to save themselves and shouting to remove vehicles from the stretch.

Work is underway on four-laning the road and frequent landslides have been reported on it.

On August 11 (Tuesday), a rock fell onto a moving vehicle on the same stretch, resulting in the death of one person while two others were injured.

As many as 140 roads were closed in Himachal Pradesh while 244 water supply schemes and 46 power transformers were disrupted following torrential rains.

A maximum of 52 roads were blocked in Mandi followed by 37 in Kullu, 29 in Chamba, five in Kangra, six in Sirmour, four each in Shimla and Una, two in Lahaul and Spiti and one in Kinnaur district on Friday morning, according



to the State Emergency Operation Centre (SEOC).

Moderate to heavy rains lashed parts of Himachal since Thursday evening and Dharamshala received 91.1 mm of rainfall followed by Naina Devi 44.6 mm, Jogindernagar 35 mm, Nalagarh 34 mm, Brahmani 27.6 mm and Bilaspur 25.8 mm.

Thunderstorm and lightning lashed Jubberhatti, Murari Devi, Jot, Sundernagar and Kangra. The Shimla Meteorological Office has issued an 'orange alert' for heavy to very heavy rains at isolated places for Monday and Tuesday (August 17 and 18). (PTI)

India's generosity, tolerance should not be mistaken for weakness: NSA Ajit Doval on Operation Sindoor

National Security Advisor Ajit Doval has said India's generosity and tolerance should not be mistaken for weakness, asserting that the country can take risks and hit hard, irrespective of the consequences.

Speaking in the upcoming Discovery docuseries "Declassified: Operation Sindoor", Doval said the objective of the 88-hour military operation was to destroy enemy camps, particularly those responsible for the Pahalgam terror attack.

"We had decided the objective of the operation as destruction of the enemy camps particularly those who had been responsible for the Pahalgam attack," Doval said in his first interview since Operation Sindoor.

"Message to the world is very clear - India's generosity or India being tolerant should not be mistaken for its weakness.

India can take risks, India can hit hard, irrespective of the consequences," he added.

The two-part docuseries brings together India's military and national security leadership to recount the decisions and events surrounding Operation Sindoor, with first-hand accounts from those who oversaw India's response, Discovery said in a statement.

In the show, Doval offers an account of the decision-making and resolve behind the military response, it added.

The NSA recalled meeting Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who was in Saudi Arabia when the Pahalgam terror attack happened and had to cut short his visit.

"Prime Minister returned. Foreign Secretary had come to receive him. Then at the airport itself we had a meeting. First he wanted to know all the facts. And then his first ques-

tion to me was -- 'Who has done it? Who is responsible? We should be very clear who the perpetrators are. I want it immediately.'

"Thanks to our intelligence agencies, I think they did a brilliant job, and within a very short time, we were able to arrive at the conclusion," he said.

Doval said they wanted Pakistan Army to realise that its "support to terrorism or inability to take effective action against the terrorists is something which is not tolerable to us".

Operation Sindoor was launched early on May 7 last year to avenge the deadly April 22 Pahalgam terror attack, in which 26 people were killed, with Indian armed forces conducting precision strikes on multiple terror infrastructure in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK).

Pakistan later also launched offensives against India, and

all subsequent counter-offensives by India were also carried out under Operation Sindoor.

The military conflict between the two nuclear-armed neighbours, lasting nearly 88 hours, halted after they reached an understanding on the evening of May 10.

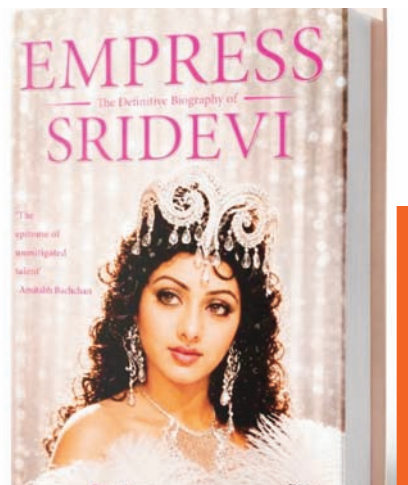
"Once anything starts, we are willing to go as far as it is necessary for a nation to preserve its sovereignty and there are no limits on that. We fight till the last drop of blood," he said in the docuseries.

Doval further said: "When the Prime Minister says that Operation Sindoor is alive, his intention is that the fight against terror will only be over till the last terrorist is eliminated."

"Declassified: Operation Sindoor" will premiere on Saturday at 9 pm on Discovery and streaming service discovery+. (PTI)



PRIYANKA CHOPRA UNVEILS COVER OF UPCOMING SRIDEVI BIOGRAPHY 'EMPRESS'



Sridevi made documenting her journey a rare privilege.

"Having known Sridevi personally, it has been a rare privilege to document her extraordinary journey across five languages, five decades and more than 300 films. She remains one of world cinema's finest actors and a South Asian icon who has touched over a billion lives with her art and movies," he said.

He thanked Sridevi's husband Boney Kapoor for his support and access to stories and rare photographs, as well as film personalities from Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam cinema who contributed anecdotes about the actor.

Among the tributes featured in the book, megastar Amitabh Bachchan describes Sridevi as the "epitome of unmitigated talent", while Shabana Azmi recalls her expressive face, comic timing, dancing skills and star power.

Telugu actor Brahmanandam calls her a "rarest of rare actor" and "a boon to earth", while writer-director Anes Bazmee says Sridevi "was the hero and leading force of her films".

Sridevi, who died in 2018 aged 54, began her career as a child actor and went on to become one of the most celebrated female stars in Indian cinema, working across Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam films.

Some of her hit films include "Himmatwala", "Mr. India", "Chandni", "Chaal-Baaz", "Lamhe", "Khuda Gawah", "Judaai", "English Vinglish" and "Mom".

"Empress: The Definitive Biography of Sridevi" is scheduled for a pan-India release in late 2026. (PTI)

Actor Priyanka Chopra has unveiled the cover of "Empress: The Definitive Biography of Sridevi", an upcoming account of the late actor's five-decade career and enduring legacy.

Written by Dhiraj Kumar and published by Westland Books, the biography traces Sridevi's journey from child prodigy to Indian cinema's first true pan-Indian female megastar, spanning five languages and more than 300 films, according to a press release.

Priyanka launched the cover on social media on Thursday, coinciding with Sridevi's birth anniversary.

"The one and only. You are so missed. Happy heavenly birthday #Sridevi #Empress... coming soon," she posted on X.

The biography examines Sridevi's rise to unprecedented stardom in a largely hero-

centric industry, her groundbreaking performances and her influence on generations of actors and audiences. It also offers a portrait of the actor away from the spotlight and places her career against the evolution of Indian cinema.

"Empress" features seven forewords by leading Indian film personalities, exclusive contributions from Amitabh Bachchan and Javed Akhtar, and more than 150 rare photographs.

Karthika V K, Publisher, Westland Books, said it was a privilege to publish Kumar's account of Sridevi.

"It's an absolute privilege for us at Westland to be able to publish Dhiraj's fantastic biography of Sridevi — it's comprehensive, full of stories and uncommon details, and delivers on the promise of honesty," she said.

Kumar said his personal association with

Prime Video announces season 2 and 3 of 'Adarsh Baal Vidyalaya'

Streaming platform Prime Video on Friday announced that it has renewed its hit comedy-drama series, "Adarsh Baal Vidyalaya" for season two and three following strong global viewership.

Since its premiere on July 24, the series has become a global audience favourite, trending as the number one non-English series in the top ten worldwide, the streamer said in a statement.

"#Adarsh-BaalVidyalayaOnPrime, season 2 and 3 now in development," Prime Video captioned the post.

Headlined by acclaimed actor Kay Menon, the series follows laidback headmaster Gyaneshwar Tripathi and his rather ambitious attempt to bring some order to one of Tinku Toli's most dysfunctional schools.

The show is directed by Himank Gaur and created and executive-produced by Biswapati Sarkar and Sameer Saxena under the banner of Posham Pa Pictures. It is written by Sarkar, Akshay Asthana, Nupur Pai, Tatsat Pandey, and Meghna Srivastava.

Actors Archana Puran Singh, Abhimanyu Singh, Naveen Kasturia, Prasanna Bisht, Deven Bhojani, Ajitesh Gupta, Annapurna Soni, and Prachee Shah round out the cast of "Adarsh Baal Vidyalaya". (PTI)



Finite series format could draw actors back to television: Actor Gashmeer Mahajani

Popular actor Gashmeer Mahajani believes the finite-series format can encourage actors who have moved away from television to return to the medium and believes his upcoming show "108 Base Hospital - Uri" will set a new precedent for the industry.

Mahajani, known for his work in Marathi films such as "Deool Band" and "Phullwanti" as well as television shows including "Imlie", "Tere Ishq Mein Ghayal" and "Khatron Ke Khiladi", headlines the 30-episode series, which celebrates the unsung bravery of army doctors.

"I believe that this entire endeavour should work. It will set a very good precedent in the industry and a lot of actors who are away from TV will once again prefer to do TV because it's an interesting format," Mahajani told PTI in an interview.

"Besides, in 30 episodes, the content remains intact, you don't need to play around things because it's planned in a certain way and is going to end in those many episodes and that there's no need to stretch the story because you already have the story in place," he added.

"108 Base Hospital - Uri" follows doctors, nurses and medical personnel who work against time to treat wounded soldiers and give them another chance to return to the frontlines and their families.

Mahajani plays Dr Major Aniruddh, while Erica Fernandes features as Dr Major Naina.

The actor said he immediately accepted the project and was particularly surprised to learn that army doctors are required to be combat-ready.

"I got to don the army uniform and play an army officer for the first time. I got my hair short on screen after a very long time, otherwise, I've always had long hair. So, these physical and materialistic changes have been new," he said.

"Besides, I learnt that they have to be combat-ready and use that training in terms of shootouts. If you see an army doctor, he is subtle, polite, suave kind of a guy and you cannot imagine the other wild side of him if he has to get into combat," he added.

Mahajani said the series is not merely an action-driven or patriotic story but also explores the personal

lives and struggles of army families.

"It is not just one piece of news that we're giving through this show that it is about an army family, the obstacles that they face, their traumas and how they tackle things, they are also humans, just like all of us," he said.

"They too have family, friends, love life, and they protect the nation at the borders. So, '108 Base Hospital Uri' is a human story, and the backdrop is action, which is never-before-seen action on TV," he added.

The cast underwent training to understand basic military protocols, including handling firearms.

"There are a lot of nitty-gritties, but there are people on set who guide you through all that, for about 15-20 days until they feel sure that we got it correct," Mahajani said.

He added that the episodes are approved by the Army, with scenes being reshot if they are found to be inaccurate.

Mahajani also recalled his first visit to Kashmir, where the series was shot in Baderwah.

"This is the first time I visited Kashmir because of this show. When

I first arrived, there was a loud sound at 3 am and initially I thought there was an attack because after I stepped out of the room, I saw the lights go off and no one was around, I got scared," the actor said.

"Later, I realised it was a thundering sound and I laughed at myself for thinking I was a coward," he added.

The actor, who has worked across Marathi and Hindi cinema, television and web series, said he is now looking to expand into production.

"I am chasing to be a producer because it gives you complete creative control. We've started work on a Marathi movie and I'm acting in it too," Mahajani said.

He added that he may not necessarily act in every project he produces, depending on the demands of the story.

Produced by The Epic Company and co-produced by A-Game Entertainment, "108 Base Hospital - Uri" also stars Nikkhil Khurana, Ayushi Talukdar, Hiten Tejwani and Smita Bansal, among others.

The series will premiere on August 15 and air on Saturdays and Sundays on COLORS and JioHotstar. (PTI)

Jemimah Rodrigues ruled out of Asia Cup and Asian Games



NEW DELHI, Aug 14: India women's team batter Jemimah Rodrigues was on Friday ruled out of the upcoming Asia Cup and Asian Games due to a hamstring injury she sustained earlier this month while playing in The Hundred tournament in England.

The BCCI said in a statement that the 25-year-old Rodrigues has been assessed by the medical team with a high-grade tear.

The Women's Selection Committee has named Pratika Rawal as Rodrigues' replacement for the Asia Cup to be played in Dubai from August 28 to September 13.

"Jemimah Rodrigues sustained a right hamstring injury on 3rd August while playing in The Hundred in England. The BCCI Medical Team clinically assessed her at the Centre of Excellence in Bengaluru, and the assessment confirmed a high-grade tear," the Board said.

"Consequently, she has been ruled out of the upcoming ACC Women's Asia Cup in the UAE and the Asian Games in Japan."

The Asian Games will be held in Aichi-Nagoya in Japan from September 19 to October 4.

India's updated Asia Cup squad: Harmanpreet Kaur (C), Smriti Mandhana (VC), Shafali Verma, Bharti Fulmali, Deepti Sharma, Richa Ghosh (WK), G. Kamalini (WK), Arundhati Reddy, Prema Rawat, Radha Yadav, Sree Charani, Renuka Thakur, Nandini Sharma, Kranti Gaud, Pratika Rawal. (PTI)

India's 'Mission World Cup' begins against Wales

AMSTELVEEN (THE NETHERLANDS), Aug 14: It's a wait that dates back to more than half a century and the Indian men's hockey team would be determined to break the jinx this time when it begins its title quest at the FIH World Cup with a clash against Wales here on Saturday.

The Harmanpreet Singh-led side would hope to add to the country's Independence Day celebrations by beating Wales to set the tone for a campaign that could finally end one of Indian hockey's longest-standing droughts which goes back 51 years.

India's last and only World Cup triumph came in 1975, when Ajit Pal Singh's team defeated Pakistan in the final in Kuala Lumpur.

"We want to write our own piece of history in Indian hockey," coach Craig Fulton said ahead of the tournament, acknowledging the weight of the legacy while insisting that his players must create their own story rather than live in the shadow of 1975.

The country previously won bronze in 1971 and silver in 1973.

More than five decades later, the current generation believes it has the experience, depth and belief to change that record.

India enter the tournament with genuine optimism. The country won bronze medals at the Tokyo Olympics, ending a 41-year wait for an Olympic medal, and followed it with another bronze at the Paris Games.

The challenge now is to replicate that consistency on the World Cup stage.

"We have come here with the same passion, mindset and preparation," captain Harmanpreet had said.

"There is no pressure to win a medal in the World Cup; rather, it is our responsibility."

The opening assignment against 15th-ranked Wales appears



favourable on paper for eighth-ranked India, but coach Craig Fulton's side knows that a strong start is essential.

England, ranked third in the world, and Pakistan, ranked 12th, await later in the pool, making every point valuable.

After a disappointing eighth-place finish in the nine-team Pro League last season, the team found its rhythm in the last phase of the European leg, defeating reigning world and European champions Germany and Olympic champions the Netherlands.

The Asia Cup title in Rajgir has also strengthened belief within the squad.

Fulton has opted for a blend of experience and youth after trying out 33 players during the 2025-26 Pro League season.

Veteran mid-fielder Manpreet Singh, India's most-capped player with 417 international appearances, provides leadership and composure, while eight players are set to experience the World Cup for the first time.

With PR Sreejesh having retired after the Paris Olympics, the responsibility in front of the goal now rests with the younger Mohit HS and Suraj Karkera.

At the other end, Harmanpreet's penalty corner expertise remains

one of India's biggest attacking weapons, with experienced defender Amit Rohidas expected to provide stability alongside him.

The mid-field will revolve around Manpreet and Hardik Singh, while the attacking line will look towards Abhishek and Mandeep, who is only 12 matches away from 300 caps.

Mental conditioning coach Paddy Upton, who was part of India's 2011 cricket World Cup-winning campaign and later worked with the hockey team at the Paris Olympics, believes the squad is equipped to handle the pressure of a long tournament.

On the other hand, playing its second consecutive World Cup, Wales has prepared for the tournament by playing practice games against England, Australia and Spain and will be eager to produce an upset.

For India a victory would provide momentum before the much tougher pool clashes against England on August 17 and arch-rivals Pakistan on August 19.

A strong showing would also provide valuable momentum ahead of next month's Asian Games, where India will chase gold and a qualification spot for the Los Angeles Olympics.

Match begins at 4.30 IST. (PTI)

Shubham Jaglan fires final-round 64 to bag maiden title at Coal India Open 2026

KOLKATA, Aug 14: Shubham Jaglan produced a superb final-round six-under 64 to claim his maiden professional title by two shots at the second edition of the ₹ 1 crore Coal India Open at Tollygunge Club here on Friday.

The 21-year-old from Panipat, Haryana, carded rounds of 67, 65 and 64 to finish the weather-shortened tournament at 14-under 196.

Jaglan, who is attached to DLF Golf & Country Club, Gurugram, earned the winner's cheque of ₹ 15 lakh and climbed 12 places from 26th to 14th on the DP World PGTI Rankings. His season's earnings rose to ₹ 26,99,875.

"It feels pretty awesome," said Jaglan. "The first win is very special. I was nervous over the last few holes, so I'm proud of the way I finished."

The tournament was reduced to 54 holes after heavy rain disrupted the second round. The fourth round was cancelled, with Friday's third round serving as the final round and being played with a shotgun start.

Jaglan began the final round from the second hole, tied fifth and four shots behind overnight leader Jamal Hossain. His challenge suffered an early setback when he bogeyed his opening hole, but he responded calmly and set the tone for the rest of the day.

"I made a poor swing with my first shot, but I didn't get upset," he said. "I knew I had to shoot a low score after starting four behind, so I kept my cool."

Jaglan quickly recovered and moved into contention during a decisive stretch. A birdie on the difficult sixth was followed by an eagle on the par-five seventh, changing the momentum of his round. His six-under 64, the lowest score of the final day, featured an eagle, six birdies and two bogeys. It erased his four-shot deficit and took him clear of the field.

The pressure returned on the closing holes. After seeing the leaderboard on the 18th, Jaglan knew his lead had been cut to one shot.

Rather than adopting a defensive approach, he hit two assured shots and finished with a birdie to seal the title.

"I knew I was only one ahead, but the standard on the DP World PGTI is so high that you can never let up," he said.

"I hit two great shots and made the putt. You have to keep pushing," Jaglan's father, Jagpal, who has caddied for him for nearly a decade through junior, amateur and professional golf, was once again on the bag.

"We understand each other very well, and I don't think anyone believes in me more than he



does," Jaglan said.

"Having someone beside you with complete belief in you is extremely important."

The victory continued the rapid rise of the University of South Florida graduate, who earned his DP World PGTI card by winning the Final Qualifying Stage in January. He also holds an Asian Tour card and has divided his season between the Asian circuit and the DP World PGTI.

Jaglan turned professional immediately after graduating from college.

In June 2025, he earned his PGA Tour Americas card through the USA Midwest Qualifying Tournament and made nine starts on the circuit. His best result was a tied-third finish at the BioSteel Championship in August.

His experience in American college golf helped develop the attacking mindset he displayed on the final hole.

The breakthrough came after two previous runner-up finishes and a third-place result at last week's J&K Open in Srinagar. Jaglan also credited greater self-belief and a more positive approach for helping him cross the line.

"My team and I have worked on being more positive," he said.

"If I don't believe in myself, there is no point going out there to compete. I carried that belief from last week into this tournament and managed to get it done," Jamal Hossain (65-63-70), a previous winner at Tollygunge Club, began the day with a two-shot advantage.

He mixed four birdies with four bogeys for an even-par 70 to finish runner-up at 12-under 198. Delhi's Shaurya Bhattacharya (64-70-66) and Chandigarh's Akshay Sharma (66-65-69) shared third place at 10-under 200.

Saptak Talwar (67-65-70), the current DP World PGTI Order of Merit leader, shared 11th place at eight-under 202.

Talwar strengthened his position at the top of the rankings, taking his season's earnings to ₹ 84,33,234. (PTI)

Ridhima holds off Mannat to win 12th Leg of WPG Tour



BENGALURU, Aug 14: Ridhima Dilawari managed to hold off a surging Mannat Brar on the back nine to win her fourth title on the Hero Women's Pro Golf Tour at the Prestige Golfshire here.

The seasoned Ridhima shot 4-under 68 for her third straight under par round following 67-71 on the first two days of the 12th Leg of the 2026 season.

Ridhima's total of 10-under 206 saw her finish one shot ahead of Mannat Brar (66), who brought home the best card of the week and totalled 9-under 207. Mannat's 66 had seven birdies against one bogey.

Ridhima's earlier wins this season came at Leg 2 at Kalhaar Blues & Greens, Leg 4 at Poona Golf Club and Leg 6 at Jaypee Wishtown, NOIDA.

Apart from her wins, Ridhima has also been runner-up twice this season. She has extended her lead at the top of the Hero Order of Merit.

While Ridhima battled to hold on to her lead and stay ahead of Mannat, Vidhatri Urs and Heena Kang were engaged in their own tussle for the third place and finally tied for it.

Vidhatri carded 71 and Heena shot 72 to be tied at 3-under at a distant total of 3-under.

Ridhima had a mixed run from the third to the sixth. After a birdie on the third she gave away a double bogey on the fourth to open the door slightly for Mannat. Ridhima made up with back-to-back birdies on the fifth and the sixth for a front nine of 1-under 35.

Mannat had one bogey on the second and three birdies on the fourth, sixth and the ninth for a 2-under 34.

When the duo came off the front nine, Mannat had reduced the gap from three shots to two.

On the back nine, both played steady. Mannat had four birdies, including three in a row from the 12th to the 14th. Ridhima had gains on the 12th and the 14th, but since she was playing in the final group, she could keep an eye on the scores.

When Mannat birdied the 16th, they were both tied at 9-under. Mannat parred the last two holes to set the clubhouse target and waited for Ridhima, who needed a birdie on the 18th to avoid a play-off. She did just that and won at 10-under.

Vidhatri had three birdies against two bogeys for a 71, while Heena had three birdies against a double bogey and a bogey for a 72.

Neha Tripathi, who was tied third after 36 holes, gave away too many shots in her 75 and slipped to sole fifth.

Only four players -- Ridhima, Mannat, Vidhatri and Heena -- were under par for the week and Neha was even par.

Amandeep Drall, Vani Kapoor and Prakruthi Sastry shot 70 each to be tied sixth, while young and promising Kashika Misra and Jahnnavi Prakhya were tied for ninth at 3-over 219. (PTI)

Maresca discusses Rodri, Enzo Fernandez as Reijnders prepares to leave Man City in midfield overhaul

MANCHESTER, Aug 14: Manchester City manager Enzo Maresca offered no assurances Friday about the future of Rodri at the club and said fellow midfielder Tijjani Reijnders was set to leave after just one season.

Rodri was welcomed with what Maresca said was a "big hug" when he returned to City on Friday following an extended break after helping Spain win the World Cup last month and then undergoing minor back surgery.

Asked whether he expected the former Ballon d'Or winner to stay at City amid reported interest from Barcelona, Maresca said "the transfer window is open — we can buy players, we can sell players. Anything can happen."

One thing is for sure: Rodri will not be playing in Sunday's Community Shield — the curtain-raiser to the English soccer season between the winners of last season's Premier League and FA Cup — against Arsenal as he follows a rehabilitation program after surgery.

How Maresca overhauls City's midfield after the departure of stalwart Bernardo Silva to Real Madrid and a possible move for Rodri has been the subject of much speculation.

On whether he would be interested in signing Enzo Fernandez from Chelsea — where Maresca used to be coach — the Italian said "it's a player from another club. I don't think it's correct to speak about other players."

Maresca was more open about Reijnders, who failed to establish himself as a regular for City after joining from AC Milan in last year's offseason.

Widespread reports in the British media say the Netherlands midfielder is on his way to Saudi Arabian club Al-Qadsiyah and Maresca said "The transfer of Tijjani is not done officially, we'll see in the next hours."

Maresca added Reijnders was "already convinced" about leaving City, comparing the situation to goalkeeper James Trafford, who joined Leeds this summer to get more playing opportunities.

"They all work every day, they all do sessions every day, and then at the end of the week, they want to all play a game — when they don't play, they struggle to understand," Maresca said.

"I can understand that. After one season, some of them, they want to play a little bit more. So it's a normal situation." (AP)



the way in the World Cup," he said.

"I am confident that we will reach the final of the World Cup. The team is playing with great belief and giving 100 per cent in every single training session," he added.

"The energy in the camp is high, and every member of the squad is determined to achieve something special. I fully believe

we will make it to the final."

India have been placed in Pool D along with Wales, England and Pakistan. They open their campaign against Wales on Saturday.

The former captain said India cannot afford to underestimate any opponent and have worked on both fitness and defence

ahead of the tournament.

"I have full faith in this team. Everyone is excited and ready for the World Cup. We have learned from past editions that you cannot take any team lightly in a tournament like this," he said.

"Our squad has a good balance of youth and experience. Senior players like our captain Harmanpreet Singh, Mandeep Singh, and myself have shared our learnings with the younger players about what worked, what didn't, and how to approach each match with full focus.

"Our coach has emphasised fitness because we know that being fit helps us compete against the best. We have also worked hard on our defence. A solid defence gives us the confidence to attack and take control of the game."

Manpreet also said India would not be affected by the reputation of their opponents, including arch-rivals Pakistan.

"Regardless of who we play, whether it's Pakistan or any other team, we stick to our game plan. We don't get caught up in the opposition's name or reputation," he said.

"Hockey is a team sport, and if one player tries to do everything alone, it can hurt the team. We must trust each other and play as a unit." (PTI)

Theegala placed tied 26th as Spieth makes strong start at FedExCup Play-offs

MEMPHIS (US), Aug 14: Sahithi Theegala was the best placed among the Indian-origin quartet, carding a 1-under 69 to sit tied 26th after the opening round, as the FedExCup Play-offs began with the St. Jude Championship at TPC Southwind here.

Sudarshan Yellamaraju was the next best at T-37 after an eventful even-par 70, while Akshay Bhatia and PGA champion Aaron Rai opened with 72s to share 53rd place.

At the top, Jordan Spieth rolled back the years with a bogey-free 5-under 65 to join Michael Thorbjornsen, Jake Knapp, Michael Kim and Kurt Kitayama in a five-way share of the lead.

Spieth, who has not won on the PGA Tour in more than four years, made the ideal start to a Play-off campaign in which every position matters. He and Kim are currently outside the crucial top-50 cut-off in the FedExCup standings, making a strong week essential if they are to advance to next week's BMW Championship.

Theegala, who is backed by Hero, started and finished his round with birdies. He added two more birdies during his round but gave back shots with bogeys, including consecutive dropped shots on the 14th and 15th holes. His 69 left him in a solid position but with plenty of ground to make up over the next three rounds.

Bhatia, also supported by Hero, had a mixed day. He made two birdies but was undone by four bogeys, three of them coming during a difficult stretch from the 10th through the 14th. His 72 left him six shots behind the leaders.

Yellamaraju had perhaps the most dramatic round among the Indians. The Indo-Canadian produced an eagle, a birdie, a bogey and a double bogey, along with 14 pars, to finish level par. He began the Play-offs ranked 57th and needs to move into the top 50 to extend his season into the BMW Championship.

Rai, whose highlight this year was his PGA Championship success, struggled to find consistency and carded four bogeys against just two birdies. His 72 left him tied 53rd and facing an uphill task over the next three days.

The battle for the top 50 is one of the major storylines of the Play-offs. Players who finish inside that mark after the FedEx St. Jude Championship qualify for the BMW Championship in St. Louis next week.

More importantly, reaching the

top 50 also guarantees entry into all of next season's USD 20 million Signature Events.

Spieth knows the significance all too well. He finished 48th last year but subsequently dropped out of the top 50 ahead of the BMW Championship. Now, after missing the top-50 mark in each of the last two seasons, he has given himself an excellent platform with his opening 65.

His round was built on patience. Spieth opened with eight consecutive pars before finally getting a putt to fall for his first birdie. He then caught fire, making four birdies in a five-hole stretch. One of the highlights was a spectacular 40-foot birdie putt on the par-3 14th.

The absence of bogeys was just as important as the birdies. On a demanding day in sweltering conditions at TPC Southwind, Spieth kept mistakes off his card and matched the day's lowest score.

Among those one shot behind the leaders at 66 were defending FedExCup champion Tommy Fleetwood, Hideki Matsuyama, Gary Woodland and Adam Scott. Woodland and Scott, both hovering around the top 30, could potentially secure their places in the season-ending TOUR Championship with a strong showing this week.

World No. 1 Scottie Scheffler opened with a steady 2-under 68. Scheffler has played TPC Southwind seven times without winning, making it the course where he has had the most starts without a victory on the PGA Tour.

Playing alongside him was Rory McIlroy, who skipped this event last year because his result would not have affected his Play-off position. McIlroy endured a difficult finish, making bogey, bogey and double bogey over his final three holes to close with a 4-over 74.

The field was reduced to 69 players after Daniel Berger chose not to compete. Jackson Koivun, who entered the Play-offs as the final qualifier at No. 70 after winning the 3M Open in just his third start as a professional, opened with a 1-over 71.

With three rounds remaining, the Indian quartet have contrasting targets. Theegala is in a relatively comfortable position but will want to climb higher, Yellamaraju needs a significant move towards the top 50, while Bhatia and Rai must recover quickly.

At the sharp end, Spieth has already made the statement he needed — a bogey-free start that keeps his Play-off hopes firmly alive. (PTI)

AMSTELVEEN (NETHERLANDS), Aug 14: Gearing up for what is possibly his last campaign in a hockey World Cup, veteran Indian mid-fielder Manpreet Singh says he is determined to make it a memorable one by playing his part in taking India to the title for the first time in 51 years.

The two-time Olympic medallist, who will be playing in his fourth World Cup, said the tournament carries added significance as India look to add to their lone triumph in 1975.

"This World Cup means a lot to me because it's my fourth edition. We have won back-to-back Olympic medals, but a World Cup medal is still missing. Every player dreams of having both," Manpreet said on JioStar.

"For me, this could be my last World Cup, so I am approaching it with that mindset. I am determined to achieve what we haven't yet. We need to stay emotionally balanced, stick to our roles, and play with discipline. That is what will give us the best chance to win."

Belgium and the Netherlands will host the marquee event from August 15 to 30.

"The team has the experience and the talent to go all the way. We have prepared well, and the belief is high. We have won Olympic medals, and now it's time to go all

